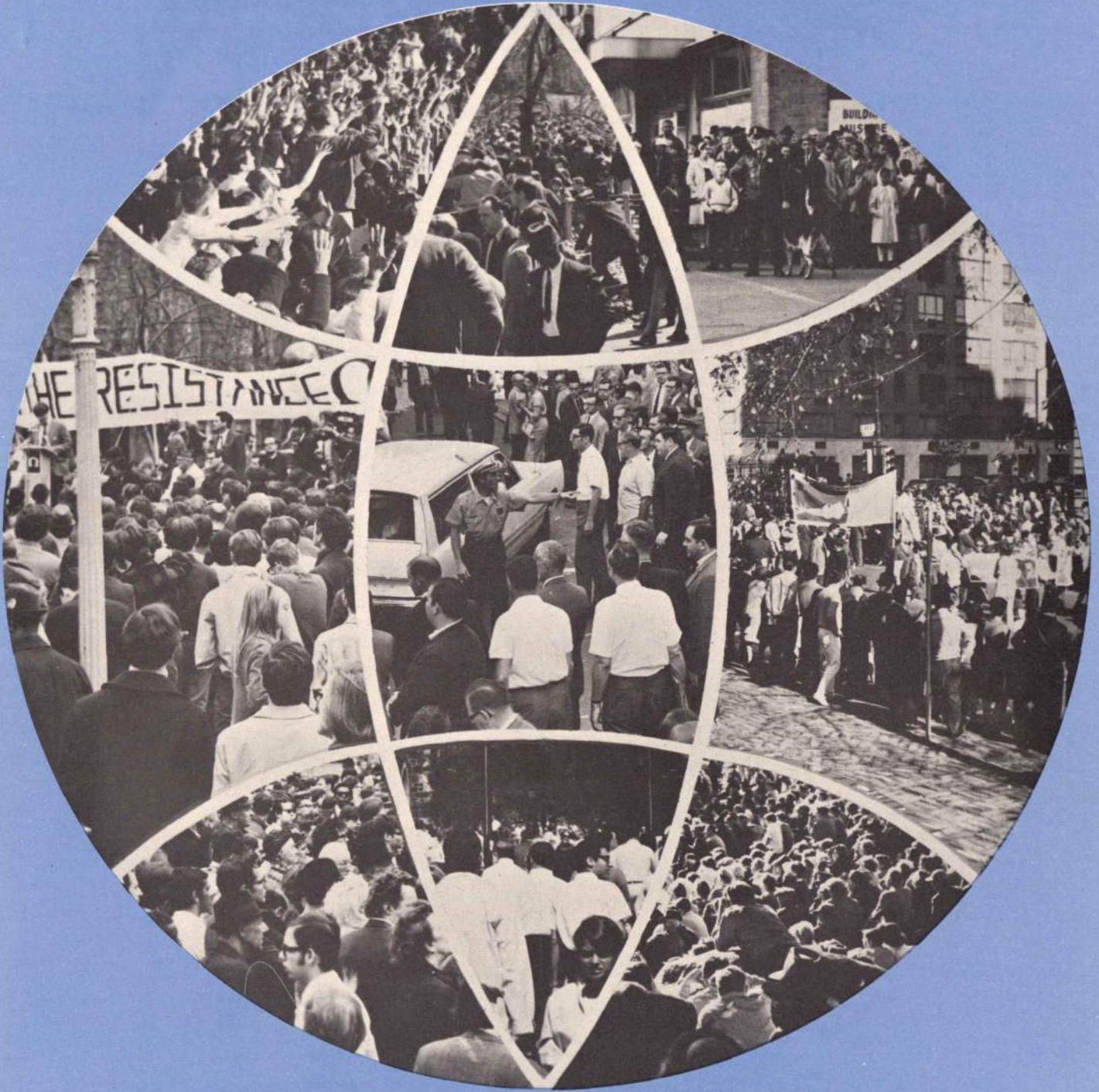


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OCTOBER 1972

THE INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE
DEDICATED TO CHRISTIAN GROWTH



THE GREAT TRANSGRESSION

(SEE PAGE 4)



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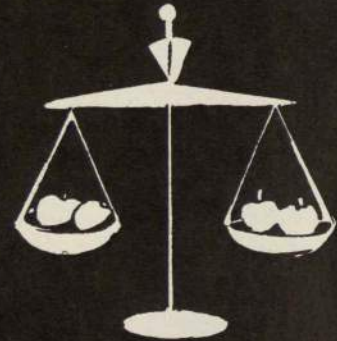
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EDITORIAL

"... although He existed in the form of God, He did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bondservant" (NAS - Phil. 2:6-7). I am sure we have all applied this passage to ourselves at one time or another, and heard sermons without number preached on emptying ourselves, etc. I never saw the key to the whole thing until recently. "... although He existed in the form of God..."

In my great rush to empty myself and become humble, I never once stopped to ask what I should empty myself of! Oh, that's simple - pride, hatred, envy, lust, etc. Really? An alternate translation of this is: "He laid aside His privileges..." The Lord Jesus laid aside those things which were rightfully His, as God.

Growing up in the Christian community I have been trained to think in terms of, "Claim it!"... "Receive it!"... "Hold on!" How tightly we can hold the blessings of God. How we can reach and grasp for them.

Something down inside rises up to say, "It's mine. I have a right to it. I'm a Christian!" Christ had a right to all the privileges of God and could have had them back the second He so desired. But, He chose a higher way - the way of letting go of all that was rightfully His.

Paul says to the Philippians that they are to have the same mind or attitude as this. It is a matter of attitude. Whose interests come first? For whom and about what do we spend the most time in prayer?

This is the pattern for the Christian life. Christ took the low road... "Therefore also God highly exalted Him." Because He gave it all up, He received it all.

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Picture with me, if you will, a beautiful, well-groomed German Shepherd dog, brimming with vitality and strength. He has been brought to a training school for a nine weeks' course in preparation for police duty. Lessons in obedience are necessary before he can be of any value in this assignment.

Watch the trainer as he takes a stick and throws it out into an open field with the command, "Fetch!" That great dog takes off in a cloud of dust, grabs the stick and trots back triumphantly. Then the trainer throws a purse, with the same command. Again, the trainee is off almost as soon as the purse is in the air. There is seemingly no thought of, "Should I . . . or should I not?" Instead, the immediate reaction is, "There it goes . . . here I go!"

After several runs, the officer throws the purse once more, only now he follows the act with the command, "Heel!" This requires some shifting of gears! The dog almost ruptures a blood vessel trying to follow the changed command. So many times he has "gone off" after the object, that obedience to the order to "stay" demands an act of definite effort and discipline.

Standing along the fence watching this procedure, I realized it was the most graphic illustration of OBEEDIENCE I had ever seen. Relating it to some experiences God had been working out in my own life, I cried, "Oh, God, I see! I see!"

Just where do you and I fit into this picture? As children of God, the object in all of His dealings with us is to bring us into an obedient spirit.

You may ask — "What — ME — a born-again believer . . . Spirit baptized . . . years of seeking to do God's will — is there still something for me to learn in this area of obedience?" Or you may be a comparative newcomer to the Christian way of life and searching for truths to guide you in your growth. Regardless of the circumstances, the principle involved in this matter of *obedience* versus *lawlessness* applies equally to us all.

To properly appreciate *obedience* in the light of God's Word, we must also investigate that other side of the coin, *lawlessness*, as presented in the Scripture. Both of these key words assume the need for commands, laws, rules and regulations which are to be used for the basis of individual decisions



H. Armstrong Roberts Photo

THE GREAT TRANSGRESSION

By Bob Mumford



The second
in a series by Bob Mumford
on the Nature and Spirit of Obedience.

and attitudes. Also pictured in the two words is the ability for personal choice as to the response we will make.

The context in which we are studying this word *lawlessness*, involves a *principle*, not an outward act of lurid crime or sin. It represents the *spirit* within a person. This spirit may eventually manifest itself in open transgression, but this is only one result of harboring a lawless spirit.

Two other words used to refer to this condition of lawlessness throughout Scripture are *sin* and *iniquity*. The whole thing began with Adam and Eve and was resident in their initial disobedience and rebellion. The result of their lawlessness has continued down through the ages. Consequently, God has worked since that initial encounter with disobedience to get Himself a people from whom rebellion has been purged — a people who can say with genuine understanding, “I delight to do thy will, O God.”

SCRIPTURE SPEAKS

“Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of God; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then I will profess unto them, I never knew (approved) you. Depart from me, ye that work *iniquity*” (Matthew 7:21–23).

“The son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do *lawlessness*” (Matthew 13:41).

“Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness? But God be thanked, that ye from the heart obey, being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants

to uncleanness and to *lawlessness* unto *lawlessness*: even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness” (Romans 16:16–19). (NOTE: Lawlessness brings *more* lawlessness. This is literally the way it works.)

“The mystery of lawlessness doth already work” (II Thessalonians 2:7).

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, and it teaches us how to deny worldly lusts, looking for that blessed hope that he might redeem us from all *lawlessness* and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works” (Titus 2:11–14). (NOTE: What is to distinguish these ‘peculiar’ (special) people? They have an inward desire to obey!)

“Jesus loved righteousness and hated *lawlessness*; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows” (Hebrews 1:9).

“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities (*lawlessness*) will I remember no more” (Hebrews 8:12).

“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all *lawlessness* and purify unto himself a special people” (Titus 2:14).

We would all agree that those we refer to as being “of the world”, walk in the spirit of lawlessness, for the world is rebel by nature. But what about those of us in the church? This area is not as clearly defined. Shades of lawlessness come into the church. There is a mixture — some obedience and some disobedience — sometimes we obey and sometimes we do not. If there were only some clear, distinct dividing lines, it would be easier. However, there is a mixture and that is what we are after. Christians need to know the answer to the question, “How much of a rebel am I?”

Also, what may have been obedience for us yesterday may be disobedience for us today. God may be trying to bring us into a new sphere of service. As the will of God is revealed, we must walk in that will as it is revealed or we will be guilty of *lawlessness*.

Do you realize, too, that we can take the truths and gifts of God and walk in disobedience? Do you see that we can actually take that which is good and make it to be rebellion and sin? Going back to the police dog, see him looking at the purse out there in the field just waiting to be retrieved. He is beginning to realize that the object isn’t getting the purse — the object is obedience!

When we move ahead in our own wisdom and strength to do “our own thing”, this is sin. So many of our messages and so much of our teachings has been all “go” and no “heel”, that we have come to the place where most of us don’t believe God would ever say, “Heel!” When we touch the power and see the need, to “heel” is hard! But I believe this is part of what God is doing in our day.

We are all familiar with the term, “general practitioner” in the field of medicine. This same term describes conditions in the church. One person may have been trying to do everything. However, the day is coming, and is here, when we are beginning to see God leading us into “specialities”. If we do not listen to His directions, should He speak to us in this area, and if we continue to do all of the other things just as before, this becomes disobedience or *lawlessness*.

A DOWNWARD PATH

To help us in taking a personal inventory, Psalm 19:12–13 vividly presents five kinds of sins: “Who can understand his *errors*? Cleanse thou me from *secret faults*. Keep back thy servant also from *presumptuous sins*; let them not have *dominion* over me; then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the *great transgression*.”

First on the list is *errors*. The question, “Who can understand his errors?”, has also been translated: “Who can tell how many times we offend?” In fact, the Psalmist might have enlarged further and asked it this way: “Who can understand how many times we must have offended God and

walked off in a *lawless* spirit without even knowing it?"

When we first came to know the Lord, there probably were many things that we did and we were not even aware that the Bible said anything about it. Later light was given to us and we realized our former ignorance. This brought responsibility for choice.

The second sin brought to our attention is *secret sin*, which falls into three categories:

(1) There is sin that is hidden to me and to others as well. It may be deeply buried, but it is a sin and God is aware of it. You may be certain He will deal with it sooner or later.

(2) Next is the sin that is hidden to others, but it is *not* hidden to me. I am aware of it but I never let anyone know about it. Yes, there are things in each of our lives that we carefully guard from exposure. There may be some pornographic literature buried in my desk drawer, or there may be some habit in which I indulge in the privacy of my own home. You would never know about it — but I am acquainted with it.

(3) Then comes the secret sin which is hidden to me but known to others. This is visible to those around me and I am not even conscious of it. Someone may say to me, "Mumford, you are a proud rascal." To which I retort, "Me? Proud? You don't know what you are talking about!" How many of you know that if you are proud, you are usually the last one to know about it?

Or I may be accused of being stubborn. "Me, stubborn? I AM NOT STUBBORN!" This is a sin that everybody can see except *me*. I cannot see it and have a hard time believing I really am like that.

So, secret sin can take any or all of these three avenues: hidden to me and to others, but God sees; hidden to others, but known to me; hidden to me, but known to others.

Third on the downward path is *presumptuous* sin. The Hebrew word here means literally to "boil over". One certain thing about sin is that as you fool

with it and continue to entertain it, something will happen inside. It starts to boil up and the next thing you know, it boils over! That pornographic literature hidden in the desk drawer, if indulged in, will finally erupt into action. That once-hidden-from-others sin is out in the open and you find yourself not caring who sees it or knows about it. That covered-up bottle of Vodka will one day rise up and assert itself and you will find yourself saying, "I'm going to drink. I don't care what people, or the church, or anyone says about it!" That is presumptuous sin.

Following close on the heels of presumptuous sin comes our fourth culprit — *dominion*. This is when you come into bondage — when you are captured by a sin and it holds you in its grasp. It can be sexual, emotional, financial, or any realm in the physical. Habits have a way of forging a chain and binding. One habit which falls into this category is smoking. A person will say, "I can get rid of cigarettes. I quit seventeen times!" And all the while he may be puffing away on the eighteenth round!

Can a Christian be in bondage? You had better believe it! The bondage can be either physical or demonic and may call for deliverance. David knew that sin is progressive in its character. He knew that if we continued walking in ignorance, the ignorant sin could develop into a secret sin if it were not discarded upon enlightenment. Then that secret sin could come to a boiling point and grow into presumption. Finally — dominion comes onto the scene!

Notice that David says at the closing of verse 13: ". . . and I shall be innocent of the *great transgression*." Here we make a difference between the first four sins and the fifth one. All sin is related to rebellion. They are first cousins. However, rebellion is a special kind of sin in its own category. You can be free from error, secret sin, presumptuousness and dominion and still have rebellion in your spirit. In fact, some of the most rebellious people outwardly display an image ex-

actly the opposite of any man-made picture of rebellion. This is why we need to probe deeply right here.

In our first four instances, sin is a matter of *conduct*. These are evidenced in the way you and I conduct our lives. There is an element of rebellion in them — but our fifth sin is an *attitude* and this is harder to deal with than conduct. The first four groupings of sins can be and are forgiven when confessed. However, when you enter into the realm of rebellion — this represents a different condition and leads into a situation where you may become *irredeemable*! There is nothing more that God can do when rebellion has worked its full cycle except execute judgment. Let me repeat — when rebellion has completed its work and you are a full-grown rebel . . . self-willed . . . incorrigible . . . unchangeable — this is *the great transgression — the spirit of rebellion!*

HOW CAN I KNOW?

How can I know if I am a rebel? It is only fair to give some ways to determine whether or not you and I are rebels.

Some of us came into the church fighting. We may have grown up in surroundings that bred a rebellious attitude. Perhaps we learned in our formative years to fight our way through life and came to feel this was the only way to get along in our world. When we were introduced to Jesus, we took those attitudes, sanctified them, put Bible texts on them and steam-rolled ahead saying, "You get out of the way. I'm going to serve Jesus!! I don't care what you do, but I'm going all the way!!" I speak from experience. Here is proof that "out of the heart the mouth speaketh." Do you see the difference between conduct and attitude?

Checking the word "rebellion" in the Bible can be a mind-blowing experience. Warnings against this attitude and the results of continuing in this condition are splattered across the entire history of Israel. Two instances

(Continued on next page)

GREAT TRANSGRESSION

(Continued from page 7)

which help us understand this condition and the heartbreak it caused God are:

Isaiah 1:2 — "I have brought forth many children but they rebelled against me . . . the ass knows its stall but my people don't even know who their God is."

Zechariah 7:11 — "But they refused to hearken, and pulled away the shoulder . . ." Do you get the picture here? Those of you who have children know very well this response. You try to talk to one of them, "Honey, let me tell you something . . ." — and they pull away from you in anger. That is *attitude*, Church. It is deeper than conduct. It is something that goes down into the fiber of the being. The literal translation of Israel's response to God's attempt to talk to them goes like this: "We will come no more unto thee. We are lords!"

Then in I Samuel 15:17-31 there is the dramatic scene involving the prophet Samuel and King Saul which we are going to use as a basis in our search for answers to this question, "Am I a rebel?"

(17) "*And Samuel said, When thou was little in thine own sight (here is an attitude) was thou not made the head of the tribes of Israel, and the Lord anointed thee king over Israel?*"

(18) "*And the Lord sent thee on a journey and said, (Now this is a commandment, and the commandments of the Lord are always clear) Go and utterly destroy the sinners, the Amalekites, and fight against them until they are consumed.*"

(19) "*Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the Lord?* (Here we have the disobedient act of Saul.)

(20) "*And Saul said unto Samuel, Yea, I have obeyed the voice of the Lord (keep this response in mind) and have gone the way which the Lord sent me, and have brought Agag the king of Amalek, and have utterly destroyed the Amalekites.*"

(21) "*But the people (here is the*

second reply to keep in mind) *took the spoil, sheep and oxen, the chief of the things which should have been utterly destroyed, to sacrifice unto the Lord thy God in Gilgal.*"

(22) "*And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in all your burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord?*"

It is still so much easier today, as it was for Saul in his situation, to bring "burnt offerings and sacrifices" than to obey the clear command of the Lord. Church attendance . . . president of the vestry . . . helping to buy new organs, song books, new pads for the pews — these all require much less sacrifice than does actual outright obedience to a clear command of the Lord. Especially is this so, when the command demands giving up something we are holding dear, even though we may know it is expressly in violation to His will.

One day God had me in a tight place. The Red Sea seemed to be in front of me — mountains on each side — and Pharaoh coming up in the rear. I was crying and weeping and the Lord said, "Mumford . . ."

"Yes, Lord?" I wailed.

"When you are all done crying, how about obeying?"

He had me right there!

(23) "*For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king.*" (Judgment!).

Rebellion is an attitude! Why didn't God just forgive Saul? Can you see that Saul's disobedience in this case clearly revealed his rebellious attitude? God gives us a command — and we disobey; but we realize our disobedience and ask God to forgive us. He does because there is not YET a rebellious attitude.

But persistent disobedience leads to a rebellious attitude! This is where we need to stop, look and listen. One thing I have learned about God is that after a first disobedience, the second time the Lord gives a command, His voice is softer. I may reason — "Well,

the Lord has forgiven me." However, the time following there may only be a whispered command. I have discovered when His voice becomes softer in giving the commands, it means that He is leaving — we are not getting away with something! God has a way of recognizing and revealing our attitudes to us.

This you may not like to hear! Rebellion . . . witchcraft . . . demonizing! In our day in the United States of America we are in a witchcraft revival. Pagan lands have already had their witchcraft revivals. What is the root of it all? Why are people turning to astrology and the occult in such overwhelming numbers? Why are colleges offering credit courses in this subject? The truth is this: as we find ourselves in a rebellious attitude, we open the whole inner nature of our being to all kinds of demon activity. This is true of our children and our entire society today. Hasn't rebellion been a keynote in our society on an ever-increasing scale?

Let me ask you another straight question. Did this happen in Saul's life? This man who was called of God, anointed and presented with every opportunity to serve his people in his day — what developed from his disobedient and rebellious attitude? The end result was demonizing and then that ultimate cop-out — suicide! There is also a remarkable revival of suicide in our day. Most people who take this route would rather give up their lives than obey. So strong is the spirit of rebellion!

(24) "*And Saul said unto Samuel, I have sinned; for I have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, (Saul knew very well that he had disobeyed) and thy words: because I feared the people, and obeyed their voice.*"

(25) "*Now therefore, I pray thee, pardon my sin, and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord.*"

(26) "*And Samuel said unto Saul, I will not return with thee for thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, and the Lord hath rejected thee from being king over Israel. (Note that Saul's soul was not lost for eternity. This is a mat-*

ter of judgment — rejection from the place of responsibility to which he had been called.)

(27) *"And as Samuel turned about to go away, he laid hold upon the skirt of his mantle and it rent.*

(28) *"And Samuel said unto him, the Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine, that is better than thou.*

(29) *"Also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man, that he should repent.*

(30) *"Then he said, I have sinned; yet honour me now, I pray thee, before the elders of my people, and before Israel and turn again with me, that I may worship the Lord thy God."*

Here is one way in which we can judge whether or not we are a rebel. What was Saul worried about? Public opinion! He wanted to walk into "church" once more so that the people would not know about his situation. Samuel agreed. But he might have added, "It isn't going to change anything!"

(31) *"So Samuel turned again after Saul; and Saul worshiped the Lord."*

IT'S UP TO YOU

After reading the story of Saul, you may be asking, "How can I tell whether my disobedience is one of the first four sins — error, secret sin, presumptuous sin, dominion — or if it is the attitude of rebellion?" And certainly this is what we need to discover.

This is a day of using abbreviations and the first letters of proper names or titles in order to save time . . . IBM . . . JFK . . . IRS . . . KJV . . . others. Let me give you another threesome to add to your list — V.R.G. These letters play a part in the way you can determine if you are a rebel or not. If you throw around V.R.G. (and that stands for *Verbalized Religious Garbage!*), you had better make out a check list and get busy!

When you are faced with disobedience on your part and God puts the "stone of offense" right in your

path, you have the choice of four attitudes you can assume. Saul had these four choices. As we consider them, we get some answers to our question, "Am I a rebel?"

1. What did Saul say when Samuel asked the question in verse 19: "Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord . . .?" He began at once to come up with some V.R.G. . . . "I have obeyed."

Someone comes to me and says,

A DIFFERENCE?

You may say, "Jesus is my Savior", and get away with some things.

But when you say, "Jesus is my Lord!", this is different . . . you give up your own will to do His Will!

"He gave Himself that He might purify us from all lawlessness." Titus 2:14

"Brother Mumford, I don't know why I am so sick. My home is in utter confusion . . . my marriage is breaking up . . . things are in a terrible state."

"Did you obey the Lord?" I ask.

"Oh, yes! I have kept the commandments from my youth up."

"Never did anything wrong?"

"Never — Oh, no — not me!"

Does this response have a familiar ring to it?

2. The second response is almost the same — more V.R.G. Only this time Saul tries another escape mechanism, "The people did it!" Instead of admitting, "I didn't obey", he continued evading and now blamed it on someone else. I wonder what God would have done if Saul had been man enough to have said, "You know — I didn't obey — and there is a rebellious spirit in me. Once I was humble and now I am not. Samuel, I need help!"

3. The third choice is the one that leads to the point of no return. The

first response is trying to get around it; the second one is blaming it on somebody else; but here the person says, "I can't face it." Isn't it tragic that at times we would rather turn back than admit we are wrong? We insist, "The Lord has been too hard on me . . . I can't continue in this discipleship thing — it's too tough." Your rebellion remains intact. Nothing can touch you. You have no intention of changing your life style. God cannot break that *core* of rebellion that lies at the center of your being and is causing your trouble. Remember *sin* is what you do. Rebellion is the result of *what you are*.

4. Finally, we have the fourth choice — that of being broken — of saying, "God, you are looking at a rebel. God, I need help. God, I want you to break that thing that is inside — that thing that exalts itself against Your will." When this attitude is reached, God says, "O.K., I'll fix you up."

For a classic example of our fourth choice, we look at an incident in the life of King David, the man who was chosen to replace King Saul after his rejection by God. Do you know what I believe about David? I believe he was just as much a rebel as Saul. But, oh, the difference when David was faced with the "stone of offense" in his life by God.

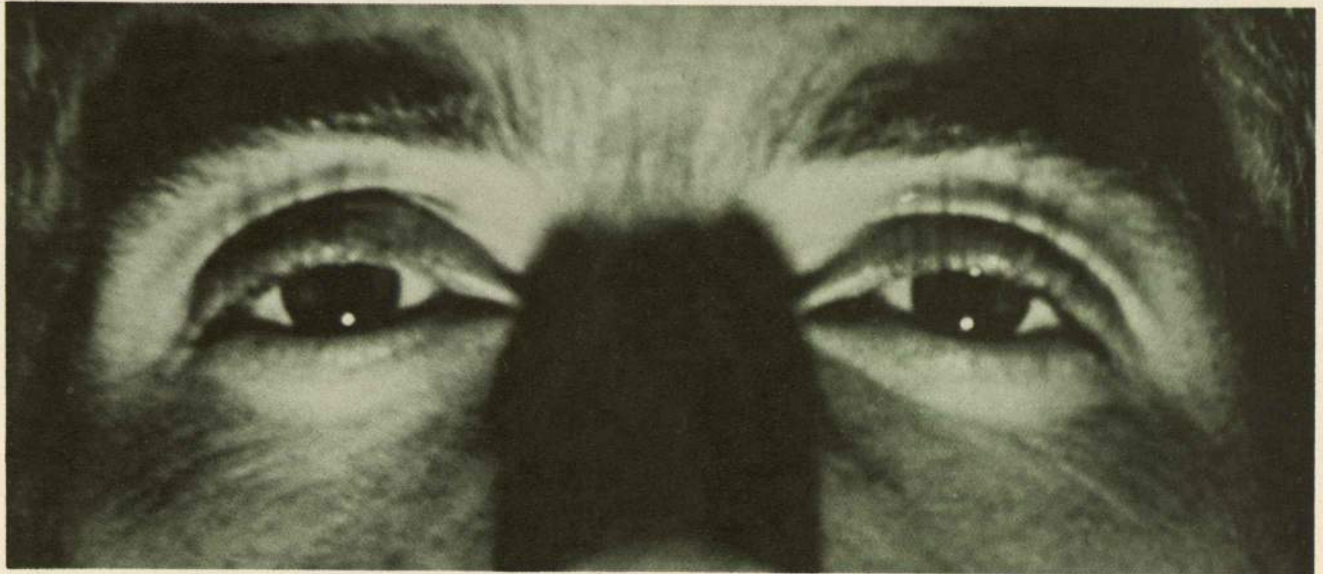
David had a strong spirit. He had what the modern youth would call, "real power under the hood!" When he wanted something he got it. Recall how he went up on the housetop and looking over he saw beautiful Bathsheba. His immediate reaction was, "I think I'd like to have her. Find out who she is and bring her to me." He was king and got most anything he wanted! But God did not let David get away with his sinning in taking another man's wife and having her husband killed. Just as Samuel confronted Saul with his disobedience, so God used another prophet to bring before David the enormity of his sin.

Listen to Nathan as he tells David the parable about a rich man who had

(Continued on page 31)

RULERS OF DARKNESS

By Hobart Freeman



PART OF SATAN'S MASTER PLAN TO ENSLAVE AN ENTIRE GENERATION

The Scriptures predict that there will be a great increase in demonic activity in the last days. Our age is characterized by an ever-increasing flood of Satanic wickedness. This rapid expansion of the world of the kingdom of darkness is seen in the increase in crime, lust, deceit, moral depravity, suicide, war, fear, worry, atheism, psychic disorders, demonic oppression and possession, drug and alcohol addiction, together with the growth of spiritism and occultism.

Practices which were once abhorred by the average person as witchcraft, sorcery, and spiritism are now being

popularized through religious literature, church groups, and radio and TV, whereby millions are being subjected to such occult practices as clairvoyance, telepathy, hypnotism, magic, seances, and forms of extrasensory preception (ESP).

We find that many persons in government circles seek and welcome the counsel of clairvoyants and mediums, such as Jeane Dixon, whose prognostications are derived from fortunetelling, and Arthur Ford who conducts seances while in a trance.

Multitudes, including businessmen, government and religious leaders, beset with problems, fearful and confused because of the present state of the world, are seeking help from fortunetellers and spiritualist mediums. Others have been subjected to the influences of spiritualism, assuming everything supernatural is of God.

The use of hallucinogenic drugs has

become a symbol of mankind's frustration with life and is an attempt to venture into the spiritual "unknown" by means contrary to the Divine will.

Feeling the contemporary Church lacks awareness of the true spiritual dimension, many are seeking spiritual understanding from such organizations as, Inner Peace Movement (IPM), the Association for Research and Enlightenment (ARE), Spiritual Frontiers Fellowship (SFF), and the Religious Research Foundation of America (RRFA). The occult nature of these and similar organizations is seen in their stress upon psychic experiences and many other practices similar to occultism in general.

Multitudes are being deluded by the unscriptural doctrine of reincarnation, whereby one "atones" for his own sins through a cycle of rebirths. This is arousing unusual interest in the Western world as a result of renewed interest in Eastern metaphysics and

Dr. Hobart E. Freeman, a former teacher of philosophy and ethics, writes from the position of one who has been used of God to help set hundreds free from the bondage of occultism.

the writings of the Rosicrucians and Theosophy, as well as psychics like Edgar Cayce and Grace Wittenberger.

Thousands of self-admitted witches meet regularly to perpetuate pagan rituals, fertility rites, and invoke and worship pagan gods (demons, cf. Deuteronomy 32:16-17 and I Corinthians 10:20). In San Francisco, the First Satanic Church has been founded with Anton LaVey, the priest of Satan, as its founder and leader.

The current scientific interest in psychic research, the growing acceptance of parapsychology as a science, the use of hypnotism in medical practice, and the acknowledgment of extrasensory perception as legitimate manifestations of the mind, are unmistakable evidence of the success of Satan's diabolical scheme to gain access to man's spirit as a necessary step in his invasion of humanity on a scale unlike anything in the history of the human race!

CAUSE FOR OPPRESSION

Those who have become involved in any form of occultism will eventually suffer satanic oppression. There are valid reasons for such a conclusion, based both upon Scripture and experience.

1. Occult involvement is disobedience to God's Word and is an abomination to Him.

In Deuteronomy 18:9f., God warns: ". . . thou shalt not learn to do after the abominations of those nations. There shall not be found with thee anyone . . . that useth divination (fortuneteller), or an observer of times (soothsayer), or an enchanter (magician), or a witch (sorceress), or a charmer (hypnotist), or a consulter with familiar spirits (mediums possessed with a spirit or "guide"), or a wizard (clairvoyant or psychic), or a necromancer (medium who consults the dead). For ALL that do these things ARE AN ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD!"

This passage sets forth the methods by which the heathen sought to unveil hidden knowledge and exercise super-

natural powers. In contrast, God declares in verses 15-22 that Israel would learn the things that she needed to know, not by *discovery* through the methods of divination and occult practices, but by *revelation*.

These practices are all condemned by God without reservation. Carefully examine the following Scriptures: Deuteronomy 18:9-14; Exodus 7:11-12; II Timothy 3:8; Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 19:26, 31; 20:6, 27; I Chronicles 10:13-14; II Kings 21:5-6; Isaiah 2:6; 8-19; Jeremiah 27:9-10; Zechariah 10:2; Malachi 3:5; Acts 8:9f; 16:16f; 19:19; Galatians 5:16-21; Revelation 21:8; 22:15.

God not only forbade participation in all forms of occultism as spiritually defiling (Leviticus 19:31), but made such disobedience as punishable by death (Exodus 22:18; Leviticus 20:27), and sufficient grounds for rejection of that soul by God (Leviticus 20:6).

2. Occult involvement breaks the First Commandment and invokes God's curse.

"Thou shalt have no other gods before me . . . for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation . . ." (Exodus 20:3-5).

Few people have seriously considered that there are but two sources of supernatural guidance, or power — God or Satan. One who visits a fortuneteller, obviously is not seeking help from God through Jesus Christ, or he would pray directly to God, or seek help through a Christian friend or minister. The fortuneteller does not call upon God for the information, but divines by occult methods and demonic power, as is seen in the girl in Acts 16 who had a "spirit of divination".

Although Satan often accommodates the seeker with knowledge or help, one has opened the door to the Enemy who moves in and oppresses him, for the powers of darkness always exact a heavy price for their services.

God's prohibitions against occultism

are still in effect today. Those who disobey His commandments against this sin invariably fall under His curse, suffering psychic, mental, physical or spiritual oppression or enslavement, from which liberation is needed.

EVIDENCE OF OCCULT OPPRESSION AND SUBJECTION

We must distinguish between *general* oppression and *occult* oppression and subjection. Liberation from occult oppression or subjection requires proper understanding of its peculiar nature and cause.

General oppression, whether mental, physical, or spiritual, may result from any one of several causes. It may result from some traumatic experience, sin, resentment, hate, pride, fear, or illness, as well as other causes. Occult oppression and subjection, however, always results from *an individual's involvement in some form of occult activity or false religious cults*.

Both from the Scriptures and experience, it is evident that evil spirits are of various kinds and work in a variety of ways. There are blind spirits, epileptic spirits, lying spirits, spirits of pride, intellectualism, lust, infirmity, insanity, homosexuality, suicide, fear, apathy, anger, strife, hate, depression, stubbornness, misunderstanding, gossip, obscenity, and many others.

These malevolent spirits are definite personalities, not mere habits, diseases or psychological conditions. The demonic spirits seek to oppress those whose character, appetites, and moral, mental, or physical weaknesses are most harmonious to themselves. They bury themselves in the very structure of the person and identify with the personality of the victim insofar as possible. This is why it is difficult for the novice to discern, or the medical doctor, psychologist, and psychiatrist to admit the reality and activity of demonic spirits in such victims.

A distinction should be made between occult "subjection" and "oppression". Subjection, resulting from occult involvement, means that one or

(Continued on next page)

RULERS OF DARKNESS

(Continued from page 11)

more of these malevolent spirits have brought the victim under the domination and control to such an extent that the individual has been enslaved by such things as: sexual lust, violent temper, lying, hate, religious delusions, or forms of occultism themselves. In persons so subjected, it is often found that they have become psychic themselves, and are so enslaved by occultism that often they lack the will, and sometimes even the desire to be set free.

Oppression means that one or more of these spirits are afflicting the victim with one of many forms of mental, physical, emotional, or psychic ailments, such as depression, pain, marital discord, apparitions, and so forth.

Although these symptoms may stem from other causes, occult subjection and oppression may be classified for clarification into five categories: (1) Mental and Emotional, (2) Psychic, (3) Spiritual, (4) Physical, (5) Material, Domestic and Social.

I. MENTAL AND EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCES AND ABNORMALITIES.

There are many forms of mental and emotional abnormalities which have no functional or organic basis, as is commonly supposed, but result from occult involvement.

1. Psychoses indicative of occult oppression or subjection.

The symptoms that will be found in this category are such things as serious, prolonged depression or melancholia; resignation to failure or misfortune; apathy in general.

Sometimes this depressive state alternates with a directly opposite mood of extreme joy or an optimistic outlook. This mental disorder is characterized by extreme changes in mood, fluctuating up and down — often without warning.

There may be compulsive thoughts of violence and aggression, as well as the presence of destructive emotions of hate, resentment, suspicion, envy, malice and other antisocial abnormalities. Unpredictable impulses,

moods, and actions characterize such an individual.

There is often found in such persons a continual "flight of ideas", the individual going off on one tangent or another, often without completion of a thought, in addition to general incoherence of thoughts and ideas.

Some individuals are subject to uncontrollable passions and appetites, vile language and sexual aberrations. Also indicative of the activity of demonic powers is drug addiction, gluttony, addiction to alcohol or tobacco, compulsive gambling, and many other forms of excess and intemperance.

2. Psychoneuroses indicative of occult oppression and subjection.

The neurotic exhibits symptoms such as persistent and chronic fear, dread, or evidence of strong nervous tensions. The individual often lives at a frenzied pace and suffers insomnia and restlessness.

The most pathetic and difficult forms of neurotic oppression to deal with are the deep-rooted feelings of self-pity and the abnormal desire for attention found in some individuals.

Compulsive thoughts, behaviour, phobias and obsessions are often present in such persons. Compulsive lying, deception, infidelity, arson or kleptomania (an irresistible desire to steal) are some of the compulsive abnormalities.

II. PSYCHIC DISTURBANCES AND ABNORMALITIES.

Under this category are to be found those forms of subjection and oppression that pertain particularly to the extrasensory functions of the mind or psyche (spirit).

1. Occult Subjection:

Those who have had occult involvement, or who come from a background which contains occult connections, frequently become "psychic" themselves.

(a) *Clairvoyance*: This term describes the ability to see objects or events beyond the natural range of vision. It is the awareness or knowledge of what is taking place elsewhere.

(b) *Precognition*: This power enables occultly subjected persons to

have knowledge of, or the ability to see events before they occur.

(c) *Telepathy*: Persons who are psychic often exhibit the power of the transference of thought from one mind to another, either by thought-sending or mind-reading. When the term ESP is mentioned, often this is what is first thought of.

(d) *Divination*: This is the most common form of occultism and has reference to the ancient black art of fortunetelling — by the crystal ball, ouija board, tea leaves, handwriting analysis (graphology), horoscope, etc.

(e) *Radiesthesia*: Divining for such things as water, oil, and minerals, using a dowsing rod or pendulum, is an ancient occult practice known the world over, having its roots in heathenism, and it is condemned in the Scriptures (Hosea 4:12; Deuteronomy 18:10).

(f) *Psychometry*: This is the psychic ability to determine the facts about an object's owner from contact with the object.

(g) *Magic Practices*: Includes: hypnosis, remote influence of others, magic charming, conjuring and healing animals and humans, casting spells, and countless other magical and superstitious practices.

(h) *Spiritism and Mediumistic Powers*: Certain other abilities which can result from occult subjection: self-induced trance states, contact with spirit writing, levitation (the lifting or floating of objects), spirit knockings or rappings, telekinesis (objects are caused to move mysteriously about the room, musical instruments play as by unseen hands), parakinesis (PK, or the ability to control objects by the power of the mind and will), and many other forms of psychic phenomena.

2. Occult Oppression.

Occult participation does not always result in the above mentioned sensitivity, there often being only some form of "oppression" occurring.

(a) *Poltergeist Phenomena*: Poltergeist (German for "noisy ghost") manifestations are common phenomena, having been observed by

many reliable witnesses and may be attributed to the malicious works perpetrated by demonic spirits.

In this instance, the oppressed individual suffers definite psychic attacks in the form of such bizarre occurrences as: objects are seen floating about the room, the sound of rattling of chains, moaning, weeping or crying; voices speak threats and obscenities; or the piano begins to play in the middle of the night by unseen hands.

(b) *Apparitions, Specters, Monstrous Phantasms*: Appearances of ghostly figures, specters, and demonic creatures (often mistaken for mere hallucinations) such as headless figures, weird animals, or other hideous creatures. At times there is experienced an actual attack by these malevolent spirits. Psychic attacks in the form of persistent nightmares are also common.

(c) *Incubi and Succubae Experiences*: This is an attempted assault upon a man or woman by an unclean spirit or demon of lust for the purpose of gratifying its sexual appetites.

III. SPIRITUAL SUBJECTION AND OPPRESSION.

From the religious standpoint occult involvement invariably affects one spiritually, frequently causing serious damage to one's spiritual life and faith.

1. Indifference to Spiritual Things:

Indifference to the Word of God, prayer, worship and spiritual matters in general — often against one's will.

2. Serious Problems Concerning Doubt and Unbelief:

Extreme and persistent doubts concerning the teachings of Scripture (especially the supernatural), or difficulty in exercising faith.

3. Religious Aberrations:

Religious delusions, heresies and errors — ranging from agnosticism to affirming the doctrines of Spiritualism, Modernism or the false religious cults.

4. Inability to Receive the Holy Spirit:

Frequently, there is found to be a spiritual barrier in those with occult associations when they wish to receive the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

5. Resistance:

A very significant indication of the spiritual effect upon those who have had occult involvement is the resistance sometimes evidenced by some to the teaching concerning the reality of occult subjection and oppression, as well as indifference to the dangers involved.

6. Occult Bondage and Opposition to God:

In many instances where spiritual damage is severe, there are evidenced the following forms of occult subjection: Inability of the person to believe on or confess Christ, to pray or read the Word of God, to understand or keep one's attention on the preaching or teaching of the Scriptures, to acknowledge the fact of the efficacy of the blood Atonement or the Deity of Christ, and the infiltration of unclean thoughts and sexual images into the mind when any attempt at spiritual devotions or exercises is made.

Opposition to God, as seen in the following characteristics, is unmistakable evidence of demon possession: Blasphemous thoughts against God, Christ and the Trinity; opposition to the work of the Holy Spirit; aversion to all references to the blood of Christ or His Deity; scorn, mockery and ridicule toward the Bible, preaching, believers, Christianity, or divine and holy things in general.

IV. PHYSICAL OPPRESSION

Certain physical symptoms are indicative of the presence and activity of demonic powers.

1. Speech and Behavioral Abnormalities:

The oppressed individual will frequently manifest one or more of the following symptoms: abnormal talkativeness, unusual loudness of voice, hysterical laughter, persistent uneasiness, silliness, unusually foolish talk and behavior, muttering to oneself, compulsive shouting or screaming when provoked, peculiar postures (e.g. abnormally rigid or the opposite state of sluggish droopiness), deep sighing (denoting despondency or feelings of self-pity), withdrawal from public scrutiny, odd eccentricities of speech

which are annoyingly repetitious.

2. Abnormal Facial Characteristics:

The face is often seen to be noticeably contorted by fear, chronic doubts or anxiety. Other extremes of facial characteristics are seen from a stereotyped, frozen smile or grimace to an expressionless or stoical indifference.

The eyes may be abnormally bright and protruding, or glazed, having a trance-like or hunted, animal-like stare. In others there is a wicked, defiant glare, or a demonic leering in the eyes.

3. Abnormal Physical Ailments:

Chronic, persistent physical ailments, diseases or pains that do not respond to prayer or treatment of any kind, but which seem to linger on and on, may indicate occult oppression.

V. MATERIAL, DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL FORMS OF OPPRESSION

Most people are unaware of the far-reaching effects of occult participation. Occult associations can also result in oppression which affects the lives of others, resulting, for example, in serious marital problems (often ending in divorce — one person traced the beginning of marital strife and incompatibility to the day following a visit to a seance), discord between parents and children, disputes with neighbors, friction and strife between business associates or others, as well as church divisions and irreconcilable schisms.

LIBERATION FROM OCCULT OPPRESSION AND SUBJECTION

Satan has deluded many concerning the following questions: Can a Christian be oppressed, or possess evil spirits? Can one who has never actively participated in any form of occultism be occultly subjected or oppressed? The answer to both these questions is YES, which can be supported both from Scripture and experience.

We know from experience that believers can be oppressed and suffer invasion of the mind and body by malicious spirits because the vast ma-

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majority of those with whom we have dealt and seen God deliver were Christians! Moreover, many of these were believers who had received the baptism in the Holy Spirit.

The misfortunes and physical afflictions of Job are said to be the work of Satan (Job 1-2). The woman bowed together by Satan and delivered of a "spirit of infirmity" by Jesus in the synagogue was a believer ("a daughter of Abraham"). Believers may also be implied in II Timothy 2:23-26. Since Scriptures teach that all sickness is the "oppression" of Satan (Acts 10:38), it follows then that a Christian who becomes sick or diseased is suffering Satanic oppression.

The second significant question is: Can a Christian who has never actively participated in any form of occultism be occultly subjected or oppressed?

We have found many times that a person who has never actively participated in any form of occult practice can suffer oppression or subjection, experiencing what may be termed "passive" oppression or subjection.

In our files are records of individuals suffering forms of "passive" oppression or subjection of every description, which have resulted either from the occult involvements of their relatives, or from having been innocently subjected to occult influences as children.

Finally, it should also be pointed out that there is no such thing as "minor" or "harmless" involvement. Some of the most severely oppressed victims are often those who merely had warts removed by magic charming, or who followed the horoscope column in the newspaper each day, although they did not allow it to "affect their lives and decisions".

METHODS OF DELIVERANCE

Wherever there has been occult participation in any form, it is essential that the following procedure be under-

taken and carefully followed or *liberation from occult subjection or oppression will not result.*

1. Confession of Faith in Christ:

If the person who needs liberation is already a Christian, then he needs only to affirm his faith in Christ. Some, however, who are not believers will have to be led to make such a confession.

Then there are others who are *unable* to make such a confession of Christ without help. In such cases, the oppressed person, bound by the powers of darkness, must be led in a confession of faith in Christ by someone who should have them repeat after them a saving confession. Do not be concerned about sincerity in such cases, for if the subjected individual were not in earnest he would not be seeking liberation.

2. Confession of Occult Sins:

All occult involvement must be confessed. The oppressed should name each specific form of participation which can be recalled and confess it to God as sin. The individual should, for example, make a confession similar to the following: "Father, I confess that I have sinned against Your Word by consulting a fortuneteller, by following the horoscope, and divining for water, as well as anything else of this nature which I may have forgotten, and I ask for and accept your forgiveness, in Jesus' Name."

3. Renunciation of Satan and Command to Depart:

This must be a *direct command to Satan himself* (not a prayer or request) *on the part of the person seeking or needing the deliverance* for the Enemy to depart in Jesus' Name! No one else can do this for the oppressed person. It was by an act of this individual's will that the door was opened and Satan will only heed a command from the same individual to depart permanently.

4. Exorcism: the Prayer of Deliverance:

Although we believe, when done in faith, one can liberate himself from occult bondage and oppression, it is, however, advisable to have another ex-

orcise these powers when the oppressed individual's faith is weak and the oppression severe.

5. Responsibility of the Liberated:

The important thing to remember is that **DELIVERANCE IS A WALK**, not a once-for-all experience without any responsibilities on the part of the person who has been set free. After deliverance, it is necessary to build certain safeguards around the ground that has been liberated from the Enemy. Jesus warns in Matthew 12:43-45 that deliverance is not necessarily permanent unless one takes certain spiritual precautions against the Enemy's attempts to return. Moreover, one should not neglect to destroy all occult objects and literature without regard to their cost (Acts 19:18-19).

A. Study of the Scriptures: Faith comes by hearing and believing the Word of God (Romans 10:17).

B. Prayer: Develop a consistent prayer life. Prayer partners are recommended. See Luke 18:1; Ephesians 6:18; Jude 20.

C. Fellowship: Spiritual fellowship with other members of the Body of Christ is essential. See Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:41-47.

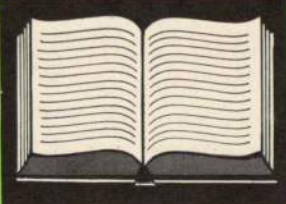
D. Resistance: After liberation Satan may seek to oppress again, or through temptation attempt to entice the individual to yield to him in order to regain access to his life. We are admonished in Ephesians 4:27 not to "give place to the devil", but to "resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7). However, even if the Enemy did break through in a moment of weakness, one should immediately take a firm stand and refuse to give him further access, demanding that he depart.

(a) Confess your victory and deliverance through Jesus' blood (Revelation 12:11).

(b) Claim your authority over Satan by virtue of your position with Christ and command that he depart. (Ephesians 2:6; 1:20-21; Colossians 2:13-15; Psalm 91; Mark 16:17).

(c) Put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:10-18).

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BIBLE STUDY

By HOWARD COFFEY

Judges

JUDGES — The title of the Book of Judges comes from the title given to the rulers, chiefs, leaders or magistrates of Israel, from Joshua to Saul.

THEME — MAN TRIED. After great victory in conquest, came a time of trial and struggle in Israel, the period of the Judges. During this time the nation passed through periods of prosperity and plenty, as, also, poverty and persecution. These fluctuating circumstances came because of compromise that resulted in confusion, and disobedience that led to despair. But God faithfully delivered them through judges He raised up each time they cried unto Him. God's pattern is to try hearts after victories, and prove His own through struggle and battle once He has blessed them, and then to bless them with new heights once they have been tried and proven.

SYNOPSIS — God's command to expel or destroy all the Canaanites was not fully executed by Israel upon possessing the Promised Land, so that those who remained contaminated the nation with their idolatry and vices. It seems that the affair of Micah and the Levite and the crime of Gibeah which led to the devastating war against the Benjaminites occurred soon after the death of Joshua (chapter 17–21, included as an appendix; see Outline), at which time it was said of Israel: "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes." (Joshua 21:25).

To chastise them and bring them again to Himself, God permitted the Mesopotamians, the Moabites, the Canaanites, the Midianites, the Ammonites, and the Philistines to oppress them at times as tribes, and at other times as a whole nation, until they would call out to Him and He would raise up a deliverer, a judge, to deliver them out of the hands of their enemies. A resume of the story of the book is found in Joshua 2:7–19.

These judges were different from the ordinary

administrator of justice in Israel. Rather they were ruling magistrates whose office was for life. Succession was not always constant, so that there were periods of anarchies, and intervals when the nation was without a ruler; as, also, intervals of long duration of foreign domination and oppression.

The authority of judges was nearly equal to that of kings; it had to do with war and peace. They decided cases with absolute authority; but they had no power to make new laws, nor to impose new burdens on the people. They were protectors of the law and the faith and avengers of crimes. They served without remuneration, pomp or splendor, and without guards or court, other than what their own wealth could afford.

There are fifteen judges listed in Scripture, thirteen in Judges, and the last two, Eli and Samuel, in I Samuel; they are: Othniel, Ehud, Shamgar, Deborah and Barak, Gideon, Abimelech, Tola, Jair, Jephthah, Ibzan, Elon, Abdon, Samson, Eli and Samuel.

Othniel started his rule about 20 years after Joshua. Deborah, a prophetess, ruled together with Barak. Abimelech was not called of God to rule, but rather came into power through intrigue and violence, making himself "king", which was punished by God with a tragic end. His father, Gideon, had refused to be king over Israel; he declared, "The Lord is your king." (Judges 8:23).

Some judges were contemporaries, ruling in different sections of the country; some ruled locally, others nationally.

Of the approximately 350 years covered by this period, it is estimated that only about 100 years were spent in rebellion and disloyalty to God. So in spite of the dark periods, there were better periods, also.

According to Jewish tradition Samuel was the author of this history of the judges of Israel.

OUTLINE

- I. Introduction. Chapters 1:1–3:6.
- II. History of the Judges. Chapters 3:7–16:31.

III. Appendix. Chapters 17–21.

PROMINENT CHARACTERS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Caleb and his daughter, who asked for the upper and lower springs, chapter 1; Deborah and Barak, chapter 4; Song of Deborah, chapter 5; Gideon, chapters 6–8; Jephthah, chapters 11–12; Samson, chapters 13–16; The Angel of the Lord, chapters 2:1–5, 6:11–21, 10:10–16, 13:3–23; The Spirit of the Lord, chapters 3:10, 6:34, 11:29, 13:25, 14:6, 15:14.

CHRIST IN THE BOOK

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is our Deliverer-Judge.

CONCLUSION

As you assuredly realize, this study is not meant to be exhaustive, but rather its intention is to be provocative. As you read the book, what interesting facts can you find to add to those included in the Synopsis? For example, list two interesting things about Ehud.

Ruth

RUTH — The title of the book is from the name of the heroine, a Gentile woman, and was written, according to Jewish tradition, by Samuel; and it is placed in our Bibles as a sort of sequel to Judges.

THEME — The last word of the book — David — reveals the purpose of the book, to trace the lineage of David as the forebearer of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. The most important part is the genealogy given in the last chapter.

SYNOPSIS — Perhaps it was in the time of Gideon that Elimelech of Bethlehem, together with his wife Naomi, and their two sons, emigrated to Moab because of a famine in Israel. Naomi became a widow in Moab, and also lost her two sons, who left widows, women of Moab. When Naomi decided to return to Israel because the famine had subsided, one of the two daughters-in-law, Ruth, decided to accompany her. In so doing, due to Judaic custom of the time (compare Deuteronomy 25:5–10), she became the wife of a near kinsman of Naomi, Boaz, and thus in turn she became the great-grandmother of David, from whom our Savior Jesus Christ was descended. (Matthew 1:5).

Ruth being a Moabitess was of the descendents of Lot who were heathen. Through Naomi and her family she learned of the true God and became His follower and worshipper; and, as has been stated, in Bethlehem she became the wife of Boaz, who was the son of Rahab, the harlot of Jericho. (Matthew 1:5). So David's great-grandmother was a Moabitess and his great-grandfather was half Canaanite. This is God's grace, adopting Gentiles into the lineage of our Savior Jesus Christ, into the blood-line of the Messiah.

This beautiful story, besides its geneological value, also throws light on the times of blessing and the simplicity, faithfulness, and nobility of character of individuals during the otherwise often dark era of the judges.

OUTLINE

It would be difficult to surpass, or improve, the simple outline of Dr. C.I. Scofield, which so vividly presents the contents of this delightful book; so we are giving it herewith:

- I. Ruth deciding. Chapter 1.
- II. Ruth serving. Chapter 2.
- III. Ruth resting. Chapter 3.
- IV. Ruth rewarded. Chapter 4.

PROMINENT CHARACTERS AND HIGHLIGHTS

Ruth, the Moabitess; Naomi, her mother-in-law; Elimelech, Naomi's husband; Chilion and Mahlon, Naomi's sons; Orpah, Naomi's other daughter-in-law; Boaz, their near kinsman who redeemed Naomi's land and married Ruth.

Ruth's famous quote: "Intreat me not to leave thee, or return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." (Ruth 1:16, 17).

CHRIST IN THE BOOK

Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ is our near Kinsman-Redeemer.

CONCLUSION

Make some subdivisions under the four divisions of the outline. □

HOME PRAYER MEETINGS



FORUM GUEST
Reverend Ken Lawrence

The Forum guest for this month is the Reverend Ken Lawrence. Rev. Lawrence was a former pastor in the Advent Christian Church for six years. Since receiving the baptism in the Holy Spirit in 1967, Rev. Lawrence and His wife, Mavis, and children have traveled in a mobile ministry to the body of Christ.

Now a resident of Orlando, Florida, Rev. Lawrence is the Associate Pastor of the Calvary Assembly of God Church.

Sitting on the panel are: Don Basham — Pastor, teacher and author; Derek Prince — Missionary, teacher, Bible and language scholar; Charles Simpson — Minister and teacher; and Bob Mumford — Popular conference speaker and teacher.

"What is the historical perspective of the widespread home prayer meetings we see today? Is it just a fad, or is God doing something new?"

Mumford — Perhaps our answers should begin, as your questions did, with the historical perspective of home prayer meetings because of the challenge they present to the "establishment" and its rejection by many who are irrevocably committed to what is called the local church. Proper understanding and relationship between a home group, a local church, and the whole Body of Christ in a given area would eliminate much misunderstanding.

Those who understand the implication of restoration (not resurrectionism) would also understand that the Early Church ministered from "house to house". There were reasons then for this which the pressures of our society are once again revealing.

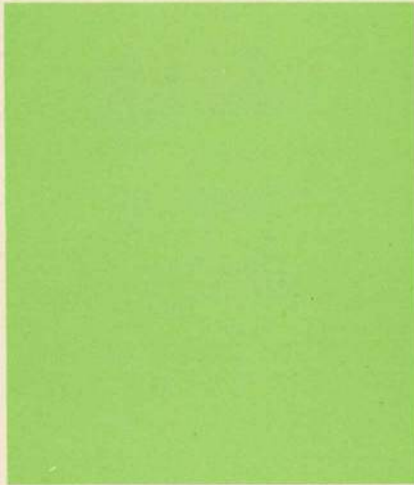
Simpson — Bob, speaking of the Early Church, in the Book of Acts — chapters 2, 5 and 10 — as well as many others — we see these people gathering in homes to seek the Lord. Often they were afraid to publicly acknowledge their hunger. As they gathered in homes to pray and share, the power of the Holy Spirit fell. They continued meeting in homes, as well as attending the public services in the temple (Acts 2:24 and

5:42). In fact, we have no record in the New Testament of church buildings being erected. It was "the church in your house".

Prince — It is interesting, too, to note that Christ Himself spent more of His ministry in homes than in synagogues (Mark 1:29–34). When He sent out the first group of twelve Apostles, he instructed them to commence their ministry in the home of a worthy local citizen (Matthew 10:11–14).

Basham — Along the same line, a study of church history will reveal that a number of our prominent denominations had their beginnings in house prayer meetings. The Quakers began with meetings in homes before their "Friends Meeting Houses" were established. My own denomination, the Disciples of Christ, began out of a house prayer meeting in Washington, Pennsylvania, back in the early 1800's.

HOME PRAYER MEETINGS



Not wanting to be a church, the group called themselves, the "Christian Association of Washington".

Simpson — Don, this is true of most great revivals, too. Usually revival grows out of a sense of hunger and need. Friends share their sense of hunger with other friends whom they trust. Sooner or later they meet together in small groups to discuss and pray. God answers their prayers and begins to pour out the Spirit upon them.

Let me say in answer to your question about this being a fad, I certainly do not believe it is a fad, though it may be a phase in a larger plan that God has.

Basham — Yes, in one way, what is happening today with the proliferation of home prayer meetings is not new. It is the same pattern the Holy Spirit has used in the past. But in another way it

is new, in that never before in the history of Christianity has such a move been so vast, so widespread. Revival, or spiritual renewal, in the past has been confined to some small area of the world and usually reflected the prophetic leadership of one person or a small group of leaders. But the house prayer meetings of our time seems to be a part of a spiritual movement which knows neither of these limitations. It is a movement which knows no geographical boundaries and recognizes no human leadership.

Prince — This is not difficult to understand when we realize that in every major move of the Holy Spirit there has been the renewed emphasis upon the fellowship of believers together in their homes. Throughout all dispensations this one fact has remained unchanged: the home is the center of all God's plans for the human race. The level of the spiritual

life of a congregation can never be higher than the level of the spiritual life in the homes that make up that congregation.

"Should leadership in the home prayer meetings be by the Spirit only, or is there need for a person or persons to help? What type of leaders or leadership should be over the meetings?"

Simpson — This question seems to imply that leadership by the Spirit cannot coincide with leadership through a person. I do not believe that is the case. I believe that if the Spirit is leading a group, He will also lead shepherds in coming forth. Since the Holy Spirit is the one Who inspired the scriptures, we can look for answers to our questions there. The biblical account of small group meetings indicates that they were under authority. They were part of the church. Acts 2:42 says they were in the apostles doctrine and breaking bread and fellowshiping from house to house. They were very clearly under apostolic authority. In Titus 1:5, Paul told Titus to set in order things that were lacking and to appoint elders. In Acts 20:17, Paul called for the elders and in subsequent verses gave them the responsibility over the church in Ephesus.

Prince — I believe, too, that all



regular activities of Christian believers should be under the direction of responsible human leaders. As Charles has shown, by New Testament standards there can be no such a thing as a meeting led solely by the Holy Spirit, without any human leaders for the Holy Spirit to work through.

Basham — Yes, any home prayer meeting needs spiritual oversight. In most cases, it is a kind of spiritual “cop-out” for the group to assume, or to say, “Let’s just let the Holy Spirit lead.” The Holy Spirit leads through those who are older and more mature in the faith. If such persons do not assume the mantle of leadership which the Holy Spirit drops upon them, then the meeting will be improperly led. You can be sure someone will exercise leadership. And if it is not Holy Spirit endowed leadership, it will be some other kind!

Preferably the leadership should come from recognized “elders”; or if the meeting has been raised up in the home of a Christian couple, the host couple should assume the leadership, with the husband taking the central place. Most of us who are experienced in the matter of house meetings are understandably leary of groups led by women. The scriptures make it plain that in matters of government and authority, the man is to assume leadership.

Mumford — I have found that the absence of sound and instructed leadership is the greatest single cause for rejecting the home prayer groups as being dangerous or competitive. An “open” meeting, where “we have no leadership but the Holy Spirit” and everyone does what he or she is prompted to do by the Spirit, is not Scriptural. This attitude IS dangerous, if not fatal, to most new groups.

The basic fear of authority or oversight, or of some leader quenching the Spirit, is usually due to past experience of ecclesiastical authoritarianism. When we can distinguish between this and genuine spiritual authority and God-given leadership, we will also come to understand that a meeting must be “directed”. Because this is scriptural, there will be an anointing by the Spirit. This leadership is only made effective by the recognition, support and submission of other members of the group.



“Why do some groups seem to have a wonderful purpose and anointing for a long time and then suddenly be almost lifeless?”

Mumford — What a question! Most people do not recognize this when it happens, let alone the reason why.

When we launch out into this dimension of the Holy Spirit, it is a commitment to flow with and follow the anointing on some new and fresh manner. At some given point the River of Anointing takes an unexpected turn which is new, different, or more particularly against our traditional manner of understanding. Refusal to flow with what God desires or requires from us as a group causes a lessening of the joy and expectancy. Gradually the group settles down to routine

HOME PRAYER MEETINGS

meetings, with most members afraid to discuss the WHY of this happening!

Basham — Bob, let me enlarge a little on the thought you have introduced. It is true that we often do not recognize that the Holy Spirit has decided to “shut down the meeting”. The time has come for the meeting to change direction or to take on a different purpose or character. Or He may be desirous of presenting a new and different kind of ministry, and so the anointing will “lift” from the present meeting. This is not a cause for concern or despair, but should lead those participating into seeking to know what God is bringing to pass. Prayerful guidance should be sought.

Unfortunately, many times, instead of being sensitive to what the Spirit is doing, desperate attempts are made to “patch up” or “prop up” the meetings, and many fleshly efforts are made to try and perpetuate what God has decreed should die. My personal conviction is that few if any home prayer meetings have a valid life expectancy of more than a few years; for as the Holy Spirit continues to move and people continue to mature, the valid forms and expressions of the Holy Spirit’s moving will likewise undergo alteration and change. Someone has rightly said, “The Holy Spirit is moving so rapidly these days that one almost has to run in order to keep up.”

In addition to the above, there are times when a meeting which has been vital for a long period of time will turn sour because of lack of disciplined leadership or the introduction of false teaching.

Simpson — May I add to the list of possible reasons, sin, wrong relationships, wrong objectives — all of these cause disharmony.

Personally, I believe that we are

moving beyond the era of prayer groups and into the era of the Church. That does not mean that God is finished with all prayer groups; but, as He answers the prayer groups’ prayers, then surely a fellowship of believers will come forth.

“How can a group be protected from ministries that can lead to gross error?”

Prince — The great protection against error is provided by the leadership of “shepherds” or “elders” who exercise scriptural authority and teach sound doctrine. This goes back to our discussion on leadership. For some references on this subject, see I Timothy 3:1–7, Titus 1:5–11 and I Peter 5:2.

It is necessary, also, that the various leaders of groups in the same locality maintain regular communication and good fellowship between themselves. If the shepherds are divided against themselves, and distrustful of each other, it is nearly always easy for the “wolves” to gain entry and make havoc of the flock. In Titus 1:9–12, responsibility is placed upon the teaching elders to protect the flock from false teachers who “subvert whole houses”.

Basham — Derek has brought out an important point. The plurality of leadership is vital. It is elders governing together, according to the New Testament principle.

When it is determined that heresy is being introduced, it should be dealt with quietly, firmly and immediately. The leaders of a meeting also have a responsibility to check out the spiritual credentials of any outside ministry coming in. No ministry, no matter how miraculous or powerful, should be allowed to operate unless the one exercising that ministry is in proper submission to leadership at his home base of operation.

“Can a prayer group experience a move of the Spirit without feeling that they are more ‘mature’ than others?”

Simpson — To serve the purpose for which it should have been formed, a group must be able to experience a move of the Spirit without falling prey to one of Satan’s fatal attacks — pride! If the group is self-seeking in its motive, then the result will be egotism as God blesses. Such a blessing turns out to be a curse. Introversion is one of the greatest dangers for spiritual people. Isaiah 58 would be excellent to read on this subject. The whole reason for having a prayer meeting is not that we ourselves might simply become more mature, but that as we minister the purposes of God, we can grow up in Him.

Basham — I certainly agree with you, Charles, when you bring Satan into this picture. Spiritual pride is one of his most subtle tools. Pride can creep into a group practically unnoticed, and there can be a real danger of groups falling into the snare it spreads. The greater the move of God in a group, the more necessity for humble gratitude on the part of those being blessed.

Prince — May I interrupt to say that the best remedy for groups who begin to consider themselves more “mature” or “super spiritual” is found in Paul’s warning in II Corinthians 10:12: “But they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves are not wise.” If we judge maturity, not by other people, but by the standards of God’s Word, then we all still have a long way to go.

These “super-spiritual” groups should consider the personal testimony of Paul after many years of successful ministry: “Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect.” (Philippians 3:12).

Basham — There is another side to

the coin, also. Groups should not be put off from moving on deeper in God just because there are those who stand around on the outside criticizing. I know of few prayer meetings (especially those which still meet in church buildings or have close church connections) which are not duly criticized and condemned by others in the congregation who do not understand.

The charismatic prayer meeting in the last church I served as pastor, even though it was regularly announced in the bulletin and from the pulpit, was condemned as a "secret meeting". And years ago when we had a charismatic meeting in my home when I was in seminary, other young ministers accused us of having seances and sex parties. We shouldn't forget that the enemy of our souls is not called "the accuser of the brethren" for nothing.

Mumford — Don, you are so right there. The enemy loves to use this particular tool of "more mature" to keep the Body of Christ in division and competition. We need to recognize the Body is not one member but many. Genuine maturity would cause us to understand that our present anointing is due to God's grace and His desire to equip and fit us into all He is doing in a given area.

"How do you handle the problem that often arises where one or two people tend to dominate a meeting with their attitudes or use of spiritual gifts?"

Simpson — Here again is the need for strong leadership. It is the shepherd's responsibility to see that all are fed and all participate. He will seek to draw some out and to quiet some down!

If I were the shepherd, I would seek the Lord about that particular problem and if He so directed, go to the more dominating ones and talk to them privately. My experience has

been that such people are not very easy to talk to. Some balanced and positive teaching on the subject would be of value also. The first epistle to the Corinthians demonstrates the kind of authority Paul had with them. He was their spiritual father, therefore he was able to talk very plainly. I suspect that other churches had the same problems, but Paul wrote to this church, being its spiritual father, with a special kind of authority.

Basham — Misuse of spiritual gifts is a cause for proper spiritual discipline: as prophesying at length or speaking in tongues at improper times. As Charles said, preferably the discipline and counsel should be done privately, but if that proves ineffective, then public discipline should do the job. And if the one so disciplined gets huffy and quits the meeting, so much the better. For until humility and submissiveness replaces pride, they should not be allowed to interfere with the flow of the meeting.

Mumford — A key phrase which may help is: Participate, don't dominate! Encouraging the quiet ones, and teaching privately and publicly the strong ones will bring a balance that will produce a spiritual symphony.

"In many of the home prayer groups, all seem to enjoy the ministry, while one or two families financially support it. Is there a scriptural way to encourage everyone to have a part without being a 'fund-raiser'?"

Prince — The solution for this problem lies in thorough scriptural teaching on Christian principles of finance. It is wrong for any leader to feel embarrassed when teaching and talking frankly about money. These principles of finance are a part of the "whole counsel of God" for His people, and a teacher must not "shun to declare"

these truths (Acts 20:20-27). Some definite means should be provided by which all the members of a group may contribute to the total financial need. They should also be encouraged to reach out financially to the needs of others.

Mumford — Finances are a great indicator or barometer of the real spiritual condition of any group. The problem, as indicated by the question as you have put it, Brother Ken, would probably indicate these "couple of families" were the ones who started the group, or at least backed it personally and financially. It is a human tendency to "let George do it". Denying people the privilege of giving is wrong; spiritually it will stunt growth and eventually create serious problems.

Help your group to see finance is not some super-spiritual experience which we pray over and "give as we are led". When it comes to the pocketbook, few of us are so sensitive as to hear the Lord say much. Remember, exceptions are not the rule! Teach that there are certain financial responsibilities in the group and the Lord and His written Word teach that all of us should have the joy of participating in this form of worship.

Simpson — I believe that the best way to get people to give is not simply to pressure for an offering, but — as Derek and Bob have pointed out — teach them the spiritual principles that are involved: the law of sowing and reaping, for instance. (Proverbs 11). "There is that which scatters abroad and tends to increase, but there is that which withholds more than is necessary and it tends to decrease" and "The liberal soul shall be made fat." Once people begin to realize the ministry of giving, then it can become a normal part of the total worship experience.

I believe, too, it is the shepherds' responsibility to see that the sheep are sheared at the proper time. Without a shepherd, the sheep are likely to stifle

(Continued on page 30)



Video tape teaching, the latest extension of the information explosion, is creating a whole new world of sound and picture in the area of Christian education and maturity, and is having a tremendous impact on the home life. The Spiritual usefulness of Video tape is virtually unlimited.

Due to the spiritual revolution now taking place in our nation and around the world, there has been an unprecedented teaching need created. As thousands from our churches, youth culture, home prayer groups, etc., are awakening to the demands of Jesus Christ, they must be taught. Video has the potential of making every teaching ministry available with what is needed, at the time it is needed. To this end, Video Ministries, a Florida based non-profit corporation, has projected its activities.

Nearly sixty hours of highly selected Bible teaching has been produced in full color for use by distributors operating Video tape libraries across the entire United States and parts of Canada.

Now, inquiries regarding this exciting new ministry are being received with increased regularity at the home office of Video Ministries in Fort Lauderdale. For the information of our readers, we have listed a few of the typical questions regarding the video tape outreach, along with answers.

Q. How can these tapes be used with an ordinary home TV set?

A. By using a simple, easy to operate, video player.

Q. If we want to buy a Video Player, where should we buy it?

A. These may be purchased from your Video Ministries' representative. (Prices are available on request).

Q. Can we rent a Video Player to start with?

A. In some locations this service is provided. Check with your area representative.

Q. Can we buy a Video Recorder-Player? We would like to record programs in Color off the air, such as Billy Graham, Kathryn Kuhlman, etc.

A. Yes, you can buy a Video Recorder in place of a Player only. Contact your Video representative for prices.

Q. Can anyone learn to operate a Video Player?

A. Yes — anyone with just a few minutes of orientation can operate the player.

THE VIDEO EXPLOSION — UNLIMITED POTENTIAL

Q. How many people can effectively view a TV set?

A. From 1 to 150 using a 19" to 25" Color set. You can feed the signal to two TV sets for greater coverage. We have successfully shown the tape "Fatherhood" to 425 people from a 25" TV set.

Q. Do we rent or buy these tapes?

A. You can rent any color video tape for \$35.00 for 7 days. Just \$5.00 per day. Show them as many times as you wish.

Q. Can we keep a tape longer than 7 days?

A. Yes, you may rent the tape as long as you wish; however, extended rental periods should be cleared with your distributor.

Q. Where would these tapes most likely be shown?

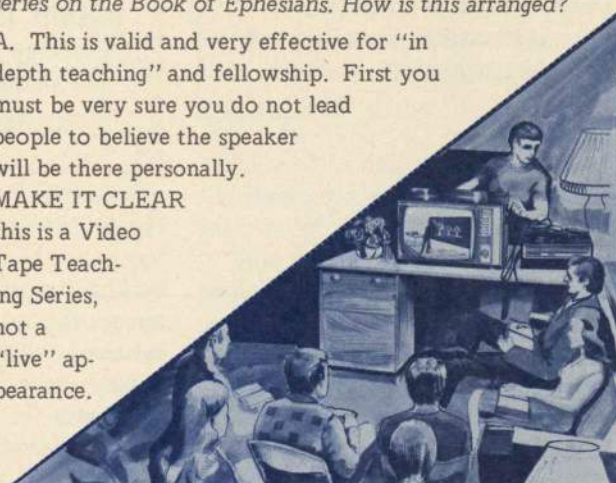
A. Prayer Meetings at Church; Christian Business Men; Rest Homes; Home Bible Study; Loan to Interested Persons; Jail and Reform Schools; Home Fellowship; Sick and Shut Ins; Youth Ministry; Sunday School Class; Coffee House Ministry; Women's Coffee Hour.

Q. We would like to put on a week-end seminar (Friday night through Sunday), using say, Charles Simpson's 5 tape series on the Book of Ephesians. How is this arranged?

A. This is valid and very effective for "in depth teaching" and fellowship. First you must be very sure you do not lead people to believe the speaker will be there personally.

MAKE IT CLEAR

this is a Video Tape Teaching Series, not a "live" appearance.



Q. Should we take an offering to help cover the investment in the tape and equipment?

A. Yes – it is good for those receiving ministry to give. Each viewer then becomes a participant and shares the total vision and outreach. There is a spiritual law in the Kingdom – Luke 6:38, "Give and it shall be given unto you."

You will find that from just a few people in the first showing the offering will take care of the 7 day rental charge.

Q. How do we schedule tapes for our showing dates?

A. If you are planning on a tape each week to start with, it is wise to work out a schedule of desired dates well in advance of intended showings.

(a) This will assure you that the tapes will be ready and available.

(b) It will allow you to make known to your groups the ministry in advance for greater response and effectiveness.

Q. How do we receive tapes and get them back to you?

A. We use United Parcel Service wherever available. It is fast, reliable and inexpensive. In most states U.P. picks up from your area representative and is delivered to you the following morning before noon. Where U.P. is not available we use U.S. Mail.

Q. How soon can we expect our first tape and player after we place our order?

A. Within a week to 10 days you will have your equipment and first tape.

During the past 12 months, more than 50 distributors have become involved in the video tape outreach. Our records indicate that there are presently 102 video playback machines in use, which represents an estimated audience of over 15,000 viewers each month. We give praise and are thankful to God for this evidence of His increase.



◆ This mark indicates the location of a distributor and video tape library.

◇ This mark indicates areas that would be suitable for locating a video tape outreach. If you or your group are interested in becoming involved as a video distributor, please contact Roy Dyer, Video Ministries, 260 S.W. 31st Street, Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33315, or phone area code (305) 522-0635.

Hurricane "Camille" hit the Mississippi Gulf Coast in August, 1969. This tragic disaster took the lives of two hundred and fifty-eight people and caused millions of dollars in property damage.

I remember the Sunday of its arrival quite well, since I was pastoring in Mobile, Alabama, only eighty miles from where the center of the hurricane hit land. That Sunday morning, the hurricane was outside the Gulf, facing the Mobile Bay area; but by faith, we continued the morning services. Before we left, word came that it was moving west of Mobile.

Sunday evening we had our worship service in worsening weather with increasingly high winds and driving rains. Several new Christians were baptized and we spent some time praying for those who faced this powerful storm. That night it hit. In our area, the winds reached over 100 miles per hour. But near Gulfport, Mississippi, at the center of the storm, winds climbed to nearly 200 miles per hour.

Later, flying over this area, through which I had driven hundreds of times, tears came to my eyes. In Mobile some homes and property were severely damaged, but where the center of "Camille" hit, the devastation was beyond description. I thought of the scripture, "When the enemy comes in like a flood . . ." (Isaiah 59:19).

Several days after "Camille" hit, I was at a place of business which belonged to a friend. His store was located near the coast and had severe water damage. Several other men were helping to clear the debris . . . mud covered the floors . . . it was awful.

"Was he covered?" I asked a helper who was shoveling mud.

"No, he wasn't covered for this type damage," he replied.

"You mean his insurance won't . . .?"

"No," the answer came almost before I had finished asking.

My friend had heavy lines in his brow. Years had gone into building the business. There was pain in his face, though he fought against despair.

This scene was multiplied thousands

of times. Some were covered, or protected, in case of flooding; but most were not. The fact is, no insurance can prevent natural disaster. It can only "cover" financial loss after the damage has been done.

Is there a covering that could *prevent* the storm from touching the inhabitants? Is there a place of protection that works *before* the tragedy instead of *after*? I believe there is such protection.

A PLACE OF PROTECTION

When the news came that the hurricane would hit a certain area, the people were gathered into shelters. These shelters were strong and well situated to guarantee protection. Whatever was left out of the shelter was exposed.

Isaiah 4:6 promises that God will provide a *place* of safety from the storm and rain: "And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain." Notice that the covering (tabernacle or roof) does not *follow us* out in the exposed areas, we seek it out. To get protection, you must be in the right place.

There are those who just assume that they will be protected, no matter where they are. There were several such groups that "bravely" faced

"Camille". "Oh, we've seen hurricanes before," they said as they resisted and even scoffed at offers of shelter.

One group engaged in a "hurricane party", which is a gathering of "revelers", who by frivolous and foolish merriment show their contempt for the storm. Law enforcement officers and friends pleaded with them to move inland away from the storm, but to no avail. The party took the main force of the wave. No one survived. Protection is being in the right place. God's protection does not follow us — He invites and even pleads that we come to it. Protection is being where God says we should be.

PROTECTION IS NOW AVAILABLE — ON THE ROCK

Salvation is more than escaping some vague *future* destruction. Obviously, there is the warning of impending destruction in the Bible. However, it seems that in our world "hell" will not be "put off" any longer. It is breaking out all around us every day. Will our salvation work *now*?

We cannot wait until we go to heaven to find protection. The "now storm" demands a "now place" for us and our families. "On this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hell will not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:18). I believe Jesus is speaking of a

COVERING OF THE LORD

By Charles Simpson

present Church and a present victory for those gathered on the unchanging Rock. Jesus is Lord, *now*. The Church, or assembly, is the place to overcome hell, now. When we get rightly related to the Rock, and those who gather with us there, we will be protected under His authority. The problem is that many Christians live in a "hurricane party". They gather where they choose, when they choose, and *if* they choose — yet claiming God's protection.

In Matthew 7:24 and following, Jesus clearly warns against building in the wrong place. Safety depends upon location — on the Rock. Those who build on the sand are inviting disaster.

DISCOVERING THE PRINCIPLE

Several years ago, while I was still in Mobile, I conducted regular weekday Bible studies. One Thursday morning, a woman asked, "What does I Corinthians 11:10 mean?" This verse states: "For this cause ought the woman to have power on her head because of the angels."

Specifically, she was asking about the practice of wearing a "head covering" or "prayer shawl". As I studied the passage, I became impressed with the underlying question, "What does it mean to be covered?" Is Paul only speaking about long hair? Obviously not. Is he only speaking

about the prayer shawl or head covering, worn by Christians of many groups? No. I began to see that being under "power" means to be under authority. The "coverings" were *physical* evidence of a *spiritual* covering — authority. Not only were woman, but men, children, and even Christ, under authority (See I Corinthians 11:3).

As Christ submitted to the Father, He came under the Father's protection. No one could touch Him except by the Father's consent (John 10:18). So it would be with men who submitted to Christ, with wives who submitted to husbands, and children who submitted to parents. *We are protected by the authority to which we submit*: Unsubmitted, we are unprotected.

Why, "because of the angels", I wondered as I continued studying I Corinthians 11:10. Looking through the scriptures, I saw that the angels have the responsibility to protect us when we are in the proper place before God (Psalm 91:11, Matthew 18:10, Isaiah 37:36). Psalm 34:7 declares that, "the angel of the Lord encampeth around about them that fear Him." I saw the principle! If I acknowledged Jesus as Lord of my life, in obedience, I was under His authority. If I were under His authority, and the authority to whom He commanded me to submit, then the angels were authorized and responsible to protect me. I wish to stress here the words *obedience* to His Lordship and *submission* to His authority . . . not only the authority manifested in Himself, but also in the offices He instituted in the home, church and government. When I submit to my Father, He is obligated to provide and protect. As I submit to my pastor, he can watch for my soul (Hebrews 13:17). As I submit to the government, it can provide a peaceful environment. Rebellion, however, in any of these realms can make the job of protection and provision difficult, if not impossible. Bear in mind that all rebellion is against God, who is the

(Continued on next page)

COVERING OF THE LORD

(Continued from page 25)

source of *all* authority (Romans 3:1-2). That rebellion relieves the angels of their responsibility. This is particularly frightening when you realize that there is a fulltime destroyer who goes around looking for unprotected sheep (I Peter 5:8).

A LESSON IN MOTIVATION

Shortly after learning this principle, the Lord began to deal with me about a change in ministry. It was not easy to believe what I was hearing was from the Lord. God was saying "Move". Obedience is a day by day matter. Righteousness is being *where* God wants you. If God wants you in California, you cannot be righteous in Georgia: even if you tithe and start family devotions.

Obedience is better than sacrifice (I Samuel 15:22-23). I was prepared to make sacrifices, but I hedged on obedience. God was saying, "Move. I don't need your sacrifices. I want you to obey." It was then that I began to discover that, as in the days of Israel's wilderness sojourn, our cloud cover still moved. If we want protection we must move under the shadow of the Almighty.

God had to illustrate this point to me in a forceful way. Being not only a pastor, but a traveling teacher, I was often away from home. I "claimed" Psalm 91:11 for both myself and my family: "For He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." God had always proven faithful.

"Psalm 91, Lord!" I would cheerily remind God as I waved goodbye on parting with my family for two weeks.

I had just returned from a trip about midnight one Saturday. My wife, Carolyn, and I had heard quiet noises in the yard but thought they were probably neighborhood dogs. Before going to sleep, Carolyn went into another room to check on the children. She returned upset and frightened. "Someone is trying to get into the house!" she whispered.

I could hardly believe her. We had never before been bothered or disturbed in our home. Nevertheless, she had seen someone. I immediately went to a window to see if I could detect the intruder. Gently lifting the drape in our darkened bedroom, I pressed my face to the glass. Imagine *my* shock and *his* when our eyes met — face to face! His expression was wild and his eyes enlarged with violent fear.

"In Jesus' Name!" I spontaneously shouted at his bewildered stare. He turned and fled into the night, bending a chain-link fence nearly to the ground as he ran over it. I cannot remember when I was ever so glad to see anyone on the run!

I went back and sat beside my disturbed wife. I began to think. "Thank God I was home . . . but, God, what about Psalm 91, 'Thou shalt not be afraid of the terror by night' and 'No plague shall come *nigh* thy *dwell-ing*'? . . . That was too close, Lord — where was the angel? . . . If you are trying to speak to me, you have *my attention*!"

The Lord impressed me to re-study Psalm 91 since I was counting on it for insurance. There were *conditions* to its covering. I did not have to read far — "He that dwelleth *in* the secret *place* of the Most High shall abide *under* the shadow of the *Almighty*." God had protected, but he let me see how close to the edge I was. To stay covered, I would have to move under His shadow, and be in my place. In verse 9, I saw that the Most High Himself would have to be my *habitation* — not a geographical location. God has ways of getting our attention. Most of us pray more fervently in the storm. We are also more sensitive to relocate in a shelter that may not otherwise be attractive.

THE UNCOVERING PROCESS

Most of us are born covered — that is, we are born under authority in a family situation. And most Christians are also begotten into a family of believers. Nevertheless, we usually

manage to get into a vulnerable position sooner or later. There are certain steps that bring one out from under authority and covering.

I. PRIDE. Here is the beginning of the downward way. Pride is Satan's sin (Isaiah 14:11-17; Ezekiel 28:11-17). It is the first one on the list of abominations (Proverbs 6:16-19). Perhaps the greatest aids to pride are success too soon, human and Satanic flattery, and appointing untried novices to positions of responsibility (I Timothy 3:6). The enemy begins to over-state *our* abilities. Soon the victim is actually believing that he needs no one else to protect him. He soothes his conscience by saying, "I'm just going to submit to God and not man!" Actually, it is God who commanded us to submit to one another (Ephesians 5:22).

II. REBELLION. Pride, unrepented of, will lead to *rebellion*. When God uses others, or circumstances, to humble the proud, the person will either repent or rebel. If he rebels, he is in a worse position and more vulnerable. The proud child of "humanism" who wishes to do his own thing, will not apply the disciplines of practical living in a real world. When discipline confronts him, he will rebel. Saul, King of Israel, was spoiled by early success. Besides that, he was born at the convenience of Israel's demand, not God's. When God would have instructed him, he rebelled (I Samuel 13-15). The classic statement on rebellion is Samuel's pronouncement to Saul after he disobeyed, "For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft."

I once believed this meant that God simply despised rebellion as much as He despised witchcraft. I now believe that rebellion, unrepented of, *leads* inevitably to deception or Spiritism.

The first five chapters in Isaiah are a study in the results of rebellion. To this chosen nation of Israel, which continued to rebel against authority, God said, "I will take away its hedge . . . and break down its wall (protection)" (Isaiah 5:5).

III. DECEPTION. Deception is the third step in the uncovering process

that leads to degradation. Once the power of the Holy Spirit departs, there is no protection against the vile forces of darkness. Bear in mind, that no generation has witnessed a greater revival of the occult than has our so-called "enlightened" generation. This rise in Satanic deception is the direct result of spiritual rebellion against God's divine authority. To further bear this out, what was rebellious Saul's last great sin? Spiritism. He sought to receive his guidance from the witch at Endor (I Samuel 28). This was one of the final reasons for his untimely death.

Deception is one of the prevalent endtime signs. We are told in II Timothy 3 that the generation that is known for its pride, will be known for its rebellion against parents and that same generation will be known for its deception. Romans chapter 1 also substantiates this inevitable slide from pride, to rebellion, to deception. II Corinthians 11:1-4 warns Christians against being beguiled through knowledge, as Eve was, and receive *another* spirit besides the Holy Spirit.

IV. PERVERSION. If the degradation stopped with deception, enough damage would already have been done. However, if repentance does not take place, perversion is the final step in destroying the image of God in man. Romans 1, Isaiah 3 and Genesis 19 give a study in this condition. Once the enemy deceives man, he is able to do whatever he desires with him. Sodomy, or perversion, is both physical and spiritual. Theological perversion is the sister of moral perversion. Both represent "man with man" rather than man submitting to God and wife to husband. Satan does this to provoke God's wrath (Isaiah 3:8-9).

Pride . . . Rebellion . . . Deception . . . Perversion. The last step is the ultimate absence of authority and

protection. Notice the more authority is removed from the home, the more perversion results. While we can repent at any of these levels, it becomes increasingly difficult to get deliverance.

This matter of covering cannot be taken lightly. In a day when the forces of Satan are going to be let loose on the world as they never have before, the people of God are going to be protected only in the shelter which God has provided for them.

HOW TO BE COVERED

I. HUMILITY. The opposite of pride is humility. When God's people have gone astray, the way back always begins with humility before the Lord. "If my people, who are called by my name, shall *humble* themselves . . ." (I Chronicles 7:14). "*Humble* yourselves, therefore, under the mighty hand of God . . ." (I Peter 5:6). Also, Joel 1 and 2 have a great deal to teach us on humbling.

II. SUBMISSION. The opposite of rebellion is submission. It is submission that actually brings one back under the roof of authority. "*Submit* yourselves, therefore, to God . . ." (James 4:7). "*Submitting* yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Ephesians 5:21). "*Wives, submit* yourselves unto your own husbands" (Ephesians 5:22). "*Obey* them (shepherds) that have the rule over you, and *submit* yourselves . . ." (Hebrews 13:17). "*Children, obey* (submit to) your parents" (Ephesians 6:1).

III. REVELATION. As we submit, God can then trust us with true revelation, which is the opposite of deception (II Corinthians 3:17-18).

IV. MATURITY. The revelation of Christ in our personal fellowship brings true maturity. "Beholding His face, we are changed into the same image" (II Corinthians 3:18).

Not long ago I was having lunch with a young man who was sharing with me how this principle had worked in his own life.

About a year after he had received the Baptism in the Holy Spirit, he left the church of which he had been a longtime member, and began to fellowship with a group of believers who met together several times during the week. During this time he often felt a sense of insecurity and being "all alone in the spiritual world". He occasionally found himself wondering, "What will I do if this whole thing falls apart?"

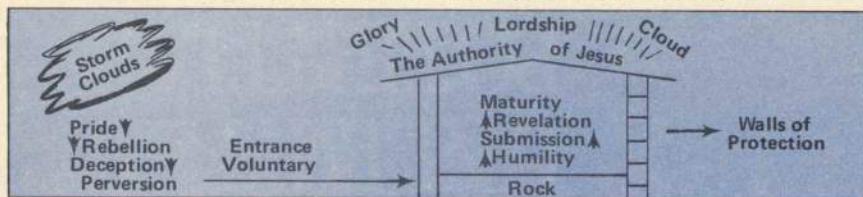
After some time God began to deal with him and his wife about verbally submitting to the man whom God had raised up as an elder in the fellowship. Not much time passed when he noticed the feeling of insecurity was gone. "Praise the Lord," he said, "I was under the proper covering and the Holy Spirit was giving me the 'Amen' in my heart."

Everyone who is willing to listen, will hear God leading him to find the place of covering that He has designed for him. It might be a test of willingness to obey where He leads, but in that place will be found a freedom in the Spirit never known before.

Hear God as He speaks in these two promises of covering:

"And the Lord will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain" (Isaiah 4:5-6).

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labor. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat, but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). □



This is the story of a dream. The dream originated in the heart of God and includes thousands and perhaps ten thousands of His saints. Many of you will realize as you read this that you have a part in this dream.

All Christians are concerned about the flood of pornography that is on the magazine stands and available to children in general. This is truly one of the great evils of our day, but the other side of the coin is my dream.

In the world today there is very little truly Christian literature and there is almost nothing that has been written primarily for children concerning the Holy Spirit. No matter how successful you might be in fighting evil literature, the problem our children face is a tremendous lack of Christ-centered reading material.

When my part of the dream started, I do not know. It may have begun that June day in 1967 when I was attending the International Christian Writers' Conference in Wisconsin. In years before I had felt very much "in" with the lectures, the materials presented, the conferees and the program. But on this day I had a different taste in my mouth. Something had gone sour.

Perhaps I did not realize until then how the Baptism in the Holy Spirit had changed me. My source of life had changed and now I was finding my viewpoint had changed. I found that in my spirit there was a deep desire to write the Word of God as I was feeling it. I wanted to make Jesus real to the kids — not a far-away hero. I wanted to show the love of God as it really is. I felt a sense of desperate need for children to have a foundation of faith so that they need not be destroyed by fear. Yes, the dream could have begun there.

Few parents realize the importance of what their children read. I have known parents who got uptight about a questionable companion, yet paid no attention to this same child's reading material. It is an even chance that what a child reads will influence his thinking as much as his companions.

Parents should also remember that

reading is motivated in the public schools and many children will read anything they can find. Have you ever watched your child reading the back of the cereal box? Did you ever stop and think about the desire just to read? For some people reading is a compulsion.



In the months ahead I found that I could not write for my publishing company the things my heart craved to write. I had been under contract with them for some time, but when it came time to renew the contract, the Lord made it clear that I was not to sign. This left me free — I thought.

There was no market for the things that I would write now. I wanted to write about the supernatural power of our great God — how He heals, protects from danger, saves from evil, and frees from bondage. You can't write like that for the ordinary church papers.

I knew my writing days were over. There were times when I ached to write something. But who would ever read it? How could I ever get it published? One day I had a little funeral service and buried my writing career and walked tearfully away and back to my teaching job.

But the dream recurred over and over again. If only someone would start a Spirit-filled magazine for children! If "they" would do it, I knew where "they" could find a ready writer.

Then there came the day that God took up the dream — or do you sup-

pose that He had it first? One morning during my regular devotional hour I felt the Lord wanted to give me a message. It was one of the strangest messages that I have ever received from the Lord: "Bible study — four parts, teaching story, memory verses, children's testimonies, bread for children, ideas to do, fireside chats."

I was immensely puzzled. Then the Holy Spirit opened my eyes and I saw that I had the format of a child's magazine. I was awed at the magnitude of the Lord's goodness. I had worked on formats for children's books, magazines and Sunday School quarterlies, and it is no snap.

Without effort and no committee work, the Holy Spirit had laid a beautiful format in my hand. The Spirit had quietly whispered the name, "Bread for Children". That was the whole philosophy behind the magazine. It was to be the bread of life

In answer to many letters wanting to know what happened to the articles entitled, "Grape Juice For Children", we would like to help introduce this new ministry to the body of Christ.

to the Lord's lambs. I began to rejoice. I said, "Lord, I am so thankful that you are going to publish a magazine for children." Then I got a shock that set me back and diminished the exuberance. The Spirit said to me, "You are going to do it." Of course I knew that was impossible and I knew the Lord knew it, too. I felt that He had some other meaning.

Finally I said, "Lord, what am I to do with this?" The answer came back, "Paint the numbers as I call them." Over on my desk was one of those paint-by-number sets. I knew then what the message meant and my spirit groaned within me. Would I be able to hear Him when He called a number?

He called many numbers in the next two years. Many of these I did not recognize as having anything to do with the birthing of BREAD FOR CHILDREN, yet in retrospect I see that they did. There was the month in Jamaica with concentrated teaching under such capable teachers as Derek Prince, Don Basham and Charles Simpson. There were many other seminars and conferences that my husband and I were led of the Spirit to attend.

All this time I was looking for an open door. I was sure that somewhere somebody would be able to "see" the vision and do something about it.

Twice it looked as though another established magazine would publish BREAD FOR CHILDREN, but each time the door closed softly and left BREAD FOR CHILDREN unborn.

In the summer of '71, the Lord spoke to me again about the dream.

A DREAM FOR CHILDREN

By Anna Lee Carlton

He said to me, "You have been knocking on doors. Now I want you to knock on the nearest door."

This was a clear instruction at last. I began to consider where the nearest door would be. That next week-end the directors of an established Spirit-filled group were holding a retreat in Arcadia, Florida, nearby. I reasoned, "Of course this is the nearest door!" I had always shared every move of the dream with the prayer group of which I am a part. They had prayed for this dream with such fervency that I felt they were my natural partners.

As I shared my plans, my prayer group prayed about the week-end. Someone prayed, "Lord if You want us to do something about this magazine let us know what we are to do." At the end of this prayer I saw a couple whispering together and the man said, "I have a feeling that we ought to get something started for 'Bread' right now," and he handed me thirty dollars.

What in the world can you do with thirty dollars on a project that will take thousands? Though I could not see it, this was the Lord's door. I did my knocking on the week-end and these dear people who included some of my dearest friends heard me out.

Then they took the skids right out from under me by saying, "This is wonderful but there isn't much we can do except pray for you. We know the Lord will help you do it."

The next day was blue Sunday. I had done what I thought the Lord had said, and it didn't work. I felt like one who had been tricked by his best friend. I went before the Lord to complain about how He had let me down. Then He asked me a straight question, "Where is YOUR nearest door?" An idea exploded in my mind that was so wild I literally reeled from the shock.

"Lord, you couldn't mean me? Us? The prayer group that meets here in our home?"

Then I remembered the prayer, "Lord, what do you want us to do?" And I remembered the thirty dollars. For some time I used all the arguments that I knew to tell myself this could not be what the Lord wanted.

When I finally shut up the Lord quietly asked me if I was still willing to paint the numbers when He called them. I affirmed that I was. Then the same instructions came once more — "Knock on your nearest door."

When I shared with the prayer group that they were my nearest door, the door flew wide open. They were ready; God had been talking to them. There was no argument of why we could not, but rather, "When do we get started?"

The next number the Lord called out was, "Announce the magazine in other Spirit-led magazines." We wrote letters of announcement to several places announcing the coming of BREAD FOR CHILDREN as a charismatic magazine for children.

While the group was applying for a government charter, we found ourselves receiving letters daily from those who had read about the coming event.

(Continued on next page)

FORUM

(Continued from page 21)

in the heat for a lack of being sheared, or some stranger will come through and, not only shear them, but skin them!

I regard proper financial understanding in teaching as being one of the cornerstones of the Christian life. I have seen some wonderful results from sound teaching and response to God's "giving" message. I have, also, seen some very disappointing results when people withheld or were falsely pressured into giving. It is the shepherds' responsibility to see that balance is brought in every area. Let the sheep be led into the right pastures.

Basham — Charles, you have hit the nail on the head in stressing the need for sound teaching in this matter of stewardship of possessions. The lack of it has resulted in rearing a crop of Christians who are mature in many areas, while remaining woefully ignorant in the ministry of money.

Scripture says, "A laborer is worthy

of his hire." Those who minister to the people of God are to be liberally supported by the people of God. A good principle for Christians to follow in this regard is to support generously those ministries where they are being fed.

If, across our nation today, every earnest Christian decided to support only those churches and ministries which were spiritually effective, there would be a tremendous shift in the distribution of Christian funds.

Regarding taking up offerings, this conclusion by Brother Rufus Mosely seems pertinent. After witnessing a high-pressured effort to raise money from a reluctant congregation, where instead of preaching and teaching from the Word of God, a half-hour had been spent in appealing for funds, Rufus observed: "You can feed a cow so poorly and milk her so roughly that she will kick at the sight of a bucket. Or you can feed her so well and milk her so gently that it is a relief to be milked."

Simpson — Don, I think we all could

bear witness to situations such as you have pictured.

As we close these thoughts on home prayer meetings, I feel prompted to add that I have had very happy experiences with prayer groups and have definitely encouraged them. I believe that people can do things in small groups that they cannot do in large groups. In these small groups they find the personal fellowship that is so often lost in a larger assembly. They can get personal teaching and ministry and mature in a friendly environment. They can, also, be launched into a ministry themselves.

I am very positive on the subject of prayer groups. However, I never encourage any member to go to a prayer group that is not under authority. I believe every prayer group ought to have not only the approval, but the leadership of its shepherd. In proper order, it can draw from the overall strength of the assembly and it can contribute to that strength by strengthening the individuals who meet together for personal fellowship.

DREAM FOR CHILDREN

(Continued from page 29)

Nearly every letter said, "I have been praying for a child's magazine such as this." This was not my dream only; hundreds, perhaps thousands in the Body of Christ had been dreaming this dream. Prayers had ascended to the throne of God in behalf of our children that they have their own charismatic reading material.

In February of '72, BREAD FOR CHILDREN made its first appearance. There was great rejoicing in our hearts here as we held this magazine in our hands. Only we knew the miracle that the Holy One had wrought.

Now for these eight months the Lord has proven His Word is true. Every mail brings more requests and the needs have been met. We are now mailing to every state in the United States, every province in Canada except two, Mexico and nineteen foreign countries.

What I had thought was my dream and my prayer has now turned out to

be the dream and prayer of thousands of people. I can see God dreaming through parents for the needs of their children. I see God dreaming through Sunday School teachers and ministers for their little lambs. On a long distance call from a minister this week I heard of another church whose leaders were praying for some charismatic literature for their children. They were so thankful to find BREAD FOR CHILDREN to fill their need.

There are over ninety groups now using BREAD as curriculum. I have to thank the Lord for His wisdom in the format. I doubt that I could ever have thought of a Bible study in four parts. It took me some time to understand that. I did not have the vision of this being used in Sunday School classes or in home study groups week by week. It was the Hand of the Lord that prepared this ahead of time.

The Holy Spirit has set no age limit either. I set an age limit in my mind, thinking that I was aiming toward the middle-agers; but not so with the Lord. He

is aiming at those who have needs not yet met in some other way. We are finding a host of teenagers and babes in Christ needing the Bible study.

The Lord gave me a distinct vision of BREAD FOR CHILDREN going into all the world and even being translated into other languages. I do not know how this can be. I do know that if the Body of Christ all over the world is dreaming this dream and praying for it nothing can stop it from coming to pass.

My dream is getting larger all the time. I know that BREAD FOR CHILDREN is only a small stream of what the Spirit is going to bring to pass for these children of the last days. Many more dreams will come into reality. This is likely the most important generation of children to ever live on the face of the earth. Let me encourage you to dream for these children. Let God work his dream in you. □

Those interested in this work should write: BREAD FOR CHILDREN, P.O. Box 617, Arcadia, Florida 33821.

GREAT TRANSGRESSION

(Continued from page 9)

many flocks and herds and then took the one little ewe lamb of the poor man (II Samuel 12). David's anger sparked at the injustice and he cried, "Who is that man? I'll have his head roll!" That shows something of the spirit of the man. Now when God got David in a corner and through Nathan revealed the truth — "Thou art the man — wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight . . .?", what did David do?

The great King David took our fourth choice — no V.R.G. here — he broke! He said, "God, that is right. I am the man!" Do you know that David could have offered God five hundred bulls as a sacrifice for his sin? However, the core of rebellion would have remained intact.

Let me ask: is it possible that when we are faced with a sin, we may try to satisfy ourselves by saying, "The blood of Jesus cleanses me from all sin." At the same time, we may have no intention of giving up that particular sin. We may also say, "I just want to be forgiven, I don't want to change." Do you see that this is not a matter of merely asking for forgiveness for a certain sinful *act*? It is a matter of breaking. The Christian life is not a series of forgivenesses, it is a series of changes. It is not just the disobedience that needs to be taken care of — it is a matter of attitude. Attitude is deeper than sin. One translation of Psalm 51:17 that brings home something of what is involved in breaking is: "The sacrifice of God is a soul with its evil crushed."

Notice it is the evil that is crushed — not the soul or spirit. I have seen people under the dealings of God who give the appearance of complete defeat. They are all bent over and dragged out — completely without any joy or vitality. To the question, "How are you doing?", their reply goes something like this: "Just waiting to go to heaven . . . this life is too hard on me . . . soon the Lord is going to take me out of it all." Do you

realize that this, too, is a form of V.R.G.? Trying to give the impression of our maturity can sometimes be a smokescreen for the truth that God is at work trying to break the core of a rebellious spirit.

How about going back with me to our opening illustration and taking another look at that police dog going through his paces?

While watching the training, one

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thing deeply impressed me. Something that *must not happen* was this: the dog's spirit could not be broken. If that dog had come out with his tail hanging between his legs and with his ears drooping when his trainer said, "Go get the purse!", what kind of testimony would that have been to the desired finished product — a beautifully trained and obedient dog? This is not what God wants from us, either.

A broken spirit is not one that says, "Oh, God, not again!" It does not project the picture of a life filled with self-pity or one that enjoys a groveling and grumbling level of living. The "poor me" attitude is just V.R.G. Instead there must be an attitude which displays joy, praise and confidence in God's workings.

I have learned that when the Lord says, "Sit" — "Run" — "Heel", to ZIP — sit, run and heel! Ears up! Life is wonderful! Glory to God! I have also learned that when He says, "Roll

over!", not to growl at Him, but to roll over! You just can't beat a dog in that position! Two more lessons that I have been taught are: (1) the more I obey, the more complete is my joy; (2) every time I go my own way, I get into trouble.

We must remember in this matter of learning, that God is going to continue steadfast in His love, but He will deal with us and judge us according to our needs. He may have to take away His anointing for service and give it to another, as He did in the case of Saul and David. God's will and work goes on, even though at times His servants have to be "put out to pasture" due to disobedience or rebellion.

David was a different man after his "breaking". The Psalms attested to this. Hear him say, "I will sing of mercy and judgment: unto thee, O Lord, will I sing . . . Serve the Lord with gladness; come before his presence with singing . . . Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever!"

This is the result toward which the Lord continues to work. He desires a people who can say from a heart overflowing with love and gratitude, "I delight to do thy will, O, God." We *can* know if we are rebels and if we are "innocent of the great transgression."

RULERS OF DARKNESS

(Continued from page 14)

(d) Keep guard over your mind and thoughts. Absolutely refuse entrance into your mind anything of a negative, critical, resentful, selfish, base or depressive nature.

Satan knows that he must release his victim when commanded to do so in Jesus' Name, but this does not mean that he always does so immediately, or that certain symptoms disappear at once. Boldly confess the fact of your liberation by faith for the victory is won! □

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