

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

April 1999

“Grace be with you, mercy, and peace, from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love.” (2 John 3) I pray you are doing well and that you have been blessed by the studies that have been presented in these papers. We would like to extend the invitation to you to contact us with your concerns, comments, or suggestions. We are always happy to hear from you. If there is a particular subject you would like to see published in this newsletter please write and let us know. This month we are printing two studies on subjects that have been specifically requested by our readers. We pray that they will be a blessing to you.

Arizona Campmeeting Notice: “The Church at Wilhoit” is having a campmeeting May 7-15 in Wilhoit, Arizona (about 1½ hours Northwest of Phoenix). Campmeetings are one the most enjoyable times of the year so we hope you will plan on being there. We are certain you will gain a rich blessing by attending with your family. The first meeting will be May 7th at 7 p.m. with the remaining meetings to begin at 10 a.m. on the 8th and will continue until Sabbath evening on the 15th of May. Doug Goslin and Lynnford Beachy will be among the speakers at this campmeeting. Call (520) 442- 9868 and ask for Kim to receive detailed information. I’ll see you at campmeeting!

The Nature of the Judgment

by Stephen N. Haskell

The judgment is spoken of by every Bible writer. It is mentioned over a thousand times in the Sacred Writings. It is more solemn than death; for death separates friends only until the resurrection, but the judgment separates them forever. No one can escape it. To ignore the thought of the judgment and live without preparing for it, will not evade it. Solomon recognized this fact when he wrote, “*Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth, and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment.*” (Ecclesiastes 11:9)

The decisions of earthly courts may often be changed by money and friends, and the guilty may be

released; but not so in the heavenly court. There every one must meet the record of his own life. “*Every one... shall give account of himself to God.*” (Romans 14:12) Earthly parents have been known to sacrifice everything they possessed to save one child from the condemnation of earthly courts. Think you our heavenly Father would let Satan destroy all his earthly children without an effort to save them? He risked all heaven for their sakes. “*God so loved the world, that He gave His*

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only begotten Son, that **whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life.**" (John 3:16) No human being can face his life record in the books of heaven, and escape condemnation, unless belief in Christ and a love for His service is a part of that record.

Christ, the heavenly Advocate, will plead the cases of all who have given Him their sins. He says, "*I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for My own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*" (Isaiah 43:25) The life record, scarlet with sins and wretchedness, the Saviour covers with the spotless robe of His righteousness; and the Judge, looking upon it, sees only the sacrifice of His Son, and the record is, "Accepted in the Beloved." Who can reject such infinite love?

The judgment involves, first, the investigation of every case, the testimony of witnesses, and the plea of the Advocate, if there is an advocate. Then comes the decision of the court; after that follows the execution of the sentence rendered by the court. A just sentence cannot be rendered in any court until the witnesses have borne their testimony; for that reason a just sentence cannot be executed upon an individual at death.

Through their writings, Payne and Voltaire have made more infidels since their death than while living. A just sentence could not be passed upon them until the record of the lives of those who had been lost through their influence, appeared as witnesses in their case. On the other hand, the influence of the righteous is like the waves on the surface of the lake, which continue to widen until they reach the shore. Abel, "*being dead, yet speaketh.*" (Hebrews 11:4) Wycliffe, that fearless man of God, could not have been judged at the close of his life, for thousands have been enlightened by the influence of his life since his voice was hushed in death.

If the Bible record were silent upon this point, it would still be apparent at a glance that the judgment could not be held before the last generation had lived their life; but the Bible is not silent. The date of the opening of this great tribunal was revealed by the Lord thousands of years before it took place. Peter taught the same truth. "*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the **times of refreshing** shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached*

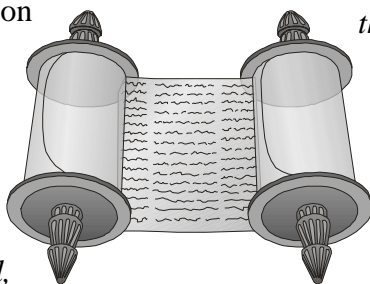
unto you." (Acts 3:19, 20) The sins will be blotted out just before the coming of the Lord.

The investigative judgment is an examination of the life record kept in heaven. Daniel says that when the judgment was set, "*the books were opened.*" (Daniel 7:9, 10) There are several books mentioned in connection with the records of heaven. The book of remembrance records even the thoughts of the heart. (Malachi 3:16) How just and merciful is our God that He takes cognizance of it when we only think upon His name! Often when pressed by temptation, our souls cry out after the living God, and a faithful record is kept of it all. Many deeds are done in darkness, hidden from even the most intimate associates; but when the books of heaven are opened, God "*will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart.*" (1 Corinthians 4:5) "*For God shall bring every work into judgment, with **every secret thing**, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.*" (Ecclesiastes 12:14) Not only the deeds are recorded, but the motives or counsels of the heart that prompted the deed; and of the bitter tears of repentance shed in secret the Lord says, Are they not all in My book?

Our daily conversation, the words spoken without thought, we may count of little worth, but "*every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment: for by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by the words thou shalt be condemned.*" (Matthew 12:36, 37) Words are the index of the heart, "*for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.*" (Matthew 12:34) The place of birth and the environment, everything that can in any way influence the life record, is all recorded in the books of heaven. (Psalm 87:4-6)

The most wonderful book of all the heavenly records that pertain to humanity, is the book of life. This book contains the names of all who have professed the name of Christ. (Philippians 4:3) To have one's name recorded in that book is the highest honor given to mortals. (Luke 10:19, 20)

It is a source of great rejoicing to know that our names are written in heaven, (Luke 10:20) but the life must be in harmony with heavenly things if our names are to remain with the righteous. The names of the wicked do not remain in the book of life; (Exodus 32:33; Revelation 13:8; 17:8) they are written in the



earth; (Jeremiah 17:13) for all their hopes and affections have clung to earthly things. When the cases of all whose hearts are the dwelling-place of the Most High and whose lives show forth His character, come up in the heavenly court, Jesus Christ the righteous will be their Advocate. (1 John 2:1) He will confess their names before the Father and before the angels. Their sins will be blotted out, and their names retained in the book of life; and they will be clothed with the white raiment of Christ's righteousness. (Revelation 3:5)

On the day of atonement in the typical service only those sins that have been confessed and transferred to the sanctuary through the sin-offering, were carried out and laid upon the head of the scapegoat. In the investigative judgment, only the cases of those who have confessed their sins will be investigated. Their names will be in the book of life, and Peter states, "*Judgment must begin at the house of God; and if it first begins at us what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?*" (1 Peter 4:17) The cases of those who have not served God will go by default. There will be no one to present them. They have no advocate in the heavenly court.

Sad indeed will be the state of those who have started on the heavenly way, but after experiencing the joy of sins forgiven and the peace of God in the heart, have returned to the world and its follies. Their names have been written in the book of life, and their cases will be presented, but only to have the sentence, "Unfaithful," passed upon them, and their names blotted forever from the book of life.

When the Saviour comes in the clouds of heaven, He will give reward to the righteous; but final judgment upon the wicked can not yet be executed, for all are to be judged "*out of those things which are written in the books, according to their works.*" (Revelation 20:12)

During the thousand years following the second advent of Christ to the earth, the righteous will join with Christ in judging the wicked. (Revelation 20:4; 1 Corinthians 6:2, 3) Then the justice of God in condemning the wicked will be demonstrated before all. The fact that they had no part in the first, or investigative judgment, that their names were not in the book of life, and no one represented them in the court of heaven, is sufficient to condemn them. The books of heaven, containing a faithful record of their lives, condemn them. The witness of the angels who have kept

the record also condemns them; but with all that evidence, God has each name considered by the saints from the earth.

There will be many among the lost who have been accounted righteous; and if they should be destroyed without an examination of the records by the saints, there might be occasion to question the justice of God; but when the records reveal how some have worked from selfish motives, and others have been guilty of cherished sins covered from the view of their fellow-men, the awfulness of sin and the longsuffering of God will be appreciated.

The Saviour said that those who had followed Him while here on earth would judge the twelve tribes of Israel. (Matthew 19:27, 28) Then when the records revealing the fact that the chief priests cried, "Crucify Him! crucify Him!" are opened in heaven, John, who followed his Lord through that cruel trial, will be able to say, "I heard them speak the awful words."

As the long list of names is brought in review, the saints can appear as witnesses. When the tyrant Nero's name comes up and the record states how he tortured the saints of God, witnesses will be there who can say, "We are the ones who were burned to light his garden." Redeemed ones gathered out of every age will sit in judgment on the cases of the wicked, and the punishment will be meted out to each one according to his works.

In the day of judgment, God will call to the heavens above. He will call for the records that have been preserved by angels,—records of men's lives, of the words they have spoken, of the deeds they have done; even the most secret acts will then be called upon to bear testimony, for "*our God shall come, and shall not keep silence; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people.*" There is one class of people who will then be gathered. He says, "*Gather My saints together unto Me; those that have made a covenant with Me by sacrifice. And the heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself.*" (Psalm 50:3-6)

This day of God's investigative judgment must occur before the second coming of Christ, and the executive part of it will take place after the close of probation, after the witnesses have borne their testimony.

When the judgment of the wicked closes, the saints, the angels, and all the universe will be in harmony with the decisions rendered. At the end of the thousand years, when fire from heaven devours the wicked as “*stubble fully dry*,” (Nahum 1:9, 10) all the universe will say, “*Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Thy judgments.*” (Revelation 16:7)

The Three Books of Judgment

1. Book of Life

Luke 10:20. Names written in heaven.

Luke 10:19, 20. To be enrolled in the book of life is the highest honor given mortals.

Philippians 4:3. Names of faithful workers recorded.

Exodus 32:33. The names of those that cling to sin will be removed.

Revelation 3:5. Names of the faithful retained.

Revelation 13:8; 17:8. Wicked are not recorded.

Revelation 20:15. None will be saved whose names are not recorded in the book of life.

Isaiah 4:3, margin.

Psalm 69:28; Ezekiel 13:9.

Hebrews 12:23; Daniel 12:1.

2. Book of Remembrance

Malachi 3:16. Records every word.

Matthew 12:36, 37. Idle words.

Psalm 56:8. Tears of repentance.

Psalm 87:4-6. Birthplace and environments.

Ecclesiastes 12:13, 14. Every secret act.

1 Corinthians 4:5. Counsels of the heart.


3. Book of Death

Jeremiah 17:13. Those that forsake God are written in the earth.

Jeremiah 2:22. Sins all recorded.

Job 14:17. Sins sealed up.

Deuteronomy 32:32-36. This sins of the wicked are all “laid up in store” until the day of judgment.

Hosea 13:12. Sin bound up. 

(This article was slightly edited from its original which was taken from pages 230-238 of the book entitled *The Cross and Its Shadow*, by Stephen N. Haskell, published in 1914 by The Bible Training School, South Lancaster, Massachusetts.)

The Ministry of the Angels

by Lynnford Beachy

For many years the existence of angels has been questioned. Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were well aware of the fact that angels exist. The Bible informs us that God placed Cherubim (angels) at the entrance of the Garden of Eden to keep anyone from entering. For many years these angels were visible to mankind as a witness of the awful results of sin. In those days there was no question of the existence of angels. However, today we do not have a visible manifestation of angels for all to behold, which has caused some to question their existence. Yet, what does the Bible have to say about this?

Even among those who believe that angels exist there are misunderstandings regarding who they are. Some have maintained that angels are spirits of dead people. Is this true? You will notice that the first time angels appeared to mankind (in the Garden of Eden) was many years before anyone had ever died, not to mention the fact that “*the dead know not any thing.*” (Ecclesiastes 9:5) Therefore it is impossible for angels to be the spirits of dead people.

Throughout the Bible we find instances where angels have appeared to men. God has often sent His angels to encourage, strengthen, enlighten,

or warn His people. Do angels have anything to do with the events in your daily life? Do you have a personal guardian angel who has been appointed by God to protect you?

This study is designed to examine what the Bible says concerning the work of angels in our lives. I pray that you will be blessed by having a more accurate understanding of the goodness of God in providing us with the benefit of the ministry of angels.

Let us first look at a few words and phrases used in the Bible that refer to angels.

The eyes of the Lord

The phrase, “the eyes of the Lord” has been used several times in the Bible referring to angels. Zechariah was shown a vision in which he beheld a stone with seven eyes.

“For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one stone shall be **seven eyes**: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.” (Zechariah 3:9) What are these seven eyes that are upon the rock?

John was shown a vision in which he beheld seven eyes as well. He wrote, “And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and **seven eyes**, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.” (Revelation 5:6) The seven eyes are the seven Spirits of God that are *sent forth* into all the earth. Who are the seven Spirits of God?

The writer of Hebrews states: “But to which of the **angels** said He at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all **ministering spirits**, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” (Hebrews 1:13, 14) The angels of God are ministering spirits *sent forth* to minister.

In the first chapter of Revelation John informs us that the seven Spirits are before God’s throne. He wrote, “John to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from Him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before His throne.” (Revelation 1:4) The seven Spirits are before the throne God.

John also saw that “all the angels stood round about the throne.” (Revelation 7:11) John “heard the voice of

many angels round about the throne... and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” (Revelation 5:11) Many angels are round about God’s throne. The seven Spirits that are before God’s throne are the multitude of angels; ministering spirits sent forth into all the earth.

Zechariah wrote concerning the eyes of the Lord: “For who hath despised the day of small things? for they shall rejoice, and shall see the plummet in the hand of Zerubbabel with **those seven** [referring to Zechariah 3:9]; they are the eyes of the Lord, which **run to and fro through the whole earth.**” (Zechariah 4:10) The seven eyes (or the host of angels) run to and fro through the whole earth. This undoubtedly refers to the angels.

We see the same language used in the second book of Chronicles: “For the eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to shew Himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward Him.” (2 Chronicles 16:9) The eyes of the Lord, spoken of here, are His angels that run to and fro throughout the whole earth to help those whose heart is perfect toward Him.

The recording angels

Not only do God’s faithful angels watch over and protect us, but they have another duty. “The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” (Proverbs 15:3) God’s angels faithfully record both the evil and the good that we do.

The angels of God are able to record more than we might think. Solomon wrote concerning this: “Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which

hath ¹¹⁶⁷ **wings** ³⁶⁷¹ shall tell the matter.” (Ecclesiastes 10:20) This verse tells us that even the thoughts that we think are being recorded by the angels. The Hebrew word that was translated “wings” often represents the angels, as we will see in more detail later.

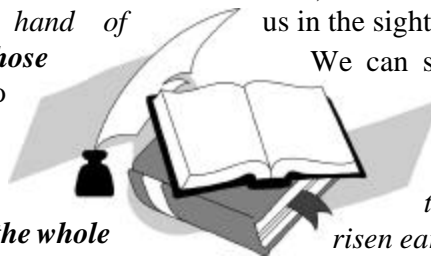
“Surely in vain the net is spread in the sight of any **bird** ^{1167 3671} [Margin: in the eyes of everything that **hath** ¹¹⁶⁷ **wings** ³⁶⁷¹].” (Proverbs 1:17) In vain the net is spread before us in the sight of God’s angels.

We can see how this principle was demonstrated for Elisha. “And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” (2 Kings 6:15-17) There are many angels working behind the scenes which we are not aware of. Thank the Lord for His continual watch-care over us.

“Hear attentively the noise of His voice, and the sound that goeth out of His mouth. He directeth it under the whole heaven, and His **lightning** ²¹⁶ [“light for doctrine, teaching,”* “illumination”**] unto the ends of ³⁶⁷¹ [Margin: wings] the earth.” (Job 37:2, 3) God directs His illumination

* Gesenius’ Hebrew-Chaldee Lexicon to the Old Testament, published by Baker Book House Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Copyright 1979

** Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance, reprinted in 1992 by Baker Book House Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan.



(light for doctrine) to His angels, and they bring it to us.

When God's people are in trouble "they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses. He **sent** His word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions." (Psalm 107:19, 20) How did God send His word to deliver them? We just read, in 2 Chronicles 16:9, that the eyes, or the angels, run to and fro throughout the earth to help God's people. God sent His word, by His angels, to help them.

"He sendeth forth His commandment upon earth: His word runneth very swiftly." (Psalm 147:15) God sends forth His angels with His words, and it runs very swiftly.

"Bless the Lord, ye His angels, that excel in strength, that do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. Bless ye the Lord, all ye His **hosts** ⁶⁶³⁵; ye ministers of His, that do His pleasure." (Psalm 103:20, 21) God's angels are also called His hosts, hence "The Lord of hosts."

The same Hebrew word that was translated "hosts" is found in Psalm 68. "The Lord gave the word: great was the **company** ⁶⁶³⁵ [host] of those that published it." (Psalm 68:11) The Lord gave His word, and His angels published it unto us, and we in turn are commissioned to preach it to the world.

Isaiah wrote, "Woe to the land shadowing with **wings** ³⁶⁷¹, which is beyond the rivers of Ethiopia: That sendeth ambassadors by the sea, even in vessels of bulrushes upon the waters, saying, Go, ye **swift messengers**, to a nation scattered and peeled, to a people terrible from their beginning hitherto; a nation meted out and trodden down, whose land the rivers have spoiled!" (Isaiah 18:1, 2) The wings, or angels, are swift messengers.

Ezekiel was shown a vision in which he heard the sound of cherubims' wings. He wrote, "And the sound of the cherubims' **wings** ³⁶⁷¹ was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when He speaketh." (Ezekiel 10:5) The wings were heard, as the voice of the Almighty God.

The chariots of God

Psalm 18 depicts the experience of Christ on the cross. When Christ called out to His Father, the Bible says "He bowed the heavens also, and came down: and darkness was under His feet. And He rode upon a cherub [a type of angel], and did fly: yea, he did fly upon the **wings** ³⁶⁷¹ of the wind." (Psalm 18:9, 10) This verse is talking about God, the Father, and says that He rode upon a cherub; upon the wings of the wind. It seems strange that God would use angels as transportation, yet the Bible clarifies this even more.

David wrote, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the holy place." (Psalm 68:17) The chariots of God are a multitude of angels.

The Psalmist wrote, "Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty. Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain: Who layeth the beams of His chambers in the waters: **who maketh the clouds His chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind: Who maketh His angels spirits; His ministers a flaming fire.**" (Psalm 104:1-4) If the clouds are His chariots, and His chariots are a multitude of angels, then the clouds, in this verse, represent His angels.

Ezekiel wrote concerning his vision, "And the glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub,

whereupon **He** was, to the threshold of the house. And He called to the man clothed with linen, which had the writer's inkhorn by his side." (Ezekiel 9:3) The glory of God was upon the cherub, or the angel. This is His chosen means of transportation.

Again Ezekiel wrote, "the glory of the Lord went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the Lord's glory." (Ezekiel 10:4) Again we see that the Lord rides upon a cherub.

Ezekiel continues his description of his vision: "Then the glory of the Lord departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims. And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also were beside them, and every one stood at the door of the east gate of the Lord's house; and the glory of the God of Israel was over them above. **This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Israel by the river of Chebar; and I knew that they were the cherubims.**" (Ezekiel 10:18-20) Clearly we can see that the cherubims were chosen to transport the God of Israel from one place to another.

The prophet Daniel wrote, "I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with **the clouds of heaven**, and came to the Ancient of days, **and they brought Him near before Him.**" (Daniel 7:13) Here we see that the Son of God uses the angels to be transported from one place to another. The clouds of heaven in this verse, as we have already seen, represent the angels of God.

The gift of the Spirit

Days after Christ's ascension into heaven God gave His disciples the gift of His Spirit in great measure. Luke wrote, "And when the day of

Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.” (Acts 2:1-4) Could the sound they heard have been the sound of angels, wings? Could the cloven tongues of fire have represented the angels that were made a flaming fire? (Psalm 104:4; Hebrews 1:7)

Olive trees and a candlestick

God gave Zechariah a very interesting vision which sheds wonderful light on the ministry of angels. Zechariah described it: “*the angel that talked with me came again, and waked me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have looked, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to the seven lamps, which are upon the top thereof.” (Zechariah 4:1, 2) What does a candlestick represent?*

Christ explained to John, “*The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.” (Revelation 1:20) Candlesticks represent churches. What are churches? They are groups of people. The candlesticks represent God’s people.*

Zechariah continued explaining his vision. He wrote, “*And two olive*

trees by it [the candlestick], one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof.” (Zechariah 4:3) When the angel that talked with Zechariah explained the meaning of these two olive trees, he said, “These are the two anointed ones, that stand by the Lord of the whole earth.” (Zechariah 4:14) The two olive trees are the two anointed ones (cherubs) that stand before the Lord.

The cherubs are anointed as described by the prophet Ezekiel. “*Thou art the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.” (Ezekiel 28:14) The anointed ones are cherubs, or angels.*

The angel that talked with Zechariah began his interpretation of the vision by informing him, “*This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” (Zechariah 4:6) This vision was given to explain how God’s Spirit is received.*

The angel queried Zechariah, “*What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? And I answered again, and said unto him, What be these two olive branches which through the two golden pipes empty the golden oil out of themselves?” (Zechariah 4:11, 12) The two olive trees, God’s angels, empty out of themselves the golden oil, God’s Spirit, into the bowls of the candlestick, or the minds of God’s people. God has chosen that His Spirit comes to us through the angelic host. If you remember in Job 37:2, 3, the Lord directs His lightning (light for doctrine) unto the angels, who, in turn, empty themselves into us.*

This truth was explained in the first verse of Revelation. John wrote, “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto Him, to shew unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass; and He sent and signified it by His angel unto His servant John.” (Revelation 1:1) The Father gave a revelation of Jesus Christ to His Son, who, in turn, gave it to His angel, who finally was sent to bring it to John. God has chosen to use this chain of revelation, from the Father, to His Son, to His angels, to His people, who share it with other people.*

Paul wrote that even humans can impart God’s Spirit to others after it has been imparted to them. “*He therefore that ministereth to you the Spirit, and worketh miracles among you, doeth he it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?” (Galatians 3:5) Job said, “To whom hast thou uttered words? and whose spirit came from thee?” (Job 26:4) We have an influence upon people by our words and actions. In this way we minister spirit to others. The spirit we minister depends upon whose spirit is leading us. Whose spirit is coming forth from you?*

Conclusion

We have seen that God’s angels bring us His word, they record our thoughts and actions, they strengthen us, they bring us His Spirit, and they are the chariots of God. Now we can better understand what David meant when he wrote, “*I will abide in thy tabernacle for ever: I will trust in the covert of thy wings. Selah.” (Psalm 61:4) And again, “How excellent is thy lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings.” (Psalm 36:7) I pray that we would all put our trust under the shadow of God’s wings, for He is well able to preserve us.*

Gospel Order

by Allen Stump

Do you have it in your home?

Many a young man has enlisted in the military service thinking to escape from the rules of his father. However, very quickly he finds out that he cannot escape rules. Rules, rules, rules; life is full of rules!

Those who have had an opportunity to enter military service know that one thing is learned very quickly: there is a “chain of command” and it is followed with precise detail. The general at the top is head over the major. The major is head over the captain. The captain is head over the sergeant. The sergeant is head over the private, etc.

Every army must have order to be successful. Did you know that God’s army, His church, is to have gospel order? The Apostle Paul clearly defines the basis of gospel order. Writing to the church at Corinth, he states:

“But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God.” (1 Corinthians 11:3)

The man is to acknowledge Christ as his Lord and Master; the woman, while recognizing the supremacy of Christ as Lord over all, is required to acknowledge that in domestic life she is placed under the guidance and protection of man. Christ is represented as recognizing God as head. Let us look at this order in more detail.

The head of every man is Christ

The Bible clearly explains why man should allow the divine Son of God to be his head. First, the Bible teaches that God created this world, including man, by His Son.

Paul wrote that God, *“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by **his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, **by whom also he made the worlds.**”* (Hebrews 1:2)

The creature always owes its creator worship and allegiance. So Christ is our head by virtue of His being our Creator.

Second, Jesus is our head because He is our Redeemer! After sin, Satan claimed mankind as his subjects. God would buy back His creation by sending His divine Son to die for man and redeem him from the devil:

*“But when the fulness of the time was come, **God sent forth his Son**, made of a woman, made under the law, **To redeem them** that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”* (Galatians 4:4, 5)

Because of His loving sacrifice for man, God has decreed, *“That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”* (Philippians 2:10, 11)

All service and submission in true gospel order is totally voluntary. Christ forces no man to obey Him. He simply says, *“Follow me.”* Isaiah wrote of Christ: *“He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.”* (Isaiah 40:11)

The head of the woman is man

Before sin, perfect love reigned between Adam and Eve. Sin destroyed the perfect order of Eden and confusion dominated. God saw the necessity, for the good of both the man and woman, of having the man lead the woman. God told Eve: *“... thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee.”* (Genesis 3:16)

Paul wrote: *“But I suffer not a woman to teach, **nor to usurp authority over the man.**”* (1 Timothy 2:12) *“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands.”* (Ephesians 5:22-24)

Please note that this dependence does not in any way imply the slightest degree of degradation. Even among equals there is a head. A committee of people of

equal rank still selects a chairman. In verse 21 Paul writes: “*Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.*” The husband and wife are to work as a team making the decisions of life for the family together. Yet, when they cannot reach an agreement after praying for the wisdom of God, the wife is to submit to the decision of the husband. This she will do willingly if the husband has loved her “*as Christ also loved the church.*” (Verse 25) She will find it easy to respect the decisions of her husband when he respects her as his divinely appointed partner and not some doormat to be trampled upon.

God does not tell husbands to order their wives. Instead He commands husbands, “*love your wives.*” (Verse 25) Husbands are “*to love their wives as their own bodies.*” (Verse 28)

God has given wives good instruction. Paul wrote, “*Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord.*” (Colossians 3:18) The wife is to submit to her husband. Does this mean that the wife should submit to her husband even if he asks her to commit sin against God? Notice the verse says for the wife to submit to her husband “*as it is fit in the Lord.*” Certainly it is not “*fit in the Lord*” for a wife to sin against God for the sake of obeying her husband. “*We ought to obey God rather than men.*” (Acts 5:29)

The analogy of the church being a bride to Christ is quite important for husbands to understand. Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. Jesus is worthy of the love and devotion of the church. Only as the husband loves his wife as Jesus loves the church, will she joyfully submit to him.

When both the father and mother are in gospel order with each other, and with Christ and God, they will find it much easier to have their children under gospel order because they will not provoke their children to wrath. As the parents first find gospel order working in their lives, the children will desire to honor and respect them as the fifth commandment instructs them to.

The Head of Christ is God

It may at first seem odd that Paul would write that God is the head of Christ. The most popular conception of the Godhead teaches that there are three, eternal, totally equal beings: God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. This teaching is usually called the Trinity. If the Father and His Son are totally equal, why

is Christ said to be subordinate to the Father? Does the Bible really teach one God in three persons, the Trinity?

Let us notice some very clear statements from the Scriptures. “*But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him.*” (1 Corinthians 8:6) Paul says that there is “*one God,*” not Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but “*the Father.*” He says we have “*one Lord Jesus Christ.*” Paul, writing to Timothy, declared: “*For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.*” (1 Timothy 2:5) Jesus is not said to be the “*one God,*” but rather to be the “*mediator between God and men.*”

The confusion is partly due to the unscriptural belief that Jesus only became the Son of God during the incarnation at Bethlehem. This teaching is not to be found anywhere in the Bible. The eighth chapter of Proverbs speaks of Christ under the symbol of wisdom and clearly teaches that in eternity past, God brought forth His divine Son. (See verses 22-30.) Jesus said that “*... God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*” (John 3:16) If the Scriptures declare that God sent His Son into the world, then He had to have had a Son to send.

The basis of all earthly sons honoring their fathers is in the gospel order between our heavenly Father and His Son. Jesus acknowledged the Father as His God. “*Jesus saith unto her [Mary], Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.*” (John 20:17) “*And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*” (Matthew 27:46) Paul called the Father “*the God of our Lord Jesus Christ.*” (Ephesians 1:3) To show the exalted position of Christ, Paul, writing in Hebrews, quotes Psalm 45:6, 7: “*But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*” (Hebrews 1:8, 9) Jesus has “*by inheritance obtained*” the name “*God.*” (Hebrews 1:4, 8) However, while the Father is called the God of Jesus Christ, Jesus is never called the God of the Father!

Even though Christ has been elevated to sit equal with the Father on the throne of the universe, there is a willing subjection of the Son to His Father. When the great controversy is over and all sin destroyed, the Son turns everything over to the Father.

*“Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he [Christ] must reign, till he [the Father] hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he [the Father] hath put all things under his [Christ’s] feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall **the Son also himself be subject unto him** [the Father] that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.” (1 Corinthians 15:24-28)*

Jesus told us the importance of knowing gospel order and the relationship between the Father and Himself when He said: *“And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.”* (John 17:3) It is dangerous to accept a false view of gospel order about the Father and the Son. John wrote: *“Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.”* (1 John 2:22)

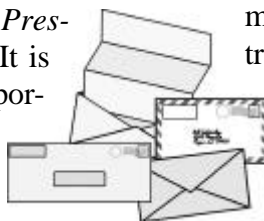
Friend, we will all obey rules whether we want to or not. We will either obey God’s rules, and be in the order of heaven or we will obey Satan’s rules, and be in the disorder of hell.

Knowing God and His only begotten Son is the basis of all gospel order. There is much more about the Bible teaching of gospel order. As the priest of the home, please write or call for more information. ✍

Letters

We appreciate and encourage your comments and suggestions. The following are a few letters that we have received from the readers of *Present Truth*.

“Would you please send me 10 copies of *Present Truth* on 2 Peter 1:12 for January 1999. It is about knowing who God is, entitled ‘The Importance of Knowing the Truth about God.’ I would appreciate it very much. I would also like to be on your mailing list. Thank you very much.”



Tennessee

“Please send me back issues of *Present Truth*—especially those dealing with—who God and His Son Jesus is—and the Holy Spirit. And put me on the mailing list for *Present Truth*.”

Tennessee

“Please send us 10 copies of the February issue of the *Present Truth* magazine. It was a very inspiring presentation of the Holy Spirit. (The Best) God is certainly working through your ministry to win souls for Him and bring the pure truths to the honest seekers. God bless you always until He comes.

“P.S. I would like to see a presentation on how the angels are connected to bringing the Holy Spirit to us.”

Arkansas

(We have fulfilled your request. The article you requested is printed in this month’s issue. *Editor*)

“Dear Friends, I am sending you some of our tithe money which I hope you can use to spread God’s true word. I love your mailings and found everything true to my understanding, except with the information that I have, I couldn’t find the words ‘brought forth’ to mean literally born. I am looking forward to more of your writings.”

Tennessee

(Please read the end of page 4 and beginning of page 5 of the October, 1998 issue of *Present Truth* entitled “The Truth About God.” *Editor*)

“Dear Friends, Again, thank you for your newsletter and the inspiration that comes with it. As promised, please find enclosed tithe money to help with the publication and distribution of your newsletter. It is not much, but every little bit helps and little can become much in God’s hands.”

Tennessee

“We enjoy the *Present Truth* you are sending to us. But the January edition is not complete. There are 2 page 1s and 2 page 2s and 2 page 7s with their back. I’m sure there was a mistake somewhere but wanted to call

this to your attention. I would love to have pages 3, 4, 5, 6.”

Pennsylvania

(We do not always do things perfectly. We apologize for the inconvenience this has caused. If anyone encounters this problem please let us know and we will promptly send you another copy.
Editor)

“I pray all is well with you.... I need some more material to pass out and send in the mail. If you have a copy of the February 1999 *Present Truth* send me a copy. I gave mine away.... If you have some tracts that would be good to give away send me some.”

Alabama

(If you ever need extra copies of any back issues of *Present Truth* please let us know. We also have several fliers available.
Editor)

“I just completed the February 1999 issue of *Present Truth*. It really sums up what all Christianity is based on, the total love of the Father. It really is too bad that so many are stuck not knowing the truth! I know that only through brothers like yourself can any change take place. Please keep up the wonderful work! May God’s Spirit continue to inspire your writings for many years. I have gained much and will continue to read the other issues you have sent.”

New Jersey

“Thank you so much for the newsletter. I look forward to reading it when it arrives. This month’s was especially interesting. I grew up reading the King James Bible, and in fact was not aware that there were any other versions until late in high school. The Church of Christ I worship at has various formats. This does make me uneasy, especially that I teach Junior High Bible school. I grew up in a single room church, no instruments and no nursery etc. I feel very comfortable there.

Here I am still trying to acclimate. I use the KJV in class and the students have Good News, Living Bible, NIV and some others. This at times creates a bit of difficulty in class discussion, and frustrates many of them due to my relentlessness to adhering to my book's translation. If possible, I would love to get a copy of the 200 Omissions. This could very well open the eyes of my beloved students and help them grow up with God's words, as best we have to share.”

Ohio

“I have read with much interest your two most recent issues of *Plain [Present] Truth*. It is a subject some of my friends and I have discussed at length in Bible studies over the past year. I was wondering if I might be able to make copies to distribute to them.”

Iowa

(We encourage you to copy any of our material. *Editor*)

“Your *Present Truth*! Some of this stuff, I have never seen before... Wow!”

Wisconsin

“Praise the Lord. I just finished reading your pamphlet, ‘Jesus wants a God Fearing Church.’ Please send more pamphlets regarding you, where you meet, America in Prophecy, and any and all that would help me at this point.”

Wisconsin

“Would you please take me off your mailing list? I've been receiving your monthly publication and I've found some problems with what is written in them. I don't mean for you to take this as an offense against you or your beliefs. Please forgive me if it seems that way.”

California



Parable of the Candles

Author Unknown



There was a blackout one night. When the lights went out, I fumbled to the closet where we keep the candles for nights like this. I lit four of them. I was turning to leave with the large candle in my hand when I heard a voice, “Now, hold it right there.”

“Who said that?”

“I did.” The voice was near my hand.

“Who are you? What are you?”

“I’m a candle.”

I lifted up the candle to take a closer look. There was a tiny face in the wax.

“Don’t take me out of here!”

“What?”

“I said, don’t take me out of this room.”

“What do you mean? I have to take you out. You’re a candle. Your job is to give light. It’s dark out there.”

“But you can’t take me out. I’m not ready,” the candle explained with pleading eyes. “I need more preparation.” I couldn’t believe my ears. “More preparation?”

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“Yeah, I’ve decided I need to research this job of light-giving so I won’t go out and make a bunch of mistakes. You’d be surprised how distorted the glow of an untrained candle can be....”

“All right then,” I said. “You’re not the only candle on the shelf. I’ll blow you out and take the others!”

But right then I heard other voices, “We aren’t going either!” I turned to the other candles, “You are candles and your job is to light dark places!”

“Well, that may be what you think,” said the first one, “You may think we have to go, but I’m busy. I’m meditating on the importance of light. It’s really enlightening....”

“And you other two,” I asked, “are you going to stay too?”

A short, fat, purple candle with plump cheeks spoke up. “I’m waiting to get my life together. I’m not stable enough.”


The last candle had a female voice, very pleasant to the ear. “I’d like to help,” she explained, “but lighting the darkness is not my gift. I’m a singer. I sing to other candles to encourage them to burn more brightly.”

She began a rendition of “This Little Light of Mine.” The other three joined in, filling the closet with singing....



I took a step back and considered the absurdity of it all. Four perfectly healthy candles singing to each other about light but refusing to come out of the closet.

Here is a question for you. When was the last time you shared the gospel with someone? This world is full of darkness, with many people stumbling around trying to find their way. You can be a light for them, and believe me, there’s a light waiting for you. It can all happen with something as simple as sharing your faith, to just a smile across the room, to a quick hello to a forgotten friend.

“You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel, but on a lampstand; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven.” (Matthew 5:14-16) 

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