

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

May 2007

“Unto the church... which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ: Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers.” (1 Thessalonians 1:1, 2) The tragedies that we see taking place all around us should awake us to the fact that “The devil is come down unto you [who live on the earth], having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” (Revelation 12:12) This is good news and bad news. Good news that in a short time, the devil will be banished, and God’s people will be free from his temptations. Bad news to those who have not made it their highest priority to establish a close relationship with God so they can endure through the troubled times coming upon this world. I pray that you will find your refuge under the shadow of God’s protection. (Psalm 91)

The Judgment

by Lynnford Beachy

When Paul was brought before the governor, Felix, “he reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come.” (Acts 24:25)

Paul wrote, “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” (2 Corinthians 5:10) So, all of us will appear before the judgment seat of Christ, whether we are wicked or righteous. The Bible says, “God shall judge the righteous and the wicked.” (Ecclesiastes 3:17)

The judgment of the wicked

Paul asked, “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) The saints are going to judge the wicked and evil angels. But, what do they do in the judgment? In a judgment there are three phases; investigative, judicial, and executive. The investigative phase is when the evidence is examined. The judicial phase is when a verdict is given, and the executive phase is when the verdict is administered. In the Bible the word, “judgment” can refer to any, or all, of these three phases. The Bible says the saints will judge the world. Are the saints going to

administer the verdict? No! Are they going to decide whether the wicked will be saved or lost? No, for that decision will have already been made before the saints take part in the judgment. So what are they involved in? Investigating evidence!

Why would the righteous take part in the investigative judgment? When the Jewish leaders were planning how they could condemn Jesus, Nicodemus asked, “Doth our law judge any man, before it hear him, and know what he doeth?” In other words there has to be an investigation or the judgment cannot be fair or just. If you were called before a court of law and the judge said, “You are guilty, go to jail,” without investigating the case, would you be happy with the verdict? That’s what we call a “Kangaroo court.” It is a mock trial because no investigation has been made, and you may be innocent. To have a fair trial, there always has to be an investigation of the facts before the verdict.

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Fundamental Principles of Health page 7
by Curtis Kline

Waggoner on Romans (Part 14) page 8
by Ellet J. Waggoner

Upcoming Meetings in Your Area page 11

The timing of the judgment

God revealed to John when the righteous will investigate the evidence. John wrote, “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. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. 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 20:4-6) The Bible says that judgment is given unto the righteous during the thousand years. This is when the righteous will judge the wicked.

Why are the righteous involved?

When we get to heaven there will be many people there whom we had thought would not make it. There will also be people missing whom we thought would be there. The primary reason for the saints to take part in this judgment is to remove any possibility of doubt regarding God’s justice in the fate of the wicked. This time is given so each one of us will be fully and thoroughly satisfied that God’s decisions are right. That He is just in the final destruction of the wicked. We do have to completely depend upon Him now, and trust that His decisions are right, but “now we see through a glass, darkly;...” (1 Corinthians 13:12) Even if we are content to trust that God’s decisions are right, God is not content to leave us with any possibility of doubt regarding His character of love. He will use the thousand years to completely remove any possibility of doubt in any of our minds regarding His justice in the destruction of the wicked. It is only after this is complete, that God will destroy the wicked.

Let’s continue reading in Revelation 20.

“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, 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. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be

tormented day and night for ever and ever. And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:7-15)

Here we learn about a great white throne judgment that takes place at the end of the thousand years. This is the executive phase of the judgment of the wicked, where the verdict is given and the judgment is carried out. At this time all of God’s people are going to be perfectly content that God is right to do this. It is extremely important to God that all of His creation know, beyond a shadow of a doubt that He is right to destroy the wicked.

Jesus said, “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 7:21) That is why this investigation needs to take place. David confessed to God, “Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.” (Psalms 51:4) God is going to be clear when He judges. He wants to make sure that everyone understands that what He has decided is right.

Why is Satan alive today?

Satan was once a highly exalted angel in heaven, but he rebelled against God, and caused a lot of misery. (Isaiah 14:12-17; Ezekiel 28:12-19) God could have spared the universe a lot of trouble, pain, and suffering if he would have just destroyed this rebel from the beginning, or could He? If God would have destroyed Satan as soon as he rebelled, it would have made a way where sin could arise the second time. Some of the other angels would have said, “All Satan did was question God’s government, and share his concerns with others, and boom, God destroyed him. I don’t know if I can trust God anymore.” Much of the loyalty to God would be out of fear instead of love. This would leave the door open so that sin would rise again. But God promised that sin will never rise again. “What do ye imagine against the LORD? he will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.” (Nahum 1:9) God has

a tremendous task upon His hands to fulfill this promise. He has to make things 100% clear to everyone, to insure that sin will not come back. That is why Satan is still alive today, and that is why the saints are allowed to take part in the judgment of the wicked.

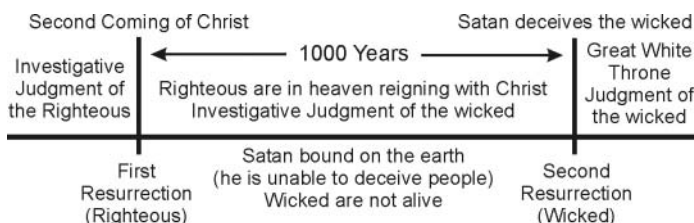
John wrote, "I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus." (Revelations 16:5) God is determined that each one of us will understand that He is righteous in what He is doing, even if we think that it is not necessary.

The judgment of the righteous

The Bible says that all of us have to appear before the judgment seat of Christ, every one of us. Are we going to appear before the judgment seat of Christ to answer for what we have done, after the thousand years, at that great white throne judgment? The Bible says "the dead, small and great, stand before God." (Revelation 20:12) The Bible is talking about "the rest of the dead" who "lived not again until the thousand years were finished." (v. 5) It is only the wicked who come before this great white throne judgment, the righteous do not have to appear there.

Ezekiel wrote, "If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die. None of his sins that he hath committed shall be mentioned unto him: he hath done that which is lawful and right; he shall surely live." (Ezekiel 33:15, 16) It is very clear that we are not going to be there after the thousand years answering for what we have done.

Peter wrote, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" (1 Peter 4:17) The judgment begins with the people of God.



Could the judgment of the righteous take place anywhere after the second coming of Christ? That would be impossible! When Christ comes back, who is He going to raise from the dead? The righteous! "The dead in Christ shall rise first." (1 Thessalonians 4:16) Any judgment of the righteous has to be completed before

Christ comes. The decisions regarding who will and who will not be saved will have to be finalized by that time.

John wrote of a time when Jesus will say, "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. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be." (Revelation 22:11, 12) There will be a time when whatever condition you are in you are going to be settled or sealed in that condition, whether you are righteous or wicked.

In any judgment there is an investigative phase, a judicial phase, and then the executive phase. It all has to happen in that order. Jesus said He is going to have His reward with Him when He comes. The Bible says, "We must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Corinthians 5:10) His reward is going to be with Him when He comes back to get us. That is the executive phase of the judgment of the righteous, which takes place at the second coming of Christ, so the investigative and judicial phases have to happen before that time. Not just for the living righteous but also for the dead.

Paul informed us, "Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after." (1 Timothy 5:24) If we confess our sins they go beforehand to judgment so we do not have to meet them again. You can stand before God as if you have never sinned. If that is your condition you will not have anything to answer for because in God's eyes you have never committed a sin. Isn't that wonderful? That is what God has done for us through Christ.

The investigative phase of the judgment of the righteous has to happen before the second coming of Christ. We are all going to have to stand before the judgment seat of Christ, but the righteous do not have to be physically present, because we have our High Priest mediating for us, and we have already sent our sins to Him. We have asked forgiveness for those sins and let Christ deal with them. He takes care of them before He comes back to get His people.

Who is this judgment for?

Is the investigative judgment of the righteous to benefit God so that He can review the evidence and say, "I want to take this one to heaven or that one?" Is it for God's benefit? Doesn't God know everything? He

knew before He created this world who was going to be saved and who was not. This investigative judgment is not to benefit God or Christ. Primarily it would have to be for the angels of God, who are very interested in what happens on this earth. Peter wrote of our salvation, “of which... the prophets have enquired and searched diligently,... which things the angels desire to look into.” (1 Peter 1:10-12) The angels are intently interested in everything regarding man. They are anxiously looking to see what will happen next.

Do the angels know everything? Do they know the end from the beginning? Definitely not! That is why this judgment is needed, to benefit the angels. Jesus said, “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 18:10) He is saying that every child has a guardian angel. I believe each one of us has a guardian angel. Do you think that my guardian angel knows my spiritual condition? Quite certainly! He knows whether I am right with God or not, he has been taking faithful records. When it comes time for us to go to heaven and my angel finds me either there or missing, do you think that he is going to have any question on whether God was right in allowing me or disallowing me into heaven? My guardian angel is going to be 100% satisfied that God’s decision concerning me is right, because he knows all the facts. He is not going to have any questions about me, but is my guardian angel going to have questions about you? The investigative phase of the judgment of the righteous is to benefit angels, and it is just as necessary for the saints to take part in the judgment of the wicked.

An Illustration

Suppose you are a president of an exclusive club who only allows members who are perfect, holy, and just, who have never sinned. One day you inform this club that you have just let in 50 murders, 30 thieves, extortionists, robbers, and all types of wicked people into this exclusive club. Do you think the people who are already members of the club would have some right to question your judgment in doing that? Wouldn’t they wonder why you are letting these people in?

The angels must be allowed the opportunity to investigate the evidence of why God is letting these people become their neighbors for all eternity. This judgment removes every possibility of doubt from the minds of all the angels, demonstrating that God is righteous and just in what He has done. If this doesn’t happen I don’t

believe the universe will be secure from sin arising the second time because it would leave room for doubt regarding God’s character. God’s character has been the issue from the beginning. Satan claims that God is no good, so God has to do everything He can to be open with everything He does. He has to make sure that charge is completely answered with no room for a shadow of doubt in anyone’s mind, including the angels.

By the time Jesus comes for His people, it is too late for the angels to make determinations about why God made those decisions because they will already be over with. In like manner, it is not going to do any good for the saints to judge the wicked after they are destroyed, so it has to happen before administering the verdict of the judgment.

“It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” (Hebrews 9:27) Judgment doesn’t take place until after the death of an individual. There are some exceptions to this, because the Bible says not all of us are going to die, such as Enoch, Elijah and those saints living when Christ returns, who will go to heaven without seeing death. The Bible doesn’t say specifically when the judgment takes place, it just says after they are dead. It could be a moment after they die, ten minutes later, two hours later, or a year later, it doesn’t say.

We read about the great white throne judgment of the wicked in Revelation 20. Now let’s look at another judgment scene in Revelation 4. John wrote, “After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.” (Revelation 4:1-3) This has to be God, the Father, for in the next chapter we are told that the Son of God approached the throne to take a book out of the hand of Him that sat on the throne. (Revelation 5:1, 6, 7)

John wrote, “I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.” (Revelation 5:11)

Daniel’s vision

Daniel chapter 7:1-8 is an account of four beasts that came up out of the sea. We know the first beast

represents Babylon, the next, Media Persia, then Greece, and the final beast represents Rome.

In the next verse Daniel wrote, “I beheld till the thrones were cast down [literally: ‘set up’], and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened.” (vs. 9, 10) This is very similar to John’s description in Revelation chapters 4-6. In both accounts thrones are set up, the Father sits on a throne, ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands stand before him, and books are opened. Revelation tells us clearly that this judgment takes place in heaven, and those before him are angels.

All of this makes this judgment distinct and separate from the great white throne judgment of Revelation 20. The great white throne judgment takes place on the earth, after the 1,000 years, and those standing before the throne are the wicked. The judgment of Revelation 4-6 and Daniel 7 takes place in heaven, before the 1,000 years, and those standing before the throne are a vast multitude of angels.

Let us notice the context Daniel gives to this judgment. The next verse says, “I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” (v. 11) Notice the order here: the Father sits down on His throne, all the angels are around Him, the judgment is set and the books are opened. Then the beast is slain.

When is the beast slain?

Revelation 19 is an account of the second coming of Jesus. At the end of the chapter we read, “The beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.” (Revelation 19:20)

The Bible says this beast, or antichrist power, performs wickedness until the second coming of Christ, when it is destroyed by the brightness of Christ’s coming. (2 Thessalonians 2:3-8) So, what we have here in Daniel 7 is a judgment scene that takes place before the second coming of Christ.

The same chronology is given again in Daniel 7:21, 22. Daniel said, “I beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them; Until the Ancient of days came, and judgment was given to the saints of the most High; and the time came that the saints possessed the kingdom.” The little horn persecuted the saints, then the Ancient of days commences a judgment, then judgment was given to the saints (or “in favor of the saints” NKJV), and some time after that, the saints possess the kingdom. Revelation 20 tells us that the saints live and reign with Christ for a thousand years, which commences at the second coming of Christ. This is when the saints receive the kingdom, for they cannot reign without a kingdom.

The same sequence is given again by Daniel in verses 25-27. The little horn, the papacy, “shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” (v. 25) Are the saints still given into his hands now? Basically his power was broken in 1798, when the pope was taken captive by Napoleon’s general Berthier, ending the Dark Ages. This ended this time prophecy of 1260 years.

Daniel continues, “But the judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.” (vs. 26, 27) Now we have a date to help pinpoint the starting of the judgment. Sometime after 1798 the judgment begins, afterward the little horn’s dominion is destroyed, and then the end comes, the end of that beastly power at the second coming of Christ. Finally, the saints possess the kingdom.

The same chronology is repeated three times, to solidify it in our minds. This judgment could not happen after the second coming of Christ.

White robes given

In John’s account of this judgment there is something very interesting. After the Father sits on His throne, Jesus approaches and takes a book out of His hand. Jesus begins to open the book, removing each of its seven seals. When He comes to the fifth seal, notice what happens:

“And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” (Revelation 6:9, 10)

Here righteous people are crying out to God for vengeance upon their murderers. We can be certain that these saints were not literally conscious and speaking, for the Bible says, “The dead know not anything.” (Ecclesiastes 9:5) Abel was the first person to be killed, and he was killed for the same reason as these saints. After Abel was killed, God said to his murderer, “The voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground.” (Genesis 4:10) Was Abel’s blood actually alive and talking? Certainly not! But the fact that He was murdered for standing up for God, demanded that justice be done. That is the same thing that is happening here. These souls that have been killed for God’s sake are crying out for justice. They are not alive and talking; they are dead.

Notice what happens next: “And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.” (v. 11)

Here it says that these souls were given white robes while they are dead, and they are told to “rest yet for a little season until... their brethren... should be killed as they were.” Is this before or after the second coming of Christ? It would have to be before, because at the second coming of Christ it says “this mortal must put on immortality.” (1 Corinthians 15:53) Will any saints die after the second coming of Christ? It’s not going to happen. So this scene has to happen before the second coming of Christ.

These dead saints are given white robes. This is the robe that ensures they will be able to enter into heaven. (Revelation 19:8) This is a judgment given in favor of dead saints. Afterward, they are told to rest for a “little season.” That is the only time period we are given. At the end of that “little season” they are awaken from their rest from the dead.


There is a little season from the time that a verdict is given in favor of these dead saints until the second coming of Christ. So, this public judgment takes place in heaven a short time before the second coming of Christ and it pertains to the righteous, not the wicked.

Do you think we are within that “little season” before the second coming of Christ right now? It is very possible, isn’t it?

In Daniel chapter 7 we saw that the judgment sits after the “time and times and dividing of times (a year, two years, and a half a year; 3 1/2 years, or 1,260 prophetic years).” We understand, if we research history, that the 1,260 years was during the time of papal dominance and persecution, from 538 A.D. to 1798 A.D. Now we have a time period. Sometime after 1798 is when this judgment begins. In Revelation it is called “a little season.” From a study of Daniel, chapters 8 and 9, I believe that this judgment began with the close of the 2,300 year prophecy of Daniel 8:14, in the fall of 1844. (For a thorough study on this topic, please request the article entitled, “The Prophecies of Daniel 8 and 9” in the October 2002 issue of *Present Truth*.)

Those who are gathered at this judgment are angels, who are earnestly and intently looking to see what is going to happen next. I am very thankful that this judgment is going on right now because that means I am not going to have to answer for my own sins. They can go beforehand to judgment. They can be dealt with before Christ comes so that my sins will not be mentioned unto me again. Isn’t that wonderful! All of our sins, no matter what we have done, if we confess our sins then they can go beforehand to judgment. We will not have to face them again, ever. God says that He will remember our sins no more, and we will not have to remember them any more either.

If you have not given your life to the LORD I want to encourage you to do that now. Paul reasoned with Felix of righteousness, temperance and judgment to come. We can take part in the judgment of the righteous, going on right now, or we can take part in the judgment of the wicked that takes place after the 1,000 years, it is our choice. Every one of us is going to be in one of these judgments, and I want to be part of the first one, because then I will be part of the first resurrection. We can ask God to forgive our sins and He will take care of them right away, beforehand.

God is performing a work in our behalf to prepare this universe to live for eternity without sin ever rising a second time. Won’t you be part of that wonderful plan? If you have not asked God to take your sins away, I pray that you will do that right now, ask Him into your heart. You will never be sorry that you did. 

Fundamental Principles of Health

by Curtis Kline

Hopefully by now we all see that we have a responsibility from God Himself to take care of and maintain the wonderful bodies that He has entrusted us with. Although these are not the bodies that we will have in heaven, these are the bodies that we will hopefully be sanctified in, and these are the bodies and minds that God will speak to His end-time people in. So now that we have already stressed in the past the importance of maintaining our bodies in as pure of a condition as possible, let us look at the ways we can accomplish this.

I believe one of the greatest pitfalls that come from modern western medicine is the symptomatic approach to treating sickness and disease. In all my experience, this is a very poor method of maintaining health or treating illness. Somehow man, in all his pride, has come to the conclusion that he can “treat illness.” Let us reestablish two fundamental principles in health. One is that true health is achieved through preventative measures. And the other is that if health is compromised in any way “The body heals itself” (under proper circumstances, of course).

In His supreme foreknowledge, God has designed our bodies in such a way that whenever a state of perfect health has been compromised our bodies not only compensate for the violation, but also make an effort to return to optimal health or homeostasis. When you look at the complex function and adaptability of our immune systems you see a true example of a tool God has provided us with to live without compromised health. Under optimal circumstances, anytime health has been infringed upon through injury, trauma, or toxic exposure our bodies make a valiant effort to correct the situation. As a matter of fact, God has created us in such a marvelous way that if a return to optimal health cannot be established our bodies will compensate as much as possible to function as well as possible under the given circumstances. Our bodies are even designed with an built-in mechanism that can prioritize conditions and act accordingly. Truly, as the psalmist stated, “We are fearfully and wonderfully made.” (Psalm 139:14)


You may be wondering by now, “If the body is such a wonderful and complex organism why is every degenerative disease and chronic illness in the United States on the rise in epidemic proportions? Surely, if God provided us with such a marvelous body we should be enjoying a state of health far superior than we do.” As we

look at the world we live in with all the crime, pollution, and suffering we can understand, by faith, that this is not God’s plan for this planet, but rather this is Satan working out his government on this earth. Through the minds and actions of those under his control, Satan forwards his evil ways along with all its baleful consequences. God truly has absolutely no part in the evil of this world apart from the fact that in His sovereignty he allows it to play out so one day His character can be ultimately vindicated throughout the universe.

Now the reason I bring this up is because these principles translate over into the world of health and healing. As we look at the character of God through the life of His Son, Jesus Christ, we see that He never had any part in making anyone sick, or sinful for that matter. As a matter of fact, He spent almost all of His time healing those who have been touched by the hand of sickness or disease.

My friend, in closing, let us understand that Satan is the author of sickness, suffering, disease, and sin. God and His Son are working to counteract the effects of his work throughout the earth. So the more heaven-indicted information we obtain concerning the cause and effect relationship of sickness and health and the immutable health laws that God has scripted into every cell of our body, the more we will be prepared to put our own condition, and also our influence, on the side of health, peace and happiness, instead of sin, sickness and death.

Beginning next month, we will look at some of the ways and concepts Satan is using to keep us in sickness, suffering, disease, and spiritual lethargy. We will also look at some of the truly wonderful ways that God is working to counteract and restore us to what His original intention for man was before the fall. Until then let us remember this:

“What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” (1 Corinthians 6:19) 

(The above article was provided by Curtis Kline, Director of Bible Health Solutions. For more in-depth information he can be contacted at (814) 724-4316 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)

WAGGONER ON ROMANS—THE GOSPEL IN PAUL'S GREAT LETTER (PART 14)

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)

MARRIED TO THE WRONG MAN

Chapter 7

The seventh chapter of Romans is really all contained in the sixth. He who understands the sixth chapter will have no difficulty with the seventh. By Christ's obedience we are made righteous. This is because His life is now given to us, and He lives in us.

This union with Christ we get by being crucified with Him. In that death the body of sin is destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin, or, in other words, that we should no more transgress the law. So closely are we identified with sin, it being our very life, that it can not be destroyed without our dying. But in Christ there is no sin, so that while we have a resurrection with Him, sin remains dead. So, being raised with Him, we live with Him, a thing that was formerly impossible on account of sin; sin can not dwell with Him.

A Striking Illustration Romans 7:1-7

Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring

forth fruit unto God. For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.

The Illustration—It is a very simple one, and one which every one can understand. The law of God says of man and woman, "They two shall be one flesh." (Ephesians 5:31) It is adultery for either one to be married to another while the other is living. The law will not sanction such a union.

For reasons that will appear later, the illustration cites only the case of a woman leaving her husband. The law unites them. That law holds the woman to the man as long as he lives. If while her husband lives she shall be united to another man, she will find herself under the condemnation of the law. But if her husband dies, she may be united to another, and be perfectly free from any condemnation.

The woman is then "free from the law," although the law has not changed in one particular. Least of all has it been abolished; for the same law that bound her to the first husband and which condemned her for uniting with another in his lifetime, now unites her to another and binds her to him as closely as it did to the first. If we hold to this simple illustration, we shall have no difficulty with what follows.

The Application—As in the illustration there are four subjects the law, the woman, the first husband, and the second husband so also in the application.

We are represented as the woman. This is clear from the statement that we are "married to another,

even to him who is raised from the dead," which is Christ. He therefore is the second husband. The first husband is indicated in verse 5: "When we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." Death is the fruit of sin. The first husband, therefore, was the flesh, or "the body of sin."

"Dead to the Law"—This is the expression that troubles so many. There is nothing troublesome in it, if we but keep in mind the illustration and the nature of the parties to this transaction. Why are we dead to the law? In order that we might be married to another. But how is it that we become dead in order to be married to another? In the illustration it is the first husband that dies before the woman may be married to another. Even so it is here, as we shall see.

"One Flesh"—The law of marriage is that the two parties to it "shall be one flesh." How is it in this case? The first husband is the flesh, the body of sin. Well, we were truly one flesh with that. We were by nature perfectly united to sin. It was our life. It controlled us. Whatever sin devised, that we did. We might have done it unwillingly at times, but we did it nevertheless. Sin reigned in our mortal bodies, so that we obeyed it in the lusts thereof. Whatever sin wished, was law to us. We were one flesh.

Seeking a Divorce—There comes a time in our experience when we wish to be free from sin. It is when we see something of the beauty of holiness. With some people the desire is only occasional; with others it is more constant. Whether they recognize the fact or not, it is Christ appealing to them to forsake sin, and to be joined to Him, to live with Him. And so they endeavor to effect a separation. But sin will not consent. In spite of all that we can do, it still clings to us. We are "one flesh," and it is a union for life

since it is a union of our life to sin. There is no divorce in that marriage.

Freedom in Death—There is no hope of effecting a separation from sin by any ordinary means. No matter how much we may desire to be united to Christ, it can not be done while we are joined to sin; for the law will not sanction such a union, and Christ will not enter into any union that is not lawful.

If we could only get sin to die, we should be free, but it will not die. There is only one way for us to be freed from the hateful union, and that is for us to die. If we wish freedom so much that we are willing [for self] to be crucified, then it may be done. In death the separation is effected; for it is by the body of Christ that “we” become dead. We are crucified with him. The body of sin is also crucified. But while the body of sin is destroyed, we have a resurrection in Christ. The same thing that frees us from the first husband, unites us to the second.

A New Creature—Now we see how it is that we are dead to the law. We died in Christ, and were raised in Him. But “if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature; old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:17, 18) Now we may be united to Christ, and the law will witness to the union, and sanction it. For not only is the first husband dead, but we also died, so that, although alive, we are not the same creature that we were before. “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” (Galatians 2:20) We are one. The same law that formerly declared us to be sinners now binds us to Christ.

A Different Service—Now that the union with Christ has been effected, we serve in newness of spirit and not in the oldness of the letter. In marriage, the woman is to be subject to the husband. So when we were united to sin, we were in all things subject to sin. For a time it was willing service; but when we saw the Lord, and were drawn to Him, the service became irksome. We tried to keep

God’s law, but were bound, and could not. But now we are set free. Sin no longer restrains us, and our service is freedom. We gladly render to Christ all the service that the law requires of us. We render this service because of the perfect union between us. His life is ours, since we were raised only by the power of His life. Therefore our obedience is simply His loyalty and faithfulness in us.

Sin by the Law—The apostle says that when we were in the flesh, “the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death.” What shall we say then? Is the law sin? Far from it. The law is righteousness. But it is only by the law that sin is known. “Sin is not imputed when there is no law.” “The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law.” (1 Corinthians 15:56) “Sin is the transgression of the law.” So there can be no sin but by the law. But the law is not sin; for if it were, it would not reprove sin. To convince of sin is the work of the Spirit of God, and not of Satan. He would make us believe that sin is right.

“Thou Shalt Not Covet”—It once seemed very strange that the apostle should have quoted only this one commandment as the one that convicted him of sin. But the reason is plain. It was because this one includes every other. We learn (Colossians 3:5) that covetousness is idolatry. Thus the law ends just where it begins. It is a complete circle, including every duty of every person in the universe. “I had not known lust,” or unlawful desire, “except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet.” Now lust is the beginning of every sin, for “when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin.” (James 1:15. And sin is the transgression of the law.

But the tenth commandment is that one which forbids lust or unlawful desire. Therefore, if it is perfectly kept, all the others must be. And if it is not kept, no part of the law is kept. So we see that in quoting the tenth commandment as that which convinced him of sin, the apostle really included the whole law.

Living with Him—Before leaving this portion we must call attention to the force of the eighth verse of chapter 6: “Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.” We can see how apt this is when we know that it is our death with Christ that frees us from the union with the monster sin, and unites us in marriage to Christ. People get married in order to live together. So we become united to Christ in order that we may live with him here and in the world to come. If we would live with him in the world to come, we must live with him in this world.

In the first seven verses of the seventh chapter of Romans we have had the relation which we by nature sustain to sin, and which by grace we afterwards sustain to Christ, represented under the figure of marriage to a first and second husband. The union with the second husband can not take place while the first husband is living; and in this case the marriage is so perfect, the two parties being literally one flesh and blood, that one can not die without the other; therefore we must needs die with sin, before we can be separated from it.

But we die in Christ, and as he lives, although he was dead, we also live with him. But in his life there is no sin, and so the body of sin is destroyed, while we are raised. Thus in death we are separated from the first husband, sin, and united to the second husband, Christ.

In the verses which follow the apostle has pictured the struggle with the sin that has become distasteful. It is really an enlargement of that which has been presented in the first verses:

The Struggle for Freedom—Romans 7:8-25

But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the

commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.

For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Sin Personified—It will be noticed that in this entire chapter sin is represented as a person. It is the first husband to which we are united. But the union has become distasteful, because, having seen Christ and having been drawn to him by his love, we have seen that we were joined to a monster. The marriage bond has become a galling yoke, and our whole thought is how to get away from the monster to which we are united and which is dragging us down to a certain death. The picture presented in this chapter is one of the most vivid in the whole Bible.

The Strength of Sin—"The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law." (1 Corinthians 15:56. "Without the law sin was dead." "Sin is not imputed when there is no law." "Where no law is, there is no transgression." So it is that "sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence." Sin is simply the law transgressed, "for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4. Sin has no strength, therefore, except that which it gets from the law. The law is not sin, and yet it binds us to sin, that is, the law witnesses to the sin and will not grant us any escape, simply because it can not bear false witness.

The "Law of Life," and the "Law of Death"—"The commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death." The law of God is the life of God. "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matthew 5:48. His life is the rule for all his creatures. Those in whom the life of God is made perfectly manifest, keep his law. It is very evident therefore that the design of the law is life, since it is life itself. But the opposite of life is death. Therefore when the law is transgressed, it is death to the transgressor.

The Deadly Enemy—"For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." It is not the law that is the enemy, but the enemy is sin. Sin does the killing, for "the sting of death is sin." Sin has the poison of death in it. Sin deceived us so that for a time we thought that it was our friend, and we embraced it and delighted in the union. But when the law enlightened us, we found that sin's embrace was the embrace of death.

The Law Cleared—The law pointed out the fact that sin was killing us. "Therefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." We have no more reason to rail at the law than we have to hate the man who tells us that the substance which we are eating, thinking it to be food, is poison. He is our friend. He would not be our friend if he did not

show us our danger. The fact that he is not able to heal the illness that the poison already eaten has caused does not make him any the less our friend. He has warned us of our danger, and we can now get help from the physician. And so, after all, the law itself was not death to us, but its office was "that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful."

"The Law Is Spiritual"—"For we know that the law is spiritual." If this fact were more generally recognized, there would be much less religious legislation among so-called Christian nations. People would not try to enforce the commandments of God. Since the law is spiritual, it can be obeyed only by the power of the Spirit of God. "God is Spirit" (John 4:24); therefore the law is the nature of God. Spiritual is opposed to carnal, or fleshly. Thus it is that the man who is in the flesh can not please God.

A Slave—"But I am carnal, sold under sin." One who is sold is a slave; and the evidence of the slavery in this instance is very plain. Free men do that which they wish to do. Only slaves do that which they do not wish to do, and are continually prevented from doing what they wish to do. "For that which I do, I allow not; for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I." A more disagreeable position can not be imagined. Life in such a state can be only a burden.

Convicted, but Not Converted—"If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good." The fact that we do not wish to do the sins that we are committing shows that we acknowledge the righteousness of the law which forbids them. But conviction is not conversion, although a very necessary step to that condition. It is not enough to wish to do right. The blessing is pronounced upon those who do his commandments, and not upon those who wish to do them, or who even try to do them. Indeed, if there were no higher position for a professed follower of the Lord than that described in these verses, he would be in a far worse condition than the

careless sinner. Both are slaves, only the latter is so hardened that he finds pleasure in his slavery.

Now if one must all his life be a slave, it is better for him to be unconscious of his bondage than to be continually fretting over it. But there is something better; therefore it is a blessing that we are convicted of sin, and that our slavery is thereby made as disagreeable as possible.

Two "Laws"—"I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members." Compare this with verse 5.

Remember also that all this is written to them that know the law. It is not addressed to the heathen who have not the law, but to those who profess to know God. While knowing the law, we are united in marriage to sin. This sin is in our flesh, since they who are married are one flesh. It is the law that witnesses to the fact that we are sinners, and that will not grant us any escape from it. But we are slaves. Whosoever commits sin is the slave of sin. John 8:34. Therefore it is that the law that will not let us be anything but what we are, is really holding us in bondage. While we are in that condition, it is not to us a law of liberty.

A Body of Death—We are joined in marriage to sin. But sin has in it death; for "the sting of death is sin." Sin is that with which death kills us. Therefore the body of sin, to which we are joined when in the flesh, is but a body of death. What a terrible condition! Joined in such close union that we are one flesh with that which is in itself death. A living death!

And "the strength of sin is the law." It witnesses to our union, and thus holds us in that bondage of death. If there were no hope of escape, we might curse the law for not allowing us to die in ignorance. But although the law seems to be pitiless, it is nevertheless our best friend. It holds us to a sense of the dreadfulness of our

bondage until in anguish we cry out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We must be delivered, or we perish.

There Is a Deliverer. The pagan proverb has it that God helps those who help themselves. The truth is that God helps those who can not help themselves: "I was brought low, and

Upcoming Meetings in Your Area

Here is the currently-planned 2007 itinerary for Lynnford Beachy:

May 4, 5 . . . Cottonwood, Arizona, contact Loni Meyer, 928-300-6360.

May 11, 12 . Moab, Utah, contact Doug Carroll, 435-259-6380.

May 18, 19 . Riverton, Wyoming, contact Andy Whitehurst, 307-840-3213.

May 25, 26 . Kansas City, Kansas, contact Tim Kritzell, (913) 626-2683.

June 1, 2 . . . Indianapolis, Indiana, contact Oscar Cortez, 317-243-8754.

June 12-16 . West Virginia Camp Meeting at Smyrna, 304-732-9204.

July 6, 7 . . . Cleveland, Ohio, contact Willis Smith, 216-271-9045.

July 11-15 . Northwestern Pennsylvania Camp Meeting, contact Calvin Bickel, 814-676-8660.

July 20, 21 . Cadillac, Michigan, contact Rick Jaroh, 231-862-3344.

July 27, 28 . Wilson, Michigan (UP), contact Jim Pierce, 906-639-2166.

Aug. 3, 4 . . . Bemidji, Minnesota, contact Bob Talios, 352-219-8503.


Aug. 17, 18 . Eureka, Montana, contact Colette Konschuh, 406-889-3242.

Sep. 1 Wenatchee, Washington, contact Eldon Noyes, 509-782-3192.

Sep. 15 Ontario, Oregon (in a prison), contact Lynnford Beachy, 304-633-5411 (Cingular Cell Phone).

Sep. 28-Oct. 1 . Rainier, Oregon Camp Meeting, contact Kristen Dreyer, 503-556-4190.

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. If you would like to host meetings in your area, please contact us. (See contact information on page 12).

Many of these meetings will be broadcast live over the Internet and by telephone conference. To listen to these sermons go to www.skype.com, download and install the free software, then click on the "Explore the skypecasts directory" link on the Skype homepage. You will see a list of all of the skypecasts available at that particular time. You can also check those "Starting soon," in case you arrive early. Look for the broadcast entitled "God's Love on Trial." Often we will be broadcasting at seven o'clock Friday evening, eleven o'clock Sabbath morning, and Sabbath afternoon and evening at three and seven o'clock. (These are local times for wherever I am scheduled to speak, currently mountain time. You can also call from any phone (long distance charges may apply). **In the US call: 605-475-8500**, Austria: 0820 4000 1572, Belgium: 070 35 9987, Spain: 0902 88 60 48, Switzerland: 0848 560 152, Ireland: 0818 270 032, Italy: 0848 390 172, France: 0826 100 275, Germany: 01805 00 76 46, Australia: 283 078 824, UK: 0870 738 0760. You will be prompted to dial this room number: **5225823**. You can dial directly from Skype at: +99008275225823. (When you use Skype, it is a free call from anywhere in the world.) I often will be broadcasting using my cell phone, and while I am still able to broadcast our meetings over the Internet, they will not be listed in the Skype directory unless someone can help me do this. **If you have a highspeed Internet connection, and would like to help with these broadcasts, please let me know (you do not need to be at the meetings to help).** You can call me at 304-633-5411. 

he helped me.” No one ever cries in vain for help. When the cry goes up for help, the Deliverer is at hand; and so, although sin is working death in us by all the power of the law, we may exclaim, “Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:57. “There shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.” (Romans 11:26. “Unto you first God, having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities.” (Acts 3:26. “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.”

A Divided Man—“So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.” That is, of course, while in the condition described in the preceding verses. In purpose he serves the law of God, but in actual practice he serves the law of sin. As described in another place, “The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye can not do the things that ye would.”

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(Galatians 5:17. It is not a state of actual service to God, because we read in our next chapter that “they that are in the flesh can not please God.” It is a state from which one may well pray to be delivered, so that he can serve the Lord not merely with the mind, but with his whole being. “The very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it.” (1 Thessalonians 5:23, 24) **(To be continued)**

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