

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

June 2006

“Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour.” (Titus 1:4) I pray that this finds you doing well and rejoicing in the salvation of the Lord. There are only a couple weeks left before our West Virginia camp meeting, June 20-24. We hope to see you here. Please do everything in your power to attend. Those of you who have never attended a camp meeting before, please plan to come. You do not know what you are missing until you have been to one. As Satan’s time is almost up, he is attacking God’s people more forcefully than ever. We need all the help we can get, and these camp meetings are one way to draw strength and encouragement from the Lord and from our brethren.

WAGGONER ON ROMANS — THE GOSPEL IN PAUL’S GREAT LETTER (PART 8)

by Ellet J. Waggoner

(We are continuing a series of articles commenting on Paul’s epistle to the Romans. We pray that they will be a blessing to you. *Editor*)

Romans 2:21-29

Hard Questions—In verses 21-23 the apostle asks some hard questions. Let each soul that has been wont to pride himself upon the correctness of his life answer these questions for himself. It is easy and natural for a man to pride himself upon his “morality.” Men who are not Christians comfort themselves with the thought that they live “moral” lives, and that therefore they are as well off as though they were Christians. Let all such know that there is no morality except conformity to the law of God. Everything that is in any respect below the standard of that law is immorality. Knowing this, let them see if they have perfectly kept that law.

“Dost Thou Steal?” Most people will say, “No; I am honest in all my dealing.” Very well, but let us not decide the case offhand. Let us examine the Scripture. It says, “The law is spiritual.” (Romans 7:14) “The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Hebrews 4:12) No matter how correct we are in our outward acts, if in spirit or thought we have transgressed, we are guilty. The Lord looks at the heart, instead of the outward appearance. (1 Samuel 16:7)

Again, it is just as wrong to steal from God as to steal from man; have you given God his due? Have you dealt

in a perfectly honest way with him? Hear what he says: “Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse; for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation.” (Malachi 3:8, 9) Does this mean you? Have you rendered to God that which is his due in tithes and offerings? If not, what will you answer when the word of inspiration asks, “Thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal?” (Romans 2:21)

“The Law is Spiritual”—In the fifth chapter of Matthew the Saviour has set forth the spirituality of the law. He says that unless our righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, we can not enter the kingdom of heaven. What was their righteousness? He said to them, “Ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity.” (Matthew 23:28)

Therefore, unless we are righteous inwardly, we are nothing. God desires “truth in the inward parts.” (Psalm

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51:6) Following on in the fifth chapter of Matthew, the Saviour shows that one may break the sixth commandment, which says, “Thou shalt not kill,” by the utterance of a single word. He also shows that we may break the seventh commandment which says, “Thou shalt not commit adultery,” by a look and a thought. The same principle of course applies to all the commandments. This being the case, it becomes one to be very careful about saying that he has perfectly kept the law.

Some have said that the Ten Commandments are a very low standard, and that a man might keep them all and still not be worthy of admission into respectable society. Such know nothing about the law. As a matter of fact, a man may break all the commandments, and still figure as a shining light in the “best society.”

The Name of God Blasphemed—“The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.” (Romans 2:24) Who has done this? The one who teaches the law, and who says that one who teaches the law and who says that one should not take the name of the Lord in vain. When David sinned in the case of Uriah’s wife, God said to him, “By this deed thou hast given great occasion to the enemies of the LORD to blaspheme.” (2 Samuel 12:14) That is, he was a professed follower of the Lord, and by his violation of the law of the Lord he had given unbelievers a chance to say, “There, that is a specimen of Christianity.”

Who is there that can say that as a professed follower of the Lord he has always correctly represented the truth? Who is there that must not admit to himself and God that either by his words or actions he has very often misrepresented the truth which he professed? Who is there that has not by his failures, either in teaching or acting, given people a miserably inadequate idea of what true godliness is?

In short, who is there that must not say “Yes” to the apostle’s question, “Through breaking the law, dishonorest thou God?” And since thus the name of God is blasphemed through professed Christians, who is there that can declare himself guiltless before God’s law?

In these verses we have had some sharp questions to those who are “called Jews,” that is, who profess to be followers of the Lord. Mere form and profession do not constitute one a proper teacher of the truth of God. He who does not exhibit in his life the power of that which he professes, is only a detriment to the cause. In the verses now before us we have a brief but explicit statement concerning circumcision and uncircumcision.

Circumcision and Uncircumcision—Romans 2:25-29

For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law; but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the

righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. (Romans 2:25-29)

Definition of Terms—The two terms “circumcision” and “uncircumcision” are here used not only to indicate the rite and the absence of it, but also to designate two classes of people. “The uncircumcision” evidently refers to those who were called Gentiles, those who worshiped other gods. This use of the terms is very plain in the following passage: “But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles;) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.” (Galatians 2:7-9) Here we find that the terms “uncircumcision,” “Gentiles,” and “heathen,” all refer to the same people.

Just what was the profit of circumcision, we are not told in this chapter. The statement of the fact was enough for this place, for the only point in the mind of the writer was to show what circumcision is, and who are the really circumcised. A great deal depends upon these few verses. They should be studied carefully, because upon them depends the proper understanding of a large portion of the prophecies of the Old Testament.

If these verses had received the consideration that they ought to have by professed Bible students, there would never have been any “Anglo-Israel” theory, and the unprofitable and misleading suppositions about the return of the Jews to Jerusalem before the coming of the Lord would never have been made.

What is Circumcision?—This question is answered in plain language in Romans 4:11, where the apostle, speaking of Abraham, the first one who was circumcised, says: “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised.” To the question, “What is circumcision?” the answer must therefore be, The sign of circumcision is a seal of righteousness by faith.

When Circumcision is Made Uncircumcision—This being the case, it is evident that where there was no

righteousness, the sign of circumcision was worthless. So the apostle says, "If thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision." As in the previous verses we learned that the form without the fact amounts to nothing, so here we are told that the sign without the substance is of no account. It is very easy for a poor man to put out a sign advertising boots and shoes; but to fill the shop with goods requires capital. If he has the sign, but has no boots and shoes, he is worse off than if he had no sign.

The Mistake of the Jews—The Jews made a mistake of supposing that the sign was sufficient. They finally came to hold the idea that the sign would bring the reality, just as many professed Christians in these days suppose that the performance of certain rites will make them members of the body of Christ. But circumcision of the flesh alone could represent no righteousness, but sin. (See Galatians 5:19-21.) As a matter of fact, many of those whom they despised as "uncircumcised" were thus in reality "circumcised," while they themselves were not.

Circumcision of the Heart—Real circumcision is a matter of the heart, that is, of the inner life, and not at all of the flesh. The apostle plainly declares that what is outward in the flesh is not circumcision, that is, which consists only in outward form; but "circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." This is stated as a general truth.

This was not a new departure in the days of Paul, but was the case from the beginning. In Deuteronomy 30:6 we read the words of Moses to the children of Israel: "And the Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." All true Jews recognized that true circumcision was only of the heart, for Stephen addressed those who rejected the truth as "stiffnecked and uncircumcised in heart and ears." (Acts 7:51)

Righteousness in the Heart—The psalmist says, "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts." (Psalm 2:6) Mere outward righteousness is nothing. (See Matthew 5:20; 23:27, 28.) It is with the heart that man believeth unto righteousness. (Romans 10:10) When Moses, at the command of the Lord, rehearsed the law to Israel, he said: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart." (Deuteronomy 6:5, 6) There can be no righteousness that is not the real life. Therefore, since circumcision is but a sign of righteousness, it is evident that there can be no real circumcision except circumcision of the heart.

Circumcised by the Spirit—"For we know that the law is spiritual." (Romans 7:14) That is, it is the nature of the Holy Spirit, for the word of God is the sword of the Spirit of God that can put the law of God into the heart of man. Therefore true circumcision is the work of the Holy Spirit. Stephen called the wicked Jews uncircumcised, because, said he, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost." (Acts 7:51) It seems evident, therefore, that, although the word "spirit" in Romans 2:29 is not spelled with a capital "S," it refers to the Holy Spirit and not merely to the spirit of man. (Of course in the Greek there is nothing to indicate any difference, just as in English the word is spelled the same whether it refers to the Spirit of God or the spirit of man).

If we remember that circumcision was given as the seal of righteousness by faith, and that the inheritance promised to Abraham and his seed was through the righteousness of the law (Romans 4:11, 13), we shall see that circumcision was the pledge of the inheritance. The apostle also says that we obtain the inheritance in Christ "in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." (Ephesians 1:10-13) The possession promised to Abraham and to his seed was assured only through the Spirit of righteousness; therefore, from the very beginning there was no real circumcision that was not of the Spirit.

Circumcision through Christ—"Ye are complete in [Christ], which is the head of all principality and power; in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." (Colossians 2:8-11) Circumcision must have meant as much when first given as it ever did. Therefore from the very beginning it meant righteousness through Christ alone. This is sufficiently shown in the fact that circumcision was given to Abraham as the seal of the righteousness which he had by faith, and that "he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." (Genesis 15:6)

Who Are the "Circumcision"?—This question is answered in Philippians 3:3: "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." And this is but saying in other words what we have in our text, "Circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Nobody therefore was ever really circumcised who did not believe and rejoice in Christ Jesus. That is the reason why Stephen called the unbelieving Jews "uncircumcised."

The Meaning of Circumcision—We have not space to go into this question in detail, but the above texts put us on the track. A careful study of the chapters in Genesis which speak of God's covenant with Abraham will also help to clear up the matter.

We learn in Genesis 15 that God made a covenant with Abraham on the basis of his faith. The sixteenth chapter tells how Abraham listened to the voice of his wife instead of the voice of the Lord, and sought to work out the promise of God through the flesh and made a failure. His son was to be born of the Spirit, and not after the flesh. (See Galatians 4:22, 23, 28, 29.)

Then the seventeenth chapter shows the revival of Abraham's faith, and the renewal of the covenant, with circumcision as the seal. A portion of flesh was cut off to indicate that he was to have no confidence in the flesh, but was to expect righteousness and the inheritance only through the Spirit of God. The descendants of Abraham would thus have a continual reminder of his mistake and would be admonished to trust the Lord and not themselves.

But they perverted this sign. They regarded it as indicating that they were better than other people, instead of looking upon it as an evidence that "the flesh profiteth nothing." But the fact that the Jews perverted and misunderstood the sign does not destroy its original meaning.

Who Are Jews?—We have seen in a quotation from the second chapter of Galatians that the term "uncircumcised" refers to those who do not know the Lord, or who are "without God in the world." (See Ephesians 2:11, 12.) The Jews are "the circumcision." But only those who rejoice in Christ Jesus are the circumcision, who have no confidence in the flesh. Therefore the real Jews are none other than [believing] Christians. "He is a Jew, which is one inwardly." There never was a real Jew in the sight of God who was not a believer in Christ. And every true believer in Christ is a Jew in the Bible sense of the term. Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, rejoiced in Christ. (See John 8:56.)

A Mark of Separation—Many have entertained the notion that circumcision was given as a distinguishing mark between the Jews and the Gentiles. The fallacy of this idea is sufficiently shown by a study of the giving of circumcision, and by the statement of the apostle Paul of what it really signified. Others suppose that it was given to keep the Jews separate, so that the genealogy of Christ could be ascertained. This also is simply an unfounded guess. Christ was to come from the tribe of Judah, but as all the tribes were circumcised, it is evident that circumcision could not by any means preserve his genealogy.

Moreover, circumcision in the flesh never did make any separation between the Jews and the Gentiles.

It did not keep Israel from idolatry, and it did not keep them from joining the heathen in their idolatrous practices. Whenever the Jews forgot God, they mingled with the heathen, and there was no difference between them and the Gentiles. Circumcision did not separate them.

Still further, God did not wish the Jews to be separated from the Gentiles in the sense that they were to have no dealings with them. The object of his calling out the Jews from Egypt was that they should carry the gospel to the heathen. He did wish them to be separate in character, but outward circumcision could never effect this.

Moses said to the Lord, "Wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." (Exodus 33:16) The presence of the Lord in the heart of men will separate them from all others, although they live in the same house and eat at the same table. But if Christ is not in the heart of a man, he is not separated from the world, though he may have been circumcised and may live a hermit.

Literal and Spiritual Seed—Much of the confusion that has existed in regard to Israel has arisen through a misunderstanding of these terms. People suppose that to say that only those who are spiritual are really Jews is to deny the literalness of the seed and of the promise. But "spiritual" is not opposed to "literal." That which is spiritual is literal, and real. Christ is spiritual, but he is the real, literal Seed. God is spiritual, and is Spirit, yet he is not a figurative Being, but a real, literal God. So the inheritance of which we are heirs in Christ, is a spiritual inheritance, yet it is real.

To say that only those who are spiritual constitute the true Israel is not to modify or turn aside the Scriptures, or to weaken in any way the directness and force of the promise, because the promise of God is only to those who have faith in Christ. "For the promise that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." (Romans 4:13) "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Galatians 3:29) (To be continued)

(This article was taken from a series of articles printed in *The Signs of the Times* from October, 1895 through September, 1896. Some editing has been done for this publication. Editor)

Northeastern Trip Report

by Lynnford Beachy

My family and I traveled to the northeastern part of the United States during the month of May. During the month of February we traveled to the southeastern part of the country (See the March 2006 issue of *Present Truth* for the report). In February we used my sister's van for the trip, but in May we packed lightly and used our small Plymouth Neon.

New Jersey

Our first stop was in Berlin, New Jersey, just outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. We had meetings on Sabbath, May 6, hosted by Dr. Joel Arcilla at his Better Living Center. Several people came from the Newark, New Jersey area. It was a blessing to meet some brethren that I had previously only known by name. I shared a study on Righteousness by Faith in the morning, and some of our evangelism experiences in the afternoon. Afterwards Dr. Arcilla shared a presentation on end-time events.

New York City

On Monday we left for New York City to have a meeting with a Spanish church in Brooklyn, with Pastor Pascual Flores. (Pastor Flores will be hosting the Spanish/Portuguese camp meeting in Pennsylvania, September 1-4. See page 7 for more information.) I shared some experiences from my trip to Brazil and encouraged them to stay strong and faithful. It was good to see some of the work Pastor Flores is doing to spread the gospel. He produces sermons on CDs and distributes them. A minister in the Dominican Republic played some of these sermons on their radio program, and a group of 200 requested Pastor Flores to come and preach to them. Circumstances prevent him from being able to go, so he asked me to go in his place. I will be preaching there June 3, and 4, about the time you receive this paper. Please keep these meetings in your prayers.

Boston, Massachusetts

The next evening we had a meeting in Boston with a Pentecostal family. (A contact from the Pentecostal church in Brazil. See the May 2006 issue of *Present Truth* for more details.) Brother Ed Cyrus from Florida was in the area, so he accompanied me in this study. We studied long into the night. This Pentecostal family was very eager to convince us that we must speak in tongues or we cannot receive the Holy Spirit. It was interesting to hear their thoughts. We shared with them the fact that in the Book of Acts, those who spoke in tongues spoke in

known languages, that people could understand. (See Acts 2:4-11.) We also saw that nobody was allowed to speak in tongues in the apostolic church unless someone was there to translate. (1 Corinthians 14:28)

After we discussed this topic we examined what the Bible says about the identity of Jesus Christ. They maintained, as many Oneness Pentecostals do, that Jesus Christ is God, the Father, Himself. They claimed that Jesus is not really God's Son, but rather God Himself, living in a human body. They said that when Jesus prayed to His Father His human part was praying to His divine part, He was praying to Himself. The two primary verses used to support this theory were John 10:30; 14:9. However, when we read the immediate context it demonstrated that these verses do not support this theory. (Read John 10:30-36; 14:6-10.) Unfortunately our friends could not see this. We left them with some literature and prayer.

Maine

Our next meetings were held in southern Maine at the home of Mervin and RoseMarie Shoemaker. A camp meeting had originally been scheduled at this time, but it was postponed until July 27-29, so there were not a lot of people in attendance. Yet, it was a pleasure for me to see some brethren whom I had not seen for many years, and some new faces as well.

The Lord did something wonderful here. A sister in New Hampshire called me Thursday night requesting copies of one of our books in Spanish to take with her to Peru to share with her family. She was leaving on Sunday morning, and needed them immediately. She did not know that I was in Maine. I informed her that I was very near, and if she came to meet with us on Sabbath she could pick up the books she needed. She was very relieved and she and her family came to Maine where we had a wonderful Sabbath together. Everyone was glad they had come.

Several of the brethren had questions about the feast days, so we spent some time studying this subject, as well as the new birth, and Christian growth. The Lord blessed, and there was a renewed interest in living completely for God.

Upstate New York

Our next visit was at the farm of Marvin Ford and his family. It was a pleasure to get to know this lovely family. The first night we had a study with some of Marvin's extended family and others in their study group. They had gathered together to discuss the topic of the trinity. I was

asked to share a short presentation, followed by questions and discussion. The meeting went well, and lasted until about 11:30 p.m. There was much interest on the subject, and even though most believed in the trinity they were willing to study the subject further. We left them with some literature to aid them in their studies.

The next night we had a study in Marvin's home with some of his neighbors. One man was an evangelical minister. We studied on the law of God and His requirements upon His people, as well as its connection to righteousness by faith. He seemed genuinely interested in God's prophecies about earth's final generation and the 144,000. We read in the Bible that these people will keep all of God's commandments. (Revelation 12:17; 14:1, 5) We also studied the love of God in giving His only-begotten Son, who was begotten before all creation. This minister said that he had never heard this preached before, and had never thought about it, but saw that it was true and helpful to understand.

The following day we left the Fords to visit another family to the south, whom we had not seen for many years. We stayed in their home and visited and discussed spiritual things into the night.

Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

The next morning we departed for Hamilton, Ontario, Canada where we were scheduled to have an evening meeting. Several people had gathered in a home to discuss the subject of God's love in giving His Son. They had many questions for which they wanted answers. One brother accepted the truth on this subject for the first time.

Brother Paul Falconbridge had worked diligently to arrange for the meetings in Hamilton. On Sabbath morning about 25 people gathered to hear the messages. I was asked to share studies on the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We saw what the Bible has to say on these subjects, and found the answers to several questions in the Bible. A few people learned the truth on this subject for the first time, and others were confirmed in the truth.

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

The next day we went to Toronto where a man who has been reading and enjoying *Present Truth* for several years had organized to have a Bible study with some of his friends. A lady from the Jehovah's Witness church came, as well as a lady from the Seventh-day Adventist church, a lady who is just learning about Christianity, and a man who has been studying the Koran and believes similarly to the Muslims.

The first topic everyone wanted to discuss was the identity of Jesus Christ. The Jehovah's Witnesses believe

that He is the first angel that God created, the Muslims believe that He was just a human prophet and nothing more, and the Seventh-day Adventists believe that He is the second person of the trinity. (Seventh-day Adventists did not believe in the trinity for most of their existence as a church, but recently, in 1980, they voted to accept this doctrine.) My friend and I did not agree with any of these positions, but rather that Jesus is the only begotten Son of God, who was begotten before anything was created. (Proverbs 8:24-36; John 3:16-18; 1 John 4:9; Hebrews 1:1-6; Colossians 1:15, etc.)

With all the different ideas on this subject, it made for a very lively discussion and Bible study. After studying what the Bible says on this subject, everyone agreed (except the Seventh-day Adventist lady) that Jesus Christ truly is the only-begotten Son of God, begotten before anything was created.

After examining this subject, we studied a little on the condition of the dead, the second coming of Christ, and the millennium. It was a very nice study, and I pray that the seeds sown will be watered and bear much fruit. Everyone was given some literature for further study.

My Wife's Health

My family and I left Toronto and went back to New Jersey so my wife, Kendra, could go through a 10-day detoxification. Two days before we left on our trip my wife began to have headaches, dizziness, tunnel vision, a sinus infection, and other symptoms. She almost decided not to accompany me on the trip, but after discussion and prayer, we decided to travel together. Our first stop in New Jersey was at a Better Living Center, where they did a Carey Rheams test on her and a live blood cell analysis. They discovered that she was having an allergic reaction to something, and we suspected it to be mold in our house. West Virginia has a lot of trouble with mold, especially in the numerous valleys (or hollows) where little sun can reach.

Later on our trip we confirmed this finding as Kendra's symptoms grew worse whenever mold was present. It got to the point that we could tell that mold was present just by Kendra's reactions, and when we searched for it we would find it. Evidently mold has built up in her system, and now she has a strong sensitivity to it. In New Jersey she began her detox by fasting and taking a salt water flush along with herbs to clean the colon, followed by a gallbladder and liver flush, and simple raw foods. This is good maintenance for the body that can help with many problems, but should not be done unless supervised by knowledgeable health workers.

Kendra is doing better now, and is currently on day number seven of her cleanse as I am writing this paper.

Please keep her in your prayers, as well as the mold problem. I am sure the Lord has a solution for the mold problem. Her father went to New Jersey to be with her, while I continued on the trip. It was hard to leave her there because she is such an asset while doing ministry work. Being a woman allows her to interact with and strengthen women in their walk with the Lord in ways that I cannot.

Northwestern Pennsylvania

Our next meetings were held in northwestern Pennsylvania. I took our two older children, while my wife and her father stayed in New Jersey with our youngest child, Zachariah. Providentially, I was in New Jersey when I received an e-mail from my secretary, Ruth, informing me that a brother in Philadelphia had just lost his mother and needed encouragement. As we left for the Pennsylvania meetings we stopped to see this brother, to encourage him and pray with him. He was overjoyed to receive a visit and to realize that there are people who care about him. I told him about the upcoming camp meeting, September 1-4, just a couple hours from his home. He expressed a desire to attend. I left him a copy of *God's Love on Trial*, and encouraged him to stay close to the Lord.

On Friday afternoon some of the people in the church requested me to answer some of their questions on righteousness by faith. That evening, my children and I stayed with Brother Ken Corklin, and we had a Bible study together.

On Sabbath we had a nice Sabbath school, and then I shared a study on the new birth. After lunch we studied righteousness by faith. We had a very nice time together.

In the evening my children and I went to the home of Calvin and Paula Bickel, where they had prepared to have a mini camp meeting that night and all day Sunday. A few families were gathered who had recently learned the truth about God, His Sabbath, and other important issues. They had left the Catholic Church and were eager to study God's word. Another family from the New Age movement also attended the meetings. We had studies and discussions on the one God of the Bible, the Holy Spirit, the state of the dead, eternal torment, creation versus evolution, the new birth, etc. Everyone seemed to be challenged and encouraged by the meetings. The children especially enjoyed the canoeing, horseback riding, campfires, and other outdoor activities.


Summary

I was encouraged to see how the Lord is working around the country, and to see new believers standing firm for the truth. I firmly believe in the importance of this work. I am reminded of Paul's work along these

lines. One day "Paul said unto Barnabas, Let us go again and visit our brethren in every city where we have preached the word of the Lord, and see how they do." (Acts 15:36) As a result, "the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily." (Acts 16:5) Paul "went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order, strengthening all the disciples." (Acts 18:23)

This type of work has been neglected far too long and, as the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ draws nigh, it is even more important.

My wife and I are still praying for the Lord to continue to open the doors for us to get an RV or converted bus to aid us in this work. The Lord has already begun preparing the way for this, and I am confident that He will continue.

Please keep all the brethren in your prayers, and let me know if you would like to conduct or attend meetings in your area. 

Upcoming Meetings in Your Area

Here is the currently-planned 2006 itinerary for Lynnford Beachy:

June 3, 4 [Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic](#), contact Pascual Flores, 347-232-4151 or 718-453-3556

June 20-24 [West Virginia Camp Meeting](#), contact us here at Smyrna.

July 7, 8 [Asheville, North Carolina](#), contact Carl Felts, 828-667-8156.

July 9 [Hickory, North Carolina](#), contact Dr. Herb Cole, 828-322-5316.


July 27-29 [Southern Maine Camp Meeting](#), contact Mervin and Rose Marie Shoemaker, 207-892-2338.

July 31-Aug. 6 . [Germany Camp Meeting](#), contact us here at Smyrna.

August 7-20 . . . [Denmark, Romania, Hungary and Poland Visit](#), contact us here at Smyrna.

September 1-4 . [Eastern Pennsylvania Spanish/Portuguese Camp Meeting](#), contact Pascual Flores, 347-232-4151 or 718-453-3556.

Nov. or Dec. . . . [Southern California Camp Meeting](#), contact us here at Smyrna.

Note: The camp meeting in Southern California is tentatively planned for this fall, but dates have not been finalized. More meetings are being planned for September through December. Between these meetings we will be available to visit people in their homes and to have additional meetings. Check upcoming issues of *Present Truth* (available on our website) to keep informed about these meetings, and others in your area. Please contact us if you would like to host meetings in your area. 

The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection

by Alonzo T. Jones

(Part 3)

(We are continuing a series of studies on God's plan of salvation as revealed in the sanctuary. We pray they will be a blessing to you. *Editor*)

Chapter 6—"Made of a Woman"

By what means was Christ made flesh? Through what means was He partaker of human nature?—Exactly the same means as are all of us partakers: all of the children of men. For it is written: "As the children [of the man] are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same."

Likewise signifies "in the like way," "thus," "in the same way." So He partook of "the same" flesh and blood that men have in the same way that men partake of it. Men partake of it by birth. So "likewise" did He. Accordingly, it is written, "Unto us a Child is born."

Accordingly, it is further written: "God sent forth His Son, made of a woman." (Galatians 4:4) He, being made of a woman in this world, in the nature of things He was made of the only kind of woman that this world knows.

But why must He be made of a woman? why not of a man?—For the simple reason that to be made of a man would not bring Him close enough to mankind as mankind is, under sin. He was made of a woman in order that He might come, in the very uttermost, to where human nature is in its sinning.

In order to do this, He must be made of a woman, because the woman, not the man, was first and originally in the transgression. For "Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (1 Timothy 2:14)

To have been made only of the descent of man would have been to come short of the full breadth of the field of sin, because the woman had sinned and sin was thus in the world before the man sinned.

Christ was thus made of a woman in order that He might meet the great world of sin at its very fountain head of entrance into this world. To have been made otherwise than of a woman would have been to come short of this and so

would have been only to miss completely the redemption of men from sin.

It was "the Seed of the woman" that was to bruise the serpent's head; and it was only as "the seed of the woman" and "made of a woman" that He could meet the serpent on his own ground, at the very point of the entrance of sin into this world.

It was the woman who, in this world, was originally in the transgression. It was the woman by whom sin originally entered. Therefore, in the redemption of the children of men from sin, He who would be the Redeemer must go back of the man to meet the sin that was in the world before the man sinned.

This is why He who came to redeem was "made of a woman." By being made of a woman He could trace sin to the very fountain head of its original entry into the world by the woman. And thus, in finding sin in the world and uprooting it from the world from its original entrance into the world till the last vestige of it shall be swept from the world, in the very nature of things He must partake of human nature as it is since sin entered.

Otherwise, there was no kind of need whatever that He should be "made of a woman." If He were not to come into closest contact with sin as it is in the world, as it is in human nature; if He were to be removed one single degree from it as it is in human nature, then He need not have been "made of a woman."

But as He was made of a woman—not of a man; as He was made of the one by whom sin entered in its very origin into the world—and not made of the man, who entered into the sin after the sin had entered into the world; this demonstrates beyond all possibility of fair question that between Christ and sin in this world and between Christ and human nature as it is under sin in the world there is no kind of separation, even to the shadow of a single degree. He was made flesh; he was made to be sin. He was made flesh as flesh is and only as flesh is in this world and was made to be sin only as sin is.

And this must He do to redeem lost mankind. For Him to be separated a

single degree or a shadow of a single degree in any sense from the nature of those whom He came to redeem would be only to miss everything.

Therefore, as He was made "under the law," because they are under the law whom He would redeem, and as He was made a curse, because they are under the curse whom He would redeem, and as He was made sin, because they are sinners—"sold under sin"—whom He would redeem, precisely so He must be made flesh and "the same" flesh and blood, because they are flesh and blood whom He would redeem and must be made "of a woman," because sin was in the world first by and in the woman.

Consequently, it is true, without any sort of exception, that "in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren." (Hebrews 2:17)

If He were not of the same flesh as are those whom He came to redeem, then there is no sort of use of His being made flesh at all. More than this: Since the only flesh that there is in this wide world which He came to redeem is just the poor, sinful, lost, human flesh that all mankind have; if this is not the flesh that he was made, then He never really came to the world which needs to be redeemed. For if he came in a human nature different from that which human nature in this world actually is, then, even though He were in the world, yet for any practical purposes in reaching man and helping him, he was as far from him as if He had never come, for, in that case, in His human nature He was just as far from man and just as much of another world as if He had never come into this world at all.

It is thoroughly understood that in His birth Christ did partake of the nature of Mary—the "woman" of whom He was "made." But the carnal mind is not willing to allow that God in His perfection of holiness could endure to come to men where they are in their sinfulness. Therefore endeavor has been made to escape the consequences of this glorious truth, which is the emptying of self, by inventing a theory that the nature of the virgin Mary was different from the

nature of the rest of mankind; that her flesh was not exactly such flesh as is that of all mankind. This invention sets up that by some special means Mary was made different from the rest of human beings, especially in order that Christ might be becomingly born of her.

This invention has culminated in what is known as the Roman Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception. Many Protestants, if not the vast majority of them as well as other non-Catholics, think that the Immaculate Conception refers to the conception of Jesus by the virgin Mary. But this is altogether a mistake. It refers not at all to the conception of Christ by Mary but to the conception of Mary herself by her mother.

The official and “infallible” doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, as solemnly defined as an article of faith, by Pope Pius IX, speaking ex cathedra on the 8th of December 1854 is as follows:

“By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and by our own authority, we declare, pronounce, and define that the doctrine which holds that the most blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a special grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, has been revealed by God, and therefore is to be firmly and steadfastly believed by all the faithful.

“Wherefore, if any shall presume, which may God avert, to think in their heart otherwise than has been defined by us, let them know, and moreover understand, that they are condemned by their own judgment, that they have made shipwreck as regards the faith, and have fallen away from the unity of the Church.” (*Catholic Belief*, page 214)

This conception is defined by Catholic writers thus:

“The ancient writing, ‘De Nativitate Christi,’ found in St. Cyprian’s works says: Because (Mary) being ‘very different from the rest of mankind, human nature, but not sin, communicated itself to her.’

“Theodore, patriarch of Jerusalem, said in the second council of Nice, that Mary ‘is truly the mother of God, and virgin before and after childbirth; and she was created in a condition more sublime and glorious than that of all natures,

whether intellectual or corporeal.” (*Ibid*, pages 216, 217)

This plainly puts the nature of Mary entirely beyond any real likeness or relationship to mankind or human nature as it is. Having this clearly in mind, let us follow this invention in its next step. Thus it is, as given in the words of Cardinal Gibbons:

“We affirm that the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, the Word of God, who in His divine nature is, from all eternity, begotten of the Father, consubstantial with Him, was in the fulness of time again begotten, by being born of the virgin, thus taking to himself from her maternal womb a human nature of the same substance with hers.

“As far as the sublime mystery of the incarnation can be reflected in the natural order, the blessed Virgin, under the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, by communicating to the Second Person of the adorable Trinity, as mothers do, a true human nature of the same substance with her own, is thereby really and truly His mother.” (*Faith of Our Fathers*, pages 198, 199)

Now put these two things together. First, we have the nature of Mary defined as being not only “very different from the rest of mankind,” but “more sublime and glorious than all natures:” thus putting her infinitely beyond any real likeness or relationship to mankind as we really are.

Next, we have Jesus described as taking from her a human nature of the same substance as hers.

From this theory it therefore follows as certainly as that two and two make four, that in His human nature the Lord Jesus is “very different” from the rest of mankind; indeed, His nature is not human nature at all.

Such is the Roman Catholic doctrine concerning the human nature of Christ. The Catholic doctrine of the human nature of Christ is simply that that nature is not human nature at all, but divine: “more sublime and glorious than all natures.” It is that in His human nature Christ was so far separated from mankind as to be utterly unlike that of mankind, that His was a nature in which He could have no sort of fellow-feeling with mankind.

But such is not the faith of Jesus. The faith of Jesus is that “as the

children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself likewise took part of the same.” (Hebrews 2:14)

The faith of Jesus is that God sent “His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh.” (Romans 8:3) The faith of Jesus is that “in all things it behooved Him to be made like unto His brethren.” (Hebrews 2:17) The faith of Jesus is that He “Himself took our infirmities” (Matthew 8:17) and was touched “with the feeling of our infirmities,” (Hebrews 4:15) being tempted in all points like as we are. If He was not as we are, He could not possibly be tempted “like as we are.” But He was “in all points tempted like as we are.” (Hebrews 4:15) Therefore He was “in all points” “like as we are.”

In the quotations of Catholic faith which in this chapter we have cited, we have presented the faith of Rome as to the human nature of Christ and of Mary. In the second chapter of Hebrews and kindred texts of Scripture there is presented—and in these studies we have endeavored to reproduce as there presented—the faith of Jesus as to the human nature of Christ.

The faith of Rome as to the human nature of Christ and Mary and of ourselves springs from that idea of the natural mind that God is too pure and too holy to dwell with us and in us in our sinful human nature; that sinful as we are, we are too far off for Him in His purity and holiness to come to us just as we are.

The true faith—the faith of Jesus—is that, far off from God as we are in our sinfulness, in our human nature which He took, He has come to us just where we are; that, infinitely pure and holy as He is, and sinful, degraded, and lost as we are, He in Christ by His Holy Spirit will willingly dwell with us and in us to save us, to purify us, and to make us holy.

The faith of Rome is that we must be pure and holy in order that God shall dwell with us at all.

The faith of Jesus is that God must dwell with us and in us in order that we shall be holy or pure at all.

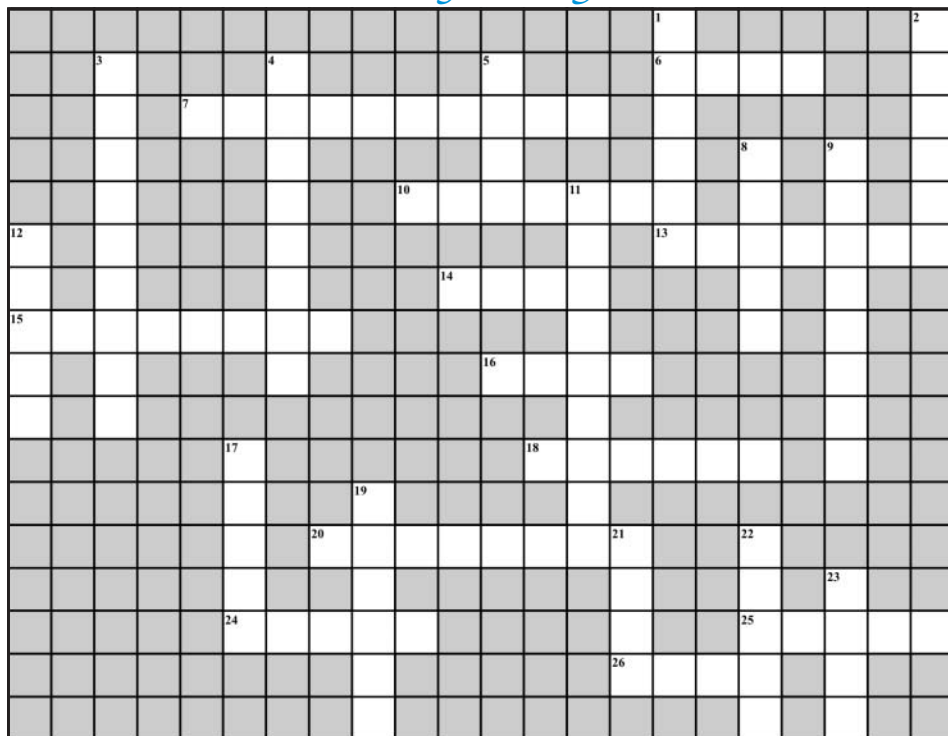
(To be continued)

(This article was taken from pages 32-39 of the book, *The Consecrated Way to Christian Perfection*, by Alonzo T. Jones. Some editing has been done for this publication. Editor)

Something for the Young at Heart

This month we are continuing a series of crossword Bible studies that are based on the “These Last Days” Bible Lessons. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line.

Testing the Gifts



Answers are on page 12

➤ Many false ____ are in the world.
1 John 4:1—**20 Across**

➤ To many who have ____ the Lord will say, I never knew you. Matthew 7:22, 23—**7 Across**

➤ Jesus said, there will arise ____ prophets. Matthew 24:24—**8 Down**

➤ We must not ____ prophesyings. 1 Thess. 5:19-21—**10 Across**

➤ The Bible says, “If they speak not according to this ____, there is no light in them. Isaiah 8:20—**16 Across**

Note: The first and most important test of a prophet is that his message is in harmony with the law of God and the testimony of earlier prophets.

➤ False prophets are compared to _____. Matthew 7:15—**1 Down**

➤ We may know the prophets by their _____. Matthew 7:16-20—**18 Across**

➤ ____ strengthen the hands of the wicked. Ezekiel 13:22—**5 Down**

Note: The second test of a prophet is the fruit of his ministry. Does his own life reveal God’s character?

Does his work bear the marks of the high and holy calling of God. Are people’s lives elevated through his influence?

➤ When the prophet’s word is fulfilled, then we can know that the Lord hath ____ him. Jeremiah 28:9—**14 Across**

➤ When a prophet speaks in the ____ of the Lord and the thing does not come to pass, the thing was not of the Lord. Deuteronomy 18:21, 22—**26 Across**

➤ If a prophet leads away from God’s commandments, he shall be put to ____, even if his words are fulfilled. Deuteronomy 13:1-5—**25 Across**

Note: The third test of a prophet is the accuracy of his predictions. Predicting, however, is not the primary function of a prophet. A prophet’s work is to bear the messages which God gives, and those messages may or may not contain information about the future. But when God does reveal

future events, we may be sure that it will happen just as He has foretold.

Sometimes God gives conditional prophecies. Jonah’s message of the fall of Nineveh, for example, was conditioned upon the response of the people.

Because Satan can also foretell certain events before they happen, fulfilled predictions cannot be considered conclusive evidence of the genuine gift of prophecy. (See 1 Samuel 28:6-19) But Satan cannot predict with 100% accuracy as God does. For this reason, when a prophet’s predictions are consistently fulfilled throughout his entire career, we may take it as evidence of his authenticity. We should then look for the other tests to be met as well.

➤ Every spirit that does not confess that Jesus is come in the ____ is not of God. 1 John 4:3—**12 Down**

➤ In vision, Daniel said that there remained no strength or ____ in him. Daniel 10:17—**19 Down**

Note: The effects of Daniel’s vision are described in detail in Daniel 10:7-19. a) Daniel alone saw the vision. The men with him did not see it, but were afraid. b) He lost all his own strength. c) When he heard a voice he was in a deep sleep. d) A hand touched him, which set him on his hands and knees. e) He then arose to his feet. f) He became dumb. g) His lips were touched; he was able to speak. h) There was no breath in him. i) He was given strength.

➤ Balaam in vision fell into a trance, but his eyes remained _____. Numbers 24:4—**6 Across**

Note: Although never a conclusive test of divine inspiration, supernatural phenomena accompanying a vision do lend credibility to a prophet’s message. But because Satan can counterfeit such signs, we cannot base our confidence

in a prophet solely upon physical manifestations.

Physical signs are not always present when a prophet receives a revelation. God has often spoken to His prophets in dreams while they were sleeping.

- We are members in one body, but not all members have the same _____. Romans 12:4—**2 Down**

- The _____ differ according to the grace given. Romans 12:6—**17 Down**

Note: Please also read 1 Corinthians Chapter 12, especially verses 4-11, 14-19, 28-30. The Bible does not say that a true believer has to have any one particular gift. Neither does it say that the believer may choose his gift. The Holy Spirit gives different gifts to different people, “dividing them severally as He will.”

- Christ said that those that believe will cast out devils and _____ with new tongues. Mark 16:17—**24 Across**

Note: The word “tongue” (glossa) means “language.”

- The multitude was confounded because every man heard the disciples speaking in his own _____. Acts 2:6—**9 Down**

Note: A second manifestation of the gift of tongues took place at the house of Cornelius, a Roman centurion. (Acts 10:46)

- Peter declared that God _____ the gift of tongues to Cornelius in the same manner as He had at Pentecost. Acts 11:17—**23 Down**

Note: The only other recorded instance of tongues in the Bible is Acts 19:6. And there is nothing in the passage to indicate that its manifestation was any different.

- Though I speak with tongues of men and of angels and have not charity, I am become as _____ brass. 1 Corinthians 13:1—**4 Down**

- If any man speak in an unknown tongue let one _____. 1 Corinthians 14:27—**11 Down**

- If there be no interpreter, let him keep _____ in the church. 1 Corinthians 14:28—**13 Across**

- When you come together, let all things be done unto _____. 1 Corinthians 14:26—**15 Across**

Note: “Except ye utter by the tongue words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken? For ye shall speak into the air.” (1 Corinthians 14:9) “Therefore if I know not the meaning of the voice, I shall be unto him that speaketh a barbarian, and he that speaketh shall be a barbarian unto me.” (1 Corinthians 14:11) “If therefore the whole church be come together into one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those that are unlearned, or unbelievers, will they not say that ye are mad?” (1 Corinthians 14:23)

- God is not the author of _____. 1 Corinthians 14:33—**3 Down**

- Tongues are for a _____ to them that believe not. 1 Corinthians 14:22—**21 Down**

- Let all things be done decently and in _____. 1 Corinthians 14:40—**22 Down**

Fundamental Principles of Health

by Curtis Kline

Temperance—Hello again from the Ministry of Healing and Restoration. This month we will be discussing a very important law of health, temperance. The dictionary defines temperance as “moderation; particularly, habitual moderation in regard to the indulgence of the natural appetites and passions.” Below is another definition I find to be very fitting in understanding just what we are speaking of when we speak of temperance.

“True temperance teaches us to dispense entirely with everything hurtful, and to use judiciously that which is healthful. There are few who realize, as they should how much their habits of diet have to do with their health, their character, their usefulness in this world, and their eternal destiny. The appetite should ever be in subjection to the moral and intellectual powers. The body should be servant to the mind, and not the mind to the body.” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, page 562)

Many do not realize it, but temperance is mentioned several times in the Bible as a Christian virtue. “Every man that striveth for the mastery is *temperate* in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible.” (1 Corinthians 5:19; also please read Titus 1:8; 2:2; Acts 24:25; Galatians 5:22, 23; 2 Peter 1:4-8.)

Man was originally made in the image of God. Genesis 1:26. The plan of salvation includes restoring the image of God in man. Those acquainted with God through the Bible would agree that one of His strongest attributes is self-control or temperance. None need look any further than the life of Christ to see this attribute in our Heavenly Father. Satan and his agents constantly harassed Christ during His life on earth. Through all this, however, we never see our precious Savior lose His self control when dealing with the devil and evil men. This should not be confused with the “righteous indignation” that was exercised by Christ in the cleansing of the temple and many of His other rebukes. One of the strongest evidences we can give that we are being recreated in the image of God is when we exercise self-control or temperance in this world of sin and self-indulgence. Truly, this gift is not inherent in man and can be possessed only through divine power.

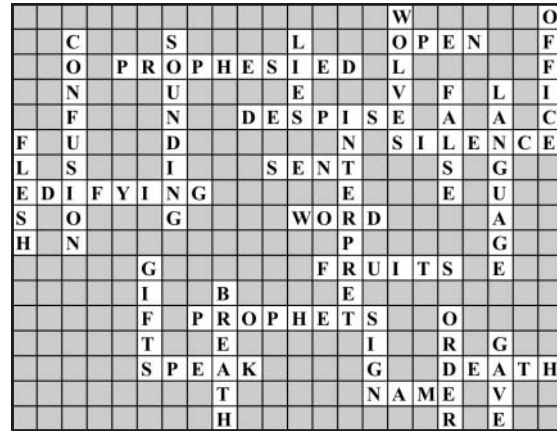
Temperance is ever so important in the context of physical health because we must allow God to give us the self-control needed in order not to indulge in harmful substances and practices that will put an added burden on the physical organism. And even with things that are good in and of themselves, we must not overindulge and turn a blessing into a curse. God has given the body the ability to heal itself under certain circumstances. However, when we deliberately take into the body things that are damaging, and participate in activities

and lifestyles that are harmful to the body, we can be sure that our health will suffer and we will not be able to glorify God in our bodies. (See 1 Corinthians 6:20; 10:31) One closing reminder: temperance is not an inherent quality in man. In our fallen condition we are naturally drawn to indulgence and a lack of self-control. True temperance can only be obtained by having God's Spirit living within us. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, *temperance*." (Galatians 5:22, 23) Temperance is a virtue we must possess if heaven is our hope. Until next month, may God richly bless you. ✍️

(The above article was provided by Curtis Kline, Director of Ministry of Healing and Restoration, Canvas, WV. For more in-depth information he can be contacted at (304) 872-4463 or curkli@yahoo.com. While we believe the principles in this article can be helpful, we are not responsible for any negative effects resulting from the use of remedies or recommendations herein. Use them at your own risk. *Editor*)

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Answers to Crossword Puzzle on page 10



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