

# Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

January 2010

“Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord” (2 Timothy 1:2). I want to wish everyone a happy new year. I pray that you will dedicate this new year to spending more time with the Lord than ever before.

**2010 Florida Camp Meeting:** It will be held at the Florida Lions Camp in Lake Wales, Florida, February 23-28. For more information call Jerri Raymond at 407-291-9565.

**E-mail Reminder:** Let us know if you would like *Present Truth* by e-mail.

## ***The Soon Coming Millennium***

by Lynnford Beachy

There has been a lot of talk about the year 2012 as the year when the world drastically changes. Much of this seems to be based upon the fact that the Mayan calendar ends in 2012. I personally don't see how the Mayan calendar has anything to do with how long the world will last. However, there are many circumstances that indicate that our time on this planet is very short, and may not go beyond 2012.

Many people in the world are preparing for a catastrophic event that will drastically change this planet. Scientists are expecting global warming, Planet X, or the explosion of Yellowstone to alter this planet so severely that life would barely be sustainable.

As Christians we can be confident that God is in control, and that He will protect His people who abide “in the secret place of the most High” (Psalms 91:1).

For those without this assurance fear can become overwhelming. Concerning the last days, Jesus said, “There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall

### **ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:**

**The National Sunday Law  
(Part 14) ..... page 12**

by Alonzo T. Jones

**The Gospel in Creation  
(Part 12) ..... page 16**

by Ellet J. Waggoner

**Young at Heart..... page 19**

**You May Freely Eat..... page 21**  
by Jim Raymond

they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh” (Luke 21:25-28).

When these events come to pass it will mark the beginning of the millennium. But what is the millennium, and how can we know what to expect?

There are several different views Christians hold regarding the millennium. Many believe that during the millennium this earth will enjoy a time of peace, when people will live in a world where there is no bloodshed, stealing, lying, etc., and where Christ Himself will be the visible King on the earth. Others believe that during the thousand years there will not be anyone alive upon this earth and God’s people will be in heaven.

There are also several different views about the events that lead up to the millennium. Many believe there will be a seven-year period of persecution just prior to the millennium. Some of these Christians believe that all Christians will be secretly raptured out of the world at the beginning of this seven-year period, while others believe that Christians will be secretly raptured in the middle of this seven-year period. There are still others who believe that Christians will be raptured at the end of this seven-year period—not secretly, but openly for every eye to see.

With so many different ideas about the millennium how can we know for sure which one is true? We need only to look at the plain Bible evidence to find the answer. The purpose of this article

is to examine what the Bible says about these subjects.

The word “millennium” is used in reference to a time period of one thousand years. This word is not found in the Bible; however the Bible does use the term “thousand years” in nine separate verses. They are as follows: Psalm 90:4; Ecclesiastes 6:6; 2 Peter 3:8; & Revelation 20:2-7. The first three verses have nothing to do with an actual time period that will occur. The only place in the entire Bible where we can find reference to a thousand year time period that will actually occur is in Revelation chapter twenty.

If we wish to find out what events take place just prior to the millennium, during the millennium, and at the close of the millennium, we must look at the twentieth chapter of Revelation. This truly is the only place where we can come to a Biblical understanding of this millennium. There are other verses in the Bible that describe events that will occur during, just prior to, and after the millennium, but none of these verses lay out the consecutive events surrounding the millennium as well as Revelation chapter twenty. Let us look at this chapter and find out for sure what the Bible says about the millennium.

Verses 1-3 read as follows: “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till

the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season” (Revelation 20:1-3). It is quite unlikely that these verses refer to a literal chain for a couple of reasons. As we all know, the book of Revelation uses more symbols than any other book in the Bible. Also, it is not possible to use a literal chain to bind a spiritual being who is capable of walking through walls. For these reasons, and the context, I understand this chain to refer to a chain of circumstances binding Satan for a thousand years, keeping him from deceiving people.

Notice that these verses demonstrate that during the thousand years Satan is not able to deceive anyone, but after the thousand years are over he will be able to deceive people again for a short time. Keep this in mind as we examine the remaining verses.

Verse 4 reads: “And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” This verse is obviously referring to righteous people. It says very clearly that they will live during the thousand year period. It also states that judgment was given unto them. What type of judgment?

### ***Judgment of the Wicked***

Paul wrote, “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye

unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?” (1 Corinthians 6:2, 3). Paul tells us that the saints will judge the world and the evil angels. It is obvious that the saints will not judge the righteous, for the righteous will already have been judged by the time the Lord comes to take His children to heaven. During the thousand years the righteous will be alive, judging the wicked and the fallen angels.

John continues, “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished....” (Revelation 20:5). The phrase, “the rest of the dead” obviously refers to the wicked, for the righteous are said to be alive during this time. During the thousand years the righteous will be alive, but the wicked will not be living. Let me take a moment to clarify here. According to the Bible “the dead know not anything” (Ecclesiastes 9:5). They are completely unconscious of the things going on around them. (For a thorough Bible study on this subject, please contact us and request the study entitled, “What Happens After Death?”)

### ***Two Resurrections***

John continues, “This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years” (Revelation 20:5, 6). According to the Bible there will be two resurrections. Paul said, “...there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust” (Acts 24:15).

And Jesus said, “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation” (John 5:28, 29).

In Revelation 20:5, 6 God informs us that the first resurrection will be the resurrection of the righteous, for these are said to be “blessed and holy.” It is also clear from these verses that the resurrection of the righteous takes place before the thousand years, for those who have part in it will live and reign with Christ during this time, and that the resurrection of the righteous marks the beginning of the millennium. Let us pinpoint exactly when the resurrection of the righteous will take place.

“For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). At the second coming of Christ those who have died in Christ will rise first—this is the first resurrection—then we which are alive and remain will be caught up with them in the clouds to be with the Lord.

Let us quickly summarize what we have learned so far. When Christ returns all those who have died in Christ will be raised from the dead commencing the thousand year millennium. During the millennium the righteous will be living and reigning with Christ. They will be given judgment to judge

the wicked and the fallen angels during this time. All the wicked will be dead during the millennium and Satan will be bound; unable to deceive anyone. At the end of the millennium the wicked will be resurrected from the dead. (See Revelation 20:5.) At this time Satan will be loosed for a little season.

Isaiah wrote concerning the wicked, “And they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited” (Isaiah 24:21, 22). During the thousand years Satan will be unable to deceive anyone, but after the wicked are raised from the dead he is loosed to deceive people again. Who will he deceive? Not the righteous for they are eternally secure, having already obtained immortality at Christ’s second coming. (See 1 Corinthians 15:51-53.) Satan will deceive the wicked who have just been raised from the dead.

Before we look at the rest of the events that will occur after the millennium we need to look at a few verses about the New Jerusalem which will help us understand these events.

### ***The New Jerusalem***

John wrote, “And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God” (Revelation 21:10). John saw the New Jerusalem descend from God to the earth. Who was in the city? John wrote, “Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city. For without are dogs, and

sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Revelation 22:14, 15). Only the righteous will be allowed to enter into the city, but there will be some who must remain outside. John wrote concerning them: "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death" (Revelation 21:8). Here we see that those who cannot enter the city due to their sinfulness, will suffer the second death.

Continuing with Revelation 20, John wrote, "And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog [land of the wicked, see Ezekiel 38:1-3], to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them" (Revelation 20:7).

Satan will convince the wicked that they can take the beloved city, the New Jerusalem. They will surround the city in a vain attempt to overthrow it, but God will overrule and send fire down to devour them.

Zechariah recorded a similar account of this event. Referring to the Lord he wrote, "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east,

and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee.... And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one" (Zechariah 14:4, 5, 9).

Here Zechariah saw the Lord descending on the Mount of Olives, and it divided in two and spread out to make a great valley. Then he saw the Lord come with all His saints. Please notice that this cannot be referring to the second coming of Christ, for at that time the dead in Christ will rise from the dead and the righteous living will be caught up with them in the air. All the saints cannot possibly be with the Lord until after they are raised from the dead and redeemed from this earth. Therefore this must have reference to another coming of our Lord. This is when the New Jerusalem descends from God out of heaven. The mount of Olives, spreading out to make a great valley, is the preparing of a place for the New Jerusalem. This does not occur until after the millennium.

We already learned from the Bible what occurs next: the wicked are raised from the dead and they surround the city attempting to overthrow it. Then the Lord rains down fire from heaven that devours the wicked. Zechariah goes on

to describe this scene. He wrote, “And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth” (Zechariah 14:12).

## ***The Destruction of the Wicked***

When the Bible speaks of the second death and fire devouring the wicked, is it referring to a continual fire that tortures the wicked for billions and billions of years with no end? Please take a moment to consider a few thoughts before we continue.

Suppose a fifteen-year-old boy gets drunk one night, steals his father’s car and wrecks it. If the father of that boy would torment him with fire for one week we would say that man is cruel. Suppose the father tormented him for one year. Surely we would say this punishment is far too severe for the acts committed. Now suppose the same young boy did the same thing but, instead of living through it, he died in the accident. Do you suppose God will take that young boy and torment him for billions and billions of years? This would be downright cruel—more cruel than the worst criminal who has ever lived—not to mention it is completely contrary to Scripture.

Is it fair to torture someone for millions of years for sins that may have taken only fifteen years to commit? This surely sounds unfair to me. With this perception of God we see Him as unfair and accordingly, we feel

justified in being unfair as well. The Scripture tells us that God is just and merciful and He treats us better than we deserve.

“Know therefore that God exacteth of thee less than thine iniquity deserveth” (Job 11:6). God gives us less than our iniquities deserve. This surely would not be the case if God would torture the wicked for billions of years.

The punishment of the wicked will be according to the things done during their lifetimes. Jesus said, “And that servant, which knew his lord’s will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more” (Luke 12:47, 48). Some will receive a punishment of longer duration than others, but none will be punished more severely than they deserve. The prophet Obadiah wrote concerning the wicked: “...they shall be as though they had not been” (Obadiah 1:16). David wrote, “For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.... But the wicked shall perish, and the enemies of the LORD shall be as the fat of lambs: they shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away” (Psalms 37:10, 20).

The idea that God takes pleasure in watching the wicked burn continually is a false teaching that has caused many people to look upon God as an unkind tyrant—even worse than Hitler. This

false doctrine has its origin with Satan who first said, “Ye shall not surely die.” Man does not naturally have an immortal soul for he never ate of the tree of life after sinning, which would have allowed him to have eternal life in a sinful state. (See Genesis 3:22-24.)

We are becoming like the God whom we behold. If we are beholding a God who is pleased to see the creatures whom He has made suffer without end, then we will acquire the same type of character. But this is far from the true character of God, for the Bible clearly states, “As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?” (Ezekiel 33:11). Truly God is merciful and kind, even in his dealings with those who finally reject Him. (For a thorough Bible study on this subject contact us and request the study entitled, “God’s Love Revealed in Hell.”)

We have seen quite clearly the events that mark the beginning of the Millennium, the end of the Millennium, and some facts about what happens during the Millennium. Yet there are a few details we have not examined.

### ***During the Millennium***

Among Christians there are several ideas about what will happen during the millennium. The Bible makes it clear that all the wicked will be dead during the millennium. It is evident that they will be on this earth during that time for their resurrection from their graves will not have occurred yet, and their graves are on this earth. What

about the righteous; where are they during the millennium? The Bible tells us that they are with Christ. Does the Bible tell us where Christ is during this time?

In Paul’s account of the second coming of Christ he does not indicate that He ever sets foot upon this earth. He wrote, “For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord” (1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17). At the second coming of Christ the righteous will be caught up in the air to meet the Lord and be with him there.

There are several reasons why I do not believe that Christ and the righteous will be on this earth during the thousand years.

- 1) There is no record in the Bible stating that Christ or His people will be on this earth during the millennium.
- 2) Just prior to the second coming of Christ there will be a great earthquake causing every island to flee away and every mountain to be cast down. “And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.... And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found” (Revelation 16:18-20).
- 3) The landscape of the earth will be in a very chaotic condition during this time. “Behold, the LORD maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth

abroad the inhabitants thereof.... The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the LORD hath spoken this word.... The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant" (Isaiah 24:1-5). Isaiah continued, "...the foundations of the earth do shake. The earth is utterly broken down, the earth is clean dissolved, the earth is moved exceedingly. The earth shall reel to and fro like a drunkard, and shall be removed like a cottage; and the transgression thereof shall be heavy upon it; and it shall fall, and not rise again" (Isaiah 24:18-20).

4) The surface of the earth will be littered with many dead bodies during this time. "For, behold, the LORD cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain" (Isaiah 26:21).

5) The Bible describes a time when there are no inhabitants on this earth. "I have cut off the nations: their towers are desolate; I made their streets waste, that none passeth by: their cities are destroyed, so that *there is no man*, that *there is none inhabitant*.... Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy" (Zephaniah 3:6-8).

6) This old earth is said to be destroyed by fire, after which there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

"...Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness" (2 Peter 3:12, 13).

7) The new earth will not be in existence until after the thousand years are completed. (See Revelation 21.)

This is very conclusive evidence that Christ and His righteous people will not be on this earth during the millennium. So where will they be? We are told that they will live and reign with Christ and that judgment will be given to them. This evidently will be in heaven in the city which God has prepared for His people, for the New Jerusalem is said to have come down from heaven after the thousand years.

The biblical evidence is clear that during the thousand years the righteous will be in heaven with Christ, and the wicked will be dead in their graves awaiting their resurrection at the end of the millennium.

## ***What About the Secret Rapture?***

Many Christians honestly believe that Christ will return secretly to rapture His people prior to the great tribulation which occurs just before the millennium. If this is true, there is no need to prepare for such a tribulation. If this is not true, many will be caught in the tribulation without making the necessary preparations. Paul wrote concerning this time; "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden

destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape” (1 Thessalonians 5:3). As you can see, it is very important to understand the truth about this subject. Let us take a few minutes to examine what the Bible says about it.

A few well-known verses used to support the idea of a secret rapture are found in Matthew 24. “Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (Matthew 24:40, 41). Many assume that those who are taken are the righteous being secretly raptured, leaving the wicked to wonder what had happened to those missing. However, if one would just read the preceding three verses it would be very clear what is spoken of here. Here are the verses in their context:

“But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left” (Matthew 24:37-41).

Jesus made a parallel here and said that it would be the same when Christ returns as it was in the days of Noah. In the days of Noah those who were taken were the wicked, taken in death by the flood. So shall it be when the Lord returns. Those who will be taken will be

the wicked who are taken in death at the brightness of the Lord’s return. Let us look at a few other verses which mention the same event.

When the Lord returns there will be two classes of people upon this earth, one of which will cry out, “...this is our God; we have waited for him, and he will save us” (Isaiah 25:9). The other class of people will “hid[e] themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains,” and say “to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb” (Revelation 6:15, 16). Regarding the coming of the Lord, Malachi wrote, “But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? for he is like a refiner’s fire, and like fullers’ soap” (Malachi 3:2). John wrote, “For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” (Revelation 6:17). The obvious answer to who will be able to stand is the righteous—those who have prepared themselves to meet the Lord.

Paul wrote about the destruction of the Antichrist power in this way: “And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming” (2 Thessalonians 2:8). When the Lord returns, only the righteous will be able to stand the “brightness of his coming.” Isaiah wrote concerning the coming of the Lord: “Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned, and few men left” (Isaiah 24:6). Who will be left? Certainly! It will be the righteous.

## **Answering Some Objections**

There are some who believe in the secret rapture who like to quote Christ's words to the church of Philadelphia as proof of this theory. Christ said, "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth" (Revelation 3:10). Please notice that this is spoken to one of the seven churches. It is not the last of the seven, for one more church comes after it. If the churches are in chronological order as many believe, then this could not be referring to a secret rapture.

Also, how does God keep people from evil that comes upon the earth? "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come" (Isaiah 57:1). As we can see, God will keep some of His people from going through the great tribulation, not by secretly rapturing them out of the world, but by allowing them to die before this hour comes.

The Bible demonstrates that there will be a great tribulation just prior to the second coming of Christ for which we must prepare. Amos wrote, "...prepare to meet thy God" (Amos 4:12). We have been warned of those who cry out "peace and safety." Paul wrote, "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape" (1 Thessalonians 5:3).

"And Jesus answered and said unto them, Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes, in divers places. All these are the beginning of sorrows" (Matthew 24:4-8).

Jesus described the condition of the world in the last days. This would have been the perfect opportunity for Jesus to tell his disciples that they would then be raptured but notice what He said next: "Then shall they deliver you up to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one another. And many false prophets shall rise, and shall deceive many. And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matthew 24:9-13).

Jesus said that if we endure to the end we will be saved. Friends, there are events that will come upon this earth which we must endure before the end comes. Please take every opportunity given you to make the necessary preparations to meet the Lord when He comes.

## **Preparing to Meet the Lord**

We know we must prepare to meet the Lord, but what preparations are

necessary for us to be ready for that day? The Bible speaks of two groups of people in the last days—those who receive the mark of the beast and those who receive the seal of God. We read concerning the seal of God:

“And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree. And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel” (Revelation 7:1-4).

John wrote concerning those who receive the seal of God: “And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with Him an hundred forty and four thousand, having His Father’s name written in their foreheads.... And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God” (Revelation 14:1, 5).

Just prior to the coming of our Lord in the clouds of heaven, there will be a group of people that have the Father’s name (character) written in their foreheads. They will reflect the character of God in their lives. These will receive the seal of God rather than the mark of the beast. The Bible tells us that this group of people will be without fault before God. They will not sin nor teach

falsehoods, for “The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid” (Zephaniah 3:13).

This group of people are prepared to meet their God. When the Lord comes they will say, “...this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us” (Isaiah 25:9). The proclamation in Revelation 22:11 will have already been given. “He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still” (Revelation 22:11). Each person’s case will have been settled at this point, whether for eternal life or for destruction.

One group of people will have overcome sin, for Jesus said, “To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in His throne” (Revelation 3:21). Another group of people will have chosen to cling to their sins and they will be destroyed at the brightness of His coming. “Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, cruel both with wrath and fierce anger, to lay the land desolate: and He shall destroy the sinners thereof out of it” (Isaiah 13:9). According to the Bible, if you are still sinning when the Lord returns, you will be destroyed. (For a thorough study on how you can overcome sin, please contact us and request the study entitled, “Go and Sin No More.”)

I pray that the Lord will guide you as you study His word and follow Him. ✍

# *The National Sunday Law (Part 14)*

by Alonzo T. Jones

(The following is a portion of an argument of Alonzo T. Jones before the United States Senate, December 13, 1888, opposing the Blair Bill that promoted a Sunday law. *Editor*)

**Mr. Jones:** The statute of Arkansas at that time ran thus:

“SECTION 1883. Every person who shall on the Sabbath, or Sunday, be found laboring, or shall compel his apprentice or servant to labor or perform service other than customary household duties of daily necessity, comfort, or charity, on conviction thereof shall be fined one dollar for each separate offense.

“SEC. 1884. Every apprentice or servant compelled to labor on Sunday shall be deemed a separate offense of the master.

“SEC. 1885. The provision of this act shall not apply to steamboats and other vessels navigating the waters of the State, nor such manufacturing establishments as require to be kept in continual operation.”

In the case of Mr. Swearingen, mentioned by Senator Crockett, the conviction was upon the testimony of a witness who swore that the work for which he was convicted was done on a day which proved to be seventeen days before the law was enacted, thus by its enforcement making the law *ex post facto*. The Constitution of the United States forbids the making of *ex post facto* laws. But when a law not being *ex post facto* in itself, made so by its enforcement, it is time that something was being done to enlighten courts and juries upon that subject, even though it should be by an amendment to the Constitution of the United States,

providing that no law not being *ex post facto* in itself shall be made so by its enforcement. Then, on the other hand, several cases were tried, and the men convicted and fined after the law was repealed, though for work done before.

In almost every case the informer, the prosecuting witness, or perhaps both, were men who were doing work or business on the same day, and sometimes with the very persons accused; yet the man who kept the seventh day was convicted in every instance, while the man who did not keep the seventh day, but did work or business with the man who did, was left entirely unmolested, and his evidence was accepted in court to convict the other man. I give some instances:

First, a man by the name of Millard Courtney, who was the prosecuting witness against two men, Armstrong and Elmore, had taken a man with him to where these men were working, and there they made a contract for roofing a school-house; and yet Courtney's evidence convicted these two men of Sabbath-breaking at the very time he was doing business with them.

Second, J. L. Shockey was convicted upon the testimony of a man by the name of Hammond, who went to him on Sunday where he was at work, and bargained with him for a Plymouth Rock rooster.

Third, J. L. James, who worked in the rain for nothing on Sunday that a poor widow, a member of another church, might be sheltered, was convicted of Sabbath breaking upon the evidence of a man who carried wood and chopped it up that same day within seven rods of the man who was convicted by his testimony.

Fourth, one La Fever and his wife went to Allen Meeks' house on Sunday to visit. They found Meeks planting potatoes. Meeks stopped planting potatoes, and spent the rest of the day visiting with them; and yet Meeks was convicted of Sabbath-breaking and fined upon the evidence of La Fever.

Fifth, the second case of Mr. Meeks. Riley Warren went to his house on Sunday, to see him about hiring a teacher for the public school. In the social, neighborly conversation that passed between them, Meeks incidentally mentioned that he had mended his wagon-brake that morning; and yet he was convicted of Sabbath-breaking upon the evidence of that same Riley Warren. Meeks was thus virtually compelled to be a witness against himself, — clearly another violation of both the State and United States Constitution.

Sixth, Mr. Reeves' boys were hauling wood on Sunday. In the timber where they got the wood, they met another boy, a Seventh-day Adventist, John A. Meeks, hunting squirrels. They joined him in the hunt, scaring the squirrels around the trees so he could shoot them. Then the squirrels were divided between the Meeks boy and the Reeves boys. Then the Meeks boy was indicted, prosecuted, and convicted of Sabbath-breaking upon the evidence of the father of those boys who were hauling wood, and who helped to kill the squirrels.

Seventh, James M. Pool, for hoeing in his garden on Sunday, was convicted of Sabbath-breaking, on the evidence of a "sanctified" church member who had gone to Pool's house on Sunday to buy tobacco.

Allow me to mention the methods of prosecution. In the case of Scoles, J. A. Armstrong was called before the Grand Jury. After repeated answers to

questions in regard to work done on Sunday by different parties in several different lines of business and traffic, he was asked the direct question whether he knew of any Seventh-day Adventists who worked on Sunday, and when in the nature of the case he answered in the affirmative, every one of the Seventh-day Adventists whom he named was indicted, and not one of any other class or trade.

In the second case of James A. Armstrong; he was arrested at the instance of the mayor. When asked for the affidavit upon which Armstrong was arrested, the mayor said that A. J. Vaughn had called his attention to Armstrong's working, and had said, "Now see that you do your duty," yet Vaughn testified under oath that he did not see Armstrong at all on the day referred to. Armstrong was not only arrested at the instance of the mayor, but he was also tried before the mayor, who acted as Justice of the Peace. And when Vaughn testified that he had not seen Armstrong at all on the day referred to, this made the mayor, virtually, both prosecuting witness and judge; and the questions which he asked show that that was precisely his position, and his own view of the case. The question which he asked to each of the first two witnesses was, "What do you know about Mr. Armstrong's working on Sunday, June 27?" This question assumes all that was expected to be proved on the trial.

This is enough to show the workings of such a Sunday law as is embodied in this Senate bill. There were many other cases, every one in the same line. But throughout the whole list of cases, it is only the record of how people who were performing honest labor on their own premises in a way in which it was impossible to do harm to any soul on

earth, were indicted, prosecuted, and convicted upon the evidence of men who, if there were any wrong involved in the case at all, were more guilty than they. If religious persecution could possibly be more clearly demonstrated than it is in this thing, we hope never to see an illustration of it.

It may be asked, Why was not an appeal taken? An appeal was taken to the Supreme Court of the State, in the first case that was tried. The judgment of the lower Court was confirmed in an opinion closing with these words:

"The appellant's argument, then, is reduced to this: That because he conscientiously believes he is permitted by the law of God to labor on Sunday, he may violate with impunity the statute declaring it illegal to do so; but a man's religious belief cannot be accepted as a justification for his committing an overt act made criminal by the law of the land. If the law operates harshly, as laws sometimes do, the remedy is in the hands of the legislature. It is not the province of the judiciary to pass upon the wisdom or policy of legislation. That is for the members of the legislative department; and the only appeal from their determination is to the constituency."

This decision of the Supreme Court is of the same piece with the prosecutions and judicial processes throughout. It gives to the legislature all the omnipotence of the British Parliament, and in that does away with all necessity for a Constitution. The decision on this principle alone, is un-American. No legislative body in this country is framed upon the model of the British Parliament in respect to power. In this country, the powers of every legislature are defined and limited by Constitutions. It is the prerogative of Supreme Courts to define the meaning of the Constitution, and to decide whether an act of the

legislature is Constitutional or not. If the act is Constitutional, then it must stand, whatever the results may be. And the Supreme Court is the body by which the Constitutionality or the unconstitutionality of any statute is to be discovered. But if, as this decision declares, the legislature is omnipotent, and that which it does must stand as law, then there is no use for a Constitution. "One of the objects for which the judiciary department is established, is the protection of the Constitutional rights of the citizens."

So long as there is a Constitution above the legislature, which defines and limits its powers, and protects and guards the rights of the citizens, so long it is the province of the Supreme Court to pronounce upon the acts of the legislature. The Supreme Court of Arkansas, therefore, in this case, clearly abdicated one of the very functions for which it was created, or else subverted the Constitution of Arkansas; and in either case, bestowed upon the legislature the omnipotence of the British Parliament, which is contrary to every principle of American institutions. Nor is the State of Arkansas an exception in this case; for this is the usual procedure of Supreme Courts in sustaining Sunday laws. They cannot be sustained upon any American principle; resort has to be made in every instance, and has been with scarcely an exception, either to the church-and-state principles of the British Government, or to the British principle of the omnipotence of the legislative power. But American principles are far above and far in advance of the principles of the British Government, in that they recognize Constitutional limitations upon the legislative power, and countenance no union of church and state; consequently Sunday laws never have been, and never can be, sustained upon American principles.

That this stricture upon Supreme Court of Arkansas is not unjust, we have the clearest proof. The three judges who then composed the Supreme Court, were all members of the Bar Association of the State of Arkansas. In less than three months after this decision was rendered, the Bar Association unanimously made a report to the State on "law and law reform," an official copy of which I have in my possession. In that report, under the heading "Sunday Laws," is the following:

"Our statute as it stands in Mansfield's Digest, provides that 'persons who are members of any religious society who observe as Sabbath any other day of the week than the Christian Sabbath, or Sunday, shall not be subject to the penalties of this act [the Sunday law], so that they observe one day in seven, agreeably to the faith and practice of their church or society.' — Mans. Dig., sec. 1886.

"This statute had been in force from the time of the organization of the State government; but it was unfortunately repealed by act of March 3, 1885: Acts 1885, p. 37.

"While the Jews adhere, of course, to the letter of the original command to remember the seventh day of the week, there is also in the State a small but respectable body of Christians who consistently believe that the seventh day is the proper day to be kept sacred; and in the case of *Scoles vs. State*, our Supreme Court was compelled to affirm a judgment against a member of one of these churches, for worshiping God according to the dictates of his own conscience, supported, as he supposed, by good theological arguments. It is very evident that the system now in force, saving, as it does, very much of religious persecution, is a relic of the Middle Ages, when it was thought that men

could be made orthodox by an act of parliament. Even in Massachusetts, where Sabbatarian laws have always been enforced with unusual vigor, exceptions are made in favor of persons who religiously observe any other day in the place of Sunday. We think that the law as it stood in Mansfield's Digest, should be restored, with such an amendment as would prevent the sale of spirits on Sunday, as that was probably the object of repealing the above section."

Now the Arkansas Constitution says:

"All men have a natural and indefeasible right to worship Almighty God according to the dictates of their own consciences; no man can of right be compelled to attend, erect, or support any place of worship, or to maintain any ministry, against his consent. No human authority can, in any case or manner whatsoever, control or interfere with the right of conscience; and no preference shall ever be given by law to any religious establishment, denomination, or mode of worship, above any other."

This report of the Bar Association says, "In the case of *Scoles vs. State*, our Supreme Court was compelled to affirm a judgment against a member of one of these churches, for worshiping God according to the dictates of his own conscience."

The members of the Supreme Court being members of the Bar Association, in that report it is confessed that they confirmed a judgment against a man for doing that which the Constitution explicitly declares all men have a natural and indefeasible right to do.

**To be Continued...**

(This article was taken from pages 131-138 of the book entitled, *The National Sunday Law*, by Alonzo T. Jones. Some editing was done for this publication. Editor)

# The Gospel in Creation (Part 12)

by Ellet J. Waggoner

But when anyone wants salvation, no matter how small and weak he is, no matter how insignificant he may be in the eyes of the world, even though he be regarded no more than the grass which is trodden under foot, God can work wonders with him. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which to-day is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, much more will He clothe with power the men whom He has made in His own image, if they but submit to Him. That promise that He will clothe us does not refer exclusively to clothing for the body. "The life is more than meat, and the body than raiment" (Matthew 6:2). If He gives us that which is least important surely He will give us that which is of infinite value. So the promise that He will much more clothe us than the grass, refers as well to the garment of salvation and the robe of righteousness, with which we are to be clothed. That power which works so wonderfully in the tiny blade of grass will work still more mightily in the man who trusts the Lord.

"Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow" (Matthew 6:28). I have said that this is written for our encouragement in our growth in grace. As they grow, so must we. Now read some words of inspiration, which show clearly that the growth of the lily is but an illustration of the Christian's growth in grace:

"O Israel, return unto the Lord thy God; for thou hast fallen by thine iniquity. Take with you words, and turn to

the Lord: say unto Him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves [offerings] of our lips. Asshur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods; for in Thee the fatherless findeth mercy" (Hosea 14:1-3). There is no doubt but that it is sin and righteousness that the Lord is here speaking of. He tells His people, who have departed from Him, to return, and He tells them what to say when they return. Note that they are to say that they will not any more trust in the work of their hands. Their works are not to be from self, but those that are wrought in God. Now see the assurance that He gives those who thus turn to Him:

"I will heal their backsliding. I will love them freely: for Mine anger is turned away from him. I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow [margin: blossom] as the vine."

But this is not all. God's people are His vineyard, the branch of His planting, that He might be glorified; and He would not be glorified if through any lack of personal attention they should be destroyed. So He assures them of His constant care. "In that day sing ye unto her, a vineyard of red wine. I the

Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day. Fury is not in Me: who would set the briars and thorns against Me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. Or let him take hold of My strength, that he may make peace with Me; and he shall make peace with Me. He shall cause them that come of Jacob to take root: Israel shall blossom and bud, and fill the face of the world with fruit” (Isaiah 27:2-6).

But what need of carrying the likeness any further? We could not exhaust the Scriptures if we should try. And the only design of this writing is to lead the reader to study the word more closely for himself, and appropriate it as the living word of the living God, which works effectually in all that believe. Do not put the Lord off, but let your faith prove that He is near, even a very present help in trouble. He is a God nigh at hand, and not afar off; and nothing is too hard for Him. He has written His love and His power upon all creation, and wants to speak to us through the things that He made. In Him all things consist. That same word that spoke the universe into existence, which said to the earth, “Bring forth grass,” speaks to us in the words of God’s law. But His law is not a hard, lifeless decree which weak mortals are to strive in vain to keep, while God watches them with a stern eye ready to taunt and punish them for failure; but we “know that His commandment is life everlasting” (John 12:50). That word which says to us, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself,” sheds that love abroad in our

hearts, just as the word of God brings forth the fruit in the plant. Then well may we sing:

How gentle God’s commands!  
How kind His precepts are!  
Come, cast your burdens on the Lord,  
And trust His constant care.  
Beneath His watchful eye  
His saints securely dwell;  
That hand which bears all nature up  
Shall guard His children well.  
Why should this anxious load  
Press down your weary mind?  
Haste to your Heavenly Father’s throne,  
And sweet refreshment find.  
His goodness stands approved  
Through each succeeding day;  
I’ll drop my burden at His feet,  
And bear a song away.

### **The Fourth Day - The Firmament Showeth His Handiwork**

In no part of the creation of God do we find more wonderful gospel lessons than in the heavens. We have already seen that the heavenly bodies preach the gospel, although they have no articulate speech. The apostle Paul, having stated that all had not obeyed the gospel, adds that faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God, and then asks, “But I say, Have they not heard?” Heard what? Why, the gospel, of course. And then he answers his own question, saying, “Yes, verily,” and proves it by quoting the words of the psalmist concerning the heavens, “Their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world” (Romans 10:15-18). The

heavens, therefore, do most widely and powerfully preach the gospel. Let us note a few points from the word, that we may be able henceforth more readily to read the language of the heavens:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork” (Psalm 19:1). Now put with this a statement concerning man: “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained [prepared] that we should walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10). The same language is used about us that is used of the heavens. Both are His workmanship, and both are created in Christ, provided we yield ourselves to Him. That thing for which we are created is good works, by which we are to glorify our Father which is in heaven. So if we have the good works, we, as well as the heavens, declare the glory of God.

The heavens do the work that God has appointed for them. They do it because they are perfectly subject to His will. So if we are as subject to Him, we shall do the work that He has appointed for us. And that work glorifies Him, because it is He that does the work in us. Notice that God has before prepared these works, that we should walk in them. So Christ says of the one who does the truth, that he comes to the light, “that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.” God Himself does the works, else they would not be the righteousness of God. That which the heavens do is also His work; and when we are voluntarily as submissive to His will as they are by nature, then the glory of

God will be as fully declared by us as by them, even though, like them, we are unable to make an articulate sound.

The heavens are the pledge of God’s faithfulness. “I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever: with my mouth will I make known Thy faithfulness to all generations. For I have said, Mercy shall be built up forever: Thy faithfulness shalt Thou establish in the very heavens” (Psalm 89:1,2). The existence of the heavens is a surety that God has not forgotten His promises of mercy to men. The thirty-first chapter of the prophet Jeremiah is full of the “exceeding great and precious promises” of God; and immediately after the promise to His people, “I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more,” there follows this: “Thus saith the Lord, which giveth the sun for a light by day, and the ordinances of the moon and of the stars for a light by night, which divideth the sea when the waves thereof roar; The Lord of hosts is His name; if those ordinances depart from before Me, saith the Lord, then the seed of Israel also shall cease from being a nation before Me forever” (Jeremiah 31:34-36). So long as the sun, moon and stars fulfill their appointed work regularly, the sons of men can find mercy with the Lord. So long may they come to Him and find pardon, peace and righteousness.

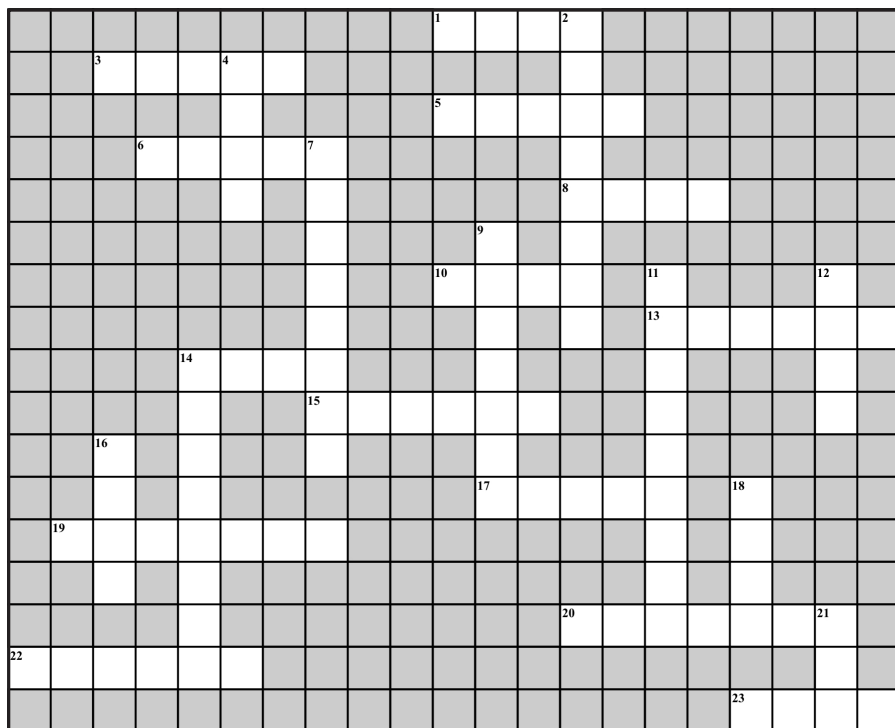
**To be Continued...**

(This article was taken from pages 102-113 of the book entitled, *The Gospel in Creation*, by Ellet J. Waggoner. Editor)

*Present Truth*  
**Something for the Young at Heart**

We would like to give you an interesting and easy way to study the Bible, so we are including a crossword puzzle for you. 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. (The KJV is required.)

***Fear God - Part 2***



**Answers will be printed on the back page of next month's issue**

➤ Many shall "fear, and shall \_\_\_\_ in the LORD." Psalms 40:3—**17 Across**

**Note:** Usually if you fear someone you try to avoid him and hide from him rather than trust him. But here we learn that godly fear includes trust. There is a difference between the type of fear a person has of men, and the fear we are to have for God. Godly fear includes love, trust, and reverence.

➤ "Ye shall \_\_\_\_ every man his mother, and his father,..." Leviticus 19:3—**10 Across**

**Note:** The fear a child is to have for his parents also includes love, and trust.

➤ The LORD is the \_\_\_\_ and shield of those who fear and trust Him. Psalms 115:11—**8 Across**

➤ After Abraham was willing to offer his son, the Lord said, "now I know that thou \_\_\_\_ God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me." Genesis 22:12—**9 Down**

**Note:** Perhaps you have wondered why God did not say, "now I know that you love me" instead of "fear me." This

is because of the limited view we commonly have for the word “fear.” The godly fear that Abraham demonstrated by surrendering all to God included love and trust.

➤ “Work out your own \_\_\_\_ with fear and trembling.” Philippians 2:12—

**11 Down**

➤ We are to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness “perfecting \_\_\_\_ in the fear of God.” 2 Corinthians 7:1—**7 Down**

➤ There is no \_\_\_\_ to them that fear the LORD. Psalms 34:9—**23 Across**

➤ “The LORD is my \_\_\_\_; I shall not want.” Psalms 23:1—**2 Down**

➤ “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no \_\_\_\_.” Psalms 23:4—**4 Down**

➤ “The fear of the LORD prolongeth \_\_\_\_.” Proverbs 10:27—**1 Across**

➤ “The \_\_\_\_ of the LORD is with them that fear him.” Psalms 25:14—**15 Across**

➤ God’s mystery is “\_\_\_\_ in you, the hope of glory.” Colossians 1:27—**22 Across**

➤ “The \_\_\_\_ of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him.” Psalms 34:7—**3 Across**

### *Fear of Man*

➤ “The \_\_\_\_, and unbelieving,... shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire...” Revelation 21:8—**19 Across**

➤ “The wicked \_\_\_\_ when no man pursueth...” Proverbs 28:1—**16 Down**

➤ “But the righteous are \_\_\_\_ as a lion.” Proverbs 28:1—**18 Down**

**Note:** One of the curses that God promised to send upon His people if they forsook the Lord was a fearful heart. He said to them, “And upon them that are left alive of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf

shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. And they shall fall one upon another, as it were before a sword, when none pursueth: and ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies” (Leviticus 26:36, 37).

➤ “The fear of \_\_\_\_ bringeth a snare...” Proverbs 29:25—**21 Down**

➤ David said, “The LORD is on my \_\_\_\_; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?” Psalms 118:6—**14 Across**

➤ “Who art thou, that thou shouldest be \_\_\_\_ of a man that shall die?” Isaiah 51:12—**13 Across**

➤ Jesus rebuked His disciples saying, “Why are ye fearful, O ye of little \_\_\_\_?” Matthew 8:26—**6 Across**

➤ “And fear not them which \_\_\_\_ the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Matthew 10:28—**12 Down**

➤ “Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many \_\_\_\_.” Matthew 10:31—**14 Down**

➤ “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the \_\_\_\_.” Luke 12:32—**20 Across**

➤ “God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of \_\_\_\_, and of love, and of a sound mind.” 2 Timothy 1:7—**5 Across**

**Note:** The Fear of the Lord is the first part of the everlasting gospel. It is the beginning of wisdom. By the fear of the Lord we depart from sin. There is a godly fear that is different from the fear of man. The fear of God includes love, reverence, trust, and a fatherly respect. Ungodly fear of men or circumstances is not helpful at all, and can lead to destruction. The fearful and unbelieving will be outside the holy city of God. ✍

# **You May Freely Eat?**

by Jim Raymond

(Brother Jim Raymond has been a food scientist for many years, and has agreed to share some of his knowledge with us. *Editor*)

## **Supplements For All? – Part 1**

### **Perspectives, Processing, Practice:**

I was recently asked why I would recommend a supplement. The short answer is: “Whenever I believe that it could be a blessing; especially if the time for the need of that blessing seems short.”

I don’t actually recommend supplements very often. I am sleeplessly fascinated by the scientific research that allows me to behold the high and holy intelligences of our God. The way He designed the chemical processes to work within us so that “in him we live, and move, and have our being” (Acts 17:28). Each chemical reaction is simple and usually straightforward in its own right, but there are a myriad of them going on at any given time in each and every cell in our bodies. Supplements are born out of experimentation with the chemical processes at the cellular level. Sometimes the testing gives rise to a new product but it always better our understanding. This is cause for praise.

Imagine this, even our thoughts are chemical, and so we think at the speed of chemistry. As interesting as it is to learn how to protect and preserve cognitive chemistry, it is even more interesting to discover that God has a technology that can weigh the very “thoughts of our hearts” (Proverbs 16:2 Amplified Version). Amazingly, through Christ we

have the fearfully awesome privilege of calling this God, “our Father”. “Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God... Beloved, now are we the sons of God...” (1 John 3:1, 2). Ah, yes! To me, studying this stuff is nothing shy of worship. So, to not share what I learn would be a withholding of my testimony! When, out of my fascination, I share something that God has shown me, and it leads someone to investigate a supplement that will work as well as a drug (that does more to them than for them), I consider that to be passing on a blessing. It is true that as I and the friends that surround me get older, I do find more occasions to suggest supplementation, usually as something to try before starting a long term therapy using a drug with a long list of undesirable effects.

**Definitions Matter:** I’ve heard people talk about supplements and supplementation as a “lifestyle program” or a “Whole Food Concentrate” as if there is no altered product involved. So we can be on the same page, I’ll describe a working definition that is accepted among my peers in the food and nutraceutical industries—those who make the stuff for a living. In the October issue of *Present Truth*, I shortly stated what supplements are not with this phrase: “the only natural form of a nutrient is found in whole, minimally processed foods.” So here (in my practice oriented view) is what herbal or food supplements are. Any food

supplement becomes such when it does not remain essentially in the form in which God provided it to us: (1.) When it is altered to concentrate the whole or any part to allow people to consume larger amounts than would normally be found in a diet consisting of natural, minimally processed whole-foods. (2.) When this is done for the purpose of supplying a real or supposed lack in the diet to enhance health or to remedy the lack thereof in a more immediate way than could be done by diet alone (if at all). Interestingly, supplements are often added directly to a food product during processing it is then called a fortified food.

This is a working “mental model”. It is functionally practical without mentioning the technical side (which will be mentioned next). You will notice this mental model insists that the “why” is as important as the “what”. If the motive for dehydrating a food is to preserve it so it can be eaten during winter or drought as part of an otherwise normal meal, then, in this model, it’s about survival not supplementation.

**Relevant Point:** Because why (motive) is the field from which marketing claims are harvested. Simply put, a marketing claim is the story used to convince buyers that they need what the seller is pushing. The most frequent supplement marketing claim goes something like this: “Oh, woe is us, our soil is depleted. So you need my product.” Well? If the soil is the problem, why not fix the problem and supplement the soil? The cost of one unit of the supplement could usually fix a whole acre’s worth of crops.

**It’s All About Marketing:** On the technical side, again it is about

marketing. Every product marketed as a supplement also had the choice (and still does) to go to market as a pharmaceutical. Be advised that there are significant advantages to taking the supplement route. Some of the time those advantages may work for the buyers.

Where does diet fit? I believe that a balanced diet, within the context of a comprehensively healthy lifestyle (one that includes all of the customary Super-8 principles), is the foundation of wellness, and longevity. I also believe that it is still possible to achieve a balanced dietary from traditional marketplace sources in most of the world. I emphasize “still possible” because (irrespective of soil condition) in cultures that rely heavily on industrially manipulated (processed) foods, it’s not as difficult to find the necessary nutrition as it is to find products that are not tainted with unnecessary (and potentially harmful) additives and the nearly clandestine processing adjuvants.

I am so sorry that there are many (too many) places in the world that cannot provide enough food to meet the daily energy needs of their population, let alone enough variety to provide a consistently balanced diet. In these places supplementation is a moot point. This is not God’s plan! We can look forward to His promise that in the new earth, all of His children will plant and eat, and that our days will be as the days of a tree.

Does all this mean that I am opposed to supplementation? No. I am not opposed to supplementation nor to supplements. I believe they are generally over marketed—shamefully so in some cases. Not everyone needs to take a vitamin C supplement, and a few should not

## *Present Truth*

do so! Over marketing aside, many supplements can be a blessing. Some may be of a short term benefit, others for longer terms, yet others are mere “snake oil” capitalizing on the placebo effect (which, by the way, can hold some degree of sway on up to two-thirds of the population).

Many reasons to consider supplementation exist: genetic dysfunction, malabsorptive problems, autoimmune syndromes, certain medical conditions and diseases, restrictive diets, drug interactions... and the list goes on. Much research shows that many of the manifestations of these conditions can be helped with food supplements as effectively as with pharmaceutical medicines, and with less undesirable effects (euphemistically called, “side-effects”). This is a strong reason always to consider supplementation as an effective alternative to drug therapy.

**My Big Two:** The two supplements I most frequently and consistently recommend are vitamin B12 and vitamin D3. Ok, we all know that vegetarians are at risk for vitamin B12—but why D3? Because you can’t get enough D3 from food to protect people from a long list of serious maladies which includes twelve types of cancers (including breast and prostate). I can hear you thinking, “God is too great to

make humans that need D3, then not provide a source that contains enough to satisfy their needs”. You are correct and so am I; we’ll prove this later.

In the next installment, we will focus on these two areas of concern, gaining more insights into the food processing industry and their specific dietary and social challenges.

**To be continued...**

Whether you have something to share, a question, comment, or suggestion, I am interested. You can interact with me by letter (see the return address) or by emailing [jim@presenttruth.info](mailto:jim@presenttruth.info). Come to the camp meeting in Florida this February and we can fellowship together.

*Blessings! JR*

|   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
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| A | G | O | D | L | Y |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| R | H | E |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | G |   |   |   |   |   |
| N | T | P |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   | O |   |   |   |   |   |
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*Answers to Last Month's Crossword Puzzle*

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