

The Good News

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THE CHURCH OF GOD

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JUNE, 1961

A Joyous PENTECOST

*Thousands observed the Day of Pentecost around the world in
GOD'S Church. God's work is growing in every direction—
and SEVEN nation-wide baptizing tours are scheduled!*

by Roderick C. Meredith

“AND when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place” (Acts 2:1).

The recent joyous observance of Pentecost by literally thousands of brethren around this earth was certainly “with one accord” as it was in apostolic days! Although this time—as it was in the days of Paul when Pentecost was observed at Ephesus (I Cor. 16:8) as well as other major centers—the observance of this Festival was held *on several continents* in various cities.

Mr. Armstrong at New York City

After spending the first part of the three-day Festival with the London church on the weekly Sabbath, Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong flew on Sunday to New York City to be with God's Church there for the Day of Pentecost. He was returning to this country anyway for a much-needed visit to important radio stations, and so planned to spend this Holy Day with God's Church in America's largest city.

The pastor of the New York City church, Mr. Carlton Smith, reports: “Again I am happy to report the greatest Holy Day Festival ever held in this great city! There were 293 adults and 118 children, representing ten states plus Canada and Washington, D.C., in attendance. This was by far the greatest number of God's people ever assembled in New York City in the Philadelphia era of God's Church.

“Not only was it the greatest Festival observed here attendance-wise; but most

important of all, it was, I sincerely feel, the most profitable, spiritually speaking. Everyone just seemed to be bubbling over with enthusiasm, warmth and joy. Mr. Herbert W. Armstrong, whom we were very happy to have with us, said that this church is the ‘handshakingest’ group he had ever seen. Also, we were overjoyed to see and hear Mr. Armstrong in person, and a number commented to me after the services as to how much they had been inspired by his messages ‘to really do more’ in the way of spiritual progress. So, it certainly was a ‘shot-in-the-arm’ for the entire church to have Mr. Armstrong with us again for the second time since the church was started in November of 1959. I hope that this shot will last until he can return to give us another one.

“In the way of physical enjoyment we, of course, had the physical feast during the interim between the morning and afternoon services. Everyone partook of and enjoyed the delicious and healthful food prepared by God's people as only God's people can prepare it. Not only were we able to please the palate with good food, but also the ears were soothed, during the afternoon services, by a couple of beautiful and melodic songs, the 1st and 117th Psalms set to music by our own Mr. Leo Bogdanchik. Mr. Bogdanchik has studied music the greater part of his life under private instructors and now has his own music studio where he teaches piano, accordion and other instruments as his profession. However, his specialty for his own likes is the organ. He is now enthusi-

astically engaged in setting other songs to music. Oh, yes, I want to say that the two above-mentioned songs were sung by our sextet made up of Messrs. Calvin and Raymond Mickens and their wives, plus Mr. and Mrs. Zac Challenger. It appears that we have a great deal of musical talent plus talent in many other fields here in New York.

“To illustrate just how much God really does want those who sincerely seek and obey His Commandments to enjoy and profit from the services, first let me tell you what occurred to one of our faithful women during Pentecost. Mrs. Charles Nickel, shortly after the morning service ended, was stricken suddenly with severe cramps and upset stomach. She was very sick and felt very bad. Her husband came over and asked me to anoint her, which I did. After the afternoon service had ended, she came to me and told me that as soon as we had come out of the little room that the pains in her body disappeared and that she was able to enjoy and profit from the afternoon service which I had asked God to make possible. Yes, God is a merciful God and He is very much concerned for His children as we have seen evidenced here many times.

“So, all in all, this was a most enjoyable and profitable Holy Day. Much enthusiasm was generated and all went away looking forward to the next one as usual.”

Overseas Observance

Mr. Gerald Waterhouse reports from

God's Church in Sydney, Australia, that they observed a wonderful Pentecost Festival. Mr. Waterhouse and Mr. Tony Hammer conducted an entire three-day Festival there with morning and afternoon preaching services each day. About 100 brethren were in attendance for the Festival from all parts of Australia—some having to travel many miles to be there.

Since new radio stations are now being added in "the land down under" God's work there should soon be BOOMING more than ever!

Many of you brethren will be happy to learn that we are now planning to send Mr. and Mrs. Frank Simpkins to Australia to help in the work there soon after college graduation this June. Mr. Simpkins is from near Neosho, Missouri, and is now graduating from Ambassador College. His wife, the former Bernice Stover, is a very faithful and dedicated maid-servant of Jesus Christ, and it is felt that this couple will add much to the work in Australia where so much growth is taking place.

Our congratulations and our prayers go with Mr. and Mrs. Frank Simpkins!

Reports are still incomplete from the British Isles regarding the observance of Pentecost there, but we do know that a large Festival was held with God's Church in London, England. About 150 brethren were in attendance, plus many others in the outlying churches. As reported earlier, Mr. Herbert Armstrong was there over the weekly Sabbath before flying back to New York Sunday. After his departure, Mr. Raymond McNair remained to conduct the services on the Day of Pentecost for God's Church in "Ephraim."

From the far away Philippine Islands, Mr. Pedro Ortiguero reports that 853 observed the Day of Pentecost there in the Philippines. Many people have been attracted by the preaching of God's truth in this far-away land, and are beginning to meet with God's Church and learn many things on His Holy Days. May our thoughts and prayers be with them!

Pentecost at Chicago

A three-day Pentecost Festival was held in Chicago with Mr. Herman L. Hoeh flying there from Pasadena to assist the local pastor, Mr. Dean Blackwell, in conducting services there for over 1100 people!

Mr. Blackwell sends the following report: "A warm, enthusiastic 1104 people rejoiced before God in the commemoration of the founding of God's Church 1930 years ago. Wonderful improvement was noticed in the special music by the Chicago chorale as well as the soloists.

"Mrs. Viola Peets is to be commended on her persistently near-flawless job of

managing the meals. Thanks also go to her helpers for the meals and service. In obedience to God's injunction that we rise up before the 'hoary head,' the older people always go through the food line first.

"A very enjoyable time of social fellowship was held on Saturday night. Among our colored brethren, under Mr. Elisha Crim's supervision, and among the other brethren with Mr. John Bald as Master of Ceremonies. Mr. Peets, the husband of Mrs. Peets and an interested friend of the church, cordially provided us with his personal band. Educational movies of God's creation were enjoyed by those 12 years old and under and a nursery was provided for the smaller children by Mrs. Cornelia Henderson, a Chicago church grandmother herself.

"Attendance at the all-day services on Sabbath and Sunday was 665 and 455 respectively. Everything was run very smoothly as the result of an outstanding job done by a very capable group of deacons. Additional rejoicing occurred as many new brothers and sisters were added to our spiritual family.

"Other recent cause for rejoicing took place on the Sabbath of May 6 when we were blessed in Chicago and Bloomington by the addition of two new deacons in God's service. In Chicago, Mr. Martin Filippello, a very yielded, zealous Italian member of God's Church was elevated to greater service for his brethren. His lively, helpful wife adds to his service and potential as well as being truly an helpmeet for him. This raises the Chicago group of special servants to an unusual six consisting of two Germans, Mr. Joseph Schlitt and Mr. Raymond Roenspies; two Russians, Mr. John Kreidich and Mr. Joseph Tkach; our colored deacon, Mr. Elisha Crim; and our new Italian deacon, Mr. Filippello.

"The very first deacon for the Bloomington church was ordained on the same Sabbath by Mr. Hal Baird and me. Mr. Gene Dawson, who has shown great zeal and yieldedness in God's Church, was readily recognized as qualified by all but himself.

"Having driven over 100 miles to church in El Paso for over two years in order to assemble to learn and help the newer brothers, Mr. Dawson pursued the path of higher service to others. He is helped by a very warm and spiritually growing wife, and two small daughters who will add experience in management and patience."

Pentecost at Gladewater and Pasadena

Flying back to Texas by 707 Jet, I was privileged to be at our own big tabernacle at Gladewater, Texas to join Mr. Kenneth Swisher—the local minister—

in conducting services during the three-day Pentecost Festival. Beginning with a Bible study on Friday night, five preaching services and two Bible studies were held during the three day period.

Mr. Swisher and I were assisted in conducting these services by Mr. Frank Wilson—who led the singing, and by Mr. Cecil Battles—who brought two sermons. Also, a very *special* treat was given all of us when the Gladewater Imperial High School Chorus rendered two special selections on the Day of Pentecost during the final afternoon service. This group of young singers was led by Mr. Richard Ricc, teacher in the Imperial School, and they sang beautifully and feelingly.

The theme of the sermons was on resisting the spirit of Satan and his demons, and on being filled with the Spirit of Almighty God. On the Day of Pentecost itself, well over 1,000 were in attendance and enjoyed a wonderful day of feasting and fellowship on the beautiful tabernacle grounds as well as in the preaching services themselves.

At Pasadena headquarters church, over 900 brethren assembled for the Feast of Pentecost—plus hundreds of others in other nearby local churches in the Los Angeles area. The preaching services in Pasadena were conducted by Mr. Garner Ted Armstrong assisted by Mr. Wayne Cole. The theme was on *knowing* the power of God and His Spirit.

God granted a beautiful day, and a wonderful feast was held out-of-doors on our own lovely Ambassador College campus grounds.

Elsewhere in the Los Angeles area, the Los Angeles and Long Beach churches met together at Gardena under the direction of Dr. Zimmerman—head of the Letter Answering Department—and Mr. Frank McCrady. Over 300 brethren joined in this service, and experienced a fine festival both spiritually and physically.

In the Sherman Oaks Church of God, about 120 brethren attended. The preaching services were conducted by Mr. Norman Smith and Mr. Selmer Hegvold.

In Redlands, California, about 125 members of the Redlands church attended Pentecost services conducted by Mr. Charles Dorothy and Mr. Al Dennis, local elder.

In Temple City, about 130 were in attendance on the Day of Pentecost. The preaching services there were conducted by Mr. Jon Hill, local pastor, and Mr. Arthur Mocarow, formerly from the Chicago church and now a zealous student in Ambassador College.

Further south, the San Diego Church of God assembled for a splendid Pentecost Festival under the direction of a visiting minister, Mr. Leroy Neff, and their

local elder, Mr. Don Billingsley. After an inspiring sermon in the morning on the meaning of the Day of Pentecost, an enjoyable feast was held in a nearby park followed by a Bible study. During the morning preaching service, about 175 were in attendance and Mrs. Dau sang a special number, "The Holy City."

Central California Observance

Mr. Ronald Kelly reports on the Pentecost festival in Central California:

"Both the Sacramento and Fresno churches met in Modesto, California, to observe the recent Day of Pentecost. Over 4:30 packed the American Legion Hall to once again review and learn more about *the very purpose* for which we humans are here — to be **FIRSTFRUITS** in God's plan of salvation! This large crowd shows how growth in California continues.

"The church in Sacramento now has over 200 attending **EVERY WEEK!** Many zealous new families drive over from many miles on all sides of Sacramento to be with God's people each week. And there is **EVEN BIGGER GROWTH** expected this summer. *Many scores* have written in to be baptized and will be contacted during the summer months. This, no doubt, will result in a great increase.

"During the wonderful Feast of Pentecost, the members of both churches became better acquainted with each other while we all enjoyed one of the **FINEST MEALS** ever displayed on tables. *Delicious* salads and decorated desserts were the highlights!

"Many who have just begun to keep the Feast have found that it is **NOT** a *yoke of bondage* as they once thought! Instead, they have never *enjoyed* anything so much in all their lives! Friends and relatives shake their heads in amazement that we would keep *God's laws*. But they never once have known what a **REAL BLESSING** it is — and just think, *not one* of them knows the very purpose God is working out here below!

"Mr. Carl McNair and Mr. Eugene Walters, who will travel together this summer on a nation-wide baptizing tour, were in Modesto to assist with the preaching and special music. Mr. McNair gave a very powerful sermon on just what the Holy Spirit is and how God sent it on the Day of Pentecost 1931 years ago. He showed how it provides the strength which enables us to fulfill God's purpose now. Mr. Walters played the piano for an inspiring song service and we all enjoyed his special music selections.

"The brethren in both churches now look forward to meeting together in September for the Feast of Trumpets if God wills.

"While we have much good news, there are still trials we must endure.

Unemployment in California is still extremely high! Several of God's people are out of work and we here would appreciate it very much if others from around the world would *fervently pray* about this! Since we last wrote many have found jobs, but still more need to be employed to have a part actively supporting **GOD'S WORK** with tithes and offerings.

"Many miraculous events take place for those who are *obeying* and *trusting* God! But perhaps one of the greatest blessings is the joy of bringing new life into the world. God's church, known for its big Bibles and many children, continues to be blessed by having their quivers full (Psalm 127:5).

"Most recent additions here were Timothy D'Amelio and Tommy Dickman. Young Tommy is the surprise bouncing baby boy — the sixth — the sixth boy — he has no sisters! Mr. and Mrs. Dickman add greatly to the church attendance, leading the stair-stepping boys into an entire row of chairs to attend church.

"When Timothy was born God performed another miraculous birth. Being delivered feet first was a real problem — but the real miracle was that he didn't breathe for *45 full minutes* after birth. Using only mouth-to-mouth respiration, the doctor admitted the miracle that God performed in allowing the baby to live.

"We all rejoice in God's blessing. We pray this Good News will encourage all of you as it has all of us in California."

Pentecost Services in Denver

The three day services for Pentecost, held this year at the Arapahoe Fair Grounds just outside of Denver, were a vital blessing for God's people in Colorado and adjoining areas.

Mr. Al Portune from Pasadena, joined Mr. Burk McNair, pastor of the Denver and Pueblo churches, for the three *all-day* services. The underlying theme of the sermons was certainly to inspire and encourage God's people. Many expressed how much nearer they were to God and how much more real God seemed to them. Mr. Bill Quillen — deacon from the Pueblo, Colorado church — gave several fine sermonettes.

The women of the Colorado churches outdid themselves in preparing delicious and unusual dishes for the noon meals. There was an abundance of fine food and everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

Varied weather was experienced during the three days. On Sabbath afternoon the sky grew very dark and a severe hail shower — pounding so loudly on the corrugated iron roof — caused the services to be interrupted for nearly ten minutes. During this period no one was able to hear Mr. McNair, so all joined in singing several hymns. Everyone thoroughly en-

joyed trying to out-sing the elements.

All were able to fellowship for many hours before, between and after services, which afforded opportunity to renew old acquaintances and to meet new brothers and sisters. Many hours of counseling were provided and benefited greatly those who needed advice.

Pentecost services in Denver were certainly a great blessing for 385 of God's people this year.

Pentecost Observed in Other Areas

Reports have not yet come in from all of the churches regarding their Pentecost Festivals, but we do have some details from many of the local areas.

First of all, a fine three-day Pentecost Festival was held at Louisville State Park, near Battleground, Washington, for all of the churches in Washington and Oregon. The Festival was conducted by Mr. Raymond Cole who was assisted by Mr. Jimmy Friddle of the Seattle church, and Mr. Dale Hampton of the Portland church, plus other local elders and assistant pastors. About 1,000 brethren were in attendance for the Day of Pentecost itself, and the preaching centered around the day itself, and the need for God's Holy Spirit.

In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, both the Akron and Pittsburgh churches met together for a three-day Pentecost Festival conducted by Mr. Bill McDowell and assisted by Mr. Robert Hoops. Nearly 600 were in attendance for the Day of Pentecost itself, and a number of beautiful musical numbers were offered during the three-day Festival by several talented church members.

The South Texas churches of San Antonio, Corpus Christi and Houston all got together at Victoria, Texas for a fine Pentecost Festival. Over 400 were in attendance, and the preaching services were conducted by Mr. Richard Prince — pastor of the churches in Houston and Dallas, and by Mr. Roger Foster — pastor of the churches in San Antonio and Corpus Christi.

Mr. Roger Foster reports: "The churches in Houston, San Antonio and Corpus Christi all met together for a very joyous and profitable Festival of Pentecost in Victoria, Texas. Besides the delicious potluck lunch — the banquet outdoor style — we had an abundance of spiritual food.

Even though Mr. Richard Prince and I made no plans for the sermons and sermonettes to follow a definite theme, each one dovetailed perfectly with the preceding message. Just another example that Jesus Christ is the One who is really conducting His Festivals. Throughout the messages was woven the theme that we

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*ministering to its members
 scattered abroad*

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 change of address.**

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Remember the Sabbath Day

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"I had just started to keep the Sabbath day and I had hay down. It was just right to bring in (or so I thought) and the weather man said it was going to rain. But God says not to work on the Sabbath day, so I didn't. My wife said it would be all ruined. Well, I didn't get it in till Monday or Tuesday. It was a clover hay, and it was black. I didn't think the cows would eat it. Do you know, sir, even a year later, the cows would push the other hay aside and eat that hay first."

from Pennsylvania

(Editor's Comment: Here is a real example of a test of faith. What would you have done? This demonstrates that God is true to His promises regardless of how hopeless all physical circumstances may seem.)

Coal Lasts and Lasts and Lasts!

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"Since tithing now for over two years I have really prospered. When I first started I was burning oil lamps. I now have light, refrigerator, fan and a warmer house. My coal pile lasted so much more, every one of my neighbors said they believed my coal pile was getting bigger all the time instead of going down. I had fuel to give to some of my neighbors and still had a lot left over and plenty to start on next winter. All I have is my husband's

pension check once a month and always have money left over. It sure pays to listen to God."

Woman, Kessinger, Kentucky

The Future Looks Bright Again!

"Last year I requested a cloth and prayer for healing from recurring partial blindness. It is pretty near a year now since I had an attack. At the same time I prayed for healing for a curvature of the spine. Last week I had some X-rays taken of the lower spine. The doctor said, 'I can find nothing wrong!' The future looks bright again."

Listener from Newfoundland

Girl's Wrist Healed

"I was shown an X-ray of a girl's wrist that had been broken. I prayed for her and advised her to go to a doctor and have a cast put on it. The doctor said it was broken in three places. After putting the cast on, he decided to take an X-ray to see if it was set properly. After observing the X-ray, he stated he must have been wrong—for it didn't reveal anything! 'It was probably only sprained,' he muttered."

Reported by one of our
 Local Elders

(Editor's Comment: We receive letters every day telling how God has supernaturally intervened and healed! There is power for the asking!)

"Redeeming the Time"

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"I am trying hard to learn God's instructions as fast as I can because I have so many years backlog to overtake. Your help is so valuable. I feel I have gotten several years knowledge in these months I have had your guiding hand to aid me."

Woman, Victoria, Australia

A Future Ambassador Student

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"My mother mentioned to her minister that I had applied for admission to Ambassador College. One day I came in and found him looking over my Correspondence Course and The PLAIN TRUTH. My folks left to do some chores and he with a cynical grin said, 'It looks like you have fallen in with quite a group.' He as much as classed the Church as a bunch of fanatical heretics and concluded by saying: 'Mr. Armstrong has quite a business going there.' All this from a man who had never before even heard of you. His shameful and shoddy performance served only to prove who he served.

"He began interrogating me and I answered every question from the Bible. He rolled his eyes and cocked his head when he found out that I believe the Ten Commandments are binding today. He said we are saved by faith. I reminded

him that James wrote: 'Faith without works is dead.' He dismissed it as having been written later and thus not as near to Christ. Apparently he doesn't believe that 'All scripture is given by inspiration.'

"Then I asked him, 'Why don't you preach the gospel of the Kingdom of God that Christ preached and commanded to be preached like Mr. Armstrong preaches?' He stammered and blurted out, 'Well, we don't have the timetable he seems to have.' Probably the first truthful thing he said all day! Then I asked him what was the purpose of life. He never answered.

"At about this time he couldn't tell whether he was coming or going, but he finally decided he was going and he took his hat and left!"

Young man, Ionia, Michigan

(Editor's note: This story is repeated many times by prospective Ambassador College students. Many of our students have learned to endure hardships and persecution from relatives and former acquaintances in order to serve God and His Church.)

God Blessed a Cheerful Giver

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"I recently sent you a money order for \$300.00. Prior to sending this money I thought I had better hold it off until I got my new job I applied for. I had been waiting four weeks for a reply but I felt guilty that this was 'buying' God, i.e., saying I would send the \$300 as soon as I got the job. On impulse when I received the March issue of The PLAIN TRUTH I decided to go immediately to the bank and withdraw \$300. That was March 2nd. On March 3rd I received a two-page telegram about my employment application saying I was tentatively selected for reinstatement in the location I had wanted. Salary offered was \$3,000 more than I had previously been making. Instead of \$6,000 a year it went to \$9,000 and I'm only 24 years old. For every \$100 I sent you, God blessed me with \$1,000."

Man, Millville, New Jersey

(Comment: Here is an example of a young man who is a "go-getter" — who pushes and prods himself — but who has learned that you cannot forget God and succeed.)

You Teach True Doctrine

"I have been studying your booklets and reading your Plain Truth. I have come to the realization that the Church of God 7th Day [Editor's note: A remnant of the Sardis era of the true church (Rev. 3:1-6)] here on the Island of Barbados, with Salem, West Virginia as our headquarters, is as good as if it were a Sunday religion, under the mark of the Beast. For the word of God says if we

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PRAYER Can Help Solve Your Problems!

Many spend hours in prayer with no apparent results. Troubles seem to continue to mount. Why? Here is the surprising answer from one of our local elders from Headquarters.

by Selmer L. Hegvold

THIS has been a critical season for most of the world — and for many of us!

Serious and strange viruses and respiratory ailments have undermined the stamina and health of some!

Unemployment has sapped the ability to provide for our own families in certain cases!

Persecution has threatened the peace and security of some of our loved ones!

Those who *have* escaped these troubles are wondering why the others *have not!*

What is wrong? Why do problems seem to stalk continually, not only the world, but the people of God as well — the *very people* God has *called out* of a very sick and confused world?

Prayer — A Key?

God has promised to bless, to prosper, to make life full, abundant and a joy to every one of us here and now! In some cases that promise has not materialized. Why?

In one way or another it has affected the entire Church of God, the Body of Christ. When one member suffers, the whole Body suffers (I Cor. 12:24-27).

In visiting and counseling with many members, we have found a common condition that reveals a vital key to most of these unpleasant circumstances!

That key? — *our prayer habits!*

Yes! *Faulty* prayer habits are a primary cause of these serious problems in God's Church!

One man, after becoming embittered against the Church, insisted he was praying more at that time than at any time before. Yet he left the Church! Others, too, have claimed they had never been closer to God in their prayer habits than at that particular time! *Could this be true?* Lack of understanding this subject could be fatal to our own spiritual development!

We need to examine ourselves!

Respect Authority

Many of us accept teachings of Christ's Church readily — *until* one of those decisions strikes at the core of some aspect of our own lives. Then we begin to doubt the wisdom of Christ, of God's ministers! It becomes easy for us to forget that they

are ordained, and placed in office *by God* for the express purpose of perfecting the saints — the work of the ministry — till we all come to the *unity* of the faith and knowledge of the Son of God, to the *perfect* man (Eph. 4:12-13).

Something is radically wrong when some, who claimed to be "close to God in prayer," suddenly are found to be on the way into the lake of fire! Of these He said, "Not every one that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 7:22, 21).

It is possible to claim to worship God diligently, and to do so in vain! Christ could not have said so, otherwise!

Your Attitude Important

An example of a wrong attitude was innocently expressed by a little three-year-old girl at a buffet dinner recently. She stood obediently and politely with bowed head along with her elders as God's blessing was asked on the food. At the word "Amen!" she gave a sigh clearly audible throughout the room. To her mind the prayer was a necessary, *but irksome*, prelude to partaking of that delicious food! Is prayer merely a superstitious smattering of words that are quoted piously before commencing on certain phases of daily duties?

Prayer must be made with a proper attitude of mind, with diligent application, with real fervency, and a proper knowledge of what to pray for! Where do some fall short, that they continue to be plagued with very real misfortunes? Some *are* falling short somewhere, and in most every case it is in prayer!

How many of you, when prayer is being offered up to God by others, can summarize that prayer at its close? Do we really focus our attention fully on the prayer? or is our attention distracted by other interests?

To some, prayer seems to be an irksome and a boring duty — a required ritual we conform to, but are secretly happy to have done with. Prayer has not become the real and living blessing to us God intended it to be!

It is vital that we examine our prayers as God sees them!

Here is a typical problem that ministers are often called upon to help with.

A Real Problem

One couple had been working together providing for their fair-sized family. Everything seemed to move along fairly well for a time. Suddenly, without warning, the man lost his job! His wife fell seriously ill and recuperated slowly over a period of weeks. Week after week passed. Their appeal for help from the ministers of the Church brought to us a sorry picture. Not only unemployment, but mounting bills, prospect of eviction from a decent home, utterly rebellious children, and a husband and a wife on the verge of going their separate ways!

When asked if each had fervently prayed one hour a day over these terrible problems that had developed, the answer in each case was a sheepish "No!" Pursuing this further, the ministers found that even before he had lost his job this man had devoted no more than one or two hours to prayer *each week!* A vital taproot of their problem had been found.

Brethren, it is vital that we go to our heavenly Father in prayer every day! This could be the taproot of our problems!

Why is prayer so very important?

Converse With God

Prayer is conversation. Not something given by rote — repeated over and over monotonously! It is conversation with our Maker — our Father in Heaven.

Conversation, in this world, helps one person to understand, and to come to love another better. How often have we formed bad first-impressions of certain people, and then, as a result of conversation with them, found them to really be desirable friends?

The "Christian" world we have lived in has given most of us a false first-impression of God. It has instilled in our minds a picture of a harsh, stern God — a God that seemingly loves to see us suffer under the battering of storms, weather disasters, war, famine, disease, unemployment. And a God who is inaccessible to us — who has gone afar off from our appeals!

Through conversational prayer we come into direct contact daily with the true God. We come to *know* Him as He is. Prayer dispels that first-impression foisted off on us by the world. A real,

comforting love develops, and a new and intimate knowledge of the very mind of God results.

The Right Approach

We need to learn to talk over our problems with Him as we would desire to do with our own earthly father of the flesh! But how to develop such a proper, intimate, and acceptable pattern of prayer seems to perplex many. We should *yearn* to establish such a contact — to know God better!

Schedule your time for the activities of the day, including a time for prayer — a regular time. An hour, or at least a half-hour to begin with, is almost an essential consideration!

The period of time set aside for prayer should be the hour of the day we are most mentally alert — *before* the problems of the day develop! "But seek ye *first* the Kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things [our needs] shall be added unto you" (Matt. 6:33).

Some have claimed they could pray just as effectively as they go about performing their daily work. *This is not true*, unless they *first* have had a period of prayer *on their knees!* The fruits of such people have proven this fact.

How should we pray? Is there a recommended position of prayer?

"That at the name of Jesus *every knee should bow ...*" (Phil. 2:10). Every knee should bow before God. The world pays homage to an earthly king by kneeling before him on *one* knee. We pay homage to the King of all the universe by kneeling before Him on *both* knees. Read II Chronicles 6:13; Daniel 6:10; Luke 22:41; Acts 9:40; 20:36 and others. These are our examples!

A Pattern Prayer

What should we pray about?

Again, it should not be a memorized prayer! Many turn to Christ's instruction to His disciples in Matthew 6:8-13 and quote the words in their prayer day after day. Note, however, that He said, "After this *manner* [pattern] therefore pray ye ..." This was given only as the skeletal framework around which to build our own prayer. Jesus did not mean "pray *this*" — He meant "pray *thus!*"

Jesus' pattern of prayer is very important! Note that Christ began by glorifying God. One fourth of our prayer should be given over to glorifying God — to magnifying His majesty, power, glory and love!

We can do this only by studying His Word — studying David's examples in the Psalms — asking God, at times, to accept some of these Psalms as our own words of praise and thanksgiving.

Realize how completely dependent we

are on Him for our food, shelter, clothing and the very breath of air we breathe! Let our minds drink in of His greatness, His mercy, His sustaining power.

We are a thank-*less* generation of people. We need to change our ways! We need to guard against the "gimmies" in our prayers! Study of all the examples

of prayer given in our Bibles will help us immensely.

Be Interested in God's Work

We should learn who God's ministers are, where they are working, and the problems they are facing in their par-
(Please continue on page 13)

Question Box

Your questions answered in these columns! Your opportunity to have discussed those problems pertaining directly to members of God's Church.

I am planning to drill a well on my property. My wife suggested that I have her brother, who is a water diviner, locate the most likely place to drill. I have heard that this method is sometimes successful, but have felt that it might come under "divination" as condemned in the Bible. What is the truth about this?

Here are the facts about "water witching." Water divining is widely practiced all over the world — even in the United States, Britain, Canada, and Australia. Yet very few people know just what water divining *really* is or where it came from. And most are ignorant of what the Bible has to say about it.

Water divining — also known as "water witching" and "water dowsing" — is the art of seeking underground water by means of a divining rod. The commonly used rod is a forked stick which the "diviner" holds by the forks in each hand with the stock pointing outward or upward. As the diviner walks over the ground the stick suddenly twists in his hands *as though by a powerful, invisible force.* The stick points downward, supposedly indicating the presence of underground water. At times there is water; at other times there is NONE!

Water witching is mentioned in the Bible! Hosea prophesied that people today would be using this very practice! "My people ask counsel at their *stock* and their *staff* [or "divining rod," see *Critical and Experimental Commentary*] declareth unto them" (Hosea 4:12).

People consult the staff, or divining rods, to ask of them where they should drill to find water. Just where did this practice come from? How did it come to be used so extensively in our western, so-called Christian nations?

Martin Gardner, writing about water divination, admits:

"The employment of various shaped rods for divination purposes goes all the

way back to the ancient Greeks and Egyptians... In the Middle Ages, *it was associated with the power of Satan*, although many churchmen made use of divination rods. The forked twig, for finding minerals, apparently did not appear until the fifteenth century when it was used by German prospectors in the Harz Mining region. When German miners were imported to England in the century following, they brought the practice with them. It was in England that the use of the twig was transferred from minerals to the search for water." (*Fads & Fallacies in the Name of Science*, page 102.)

Water witching is outright divination — a practice of demon-worshipping paganism! God condemns all such practices!

"Thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone *...that useth divination*" (Deut. 18:9-10). And God continues: "I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people" (Lev. 20:6).

Divination is an abomination in the sight of God. He absolutely forbids and condemns it. Such persons as use it, God declares, He will cut off from among his people! We cannot practice divination and still be Christian! It is high time that we look into the Bible and begin to live by every word of God! We must quit trusting in the superstitions of ancient heathenism.

Water is not difficult to locate. In order to find water, a Christian should first ask God in prayer to guide him in locating the right place. Then he should analyze the lie of the land and drill in the best-looking spot that is suitably located. It is also helpful to ask the advice of an experienced well driller who does not seek help of witchers in finding water. There is very little danger of drilling a dry hole in areas where wells are a common source of water.

The *TRUE* Reason Why the Jews Rejected Christ

Why didn't the Jews understand the prophecies of Christ's first coming? Why weren't they ready to receive the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost? The answer will surprise you!

by Herman L. Hoeh

EVER since the time of Adam man has rebelled against the government of God. As the Supreme Ruler of the universe, God has *decreed* that 6000 years be allotted to man to decide for himself whether he will voluntarily submit to the Government of God and keep holy the *time* He made holy.

Man universally has rejected God's rule, His authority, His holy days. But God has not been idle in human affairs.

What God Has Been Doing

What *God* is doing these 6000 years very few recognize.

Now is not the time God is trying to save the world. He is rather calling out of the world a select few whom He chooses. To us He reveals Himself, His Will and His Purpose. But we must *voluntarily* choose to obey Him — and to keep holy the days He set apart.

In the days of Moses God first organized His Church and revealed to them His Plan. To keep that Church in the knowledge of that Plan, the Eternal ordained seven annual festivals. These festivals pictured the seven steps in carrying out God's Plan.

When the Old Testament Church departed from celebrating these festivals, they lost the knowledge of the Plan. This is exactly what had happened to the Jews in New Testament times! The Jews did not understand the prophecies of the first coming of Christ because they were not keeping the one festival (Passover) which pictured that Christ was coming *first* as the paschal lamb. They knew He would come *later* — at the close of 6000 years of history (pictured by the Feast of Trumpets) — as the conquering King!

The Jews knew five out of the seven steps in God's Plan because they still observed five out of the seven festivals. But the two festivals on which they had become confused and divided pictured the very part of God's Plan which they had lost! The Passover pictured the coming of the Messiah as the passover lamb — to bear our sins (1 Corinthians 5:7). Having changed the day of the true Passover the Jews cut themselves off from

their God. To change the day, to neglect it, is *sin*. And sin cuts one off from God. Hence they were unable to recognize the true gospel when it came to them through Jesus Christ. They were not expecting Christ, the Messiah, to come as a man to bear the sins of the world.

They were expecting only a conquering king. Had they been celebrating the true Passover on its right day, instead of confusing it with the Feast night of the days of Unleavened Bread, they would have known that their Messiah would first come as a man to bear the sins of the world!

No wonder the Jews crucified the Saviour! They had forgotten the true Passover!

How important it is that we today keep this day so we do not forget what Christ has already done for us!

And no wonder they did not receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. They were not properly keeping the day of Pentecost which pictured the coming of the Holy Spirit. Only those who were correctly observing these two days knew that the Messiah had come, who He was. Only *they* were ready to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

It seems almost no one has really grasped the true reason why the Jews rejected Christ and ceased to be the Church through whom He could work in spreading the gospel.

It is only because we today keep these days—all of them—that we today know all the steps in God's Program.

Why Jews Lost True Dates for Passover and Pentecost

It is time we understand *why* the Jews forgot to properly celebrate Passover and Pentecost. Here is an important lesson in *Church Authority—God's Government* — which we today need to understand!

Granted the Jews preserved the Sacred Calendar. Granted that the Jews celebrated five of seven annual festivals on the correct date according to the Bible and the Sacred Calendar.

Why, then, did the Jews, who to this day have preserved the true calendar, celebrate *their* passover and *their* pence-

cost on different days from those plainly stated in the Bible?

The Jews in Judaea in Christ's day celebrated their passover one day later than did Jesus and the Galileans. The Pharisaic Judaeans also ceased to *count* fifty days to determine the day Pentecost is to be celebrated. Why? How did the Jews become confused, divided?

What happened to *Church Authority*?

Here are the facts!

Most Jews today celebrate *their* pentecost — or feast of first-fruits — on the sixth day of the third month, Sivan. According to Jewish tradition the day of Pentecost no longer needs to be counted. *Their* pentecost falls on a fixed day of the month, no matter what day of the week it occurs!

Yet Moses was inspired to write that Pentecost has to be counted (Lev. 23:15). Unlike every other annual festival, Pentecost does not fall on a set day of the month. It falls, rather, on variable days of the month, but on a specific and invariable day of the week!

The Jews in New Testament times became divided as to the correct time for celebrating this festival. Sadducees, who were mainly priests, still continued to count fifty days long after Pharisees, who were laymen in high places, fixed the festival on Sivan 6. Why?

Because *no authority* was exercised to keep unity in the Jewish community in New Testament times!

The apostles and faithful Jews in Galilee and throughout the world alone continued to celebrate Pentecost on a Monday, a fixed day of the week.

Also, Jesus and the Galileans observed Passover on Nisan 14, the correct day. The Jews in Judaea celebrated it one day late, on the night of the Feast, the 15th of Nisan or Abib. Today the Jews do not really keep any passover. They observe only the Feast. This is the real reason why the Jews as a nation forgot their God!

Now let us understand how it all happened. How the Jews became mixed up in their thinking. How people today can fall into the same snare when they begin to use individual human reason on

matters that pertain to the whole Church and hence are the responsibility of the ministry through which Christ governs His Church.

First, let's take the date of the Passover.

Why Different Passover?

Did you know that scholars are so much divided about the date of the Passover today as were the Jews in Christ's time? Even some in the Church of God during the Sardis Era of the Church became divided on this question.

The reason for every such confusion is the lack of the Government of God. The New Testament Church replaced the Old Testament Church because the Jews in Christ's day had not spiritually yielded to the Government of God. They followed their own traditions.

Centuries later, when Jesus Christ could no longer use the Sardis Era of the Church, He raised up *this work* — the Philadelphia Era of the Church of God (see Revelation 3).

We are not divided today because we follow the Government of God. "Thou...didst keep my word," says Jesus of *this Church* today (Rev. 3:8). We obey the Bible. We follow the example of Jesus. We do what He says. We submit to His government in the Church. Christ *is and will ever remain* the Head of this Church. He has promised it!

Now consider the facts of history — why the world generally believes that Christ died not on the Passover, but on the Feast — and who it is that first caused the world to believe this fable.

Did you know that it was Pope Leo — the first absolute Pope — who originated the idea that Christ died on the 15th of Nisan, not on the 14th, as the Bible makes plain? The same power that worked through him had already worked through the Jews and led them to deny that Christ is our real Passover! Jesus said of the Jews: "You are of your father the devil." And the world has followed his lies ever since! The devil wants people to deny Jesus is the Christ. And one of many ways is to delude them into thinking that Jesus did not die on the Passover, Nisan 14.

Pope Leo lived four centuries after the time of Jesus Christ. Here is what led up to his idea that Christ did not die on the true Passover. The Christian world was divided as to the date for Easter, which they had adopted from the pagans. Leo proposed to settle it. In so doing he wanted to stamp out the true passover altogether. To do so he had to make the Christian world believe that Jesus died on Nisan 15, not 14. "At the same time," declare Schaff and Wace on page 56 of Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, vol. xiv, "also was generally established, the

opinion so little entertained by the ancient authorities of the Church — one might even say, so strongly in contradiction to their teaching — that Christ partook of the passover on the 14th of Nisan, that he died on the 15th (not on the 14th, as the ancients considered) . . . In the letter we have just mentioned, Proterius of Alexandria openly admitted all these different points" — and the Pope officially approved the contents of the letter about 440 A.D.

And that is why the world believes what it does today!

But notice the plain evidence of Scripture now.

The Testimony of Scripture

The Scripture is our final authority. No man has ever been given any authority to replace it with human tradition. Here is what we find.

In Luke 22:8 we read: "And he (Jesus) sent Peter and John, saying, Go and prepare us the passover that we may eat." And in the last part of verse 13 we find: "And they made ready the passover." Now continue with the next two verses: "And when the hour was come, he sat down, and the twelve apostles with him. And he said unto them, With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer."

The next morning of this same day (a day begins at sunset), Jesus Christ was brought to trial and crucified. Late the afternoon of the same day, shortly before sunset, Jesus was buried. And in Luke 23:54 we read these plain words from the inspired Greek Text: "And it was preparation day; a sabbath drew on." Note that it was *a sabbath* according to the original Greek, not "*the sabbath*" as in the King James Version.

The women returned home, rested that sabbath following the day of preparation (Mark 16:1), then — two days after the Passover — purchased and prepared spices and — notice Luke 23:56: "And rested *the sabbath* day according to the commandment."

Here is the weekly sabbath mentioned. It was not one day after the preparation, nor two days after, but three days after that preparation day on which Jesus was killed. This plainly proves that Luke knew that Jesus was crucified on the day before an annual sabbath.

Since Leviticus 23 and many other scriptures prove that the *15th of Nisan is an annual holy day*, Luke plainly makes the crucifixion on the day before — that is, on the 14th of Nisan. Both Matthew and Mark agree with Luke, yet critics would have us believe that Luke had Jesus crucified on the 15th, an annual sabbath, the first holy day of the seven-day Festival of Unleavened Bread!

Plainly Jesus ate the Passover on the

eve of the 14th of Nisan, was seized, tried, crucified and buried on that same day, and was in the tomb on the 15th — that annual sabbath which followed the Passover.

The record of the apostle John agrees perfectly with this. In fact most critics acknowledge that John places the crucifixion record on the 14th. They think the other three gospel writers place it on the following day — thus *contradicting* one another! But there is no contradiction. Matthew, Mark and Luke all agree with John in plainly stating that the day following the crucifixion was a sabbath.

No Leaven Used with Passover

What the critics cannot get straight in their minds is that the Passover was also a day when Unleavened Bread was eaten. The Passover was always to be eaten with unleavened bread (Exodus 23:18 and 12:8).

There were seven days during which no leaven was to be seen anywhere in Israel — this is during the Feast of Unleavened Bread. But also the 14th of Abib the children of Israel were to eat only unleavened bread with the passover and to use that day as a preparation in putting out all leaven and getting ready for the feast of seven days which followed. So there were *eight days* in all during which unleavened bread was eaten — one day with the passover and seven days with the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

That is why Matthew, Mark and Luke speak of the Passover as *a day* of unleavened bread! It was not the first day of the *Feast of Unleavened Bread*, but the first of eight days on which unleavened bread was eaten. (In the King James Version the word "feast" is improperly inserted in Matthew 26:17. Notice that it is in *italics*.)

Also observe that Matthew records the conversation of the Jews' plot to kill Jesus. They said: "Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people." (Mat. 26:5).

There is absolutely no shred of evidence that Jesus was crucified on the 15th of Nisan. He was killed on the 14th as our Passover Lamb — on the very day the Passover Lamb was always slain. The Jews purposely avoided killing Jesus on the Feast — the 15th.

But now we must read John 18:28. On the morning of the 14th of Nisan the Jews refused to enter the judgment hall of the Roman governor, Pilate. Why? "Lest they should be defiled, but that they might eat the passover."

So the Jews from Judaea had not eaten *their* passover yet! They were not observing it at the same time the Galileans ate it. Remember that Jesus and the dis-

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Is JUDAISM *the Law of Moses?*

We continue the shocking period in Jewish history when "Hellenism" spread. Here is how Egyptian tradition replaced the Law of Moses in the second century before Jesus' birth.

by Ernest Martin

Part 7

LAST installment we discovered that the coming of the Egyptians and finally the Syrians, caused violent changes among the Jews in Palestine.

The authoritative Sopherim, the rightful teachers of the Law of Moses, were divested of all prerogatives. So thorough was the dissolution of the Sopherim as a corporate body that we hear nothing more of any of its members outside of Simon the Just, the High Priest who died in 270 B.C. (Aboth i, 2). Simon is described as the last remnant of the group. What happened to the remainder of these teachers is not known. It is obvious from the silence of history that the Sopherim, as the religious authority among the Jews, became extinct within about a score of years after the invasion of Alexander the Great (331 B.C.).

Wars Cause Political and Religious Disruptions

The series of wars over the control of Palestine between the Egyptians on the south and the Syrians on the north—both under Greek domination—created great political and religious disorder within Palestine. The land was attacked by invading armies no less than four times between 330 B.C. and 301 B.C. In the latter year, the land finally succumbed to the rulership of Ptolemy of Egypt (M. Margolis, *History of the Jewish People*, p. 128). Palestine remained under the direct control of the Egyptian government until 198 B.C.—just over one hundred years.

Notice that it was during the early part of this period of Egyptian domination that Simon the Just, the last survivor of the Sopherim, died (270 B.C.). *With his death a dark cloud passes over all the religious life of the Jews.* We are informed by Lauterbach, the learned Jewish scholar, that Jewish tradition knows of no religious teacher who taught any form of religion from the death of Simon the Just until about the year 190 B.C. (*Rabbinic Essays*, p. 196).

"This [silence] would have been impossible," says Lauterbach, "if there had been any official activity of the teachers in those years" (*ibid.*, p. 196).

Think of what this means! For a period of nearly one hundred years, approximating the time of Egyptian rule, there

is no record of any religious activity among the Jews! This is the only period in the history of the Jews in Palestine of which *nothing* is recorded!

What *all* the factors were that caused the Jews to be in such a condition, cannot now be known. What we do know is that one of the major reasons was the influence of Hellenism—the culture of the Greeks—as propagated by the Egyptians.

This philosophy of life—Hellenism—was exerted upon all peoples subject to the Egyptians. It was taken for granted that all persons within Egyptian territory would follow the dictates of the government in this matter. If, however, any individual or group of people felt inclined to resist this Hellenistic culture, the government took matters into its own hands and compelled the people to do their bidding.

The Gift of Alexander the Great

Alexander the Great had left, as a gift to his successors, the conception of Hellenizing the whole of his empire. His reason for this was strictly political. He fancied that all his subjects, being Hellenists, would represent a unified empire, not one of diverse ideas and philosophies constantly causing troubles with inevitable bickerings and strifes.

This same belief was existent in the subsequent divisions of Alexander's Empire. Alexander's successors saw that the continued dissemination of Hellenism would work to their advantage. This was certainly true in Egypt. Ptolemy—Alexander's successor in Egypt—carried on the campaign of preaching this Greek culture to his subjects—and the Jews did not escape its influence.

It was impossible to avoid its influence. The Greek language was the language of commerce and social intercourse generally, and it became a matter of necessity to acquire fluency in Greek (Herford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, p. 77).

By the constant hearing and speaking of Greek it was a natural consequence that the ideas which lay behind the language would become known, and in many cases, begin to be practiced. "There was no escape from that influence [Hellenism]. It was present everywhere, in the street and the market, in the everyday life and all phases of social intercourse" (*ibid.*, p. 77).

The Jews, of all people conquered by

Alexander the Great and his various successors, were seemingly the least likely to adopt the Greek culture. *But the very novelty of it, the variety of its new interests and pleasures made it exceedingly attractive to the majority of the Jews!*

It is, of course, not to be supposed that every individual was naturally attracted to Hellenism. This was not the case. But, everyone was affected by it, some to a limited degree, while others became outright Hellenists.

"It is safe to say that *no one*, high or low, who was living in Judea in the period which includes the whole of the third and the beginning of the second century B.C., *wholly escaped* the influence of Hellenism" (*ibid.*, p. 77).

The ones especially affected by this new culture were, rather ironically, the leaders of the Jews—the chief priests themselves. Most of the other influential Jews, because of their positions, also fell under the sway of Hellenism. In effect, all the intellectually able individuals, who should have been leading the common people towards the observance of the Law of God, were following after this culture as preached by the Egyptians. This is the reason no religious teacher of the Law is mentioned by the Jewish histories as having existed during this period of Egyptian domination. There simply was none—except perhaps an insignificant individual here and there who had no real effect on the people.

You can imagine what such a condition did to the religious life of the people as a whole! They were completely surrounded by the influence of Hellenism, having to incorporate it into their lives in order to carry on normal daily living, having no real teaching in the Law of God and having their leaders completely devoted to Hellenism.

What was the natural result?

Lauterbach gives us the answer:

"There prevailed a state of *religious anarchy*, wherein the practical life of the people was not controlled by the law of the fathers as interpreted by the religious authorities, nor were the activities of the teachers carried on in an official way by an authoritative body. This chaotic state of affairs lasted for a period of about eighty years..." (*Rabbinic Essays*, p. 200).

See also Herford, *Talmud and Apocrypha*, page 57. But this is not all.

The Key to the Understanding of Judaism

The recognition of this religious anarchy among the Jews during the Egyptian domination is the veritable *key* that explains the reason why the Judaism of Christ's day arose. Had this religious anarchy not occurred there would have been no *Judaism* for Christ to contend with. If conditions remained as they were under the Sopherim, then Christ would have come to a people who were fully obeying the Law of Moses! But instead, we find a people who were practicing Judaism — the religion of the Jews—not the religion of Moses!

The knowledge of this religious anarchy gives us a *key* to unlock the doctrines and teachings of Judaism. History proves that Judaism evolved out of, and was directly guided by, the inherited principles of pagan life acquired during that religious anarchy! The very foundations of Judaism, its underlying principles, though later covered with a veneer of the Law of Moses, have their origin within this period of religious chaos!

New Laws and Customs Inherited

Now let's consider how this period of religious confusion under the influence of the Egyptians brought about these significant changes in the Jews' manner of living.

Being under the persuasion of an all-encompassing Hellenistic culture, and with no real teaching of the Law of Moses, even the most nationalistic Jew found himself of necessity practicing many of the customs and habits of the Hellenistic Egyptians. There was little the people could do about it under such environmental conditions. Hellenism was in all of Palestine, even in all the known world. There was no way of escaping it. Instead of openly protesting against the new culture, the majority of Jews had to accept it, in one way or another.

It is valuable now to quote two scholars who are recognized among Jews and others alike as pre-eminent historians, particularly for the period under discussion. Both of these men, Lauterbach and Herford, were fully aware of the chaotic conditions which existed in the Egyptian period.

Lauterbach mentions: "During the seventy or eighty years of *religious anarchy*, many new practices had been gradually adopted by the people" (*Rabbinic Essays*, p. 206).

Herford adds this: "In the absence of authoritative guidance, the people had gone their own way; new customs had found a place amongst old religious usages . . . new ideas had been formed under the influence of Hellenism which

had permeated the land for more than a century, and there had been no one to point out the danger which thereby threatened the religious life of the people" (*Talmud and Apocrypha*, pp. 64, 65).

There must have been a few Jews endeavoring, in a limited way, to observe the Sabbath and perhaps the Sacred Festivals. But many of the Jews rejected the use of the Scripture and its teachings. It is even certain that the unknown few who attempted to keep some semblance of God's Word on their own, imbibed new customs "amongst old religious usages."

"The people who had now been in contact with Greek culture . . . acquired new ideas and became familiar with new views of life, other than those which they had been taught by their teachers in the name of the law of their fathers. The rich and influential classes accepted Greek ideas and followed Greek customs. The leaders of the people were no longer guided by the laws of the fathers, nor was the life of the people controlled solely by the laws and customs of the fathers as contained in the Torah" (Lauterbach, *Rabbinic Essays*, p. 194).

Even Scattered Jews Affected

This condition of general religious anarchy among the Jews was not limited to Palestine. The Hellenic culture had been spread *wherever the Jews lived*—throughout all of civilized Asia and in many parts of Europe. It was especially thoroughly implanted in Egypt. Wherever Jews were, they encountered Hellenism, its philosophies, ways of life and its religious customs and beliefs. There was no way of escaping it!

New ideas and customs everywhere supplanted the ones they had been used to under the Sopherim. The new luxuries and the extravagant habits of the Hellenists were attractive to the rich and influential Jews and the acquiring of Hellenism's new manners for everyday living and public communication became an economic necessity for the common Jews.

Many Jews enjoyed the new culture, the new types of learning and philosophies of thought that came with it. The Greek philosopher, the Greek artist and the Greek man of letters became figures of great respect and admiration to the majority of Jews—especially of the learned classes. Almost everything that was Hellenistic became the object of imitation. The older customs were looked on as relics of antiquity that, if they were to be observed at all, had to be greatly modified according to the new methods of interpretation promoted by Hellenism.

"Greek culture, Greek literature, were thrown open to the peoples of Nearer Asia, and they pressed into its pale. They had native literatures [including the Scriptures], but these in the new daylight looked poor and unformed: now those who wrote must write Greek, those who thought must think on the lines of Greek science and philosophy" (Bevan, *Jerusalem Under the High Priests*, p. 37).

Virtually everything was changed to conform to this new way of life. EVEN THE SCRIPTURE, WHEN READ, WAS INTERPRETED IN THE NEW LIGHT OF HELLENISM (Lieberman, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, pp. 62-64). The people abandoned the simple teachings of Scripture and modified or disregarded them, and in its place substituted the new customs and practices of Hellenism.

It is not at all amazing that within the space of a short hundred years that such a change could take place. The same thing has happened in the Christian world in the century following 1850 with the introduction of evolution and higher criticism.

The Jews in Egypt

At the beginning of Egyptian rule in Palestine, many thousands of Jews were carried captive to Egypt by Ptolemy I. These Jews were taken there as slaves to do menial tasks for the Egyptians or for garrison duty in Ptolemy's army. But under Ptolemy II these Jews gained their freedom. Ptolemy II was inclined to favor the Jews as a whole and *his kind treatment prompted many Jews to accept Hellenism even that much more*. As a result of Ptolemy's clemency toward the Jews, many thousands of others voluntarily left Palestine for Egypt. The majority of these settled in Alexandria on the north coast of Egypt. In a very short time there were so many Jews in Alexandria that a full quarter of the city was Jewish!

Those Jews who went to Egypt abandoned the Hebrew language and completely adopted Greek. Alexandria became one of the centers of Hellenistic influence in the world at that time, and the Jews who resided in the city assimilated the Greek culture with even less inhibitions than their brethren in Palestine. In Alexandria there was virtual adherence to Hellenism's doctrines by all the populace.

The Septuagint Translation

It was during this time of religious anarchy in Palestine and Egypt, that the Old Testament was corrupted and then translated into Greek. This first Greek translation is called the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament.

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WHY Should We *Fast*?

What purpose does fasting serve? This subject is as vital in our Christian lives as prayer or Bible study! Yet, many have neglected or completely omitted this phase of their Christian lives.

by Albert J. Portune

HUNDREDS of newly baptized members of God's Church have not grasped the primary benefits and meaning of fasting. Many who have been in God's Church for years have not come to full understanding of the purposes of fasting.

As one recently baptized member said: "Oh yes, I tried fasting *once*, and all it did for me was to make me hungry and weak!" Is this our approach to fasting? Is this all we get out of fasting? We *need* to understand the deep significance of fasting.

To Get Closer to God

Some brethren have the idea that fasting is a kind of penance—that God is pleased when we punish ourselves by a fast. This is *absolutely wrong*. We fast *to draw closer to God*—to get away from the world and the flesh.

The deep spiritual lessons and examples that fasting can teach us cannot be learned in any other way. Unless or until we experience the profound spiritual benefit of fasting, we will never know what a vital part it can play in our lives.

How to Fast

Many of us have never really learned to fast progressively. Many of us have never learned because we have never really seen the need and purpose before. Many of us have never understood fasting and why it should be a regular and diligent practice in our lives. A good way to begin is to make the positive decision to fast for *one meal*. We might decide that breakfast would be the meal to begin with. The procedure, then, would be to go to bed the previous night with the *positive realization* that the following morning we were going to have to put away the temptation and desire to eat and drink according to our regular routine. We must place ourselves in a *positive* mental attitude that we need to draw closer to God. When morning comes, we should go about our normal routine of dressing and grooming for the day—all the while realizing that it is NOT just the normal routine, but rather a time when we are giving special attention to afflicting our bodies before God. When the time comes for the usual morning meal, we should devote that time to prayer in place of satisfying our hunger and thirst. During this prayer we should ask God to help us draw closer to Him.

Christ's Example

Jesus Christ knows the kind of life to which we are called. He knows we are going to have to face trial and temptation. He knows we need to prepare and to condition ourselves. In the 6th chapter of Matthew, Jesus Christ gave us the example of how to pray. Certainly, all of us realize that prayer is a vital part of Christian living, yet, Jesus Christ placed the same emphasis on *fasting*, in this chapter, as He did on prayer.

Notice the 16th verse. Jesus Christ said: "Moreover **WHEN** you fast..." Yes, Jesus Christ did not say *if* you fast, but rather *when* you fast. Jesus Christ intends that we fast frequently and often.

He further explains *how* to fast. "...be not as the hypocrites, of a *sad countenance*: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you they have their reward." These scribes and Pharisees of Christ's day did not fast for the deep spiritual purpose that was intended. They fasted to get the pity and the approbation of men. They would let their hair hang down in stringy masses on their heads. They would not wash themselves nor groom themselves at all. They would walk about the streets in a downcast dejected manner with grimaces and pain written all over their faces. They did this in order for *others* to see them and say, "Oh, look at that poor fellow. He's been *fasting*." These hypocrites would hope that people would say to themselves, "Oh, isn't he a righteous man because he's fasting."

Christ tells us that we are not to fast in this manner. He tells us, "But thou, when thou fastest anoint thy head, and wash thy face; that thou appear *not* unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which sees in secret, shall reward thee *openly*."

Christ's Greatest Trial

Jesus Christ was faced with a trial of enduring and overcoming greater than any of us will ever face. Jesus Christ had to meet Satan the Devil in cataclysmic combat. If Jesus Christ had failed in this temptation that was to be placed before Him, He would have disqualified Himself as the Messiah and Saviour of all mankind. Let us notice how Jesus Christ prepared Himself for this greatest of all trials.

In Matthew 4:1 we see that Jesus Christ was led up of the Spirit into the

wilderness to be *tempted* of the Devil. Jesus Christ went out *specifically* into the wilderness to be tempted of Satan the Devil. He had to overcome that temptation and trial and to prove that He was able to be the Messiah and Saviour of mankind. This was a spiritual battle far more significant and tremendous than any of us realize. Satan the Devil laid before Jesus Christ the reality of this temptation in a manner more poignant and real than any temptation that has ever been placed before us. Jesus Christ knew He was going to have to endure this temptation and trial and He therefore *prepared* Himself for it.

What was the first thing Jesus Christ began to do? What was the first thing that Jesus Christ turned to to fortify Himself and to prepare Himself for this trial?

It was **FASTING!**

In verse 2 we read, "And when he had *fasted FORTY DAYS AND FORTY NIGHTS*, he was afterward *hungered*." For forty days and forty nights Jesus Christ fasted before God and afflicted His body. Jesus Christ had endured and had overcome the desire to eat and to drink for forty long days and nights. Now, the tempter came to Jesus Christ to tempt Him. The first thing that Satan tempted Jesus Christ with was the temptation to consume physical food and also to prove that He had Godly power. Satan said, "If you be the Son of God, command these stones to be made bread."

The twisted mind of Satan thought that Jesus Christ would be at His *weakest*—since He had gone without food and water for such a long period of time.

But let's consider for a moment! Jesus Christ had been fighting against this *very temptation* now for forty days and forty nights. Being tempted to change stones into bread in order that He might eat, was a temptation that Jesus Christ had already fought against for many long days and nights. It was nothing new to Him! Therefore, when Satan the Devil came to Him with this very temptation, Jesus Christ was prepared! Jesus Christ had been living by every Word of God *alone* for forty days and forty nights. Jesus Christ was at His *strongest* to endure this type of temptation. Therefore, when Satan the Devil came before Him, tempting Him to change stones into bread, He was able to say, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that pro-

ceeds out of the mouth of God.”

Many of us have thought that Satan the Devil attacked Jesus Christ at His very weakest. On the contrary, Jesus Christ was at His strongest. He had just been through a forty-day and forty-night period of severe testing and trial that had prepared Him spiritually and made Him spiritually able to resist the temptations that were coming upon Him. Finally, after enduring and overcoming the additional temptations that Satan brought upon Him, Jesus Christ was able to say, “Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, thou shalt worship the Eternal thy God and him only shalt thou serve (verse 10).

Further Reasons for Fasting

Many times in our lives we are faced with making important decisions—decisions that not only affect our lives but possibly the lives of others. Certainly we should seek wise counsel and multitude of counselors in making any decision (Prov. 11:14). God is our greatest Counselor. We should certainly seek Him diligently for the answer to any decision we must reach. There can be no better way to ask God for counsel and wisdom in any decision *than fasting*. If we begin to fast when there is an important decision to be made and spend the normal time we would spend in eating in crying out to God for wisdom in the matter, the answer will surely come.

God shows us the need of fasting when a decision has to be reached by the examples recorded in Acts 13:1-3; 14:23. In the church at Antioch a decision had to be made who was to be sent on an evangelistic journey into Asia Minor. Notice, “As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the *Holy Spirit said*, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had *fasted and prayed*, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away” (Acts 13:2, 3). Again, in Acts 14:13, we clearly see that before elders were ordained in the churches in Asia Minor, the evangelists and ministers prayed to God with *fasting* before coming to their all-important decision.

How to Fast

Many questions may arise on how to conduct a fast and what our attitude should be upon beginning a fast. Many have elected to fast and carried through a fast without any specific realization or purpose in fasting. Many of us have felt that we need to fast but have not known what to fast for or the purpose in fasting.

We should always have a DEFINITE PURPOSE in mind when we fast.

As David gives us the example in II Samuel 14, we can fast also and beseech God to intervene and help us in a specific thing that may occur in our lives. Another purpose for fasting may be for

health purposes in cleansing our bodies of impurities and toxins. For further clarification on this phase of fasting you may write for Mr. Armstrong’s article, “Fasting for Health.”

In the ordinary routine of working it will not be possible to fast much more than a day or two at a time. Usually 24 or 48 hours of fasting will be sufficient while we are employed in our regular routine activities. During these times—since we are required to be occupied with the normal daily activities—we should utilize the normal mealtime for sincere, heart-rending prayers to God—devoted to the specific reason for fasting.

If we should feel the need for a longer and more prolonged fast from time to time, we should utilize the opportunities that vacations and certain “days off” afford us. There will certainly be several times during the year when we may employ several days in a row for fasting. Even when there is not a special period of time off or vacation, by using wisdom we will find time for extra fasting. For example, we may begin a fast on Thursday, fasting during Thursday and Friday then carrying it through Sabbath and Sunday when we do not have to work at our jobs.

During the period of a long or prolonged fast, Mr. Herbert Armstrong has found that the following routine is excellent—regardless of the specific purpose involved in fasting. During the waking hours of the fast, Mr. Armstrong will spend one hour in fervent prayer to God, utilize the next hour in Bible study and then follow the third hour with meditation and reflection upon the things studied and the lessons to be learned. During the meditation period, Mr. Armstrong will often take an invigorating walk—preferably in an area where he can be near to God’s creation.

In a fast of several days, following this routine, one will quickly find himself much closer to God and able to better cope with the problems at hand.

Anyone who has learned to fast knows that one experiences a depth of understanding and a profound closeness to God in fasting that cannot be experienced in any other way. Following a routine such as Mr. Armstrong follows in fasting can be the means for many to conquer obstacles in their Christian lives that cannot be mastered in any other way.

How Often Should We Fast?

The question often arises, how often should I fast? Nowhere in the Bible do we have an exact statement of how often we should fast. Yet, we have several examples which will help us to understand how often we should practice fasting in our lives. As we have previously seen, the Apostle Paul fasted *often* (II Cor.

10:27). The Apostle Paul had no specific command in the Old Testament teaching him how often he should fast. However, Paul was acutely aware of the race he was running and how diligently he needed to strive in order to enter God’s Kingdom. He considered it necessary to fast often—even in the face of the trials and afflictions he constantly endured—in order to maintain the spiritual strength he needed to continue serving God and finally to achieve the crown of righteousness.

The Gentile, *Cornelius*, lived such a life of service and overcoming before God that God considered it important enough to send an apostle—Peter—to preach to him the Gospel of the Kingdom of God and to baptize him and his family. It is significant that Cornelius had been praying and *fasting* before God when God finally elected to send the Apostle Peter to him (Acts 10:30).

It was when the prophet Daniel elected to set his heart to understand, and to *chasten* himself before God with fasting, that God sent the angel Gabriel to reveal to Daniel some of the most vital prophecies of the Bible. See Daniel 10:2, 3, 12. The purpose of fasting is not to punish ourselves in a form of penance, but to draw closer to God by getting away from the world.

The prophet Elijah also sought God in prayer and fasting forty days and forty nights on Mt. Horeb and received the vital answer he sought.

Fasting has certainly played a vital part in the lives of those God has used down through history. From these examples, the principle we should apply in determining how often to fast should be based upon the needs in our lives. Our routine of fasting should certainly be frequent enough and of long enough duration to keep ourselves close to God and in the vital spiritual condition that will enable us to overcome and endure to the end.

The need for fasting is again exemplified by the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 7. In showing the proper marriage relationship between husband and wife, Paul clearly shows that *fasting* and prayer is of sufficient importance in our lives to actually interrupt the normal marriage relationship from time to time. Certainly many of us have *not* placed the importance on fasting in the past that we should have.

Every one of us wants to live the vital, progressive and growing life of a sincere Christian. God has placed at our disposal this vital tool and key to overcoming—fasting. Fasting must become a very real part of our lives! Let us not fall short of the tremendous goal and reward that God has prepared for us because we have neglected to utilize this vital tool that God has given us.

Is JUDAISM the Religion of Moses?

(Continued from page 10)

Tradition has it that Ptolemy II wanted to have a translation of the Jewish Scriptures made for his library. In the course of time, certain Jewish scholars were invited by Ptolemy II to accomplish the task. Thus, the Septuagint Version was born.

Needless to say, this translation abounds in Hellenistic interpretations. This Version was rejected by later Jews as totally unacceptable because of its variations from the original, inspired and authoritative Palestinian Hebrew Text and because of its inclination to "improve" the text in order to please or displease as the case may be, its Gentile reading audience.

The translators of this Version thought nothing of adding to the text or of taking away from it whole verses and even whole chapters! No wonder the later Jews renounced this product of Egypt which was translated during the time of the religious anarchy.

Christ and Apostles Did NOT Use Septuagint

It has often been assumed that the Septuagint Version, instead of the original Hebrew Text, was the Old Testament of the early Christian Church. This is decidedly not the case.

It can be shown quite plainly that Christ did not set the example of using the Septuagint Version. It was His custom to quote from the original Hebrew

scrolls (Luke 4:16, 17). Also, Christ referred to the three divisions of the Hebrew Bible as THE SCRIPTURE (Luke 24:44, 45)—the Septuagint Version *did not* contain these three divisional designations (*International Standard Bible Encyclopaedia*, vol. I, p. 555). Christ *never* referred to the Septuagint Version as the official Scripture to follow.

Some scholars have endeavored to maintain that the apostles used the Septuagint Version as their Old Testament, and that their Old Testament quotations in the New Testament were from the Septuagint. However, we are informed by Collett (*The Scripture of Truth*, pp. 142, 143), that of 263 direct quotations from the Old Testament, only 88 are verbal quotations that agree with the Septuagint. Does this prove the apostles used this Version? The answer should be obvious—it does *not*! And, out of 263 quotations, it is only rational to believe that 88 could have coincidentally agreed with the Septuagint Version. Both the translators of the Septuagint and the apostles used the Hebrew original from which they translated these quotations into Greek, and it is conceivable that once in a while the translations would agree. Instead of proving the apostles used the Septuagint as their Old Testament, this evidence proves just the opposite.

And, it is important to note that the Jews of Palestine, because of the variations in the Septuagint from the original Hebrew text, regarded the day the Sep-

tuagint was translated as a great calamity equal to the worship of the golden calf (*Sopherim*, i, 7).

For an extensive discussion on these variations, see *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, vol. IX, pp. 533-554.

(To be continued in next issue)

PRAYER Can Solve Your Problems

(Continued from page 6)

ticular areas of the world. We should certainly realize that the great and primary commission of this Church is to preach the Word of God faithfully to all the world (Matt. 24:14; 28:19-20). We should pray that new radio and then television facilities will be opened up to "The WORLD TOMORROW" program, at better times, and in areas not yet reached. And that this gospel will pierce the hearts and the minds of every listener.

Study the Bible and the literature that is sent out. If you don't understand something, jot it down in a notepad, or as part of a special prayer list as a reminder when you go to your place of prayer. Ask God to answer it through the broadcast or the magazines or Correspondence Course and through the Bible. Some think that any thought that pops into their minds is God's answer when it is only their own impulse. God answers through His Word and His ministry.

Pray for more consecrated laborers to be led into the work of God. There is a tremendous need for the right calibre men and women to do the work that is piling up (John 4:35, and Matt. 9:37-38).

Prayer is a private matter, not a public matter for your unconverted relatives to notice! "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6:5-6).

Important Points

We can help unconverted members of our families by leading them in family worship *if they personally so desire*, but *after we have already had our own!*

We need to remain in an attitude of prayer throughout the day. David, a man after God's own heart (Acts 13:22) said, "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will

Letters to Editor

(Continued from page 4)

add [to it], the plagues shall be added to us, and if we take away, our names will be taken out of the book of life. Since studying your booklets, and proving everything from the Bible, I know the doctrine you teach and preach is not yours but the truth of God. I gave the church a clear understanding of every subject in which we were misled.

"We kept the feast days last year for the first time, although this work has been here on this island for approximately 35 years. God has preserved us in our blindness until the World Tomorrow message could reach us, and the scales have fallen off our eyes. Now we know that Christ's second coming is on our doorstep: because He said this gospel of the kingdom must be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations and then shall the end come. Thank God, now our eyes are opened to the truth."

Man from Barbados, West Indies

(Editor's Comment: Brethren, are we praying that scattered remnants of that church "which had a name that it lived, but was DEAD" may have Christ's full message reach them?)

A Methodist Minister

"Dear Mr. Armstrong:

"We are just now in the process of starting a Bible study in our little church and will have about 18 in it to start. Would it be possible to get material for these also, or must they write you personally? I am the pastor of this little Methodist Church which has a desire to be closer to God and to learn more of His work."

St. Joseph, Missouri

(Editor's Comment: Some few pastors are honest enough to let the Bible be their guide. Here is one just beginning to understand who God is and where He is working. Of course the pastor should encourage his little flock to write personally for the literature.)

I pray, and cry aloud: and He shall hear my voice" (Ps. 55:17). We, too, should follow this example of David, who has his guarantee of being in the Kingdom of God!

We should ask God's help to guide us in prayer. He will lead us to have real concern and love for all the brethren, for the ministers, and His work. We may even forget our own needs in losing ourselves in these other interests — but God will not forget *our* needs!

IF WE EACH PRAY ONLY FOR OURSELVES, ONLY ONE PERSON PRAYS FOR EACH OF US. BUT IF WE ALL PRAY FOR EACH OTHER THEN, THOUSANDS PRAY FOR EACH OF US.

Our prayer life will truly come *alive* as we learn to improve our attitudes.

It's Up to You

If we are continuing to have troubles, sickness, discouragement, unemployment and persecutions, we need to examine ourselves. God is not at fault! "But *your iniquities* have separated between you and your God, and *your sins* have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isa. 59:2). *Listen to God's correction! Those who pray and refuse to obey what God says through His Word and His ministers*, cut themselves off from their Creator and worship God in vain. Don't let this happen to you!

This, then, is the key to overcoming our problems. God *will* hear and answer our pleas as he did David's. The answers will begin to come as never before, and real happiness, and a fruitful life of service to God will open before us. We shall find that we really know God as our Father in Heaven. Each moment spent in prayer with Him will be a moment of real joy to us! We should all read, if we haven't done so, Mr. Roderick Meredith's reprint article "The Answer to Unanswered Prayer."

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and *nothing shall offend them* [cause them to stumble]!" (Ps. 119:165).

The TRUE Reason Jews Rejected Christ

(Continued from page 8)

principles were from Galilee. Jews in Christ's time — those who lived in Judaea — kept *their* passover one day later than did Jesus, His disciples and the Galileans in general. Why did they do so? Where did the custom originate? Why were the Jews in Judaea observing their passover on a different day of the month than were the Jews living in Galilee?

Even Josephus, the Jewish historian, acknowledges that the Judaeans were celebrating the Passover at a different time than it was celebrated by Moses.

Notice what Josephus wrote about the Passover.

Confession of Josephus

Here is his account of the exodus. "In the month... which is by us called Nisan... on the fourteenth day of the lunar month... the law ordained that we should every year slay that sacrifice... which we slew when we came out of Egypt, and which was called the Passover. ... The feast of unleavened bread succeeds that of the passover, and falls on the fifteenth day of the month, and continues seven days." (From *Antiquities of the Jews*, book III, chapter x, § 5.)

How plain. The Passover is the 14th and the seven days which follow are the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Josephus repeats the account of the Exodus in *Antiquities*, book II. Notice how he words the account here. "But when the fourteenth day was come, and all were ready to depart, they offered the sacrifice... Whence it is that we do still offer this sacrifice in like manner to this day, and call this festival *Pascha*, which signifies *the feast of the passover*; because ON THAT DAY God passed us over, and sent the plague upon the Egyptians; for the destruction of the first-born came upon the Egyptians THAT NIGHT" (chap. xiv, § 6). This was the 14th!

And on what day did they leave Egypt? "They left Egypt," declares Josephus, "on the fifteenth day of the lunar month" (chap. xv, § 2).

This agrees perfectly with Numbers 33:3. "And they departed from Rameses in the first month, on the fifteenth day of the first month: *on the morrow after the passover* the children of Israel went out..."

Remember that Josephus plainly records that the Feast of Unleavened bread was celebrated for *only seven days* following the Passover on the 14th of Nisan. Yet Matthew, Mark and Luke show that it was customary to refer to the day of the Passover as the first of eight days of unleavened bread. Did Josephus also speak of eight days of unleavened bread, including the Passover? Indeed! In memory of the exodus he said to the Jews "keep a feast for eight days" (book II, chap. xv, § 1).

Sometimes the entire eight-day period was called "The Days of Unleavened Bread," and sometimes it was all called "The Passover," as in Luke 22:1.

If the Jews once knew that the sacrificing of the Passover lambs occurred on the eve or beginning of the 14th of Nisan, "between the two evenings," at dusk, and that God passed over them *that night* — the 14th — and that they left Egypt on the 15th of Nisan, why did the Jews in Judaea in Christ's time con-

fuse the events and celebrate the Passover one day late?

The answer has never been understood by the critics and the scholars. Here is what happened. Also read the series on *Judaism* by Ernest Martin in this issue.

After Ezra and Nehemiah

The Jews who returned under Ezra and Nehemiah correctly observed the festivals according to the law. They began each day at sunset. This custom continued until the Persian period of rule over Palestine ceased.

Then came the Greeks. New ideas began to be introduced. Judaism developed. It was a mixture of the Law of Moses and "Hellenism" — as Greek culture introduced under Alexander the Great after 333 B.C. was called. The eleventh chapter of Daniel tells us of the history of the Jews in Palestine for the next three centuries. First, Palestine was to be under the control of the King of the South. The King of the South was the Ptolemaic line of Greek rulers in Egypt. The Egyptians — under the rule of a Greek dynasty — began to force their particular brand of Hellenism upon the Jews in Palestine. The Great Synagogue was disbanded. The Jews were forced to take up the ways of the heathen — and that included *changing the time when the day begins*. Any encyclopedia will reveal that the Egyptians began their days with *sunrise*, not sunset. They therefore commenced each day about 12 hours later than the time God appoints.

So notice what would happen to the celebration of the Passover.

Jews began to neglect the law. The majority soon began to celebrate Passover in accordance with the Egyptian measurement of time. They therefore had to change the time for celebrating the Passover to meet the new custom of reckoning a day from sunrise to sunrise. Originally the Passover was celebrated at sunset, beginning the 14th of Nisan. But according to Egyptian reckoning *that sunset* would not be the beginning of the 14th, but midday of the 13th lunar month!

By Egyptian reckoning the 14th of a month began at sunrise, 12 hours late!

The dusk period "between two evenings" on the 14th of *an Egyptian day* would therefore occur at the *end* of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th day of a month as God reckons time! When this pagan method of time reckoning was forced on the people, the Jews in Palestine began to celebrate the Passover at dusk on the middle of the 14th day of *the Egyptian month*, 24 hours too late. It was in reality the beginning of the 15th day as God reckons time!

And that is how the custom began of

celebrating the Passover at sunset one day late. But the story does not end here.

The True Day Later Restored

At the time of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ the Jews had restored the beginning of a day to its proper point. The Galileans also restored the Passover, but the Judaeans were celebrating *their* passover on the 15th of Nisan!

What happened is this. After the Hellenized Egyptians were driven out of Palestine the Hellenized Syrians dominated Palestine until the Maccabees. The Maccabees were zealous Jews who drove out the Gentiles about 160 years before Jesus' birth. They were able to restore some of the practices of Moses, but they still compromised with the Gentile customs which the Jews had been practicing for generations under Greek, Egyptian and Syrian influence. The Jews restored the beginning of a day to sunset. But what were they going to do with the time of celebrating the Passover?

The Jews in Galilee, in the north of Palestine were far less influenced by Egyptian and Hellenic influences. They restored the beginning of each day to sunset and restored the Passover to its proper time at the *beginning* of the 14th of Nisan. But the Judaeans, who lived in and around Jerusalem and southern Palestine refused to change the custom of celebrating Passover in the middle of the Egyptian day at dusk—one day late.

The Judaeans decided to restore the day to begin at sunset. But they refused to change the hour for celebrating their passover. The traditions of the elders were too strong. The Judaeans henceforth decided to kill the passover lambs and to eat them at the same time of day they had been doing under Gentile Egyptian rule! And that is how the Jews in Judaea began to celebrate their passover at the end of the 14th and the beginning of the 15th day of Nisan! And by so doing they rebelled against the government of God.

Jews Admit It

In 1948 I wrote to the Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio, asking them for information on this very subject. The librarian replied to me that in Christ's time the Jews were divided over the Passover celebrations. The Jews, he wrote, had just recently (just before Christ) restored the beginning of a day to sunset. The Galileans, he admitted, had consequently restored the Passover to the beginning of the 14th as originally celebrated. But the Judaeans decided to continue their practice of killing the lambs one day later, at the beginning of the 15th so as not to change the customs they had followed while under Egyptian rule. If their elders had done so, they reasoned, they would continue to do so!

What Happened to Feast of Pentecost

The same conditions led to the celebration of Pentecost on the wrong day.

When the Greeks removed the Jews in the Great Synagogue from authority over the community, the problem arose as to who should determine the Feast of Firstfruits. Since there was no fixed authority, many of the Jews decided it would be better to have a fixed day of the month rather than be in doubt. Thus the Jews adopted the practice of designating Sivan 6 as the day of Pentecost, fifty days after the Passover. But Pentecost is not fifty days after the Passover. It is fifty days after the day on which the wave sheaf is cut—and that always occurred on the first day of the week following the only weekly Sabbath which occurs during the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

Notice Leviticus 23:11. "On the morrow after *the* Sabbath the priest shall wave it"—means the *weekly* Sabbath. Otherwise there would be no reason to count which day of the month Pentecost occurs.

Here is the proof!

Since the day the wave sheaf is cut could fall on Abib 20 (if Passover is on Monday), or on Abib 18 (if Passover is on Wednesday), or on Abib 16 (if Passover is on Friday), or on Abib 22 (if Passover is on the weekly Sabbath), you can easily see why Pentecost has to be counted.

In these four illustrations (for Passover Abib 14 can only fall on these four days of the week, beginning the evening before, of course), Pentecost—which is celebrated fifty days *after the day* the wave sheaf is cut and always falls on Monday—will be Sivan 11 or 9 or 7 or 13 respectively. That is why Pentecost must be counted.

There was no repentance among the Jews any more than there is today in the professing Christian world. There was no obedience to God. There were only the traditions of men! And the critics even to this day refuse to accept the plain words of Scripture that Jesus celebrated the Passover at its proper time on the eve of the 14th of Abib—the very day He was crucified. Carnal men uphold the tradition of Egypt and the doctrines of Judaism, not the Bible! The truth of God they refuse. They hate God's way. They refused to keep the Feast of Firstfruits—Pentecost—and that is why they were rejected as a nation.

Since 70 A.D. the Jews have also ceased altogether to observe the Passover. Today they make a pretense of keeping only the Feast of Unleavened Bread. At the Feast they have a lamb bone on the table as a solitary reminder of the original Passover which God commanded

Moses. Is it only the true New Testament Church of God which rightly celebrated Pentecost, and the Passover on the eve of the 14th of Nisan! "Do this," said Jesus "in remembrance of me." Are you really doing it?

Joyous PENTECOST

(Continued from page 3)

who are the *firstfruits* must become more and more capable of *bearing responsibility* by using the power of God's Holy Spirit.

Two of our deacons who have shown exceptional growth and dedication gave sermonettes. Mr. Harold Treybig, deacon in the Houston church, made a comparison between the irresponsibility of false ministers and the need that we have to become *really responsible* and *trustworthy* in order to qualify to become priests and teachers in the Kingdom of God. Mr. Adolph Romike, deacon in Corpus Christi and President of the Spokesman Club, gave a very helpful sermonette on "how a Christian should love correction."

Although definite information on the Pentecost observance in Wichita, Kansas, is not yet available, Mr. Allen Manteufel reports that recent attendance in the new church in Wichira has risen to 185 and over nearly every Sabbath!

Pentecost at Springfield

"As God's work is always marked by continual growth and progress, so was the Pentecost meeting observed in Springfield this month.

"The Festival was held three full days, from the weekly Sabbath through Monday. Attendance was 277 Sabbath, 217 Sunday, and a *record number* for *Pentecost Day of 407*.

"A special event, unexpected by those present, took place Sabbath Day with the ordination of two greatly needed deacons. These men, Mr. L. E. Stuart and Mr. Sam Record, have been serving in the church doing the work of a deacon for some time. Their work has been a great help to the ministry in this area, requiring a considerable share of time which they have willingly given. Their ordination will aid them in doing this work and will certainly be an asset to the Springfield Church. Mrs. Stuart and Mrs. Record are also hard workers for the church, Mrs. Stuart generally being in charge of the food preparations on the Feast Days and Mrs. Record being in charge of the clothes fund for brethren in the local church.

"The sermons and sermonettes, the most essential spiritual food of the Feast Days, were especially applicable to daily spiritual growth and overcoming. Ser-

mons on zeal, overcoming, husband-wife relations, teaching our children, and the duality and spiritual meaning of Pentecost inspired us to strive harder toward perfection. Mr. Jim Cotner, deacon from St. Louis, was present with his wife and presented sermonettes on wisdom, pleasing God, and explanations of difficult scriptures.

"Other highlights of the Festival were the delicious, bountiful potluck meals and the special music at each service presented by Mr. Jack Willbanks with his violin and Mrs. H. D. Rhodes and Mrs. Bryce Clark on the piano. And again God's blessing was evidenced in the weather, especially Pentecost Day as the cloudy skies and cooler temperature were a relief to the brethren in a capacity-filled hall. This Pentecost Festival was truly a joyous, hearty, inspiring Feast. We look forward to many more which we hope will even excel it."

Pentecost in the Oklahoma Churches

Mr. David Antion, pastor in the area, reports a combined meeting of the Churches of God of Tulsa and Oklahoma City for the Day of Pentecost.

"We had a beautiful day weather-wise for the Feast of Pentecost. It stormed something terrible, causing floods and a great amount of damage the day before Pentecost. But on God's Holy Day the weather was PERFECT! Warm but not hot, sun shining brightly, a good breeze and temperature in the 70's.

"In the morning service we had an attendance of 274. Prior to the morning sermon we had special music. Mrs. Ervin Sollars sang, 'How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings' accompanied on piano by Moncella Hartman. At noon we had our potluck lunch. It was a huge feast to say the least! In fact, after the afternoon service we had enough food left over to feed supper to all who wanted it. And even then food had to be taken home and given away.

"During the offering of the afternoon service, Mr. Edward Smith sang 'In the Garden' with the audience singing the refrain. The Feast was a success not because of any one or two persons, but because all were willing to pitch in and work to make it a truly wonderful Day of Pentecost."

Pentecost Services in St. Louis

Mr. Hal Baird came down from Chicago to take charge of the St. Louis services during the Feast of Pentecost. He reports a fine Festival in every way.

"Once again those in the St. Louis area were blessed in being able to assemble together in the very fine American Legion Post in Maplewood (St. Louis), Missouri, this time to have a three-day meeting for the Pentecost season. Our first all-day

meeting was held on the weekly Sabbath in which 167 people were present. On the following day our attendance dropped a little. However, on the Day of Pentecost, we had 305 attending — the largest Pentecost ever held in this area. The whole theme of the preaching services was the necessity of God's Holy Spirit working and being in each individual. There was much spiritual meat given through sermonettes by Mr. Arthur Roesler and sermons by Mr. Hal Baird. Another of God's blessings came to us by way of the fine voices of Mrs. Roger Swenson and Miss Bobbie Jo Carter, as well as the piano styling of Mrs. C. Avers who accompanied them both. Mrs. Swenson sang a special number 'By the Waters of Babylon,' and for a special selection, Miss Carter sang 'The Lord's Prayer.'

"Not only did we have a spiritual feast, but we also enjoyed a physical feast as well. As usual God saw to it that we had an abundant supply of food and a competent group of men and ladies to serve."

Seven Baptizing Tours This Summer

Now for some really GOOD NEWS in which we should all rejoice! It is a wonderful pleasure and privilege to be able to announce that God's headquarters is planning to send out at least *seven* baptizing tours this summer in the United States and Canada — plus other tours through England and Europe, South America, and Australia.

Slated to head two extensive baptizing tours through the central part of the United States going all the way to the East Coast is Mr. Frank McCrady — formerly local elder in the Chicago church and now in Ambassador College in Pasadena for special advanced training. Mr. McCrady will be assisted on the first half of the tour by Mr. Sherwin McMichael — an advanced and dedicated student in Ambassador College from Salina, Kansas.

On the final leg of this tour — and leading right up to the Feast of Tabernacles — Mr. McCrady will team with Mr. Guy Engelbart who will be returning from our new college near London, England after having helped set "the Ambassador spirit" there for the first year.

The second lengthy tour will be conducted by Mr. Carl McNair — graduating senior and Vice President of the student body of Ambassador College. Teaming with Mr. McNair for the first half of the tour will be Mr. Eugene Walter — formerly from South Dakota — and now an advanced student in Ambassador. For the last half of the tour, Mr. Clarence Huse will join Mr. McNair from August 7 right up until the Feast of Tabernacles. Mr. Huse is a graduating senior from Ambassador College, and he is slated to be married and then go to Australia to help out in the churches and office there

soon after the Feast this fall.

Mr. McNair's tour is scheduled to include the northern part of the United States and Canada.

The third extended baptizing tour will be led by Mr. Hal Baird — associate pastor in the Chicago area. Teaming with Mr. Baird will be Mr. Bill Winner advanced student in Ambassador College and a man who has already had one short tour. Then, the last of the summer, Mr. Baird and Mr. Winner will split and in turn each lead *another* tour! Mr. Baird this time will take with him Mr. Dave Mills — another advanced student from Ambassador College. And Mr. Winner will team with Mr. Art Craig — another dedicated and advanced leader at God's college.

Thus, by alternating these men, there will actually be *seven* complete baptizing tours of several weeks each conducted this summer by the true Church of God on earth today!

In addition, it is tentatively planned that Mr. Raymond McNair will lead a tour throughout the British Isles this summer with one of the advanced students from the college there in Britain. Also, Mr. Benjamin Rea is slated to take an important trip to South America this summer to make new radio station contacts in that continent and to baptize any who are ready in South America. Mr. Gerald Waterhouse and Mr. Tony Hammer — ministers in Australia — will no doubt be conducting another tour through part of the Australian continent to reach many there who are awaiting baptism. And, if time permits, your author plans to take a short baptizing tour this summer with Mr. Dibar Apartian — head of the French Department and now the speaker on The WORLD TOMORROW program in French. This tour will probably cover Northern California and Southern Oregon.

So let us REJOICE, brethren, that God is making possible the baptism of so many *hundreds* of people around this earth whose lives have been *reached* and *changed* by the preaching of His truth through our united efforts in the body of Christ! So far, well *over* 2,000 requests have come in to our office here in the United States alone for baptism!

And while we are rejoicing over the wonderful Pentecost season just past and these baptizing tours to reap the abundant harvest this summer, let us remember to PRAY that God will *protect* through His guardian angels, and *inspire* and *empower* the men on these tours in carrying out the vitally important work to which they are assigned. Let us WALK with God and He will continue to *use* and *bless* us in the tremendous task he has given the Philadelphia era of His Church on earth today.