

# The Baptist CHALLENGE

a voice of independent Baptists

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WHOLE NO. 441

## *Final Edition of The Baptist Challenge*

*By M. L. Moser, Editor*

A final issue of a magazine is always a difficult issue to produce: How to write the article explaining that it is the last issue; what articles to place in it, knowing that there will be no more; how to let the readers know how much you have enjoyed writing and preparing the copy for more than 38 years and how much you appreciate the thousands of letters, cards, etc. that have been sent in over the many years.

As I write these words, I am still undecided as to what articles I will use in this issue. Many of the articles have been written, sometimes months in advance, so that as I look at the articles I have on file for the various months in the future, I have much more material than I can use in this last issue, so I must decide which ones to use and which ones to leave out. I hope that I have made selections that will meet the needs of today.

The history of **The Baptist Challenge** has been one to emphasize the distinctive doctrines that we as independent Baptists believe and have stood for since the days of the founding of the

first Baptist church by Christ Himself in the first century. I have seen New Testament doctrines that have been believed and practiced by Baptists since the days of Christ, gradually forsaken, weakened, and at times, even fought against, by those who claim to be Baptists. We have sought to continue to propagate these truths as our Baptist forefathers have done, millions

of them dying for these truths in order that we might have them today. Now, they have passed from the scene, and we too must now pass from the scene.

It is a combination of things that have caused us to cease publishing **The Baptist Challenge**, one of which is the new postal regulations that the U.S. Post Office now requires and which we find it nearly impossible to comply with, or

if so, it would take me several months to do so, and I do not feel that I am ready to devote that much time and effort at my age.

Another reason is the health of my wife. As our readers know, she has Alzheimer's Disease, and it is getting progressively worse, and I feel that I must devote more of my time to her. I do covet your prayers for both of us as we continue to adjust and adapt our life to this circumstance.

## **Six Literal Days?**

**By the late Nick Michalinos**

**QUESTION:** "Was creation brought about by God in six literal days, or by six age-long periods of time?"

**ANSWER:** The Biblical record itself makes it plain that the days of creation are literal days, and not long indefinite ages. There are those who are enemies of the Bible that seek to make the word "day" in the Bible account of creation to mean a period of time of millions or even billions of years.

They do not accept creation as a direct instantane-

ous act of God. They need their billions of years theory in order to promote their unbelieving so-called scientific views of how things came about in this universe, but without a God. Others promote the day-age theory in order to prove their theory of evolution.

Shamefully, some who profess to be Bible believers adopt a theistic evolutionist view in order to make the Bible to become more ac-

### **All Bills Were Paid**

Finally, I want to express our appreciate and gratitude to all of the many churches and individuals that help pay the expenses of producing **The Baptist Challenge**. Were it not for you, we would never have been able to produce this magazine. Some of you have been supporting **TBC** on a monthly basis for many years, while others send an offering once a year, and then there are those who respond to the articles that we write mentioning the particular needs at the time. To each of you we

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## Changes In Mexican Mission Work

By Larry Jones, Pastor  
Central Baptist Church  
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As you know Bro. M. L. Moser has been overseeing Latin American Baptist Missions, a mission work sponsored by Central Baptist Church, since his retirement from the pastorate a number of years ago. He has represented LABM all over America and visited the field each year to provide counsel, support, and leadership in the absence of a missionary on the field. You also know that Edith Moser has Alzheimer's Disease. This circumstance coupled with the demands of LABM and editing **The Baptist Challenge** have become too great a load for Bro. Moser to actively carry. He is retiring from both of these ministries. We love Brother and

Sister Moser and are assisting them as they close this chapter in their lives.

We have been praying for four years that God would send a missionary to oversee our work and provide general leadership to our brethren there. It is only necessary that this missionary live in that region of Latin America and probably best that he not live in the immediate vicinity. With Bro. Moser's retirement our need for a missionary has increased greatly. This new circumstance caused us to look seriously at what God desires for our work. We believe it is God's will that we continue the work.

Through a series of circumstances we initiated ex-

tensive discussions with Pastor Ron Thomas of Rodgers Baptist Church, Garland, Texas and their missionary to Latin America, Dennis Thomas. After prayer, discussions, and further consideration we believed it to be God's will that we call Bro. Dennis Thomas to oversee our work in Latin America while he continues to serve the Lord in his present field of labor. Bro. Dennis Thomas has accepted our call and with his family joined Central Baptist Church.

The members of Central Baptist have always held a special place in our hearts for Rodgers Baptist Church. Our histories uniquely dovetail in a way that continues to bind us together in mutual love and respect. Each church has been a strong supporter of the other's mission efforts throughout the world. Our Pastors, both today and yesterday, have always been close friends. This fellowship began many years ago when Charles Thomas visited M. L. Moser Jr. on the mission field in Latin America.

Today we enjoy the same fellowship and Central has especially profited from the ministry of Rodgers

Baptist Church. Our Associate Pastor, C. D. Ward, served as a missionary out of Rodgers Baptist Church for 25 years and is a wonderful blessing to us. Our commitment to this relationship remains constant and the support of Rodgers Baptist has been wonderful during this transition.

Truly a great door has been opened to us. With the merging of these two works comes great opportunity — greater opportunity for evangelization in the regions of southern Mexico and Central America — opportunity for the establishment of more churches in regions that now have no churches.

Your continued prayer and financial support is vital — more vital now than ever before. Please call if you have questions concerning this transition or the ministries. Feel free to speak to me, pastor Larry Jones, or C. D. Ward and we will do all we can to assist you. Thank you for your prayers and support.

Please send all support and correspondence for Dennis Thomas to:

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### THE BAPTIST CHALLENGE

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#### SUBSCRIPTION POLICY


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## The Life Of Money

One day, a dollar bill and a hundred dollar bill got folded together and began talking about their life experiences. The hundred dollar bill began to brag.

"I've had a great life," he said. "I've been to all the big hotels. Donald Trump himself used me at his casino, I've been in the wallets of Fortune 500 board members. I've flown

from one end of the country to the other! I've even been in the wallet of two Presidents of the United States, and once when Princess Diana visited the U.S., she used me to buy a packet of gum."

In awe, the dollar humbly responded, "Gee, nothing like that has ever happend to me, but I have been to church a lot!" 

# The Origin of the Baptists

By George B. Taylor

Almost all the anti-papist denominations in existence date, either directly or indirectly, from the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, and came out from the Roman Catholic Church. The Reformation which brought these denominations into existence was one of the most glorious events in history; and much of what has been effected by these denominations may well rejoice both angels and saints.

The Baptists, however, do not date from the Reformation. Though anti-papists, they are not, in the technical and historical sense of the word, Protestants; for though they have ever protested, and do now protest, against the heresies and abominations of Rome, they did not come out from Rome, having never been identified with the Roman hierarchy. Sir Isaac Newton says, as quoted by *Appleton's American Cyclopaedia*: "The Baptists are the only body of Christians that has not symbolized with the Church of Rome."

But if the Baptists did not come out from Rome with the other denominations, what *is* their origin? It has not been uncommon to speak of them as beginning with the madmen of Munster, who committed in that city, in 1635, so many abominations. But, herein are several grand mistakes.

Anabaptist means rebaptizer. The term has some-

times been applied to Baptists because they reject infant baptism, and insist that those who have received that rite should be baptized upon a profession of faith, when they come personally to believe on Christ. They also insist upon immersion as the only Scriptural baptism. The Anabaptists, on the other hand, not only rebaptized all who came to them from the Papal Church, but, according to the historian Ivimy, repeated baptism among themselves when they removed from one society to another, and even in the same community when an excommunicated person was received again; and they practiced sprinkling far more than immersion. Moreover, they held views in regard to allegiance to government, marriage, and the Bible, such as not only the Baptists of these times repudiate, but as were repudiated by those of that time who correspond to the Baptists of the present day. This is the testimony of the Dutch historians, Ypeig and Dermont, and Brandt in his "History of the Reformation." Even were it true that the scenes of Munster were ascribable mainly to Anabaptists, it were as absurd to confound them with the Baptists as it would be now to confound Mormons with Baptists, merely because Mormons immerse. In fact, it would be more absurd, because, as has been said, those Anabaptists

were, as a general rule, not even immersionists.

But even were it granted that we are the successors of the Munstermen, and that we ought to bear the odium of those abominations — conclusions which I deny, and have disproved — it would still be utterly untrue that then and there the Baptists originated.

On the contrary, it is true and I propose now to show, that Baptists — not called by that name, but called by first one name and then another, and yet holding substantially Baptist principles and Baptist practices — have existed in all the ages from the Reformation back to Apostolic times. I preface my testimony with two remarks. First, it must be remembered that each Baptist congregation being independent, we do not speak of the Baptist Church being continuous as we do of the Roman Catholic Church or the Church of England. All we mean is that there have been in all the ages men and churches maintaining doctrines and practices such as Baptists and Baptist churches now maintain. Second, and as a corollary from the foregoing, I do not place any stress upon the idea of a succession. While it is true that baptism is to be administered by one who has been baptized and has been set apart to administer the ordinance by a company of believers who have themselves been baptized [a

church], yet I cannot hold an unbroken succession essential to the validity of the ordinance [This editor believes in Baptist Succession]. I will illustrate what I mean. If a person now wishes baptism, it is manifestly proper that he should receive it of one who has himself been baptized and duly authorized by a Baptist church to administer the ordinance. Otherwise, the door is open wide to confusion and irregularity. But suppose the case of a company of persons in an island, and destined to remain there. They have a New Testament. They are led to believe the gospel. Might they not join together as a church, one baptizing the others, and himself receiving baptism from the hands of another? This we know actually occurred in the case of Roger Williams; and the view presented is the one generally obtaining among Baptists. [Editor's Comments: Roger Williams "church" and "baptism" was not recognized by Baptists.] When Luther, on the 10th of December, 1520, burned the Pope's bull without the walls of Wittenberg, severing himself from Rome, and proclaimed the advent of a new order of things, the act was hailed with joy by the Baptists, who immediately engaged in active operations for the spread of the truth. In the language of Dr. Cramp, "Luther had

(See **ORIGIN** on page 19)

## Church Music

By Forrest L. Keener

*"I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also" — 1 Cor. 14:15*

When I was a child, we referred to church music as sacred songs. By that, we meant that the song had a message in it and a Spirit about it that was sacred. It also meant that we didn't sing the song in an atmosphere of worldliness and profanity, even though there was an abundance of worldly, cheap, and even profane music. It seems to be an unwritten law that the two didn't mix or mingle. I can remember frequent objection, with which I agreed, to the closing of a hillbilly or country music show, with "Hymn Time." At "Hymn Time" all the entertainers who were making their living, writing and singing songs about drunkenness, adultery, murder and lust, all gathered around the "old microphone" and closed their shindig with a hymn. To me it always seemed like "a jewel of gold in a swine's snout" (Prov. 11:22).

Well, today things have changed. The music of the world is no longer mingled with sacred music, it is mixed. Not only can you hear a hippie sing the Lord's prayer with a rock and a roll beat and a hillbilly whang, you can hear it in a "church". If God were subject to emotional reaction toward human folly, this would no doubt nauseate Him.

This results, I think, from two basic problems. One: A mixture of professionalism (in fancy more than

quality) and ignorance on the part of the singer, and Two: An absence of scriptural taste and conviction both on the part of the person responsible for what is sung in the church service and of the listeners. This destructive flame is of course fed by the pitiful fact that many churches today are infinitely more interested in relating to youth, exciting the public, pleasing the world, or appealing to the lost, than they are in glorifying God in the church.

I am appalled at the fact that a group "Singin' Gospel Music" traveling around the country on church money (whether it is given by their home church or their entertainees) can appear in a "Baptist Church (?)" with hair like granny's sheep dog, wearing clothes like Porter Wagoner's night mare, and can sing Old Dog Tray, Daddy Sang Base, or Keep on Walkin', and if they have the right P-zazz and religious flavor the whole "church" is shouting "Glory" over the great "Spiritual Experience." This kind of religion is cheaper than a six dollar tour of Europe.

How I long to see the time when in Baptist churches we insist that first of all the songs we sing and listen to have a scriptural message and that the message is clear, pure, and doctrinally sound. Secondly, we need to purge out performance and entertain-

## What About Abstinence?


By Robert Layton

*[The following I received recently by Email. No explanation is needed. -- The Editor.]*

I was holding a notice from my 13-year-old son's school announcing a meeting to preview the new course in sexuality. Parents could examine the curriculum and take part in an actual lesson presented exactly as it would be given to the students.

When I arrived at the school, I was surprised to discover only about a dozen parents there. As we waited for the presentation, I thumbed through page after page of instructions on the prevention of pregnancy or disease. I found abstinence mentioned only in passing.

When the teacher arrived with the school nurse, she asked if there were any questions. I asked why abstinence did not play a noticeable part in the material. What happened next was shocking. There was a great deal of laughter, and someone suggested that if I thought abstinence had any merit, I should go back to burying my head in the sand. The teacher and the nurse said nothing as I drowned in a sea of embarrassment. My mind had gone blank, and I could think of nothing to say.

ment from our services. Let us insist that our singing be worship, not performance. Let our songs glorify God, not the singer. "Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end" (Eph. 3:21). 

The teacher explained to me that the job of the school was to teach "facts," and the home was responsible for moral training.

I sat in silence for the next 20 minutes as the course was explained. The other parents seemed to give their unqualified support to the materials.

"Donuts, at the back," announced the teacher during the break. "I'd like you to put on the name tags we have prepared — they're right by the donuts — and mingle with the other parents. Everyone moved to the back of the room.

As I watched them affixing their name tags and shaking hands, I sat deep in thought. I was ashamed that I had not been able to convince them to include a serious discussion of abstinence in the materials. I uttered a silent prayer for guidance.

My thoughts were interrupted by the teacher's hand on my shoulder.

"Won't you join the others, Mrs. Layton?" The nurse smiled sweetly at me.

"The donuts are good." "Thank you, no," I replied.

"Well, then, how about a name tag? I'm sure the others would like to meet you."

"Somehow I doubt that," I replied.

"Won't you please join them?" she coaxed.

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# The Blessing of Being A Believer

By E. R. Henderson

The blessing of being a believer. This must be qualified a bit: The blessing of being a believer of truth.

To believe error or that which is false is a curse. Always a curse and in every realm. But to believe truth is always a blessing and in every realm. This means a great responsibility to search and learn truth and discern error and that which is false and reject it.

This approach to our subject is about to get us in too large a sphere. Let us narrow it down to, the blessing of being a believer of revealed truth. This is another way of saying, the blessing of being a believer in the Bible.

We will narrow the subject further and say, the blessing of being a believer of the revealed truth about Jesus of Nazareth. Now let us bring it down to our own experiences and enumerate some of these blessings:

1. The blessing of sins forgiven. "To him give all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive the remission of sins" (Acts 10:43).

2. The blessing of being counted righteous before God. "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness" (Rom. 4:3; 4:23-25).


3. The believer has the happy experience, that he is free from guilt before God. This he realizes because he has learned and believed

that Christ has suffered for the sins of the believer, and put away his guilt (Heb. 9:12-14).

4. The believer has the blessing of eternal life. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life" (Jn. 3:36).

5. The believer has the blessing of being a child of God. "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:26).

6. The believer has the blessing of being the recipient of exceeding great and precious promises. "Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises" (2 Pet. 1:4; Jn. 6:38-40).

7. To the believer God has given good works to walk in (Eph. 2:10; Acts 1:8). 

## The Tater Family

Come gather around friends and I'll tell you a tale Of a family named Tater who we know too well.

They're just a typical group of church people Watch out! They might be under your steeple.

Cousin Dick is there for the bussiness meeting But it's his way he's always seeking.

Yeah old Dick-Tater has a lot to say, Especially when things don't go his way.

His sister Emma is quite a sight

The way she dresses up every night.

Yeah Emma-Tater has the world in one hand

While the other one's reaching for the promised land.

And then you'll find old cousin Hesi

Whose favorite trick is pretending she's busy.

But Miss Hesi-tater is usually the one

You can't find when there's work to be done.

Then there's always this pair of twins

Who try to make sure that no one wins.

Agi-Tater's usually raising a fuss

While Irri-Tater's plain cantankerous.

But out on the limb of every family tree

There's one old soul for you and me.

He gets out his bible and sooner or later

You'll hear from Grampa Medi-Tater.

And that old man has spent many years

He's said some prayers and shed some tears.

Warning this clan who think they're so clever

That they might be fried Taters forever!

-- Mike McCartney  
Landmark Missionary  
Baptist Church  
Roseville, California

## SEX...

(Continued from page 4)

"I'll just wait here," I said.

When the class was called back to order, the teacher looked around the long table and thanked everyone for putting on

name tags. She ignored me.

Then she said, "Now we're going to give you the same lesson we'll be giving your children. Everyone please peel off your name tags."

I watched in silence as the tags came off.

"Now, then, on the back of one of the tags, I drew a tiny flower. Who has it, please?"

The gentleman across from me held it up. "Here it is!"

"All right," she said. "the flower represents disease. Do you recall with whom you shook hands? He pointed to a couple of people.


"Very good," she replied. "The handshake in this case represents intimacy. So the two people you had contact with now have the disease. There was laughter and joking among the parents.

The teacher continued, "And whom did the two of you shake hands with?" The point was well taken, and she explained how this lesson would show students how quickly disease is spread.

"Since we all shook hands, we all have the disease."

"Speak now," I thought, "but be humble." I noted wryly the latter admonition, then rose from my chair.

I apologized for any upset I might have caused earlier, congratulated the teacher on an excellent lesson that would impress the youth, and concluded by saying I had only one small point I wished to make.

"Not all of us were infected," I said. "One of us abstained." 

# Russia's New Law On religious Associations Being Put Into Practice

By Nils Degerlund Missionary in Magadan, Russia  
 nils@degerlund.magadan.su

Last fall, I reported on the new Russian law "On Freedom of Conscience and On Religious Associations" as it is officially called. This law was written primarily as a reaction to the many new denominations and cults that have poured into Russia since the end of the Soviet era. The influx of foreign religions since Perestroika has served as the catalyst for renewed opposition to anything that is not Russian Orthodox.

What follows is a brief summary of the law with special emphasis on how it might effect foreign missionaries. This information is based upon my reading of translated copies of both the law and the new regulations for implementing the law. I have also included some news items showing how it is being implemented.

The law which was almost unanimously passed by the Russian Duma and approved by President Yeltsin in September, 1997 begins with general provisions of human rights and limits on the State's power to interfere with those rights. These provisions were not new but preserved from the Russian Republic's 1990 law on freedom of conscience.

After the General Provisions comes two chapters on Religious Associations. Here begin the detailed provisions of the law which contradict the declarations

of human rights given in the first chapter and specifies numerous restrictions which the State places upon churches.

The law introduces classifications of religious activities: Organizations, and Groups. Basically, that means registered and unregistered churches, respectively.

A RELIGIOUS GROUP does not have the right of a legal entity and therefore cannot own property or operate as a legal body. They are allowed to meet in each others homes but that is about it. It is into this classification that all independent Baptist works would be placed.

A RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION is a church or organization that can prove that it has legally operated in Russia for the past 15 years. We can safely say that the only Baptists that will be included in this classification are those who were members of registered churches that operated under government control during the communist years (such as the All Union Council of Evangelical Christian-Baptists), or other Baptist (so-called) denominational groups willing to work under those registered organizations.

In order to become registered and subsequently receive legal status, a church must adopt a charter similar to what we in America would

call "Articles of Incorporation". The Charter must be approved by the Minister of Justice. Review of the charter could take up to 6-months so that "State expert analysis by specialists in religious studies" could be performed. (Who these state experts will be is still yet to be specified by law.) This process must be repeated annually.

There are many rights granted to registered Religious Organizations but all are based upon approval of their charter and subject to constant "monitoring" by the State. Some of the rights granted are: the right to exemption from military service; creation of educational institutions and seminaries; to teach in schools under state supervision; host foreign missions; create radio stations, newspapers, etc.; create or distribute literature; invite foreign evangelists; or preach in hospitals, prisons, children's homes, or even cemeteries, or other public places.

Religious Groups (unregistered) however have none of those rights. The law specifically states that Religious Groups are not granted the right to meet in any public place, evangelize, etc.

This law also specifically states that foreign missionaries DO NOT have the right to "engage in liturgical or other religious activities" unless they are invited by

and working through a "Russian" church (a "Russian" church according to the new law is one that has been a registered religious organization for FIFTY YEARS). Therefore, this new law pressures churches to form multi-church organizations /conventions /denominations in order to have legal legitimacy. As independent Baptists, it is not our intent to register as a church but to remain an unregistered "Religious Group".

An initial reading of the new law gives the impression that foreign missionaries could continue to operate in Russia and form unregistered "Religious Groups" if they were to come to Russia under a work visa and host services in their home or in the home of one of their converts. (This is how we have operated for the 5 years that we have been in Russia.) However, a close look at the exact wording shows that if the law were strictly interpreted, even foreigners who are in Russia under a work visa could not preach or unite with a Religious Group (unregistered church).

This law, like most laws in Russia are subject to wide degrees of interpretation by local officials. We have been told that some churches in other parts of Russia have been denied registration or told to cease

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## NILS...

(Continued from page 6)

meeting in their buildings while other churches are not having any problems. A good illustration of how this works can be seen in the following situation. One missionary in a small town to the north of us was able to rent the local "House of Culture" for a few evenings to hold services. However, our mission in Sinagoria, still further to the north, continues to be denied access to the "House of Culture".

It is important to note that here in Magadan there have been no attempts to persuade us to register since the new law was written. But we have been told that the local office of the FSB (former KGB) has a man assigned to keeping track of all religious activities in the area. If local officials turn their faces the other way, then nothing should change. But, if local officials seek to uphold the law according to the regulations recently issued, things could change dramatically.

Such was the case for a Baptist missionary in the Khabarovsk region, here in Far-East Russia. In the middle of March, 1998 we received word that a Baptist missionary in Vanino, Russia, was the first foreign missionary to be expelled from Russia because of this new law. The missionary had sought to renew his religious visa after being there for four years and was told by local officials that his visa was denied because he was a foreigner and was acting as the pastor of his church. He was told that he must unite with the Evangelical Christian-Baptists or find a Russian pastor for his church. Not willing to unite

with the ECB because of major doctrinal differences (Baptists in Russia believe in the universal church theory and that a person may lose their salvation) and not having a man qualified to be pastor, the missionary was told to leave his home in the church building (which he had built) and get ready to leave the country. I must add that the government official pushing to get the American expelled did offer to find a pastor for the church!

Our situation here in Magadan has been different. Since the passing of the law, we have baptized 20 converts here at our mission. This is unprecedented in our experience here in Russia! Never before have we seen such dramatic growth! There are several explanations for this recent trend, all of which are beyond our control. My opinion is that the Lord is working quickly to establish an independent Baptist church here in Magadan in the time that we have left to do it. Time will tell whether my opinion has merit or not. Of utmost importance right now is to ground the members that we have in the doctrines and practice of the Scriptures.

We are very concerned that there have been no Russian men to answer the call to the ministry. If we were forced to leave today, we would leave behind a church with no pastor. This makes me wonder if the Lord will allow us to stay here long enough to train up a man for that task, once one presents himself, or if the Lord has something else in mind. Your prayers on this matter are needed. Of course, we must wait upon the Lord.

In closing, I would like

## Yeltsin Offers Hope For Religious Freedom In Russia

"There is new hope for religious freedom in Russia. Some elements of the country's restrictive 1997 religion law may not be enforced. As a result, recently registered organizations and those that belong to centralized religious groups can continue to operate un-

hampered. to share with you a nagging worry that comes about through what we are seeing here in Russia. If this law was written in an effort to control the dangerous cults and groups that are entering this country and swaying the minds of its youth (Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, Satanism, Charismatics) and if we see the same groups in America, how long will it be before we see similar legislation appearing in our country? (Perhaps some readers will enlighten me to similar legislation that has already come before our lawmakers.) I have heard *Christians*, of all people, say that there ought to be a law against these cults and sects. Well folks, we have such a law here in Russia. And who does it restrict the most? **Christians!** My goal is this, that if Americans are aware of this law in Russia, perhaps we will be better able to keep this same kind of legislation from hindering churches at home. The real remedy for stopping the detrimental effects of these cults is not through legislation but to fervently teach and live the truth! [Bro. Nils Email address is:

hampered.

Russian President Boris Yeltsin has told the Ministry of Justice to order local authorities to ignore the 15-year registration rule on religious organizations, according to Lauren Homer of Law and Liberty Trust, a U.S.-based religious rights watchdog. The rule removes legal status from organizations that were not registered in the country before 1982, preventing new organizations from owning property, printing and distributing literature, and holding evangelistic activities.

Yeltsin said the 15-year rule conflicted with the Russian Constitution, domestic policy advisor Andrey Loginov told a group of religious freedom activists in Washington, D.C., last month.

The Ministry of Justice will issue regulations ordering local authorities to apply the most lenient standard when enforcing the law. "If there is a conflict between the law and the Constitution, the Constitution will apply," Loginov said. The regulations will require that an independent commission be established to oversee implementation of the law. The commission will consist of government officials, representatives of human rights groups, and members of religious minorities. The commission will 'make sure that local officials are fair,' Homer told Religion Today.

Yeltsin said he will support an appeal to Russia's

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(See **RUSSIA** on page 16)

## Me And My Circle

When I first became a member of the church, my circle was very large; for it included all who, like myself, had believed and been baptized.

I was happy in the thought that my brethren were many. But I soon learned to my sorrow that all brethren were not true brethren. A man with a keen mind will learn a lot through observation and I have been a close and constant observer of the brethren through the years.

In watching them, I have discovered their errors. I was forced time and again to draw my circle so as to exclude the errorists for I could not, with a good conscience tolerate any people within my circle except those who, like myself, were right on all points of doctrine and practice. Every time I drew my circle I placed myself on the inside where I belonged.

By watching the lives of those who lived within my circle I learned that some sinned and made mistakes. I was sorely grieved. What could I do about this? What else could a righteous man do than that which I have already done? Good men must avoid sinful men.

So in my righteous indignation

My circle I drew again  
Leaving the publican and sinners outside

And me, the righteous within.

I observed that many were self-righteous, unforgiving they thought that they were the only people

in the world. I do not like people who think too highly of themselves and set all others at naught.

So as a matter of discipline,

My circle I drew again  
Leaving the Pharisees without  
And me and humble men within.

Ugly rumors I heard about this brother and that brother. Brethren should not allow ugly rumors to get started on them. I have never allowed such rumors to circulate concerning me. Now what should a man with a good reputation do with brethren in bad repute? Should he but guard his own good name?

In order to save my name,  
My circle I drew again  
Leaving the disreputable without  
And me and the spiritual within.

My circle had become small yet I continued to watch the mistakes made by brethren. I learned that some of them, though not out-and-out sinners, were worldly-minded. I have a way of knowing what brethren are thinking about. The pleasures in which they participated were questionable. They should have participated in innocent pleasures. For instance, they should not drink coffee; but like me, they should drink tea.

So, through a solemn sense of duty,

My circle I drew again  
Leaving the worldly-minded out,

And me and the spiritual within.

Only my family and I


were left.

I wanted my family on the inside, because I love my family — every member of it. I had a good family. The members of my family were always right — except when they disagreed with me.

Finally, my family and I had a fuss. There were two sides to this fuss. I was on one side, my family on the other. My side was right and when a man is right he should be steadfast. In all my experience in church troubles I have never been a factious man. I have always identified with the true church, never a faction.

So in courage and determination,

My circle I drew again  
Leaving my factious family on the outside  
And me and myself within.

I alone am left with no one to love but myself.  
*Will I ever draw another circle?* 

### Billy Sunday's Estimate Of the Bible


"Twenty-nine years ago, with the Holy Spirit as my Guide, I entered at the portico of Genesis, walked down the corridor of the Old Testament art-galleries, where pictures of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joseph, Isaac, Jacob, and Daniel hang on the wall.

I passed into the music room of the Psalms where the spirit sweeps the keyboard of nature until it seems that every reed and pipe in God's great organ responds to the harp of David, the sweet singer of Israel.

I entered the chamber of Ecclesiastes, where the voice of the preacher is heard, and into the conservatory of Sharon and the lily of the valley where sweet spices filled and perfumed my life.

I entered the business office of Proverbs and on into the observatory of the Prophets where I saw telescopes of various sizes pointing to far off events, concentrating on the bright and morning Star which was to rise above the moonlit hills of Judea for our salvation and redemption.

I entered the audience room of the King of kings, catching a vision written by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John. Thence into the correspondence room with Paul, Peter, James and John writing their Epistles.

I stepped into the throne room of Revelation where tower the glittering peas, where sits the King of kings upon His throne of glory with the healing of the nations in His hand, and I cried out: 'All hail the power of Jesus' name! Let angels prostrate fall' Bring forth the royal diadem, And crown Him Lord of all.' 

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## The Bottle-nosed Dolphin

By Bob Devine

Some marine biologists claim the bottle-nosed dolphin is the most intelligent animal in the world. Its brain is larger than man's, in proportion to its total weight. Weighing as much as 800 pounds, the bottle-nosed dolphin grows up to 12 feet long. It has from 80 to 88 teeth, which it uses to make mincemeat out of fish and other small marine life. The dolphin breathes like a whale, taking in fresh air from the blowhole atop its head, filling its lungs and diving for adventure. Not only young dolphins like to play; older dolphins can't live without it either. The clicks, barks and whistles of the dolphin are unique, but its underwater guidance system is fantastic. It's really a form of sonar, similar to underwater radar. Sonar is used in the guidance systems of submarines, ocean lines and battleships. Sonar stands for **SO**und **NA**vigational **R**anging. An underwater sound wave is transmitted from a ship's antenna. When it strikes an object under water, the signal bounces back to the antenna; and a computer calculates how large and how close the object is, thus avoiding collision.

Marine biologists have discovered the bottle-nosed dolphin's sonar is far more advanced than the most modern solid-state sonar circuitry known to man. The dolphin's sonar produces a sputtering, raspy sound in the nasal passage below its blowhole, using a complex

organ called a melon. When anything is in the water up ahead — even something as small as a BB shot — the dolphin's signal reflects off the object and back into the receiving portion of its melon. Then its brain computes all the information.

A test in an oceanarium revealed that a dolphin's sonar can clearly tell the difference between a six and a twelve-inch fish. The sonar is also able to bounce back information about the kind of fish. This is important because dolphins prefer eating some fish over others!

Recently a test was conducted to see how effective the dolphin's sonar is at night. A maze of 36 poles was set up throughout the oceanarium. Even though it was pitch-dark, and a dolphin was sent through the tricky obstacle course at a fairly high rate of speed, it never touched one of the poles.

For the next experiment the marine biologists recorded the sounds of the dolphin's sonar. Then they sent the dolphin through the obstacle course and tried to confuse it by playing the recorded sounds in the water. But this didn't even bother the bottle-nosed dolphin. He made it through the tricky network of poles again without striking one of them.

Some of my friends say the dolphin is what it is today because of evolution and natural selection. They say the dolphin was not specially created by God, but that it developed into a fantastic marine creature by trial and error over millions of years.

But, is this true of the electronic sonar on our sub

(See **AGE** on page 16)

## The Panoply Of God

*“Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil”* (Eph. 6:11).

The Christian's strength is in the Lord and the power of His might, according to verse 10. Now it is revealed that not only our inward power and our spiritual, moral, and mental vigor are dependent upon the Lord, but our defensive armor, which consists of our ability and will to resist evil, must also be His supply if we are to be victorious. For the force that is directed against us is mighty, too.

The one against whom we must stand is the devil himself, Satan. And, although the world scoffs at the idea of a personal devil, and caricatures him as a peculiar red creature with horns and a spiked tail, who makes his home in hell, the Christian knows that he is very real and very powerful. He is perhaps the greatest being that God created.

In the Bible he is called “Lucifer, son of the morning” (Isa. 14:12) and “the anointed cherub that covereth” (Ezk. 28:14). Furthermore, in addition to his strength, Satan is a wily and cunning foe who gains many a victory by artifice. For example, he caused Joshua, a man who sought earnestly to live in accord with the will of God, to disobey the divine command by the simple devices of dry wine-skins, worn sandals, tattered garments, and moldy bread (Josh. 9).

The devil deceives men today in like fashion, caus-

ing them to think that they are naturally religious and that they can earn their way into heaven by means of forms and ceremonies, charitable gifts, church membership, and the like. He anesthetizes them, as it were, by a social gospel which is not the gospel of Christ but another gospel. He does not always identify himself, nor does he appear as a wicked creature. “And no marvel: for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14). He is a deceiver from the beginning and the father of lies.

How can the Christian stand against such an enemy? Well, he cannot do so in his own strength but in the power of the Lord. He cannot do so with his own armor but with the panoply of God.

“Put on the whole armour of God.” Observe that not one article, not a single piece, is to be left off. The whole armor of God is to be donned. And it is Christ who is God's armor, as further study of this passage of Scripture will reveal.

It is sufficient at this point to remind ourselves of another place wherein the Apostle speaks of the Christian's adornment. “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:14).

“But,” someone will propose, “this is all spiritual language. It doesn't help me very much. It's impractical; for how can I put on Christ or the armor of God?”

Yes, it is spiritual language; but it is also very practical, as future expositions will show. Meanwhile

(See **GOD** on page 16)

# Earth Is Thousands, Not Millions, Of Years Old, Creationists Argue

By Ken Walker

Those who believe God created the earth have wasted time criticizing evolutionists instead of developing their own theories, according to a noted Christian scientist.

"Some creationists have been on an evolution-bashing spree the last few decades," said Kurt Wise, director of origins research at Bryan College, Dayton, Tenn. "They don't know what the (creation) model says and what they believe."

Wise, who holds a doctorate in paleontology from Harvard, was one of the speakers for "Origins '98." Funded by a \$5,000 grant from an anonymous donor, organizers hope the creationism conference will become an annual event.

Though a small, private Christian college, Bryan attracts considerable attention because of its ties to the historic Scopes trial held in Dayton in 1925.

The trial, which focused on a Tennessee law outlawing the teaching of evolution, drew more than 100 reporters from around the nation and was the first trial ever broadcast over radio. The college opened in 1930 as a memorial to William Jennings Bryan, former presidential hopeful and U.S. secretary of state who helped argue the prosecution's case.

The inaugural conference February 26-28 got off to a good start: Organizers

had hoped for a turn-out of 100; instead, more than 200 came from 13 states, some from as far away as Wisconsin, Michigan and St. Louis.

The opening sessions concentrated on exploring creation's theological aspects and how evolution has helped dramatically alter society's outlook in recent decades.

"This is not a debate between evolution and creation, although it seems like that," said Bryan College President Bill Brown. "It's much deeper than that. Which interpretation is correct? There are many theories that seem to fit the evidence. That's why we're striving for truth."

"The key issue in origins is the chasm between naturalists and those who say God created everything," Brown said. "Your worldview will determine how you view the evidence. Being a Christian does not take away one's ability to interpret the data."

In the first of his four speeches, Wise — who studied under leading Harvard evolutionist Stephen Jay Gould — explained why young-age origins represent a watershed issue.

While many believe in both God's creation and evolution as a way of explaining earth's development, the associate professor of science said the two views cannot be reconciled.

Displaying a fossil chart showing sea animals and other creatures preceding humans, Wise said if evolutionary theory were valid, death would have predated the fall of Adam and Eve. That doesn't square with the Bible's explanation that death and disease were a consequence of their sin, he said.

If the earth is old, then the first 11 chapters of Genesis must be rejected, he said, as well as Christ's statements and Christian doctrines of eschatology.

"If the earth is old, God is not the Christian God," Wise said. "There isn't anything true about what you and I believe. Who will you believe? Man or God?"

However, before the weekend concluded, Wise and others presented a string of arguments in favor of a young earth.

Workshops on post-flood geology, radiometric dating, geological classification and a literal, six-day creation reviewed this perspective.

In addition, Wise presented a slide show on changes since the 1980 eruption of Mount St. Helens. He said it points to an earth that is thousands of years old, not millions.

Two events at the Washington volcano demonstrate how the changes in the earth could have occurred much faster than evolutionists theorize, he said:

—The formation of a 100-foot-deep "Little Grand Canyon" near the mountain in 1992. Its topography is similar to the Badlands and it contains a rapidly cut river valley that follows the same zigzag pattern as the Colorado River, he said.

—The nine-year devel-

opment of a swamp and an "amazingly mature" plant community and hot springs in a nearby valley. Wise, who did his undergraduate studies at the University of Chicago, said he once learned that such phenomena supposedly require thousands of years.

"What I was taught in geology was blown away by Mount St. Helens," he said.

Others cautioned against trying to accommodate theories that the earth is billions of years old in hopes of gaining credibility with evolutionists.

"I've heard every attempt to do that," said Danny Faulkner, who teaches physics and astronomy at the University of South Carolina. "Can you do it in biblically faithful fashion? I don't think so. It doesn't make scientists respect you and it doesn't help creationists."

Faulkner also warned against accepting the "Big Bang" theory. Recalling how few scientific theories have survived from a century ago, he asked, "When the Big Bang goes down, what happens to your apologetics? They're gone."

Most of the conference emphasized the need for creationists to develop their interpretation of earth's history. Wise, part of a team working to establish such a model, said that must be done before adequate curriculum can be developed.

Jeff Myers, a communications professor who helped coordinate the conference, said creationists must work harder to advance their own views.

"It's time to put up or shut up," Myers commented.

(See **EARTH** on page 16)

# The Modernist Preacher Entering Hell

He was an ordained minister,  
But modern in his views,  
He preached his fancy doctrine  
To people in the pews.

He would not hurt their feelings,  
What'er the cost would be,  
But their smiles and friendship  
And compliments sought he.

His church was filled with wicked souls  
That should be saved from sin,  
But never once he showed the way,  
Or tried a soul to win.

He preached about the lovely birds  
That twitter in the trees  
The babbling of the running brooks,  
The murm'ring of the seas.

He quoted fancy poetry  
That tickled list'ning ears;  
When sorrow came to some,  
He tried to laugh away their tears.

His smooth and slippery sermons  
Made the people slide to hell  
The harm he did by preaching  
Goes beyond what we can tell.

He took our Holy Bible,  
And preached it full of holes,  
The Virgin Birth, said he,  
Can't be believed by honest souls.  
The miracles of Jesus  
And the resurrection tale

For educated one like us,  
Today cannot avail.

We're living in an age, said he,  
When wisdom rules and reigns,  
When man's intelligence is great  
And superstition wanes.

He said, we're all God's children  
Who live upon this earth,  
No message of salvation,  
No need of second birth.

His coat was bought with money  
That he had wrongly gained,  
For through his lying sermons  
His wealth he had obtained.

He was just like the soldiers  
That watched at Jesus' grave,  
For money in abundance,  
To them, the people gave.

It was all theirs, by telling  
What was a sinful lie —  
A resurrected Savior,  
They too, were to deny.

The day at last had come  
For the minister to die,  
When to his congregation,  
He had to say good-bye.

His form lay cold and lifeless,  
His ministry was past,  
His tongue with all its poison  
Was hushed and stilled at last.

His funeral was grand,  
He was lauded to the skies  
They preached him into heaven

Where there are no good-byes.

Upon the lonely hill,  
Underneath the shady trees,  
His form was laid to rest  
In the whisp'ring of the breeze.

A tombstone was erected  
With the words; "He is at rest,  
He's gone to heaven's glories  
To live among the blest."

His body now is lifeless,  
But Ah! His soul lives on,  
He failed to enter in  
Where they thought that he had gone.

The letters on the tombstone  
Or that sermon some had heard,  
Could not decide his destiny,  
'Twas not the final word.

He still had God to deal with,  
The One who knows the heart;  
While others entered heaven,  
He heard the word, "Depart".

He pauses for a moment  
Upon the brink of hell;  
He stares into a depth  
Where he evermore will dwell.

He hears the cries and groanings  
Of souls he had misled,  
He recognizes faces  
Among the screaming dead

He sees departed deacons  
Which he once highly praised,

Their fingers pointing at him  
As they their voices raised:

"You stood behind the pulpit,  
And lived in awful sin,  
We took you for a saint,  
But a serpent you have been."

Accusing cries — he hears them.  
"Ah! you have been to blame,  
You led us into darkness  
When you were seeking fame.

"You preached your deadly poison,  
We thought you knew the way;  
We fed and clothed you,  
We even raised your pay.

"You've robbed us of a home  
Where no tear-drops ever flow,  
Where days are always fair  
And the heavenly breezes blow,

"Where living streams are flowing,  
And saints and angels sing,  
Where every one is happy,  
And Hallelujahs ring.

"We're in this place of torment,  
From which no soul returns;  
We hear the cry of lost ones,  
We feel the searing burns;

"Give us a drop of water,  
We're tortured in this flame,  
You failed to preach

(See **HELL** on page 24)

### Reaction To Conversions In India.

"In India's eastern Orissa state, in response to large numbers of conversions to Christ from Hinduism, authorities 'are cracking down on Hindus who've become Christians,' according to the World Evangelical Fellowship Religious Liberty e-mail conference. 'The government has directed revenue inspectors to visit homes, and if the inspectors see a cross, Bible, or Christian art, they are to immediately cancel basic citizenship privileges for those who live there,' conference administrator Mark Albrecht reports. In parliament, one official has introduced a bill that would require converts to register with the government. A militant Hindu group recently ended a strategy meeting in Nasik with plans to make the nation officially Hindu.'" (Pulse, January 23, 1998)

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### Doctor Death — Expands Past The Sick To The Healthy As Well.

"Murder in the cathedral. Jack Kevorkian has done it again, but this time he has managed to thumb his nose at the church in the process. According to his lawyer, Kevorkian helped a Detroit woman commit suicide in a Roman Catholic church. Ned McGrath, a spokesman for the Catholic Archdiocese of Detroit, called the action

'a tragic publicity stunt,' executed in response to the church's failed attempt to repeal Oregon's law, which allows doctor-assisted suicides. Enlarging the net Kevorkian is no longer satisfied with assisting in the suicides of the terminally ill. Now, he is available to aid those who desire to take their own life, even if they are not sick. In December, Kevorkian was present at the suicide of Martha Wilchorek, who said in her good-bye statement, 'I am not stressed, oppressed, or depressed. I don't have Alzheimer's and am not terminally ill. I'm 82 years old and I want to die.' It appears Kevorkian has grown comfortable in his self-assigned duty to determine who lives and who dies."

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**Vital Statistics.** Abortion Rate ... The Center for Disease Control said in December that abortions in 1995 were down 4.5 percent from the previous year. In Michigan, the abortion rate has dropped more than 35 percent over the last ten years. Officials point to the cut of Medicaid funding for abortions and a law requiring parental notification prior to an abortion."

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**Children and Working Mothers.** "An analysis of 105 middle-class 6-year-olds

indicates that the more hours mothers work, 'the lower the children's grades and the poorer their work habits and efforts.' The study also showed 'as mothers worked more hours, the children displayed less resilience, resourcefulness, and adaptability in the classroom.'"

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### Teenage Mothers And Their Children.

Children born to teenage mothers are more likely to drop out of high school, live in poverty, and become teen parents themselves, according to a report in the journal 'Pediatrics'. Forty percent of daughters and 18 percent of sons born to teenage mothers became young parents themselves, compared to 22 percent of daughters and 6 percent of sons born to mothers over 25. Nearly three-quarters of the children born to mothers 25 and older graduated from high school."

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### Florida Overrides Chiles' Abortion Veto.

A political victory orchestrated by a pro-family caucus that involved several Florida Baptists was achieved when state senators overturned Gov. Lawton Chiles' veto of the ban on the partial-birth abortion procedure. In a 32-7 vote, the Florida Senate handed Chiles his first veto override when members voted March 11 to overturn

his veto of the ban. The vote came just a week after the House of Representatives similarly rejected the veto by a vote of 90-27. The override marked the first time a governor's veto has been overridden in Florida since 1986.

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### MCI and Pornography.

MCI Communications is now the largest phone company in the world — at least in the world of phone sex. A survey shows MCI, including its subsidiaries, is the service provider for 57% of the over 800 dial-a-porn numbers cited in the summary. This marks the second year MCI has topped the list, having passed AT&T during the 1995 survey. AT&T has fallen on the list, providing hookups for 70 pornographic services. AFA of Florida compiled its finding from dial-a-porn services advertising in 15 porn magazines. —BBB

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### Gambling, Homelessness Linked?

A survey by the International Union of Gospel Missions found that 70% of rescue mission clients surveyed said easy access to gambling makes it hard for them to put their lives back together; 18% said gambling was a cause of their homelessness. IUGM condemned casinos and state lotteries for creating a new generation of homeless addicts. — CC

**If Clinton Guilty, Why No Graham Outrage?**

Billy Graham told NBC Today show viewers March 5 that he forgives Pres. Clinton because, "I know the frailty of human nature ... He has such a tremendous personality that I think the ladies just go wild over him." Pardon presupposes an admission of guilt, so what has the president confessed to doing? Cal Thomas asks: "For what exactly is Graham forgiving the president? Is it the sex? Is it lying under oath? Is it blanket forgiveness that also covers illegal campaign contributions, purloined FBI files, suborning of perjury, and the orchestrated cover-up of these and other 'sins,' or is it a limited immunity?" With God, forgiveness does not precede confession and repentance. Graham later added that it would be tragic to divorce character from leadership. — CC

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**Death To Those Who Insult Islam's Prophet.**

Salman Rushdie's death sentence for allegedly insulting Islam's founder in his *Satanic Verses* novel was reaffirmed Feb. 13 by Iran's chief prosecutor, who said: "Any Muslim who hears an insult to the prophet [Mohammed] must kill the person who commits the insult." Saudi Arabia kills/tortures/persecutes Muslims who become Christians. It plans to build a 1 million square-foot campus for 3,500 students on

101 acres near Washington's Dulles Airport in Virginia. Local residents fear that it would become an Islamic terrorist training center. One said: "When Saudi Arabia allows Christians to build churches in their country, I will be in favor of their right to build their religious and educational centers in America." — CC

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**Worshipful Buddhists Welcome "Holy Tooth."**

Singing hymns and praying for peace and luck, thousands of Buddhists greeted a holy tooth believed to have belonged to Buddha when it arrived in Taiwan on Thursday. Monks in saffron robes escorted the tooth, encased in a miniature golden pagoda, off a flight from India. Dozens of women prostrated themselves and spread their long hair over a red carpet. Others, kneeling in rows, clasped their hands in reverence. The ceremony at Taipei's international airport was one of the largest religious events in Taiwan. A quarter of Taiwan's 21 million people are Buddhists. Buddhists say the tooth, one of three reportedly found after Buddha was cremated 2,400 years ago, brings blessings for those who live where it is and keeps them from disaster. — AP

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**Charismatic Music.**

"Increasingly, there is more revved up performance from

the platform and less participation from the congregation. Much of it comes from the praise services popular in the charismatic movement. ... We see a real danger in teaching our people songs that tell them to raise their hands, etc., in the charismatic style of worship. It is clear, a 'mood' is being produced rather than a 'message' conveyed like the time-honored hymns the church has done. A [performance] is exactly what most of the special music was. Performances call for applause — and clap they did. ... Then there was the appearance of the musicians. ... When the 'beat' becomes more like the rock music crowd, the dress and the lifestyle follows. We know some of those in charge of the music. We knew them when they would not have allowed such sounds and sights on the platform or in our churches. Men do change, however. Music is on the cutting edge of that change. Desperately we need some men with spiritual discernment in this area. Unless some spiritual men surface soon, the flesh will continue to dominate. — Frontline.

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**CBA Sells Baptist Church Property To Hindus.**

According to Rev. John Waldrip, pastor of Calvary Road Baptist Church in Monrovia, California, the nearby Valley View Baptist Church deeded its property several years ago to the Con-

servative Baptist Association in southern California, with the understanding that should the congregation grow sufficiently the CBA would return their property to them. This move was done to prevent the church from being taken over by unscrupulous people who would join and then out vote the long time members. In 1995 the pastor of the church, Dr. Arthur Houk, was informed that the church property, which was being used by three different independent Baptist congregations (English, Spanish, and Korean), had been sold to Hindus. After contacting the local CBA representatives on several occasions and being unsatisfied with their response, Dr. Houk initiated legal action to stop the sale. The court action was unsuccessful. The church building, which had been paid for with the tithes and sacrificial offerings of God's people, has been taken over by and dedicated to the worship of idols. Unable to stop the sale of the property, the Valley View Baptist Church has proceeded with a suit against the CBA. Dr. Arthur Houk and several other independent pastors were called upon to refute the CBA contention that taking and selling a congregation's property is well within the historical

(See WNR on page 14)

**WNR...**

(Continued from page 13)

practice of Baptists. —  
Front-line.

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**Texas Reverses Child-care Stance.** On June 14, 1997, Gov. Goerge W. Bush signed into law four bills intended to encourage religious organizations to provide social and welfare-related services. The freedoms being restored in the area of child care in Texas are, without doubt, God's vindication of the work, tears, and endured persecution of many dedicated Christians. The press is still consistent in their bias by carefully avoiding the use of the name of the late Lester Roloff in their news release. Bro. Roloff gave his life for the right to minister to this particular group. The miracle is that power has been stripped away from the Texas Department of Human Resources. The Roloff Homes and other Christian homes that refused to be subjected to the unscriptural mandates of the DHR will again be working with hundreds of needy youngsters. — Frontline.

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**California Schools Favor Abstinence-only Curriculum.** A study of California schools found that many are using the popular abstinence-only sex education curriculum "Sex Respect," even though it has not been approved by the California Department of Education. The report, released by the

Applied Research Center in Oakland, was sharply critical of "Sex Respect," claiming it fails to emphasize sex education, presents a negative view of homosexuality, and emphasizes traditional gender roles — qualities that have made it a favorite of conservative parents. State law doesn't authorize the California Department of Education to monitor materials used in the state's eight thousand public schools, and districts are free to choose curriculum that meets the needs of local families. — The Baptist Bulletin

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**Jehovah's Witnesses Poised for Growth.** The Jehovah's Witnesses is preparing to undergo tremendous growth in the future, according to a study published in the *Journal of Contemporary Religion*. It projects an annual growth rate of 4 percent and cites such contributing factors as high fertility among members, increased reliance on young people as missionaries (increasing retention of youths), and high minority membership in the United States as an attraction for Third World converts. The Jehovah's Witnesses is a global religion, with only 19 percent of members within the United States. It is projected that growth will be highest in cultures familiar with Christianity and will be spurred by the strict standards followed by its adherents (serving to weed out less committed members) and restraint in issuing prophecies (since failures of previous predictions in the past have hurt credibility).

**Evolutionist's Fraudulent Work Exposed By Scientist.** The drawings of a 19th-century scientist that have been used to undergird the theory of evolution have been demonstrated to be fake, promising to add fuel to the debate over human origins. The artwork of Ernst Haeckel, a German biologist, has been used in high school and college textbooks for more than a hundred years. His side-by-side drawings of human, rabbit, chicken, salamander and fish embryos demonstrated a remarkable similarity between the different species at this early state of development. This alleged similarity, evolutionists argue, proves all living things have common ancestry. But Michael Richardson, an embryologist at St. George's Hospital Medical School in London, has proven that the drawings were purposely faked to bolster the evolutionary argument, according to *World* magazine. After performing a photographic comparison of the embryos, Richardson discovered that humans are very distinct from other species at the embryonic stage. Richardson said that not only did Haeckel add or omit critical features to increase the appearance of similarity between species, he also obscured differences in scale to enhance the effect he wished to create. — AFA Journal

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**ACLU Opposes Ohio's Motto.** Ohio's motto is "With God all things are possible." According to the American Civil Liberties

Union (ACLU), that's unconstitutional. The suit was filed in response to the state's plan to inscribe the motto and State seal in granite on the front of the Statehouse. The ACLU has accused the State of "picking" a religion.

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**SBC To Remain Part of Baptist World Alliance.** The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) will not pull out of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA), reported a committee named to investigate charges of liberalism within the worldwide Baptist fellowship. Based on "good faith discussions" with BWA leaders, the study committee recommended that the SBC continue to fund the organization while calling for "ongoing review" of the relationship. At the study committee's recommendation, the SBC Executive Committee approved \$425,000 in funding for the BWA in 1996-1997, an increase from the \$417,838 budgeted this year. The budget, however, moves the BWA from a percentage allocation on the SBC's unified budget to a flat dollar amount.

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**Baptists Largest Group In Cuba.** Cuba's Protestant churches are growing at a faster rate than the island's Catholic Church. More than 300,000 Cubans belong to the nation's 54 Protestant denominations, who operate 1,666 churches and hundreds of home-based congregations, said Pablo Oden Marichal, an Episcopal

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**WNR...**

(Continued from page 14)

priest and national coordinator of the Cuban Council of Churches. More than 700 of the churches have been established since 1992, when the Cuban government jettisoned its official "atheist" status and re-labeled the nation "secular." Baptists — about 70,000 strong — constitute the largest group in Cuba. Seventh-day Adventists, Methodists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians are among the larger Protestant groups — Western Recorder

\* \* \*

**Please Protect My Son.**

A mother recently sent a letter to the then president of Southern Methodist University in Dallas. The mother was gallantly trying to protect her son who was enrolling as a freshman. She wanted the president to make sure the boy had a "good" roommate who would encourage him to go to church and not use bad language. She did not want the roommate to smoke. The urgency was seen in the closing appeal to the president. "The reason all of this is so important is that it is the first time my boy has been away from home, except for the three years he spent in the Marines."

\* \* \*

**Results of Bible Quiz.**

A retired Air Force master sergeant received a newsletter from his old bomb wing, revealing some answers turned in on a Bible knowledge quiz. Called *Scanner*, the newsletter insists these are for real: (1)

Noah's wife was Joan of Ark; (2) Lot's wife was a pillar of salt by day, and a ball of fire by night; (3) Moses went to the top of Mount Cyanide to get the Ten Commandments; (4) The Seventh Commandment is "Thou shalt not admit adultery"; (5) Joshua led the Hebrews in the battle of Geritol; (6) The Epistles were the wives of the Apostles; and (7) A Christian should have only one wife. It is called monotony.

\* \* \*

**Dangers For Christians.**

Orthodox Jews in Israel have proposed a new law that would make it a criminal offense for anyone to persuade another person to change religions — or even to possess proselytizing materials. ... Atty. General Janet Reno and Pres. Clinton want Congress to expand the definition of federal "hate crimes" to include crimes based on sexual orientation, gender or disabilities. This might make it a "hate crime" to call homosexuality a sin. The FBI says 8,759 hate crimes were reported in 1996. — CC

\* \* \*

**Homosexuals Lose In Maine.**

Maine voters repealed a law that would have allowed for punitive damages ranging from \$10,000 to \$300,000 levied against even first-time violators. No exceptions were added for religious groups, so churches and private schools could have been taken to court and fined for refusing to hire homosexuals. Some other states (Calif., Hawaii, Minn., NJ, Wisc., and DC) have

"homosexual rights" laws — CC

\* \* \*

**Methodist Pastor Unites Two Lesbians.**

A Methodist pastor was found innocent by a church panel of disobeying church rules for performing a lesbian unity ceremony. If he had been found guilty by the jury of fellow ministers, the Rev. Jimmy Creech could have lost his position as senior pastor of Omaha's (Neb.) largest United Methodist Church and be stripped of his ministerial credentials. The case was the first challenge to United Methodist policy on homosexual marriage, and the jury's decision could shape how the 9.5 million-member denomination interprets rules governing its treatment of gays. The jury was made up of four women and nine men, all ministers from Nebraska. Joe Leonard of the National Council of Churches, which represents 34 Protestant and Orthodox churches in the United States, said many congregations of various denominations are conducting same-sex ceremonies, "but often they have to do it in defiance of their denomination's policies." Upon returning to his pulpit he was received with a standing ovation.

\* \* \*

**Another Homosexual.**

The Rev. Gene Robinson, 50, an openly gay cleric who has been a top official of the Diocese of New Hampshire for more than a decade, is among five nominees to succeed the Rt. Rev. John Spong as bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Newark,

New Jersey.

\* \* \*

**Israel Will Have Most**

**Jews In Five Years.** By 2003, Israel will finally have fulfilled the dreams of its founders when it overtakes the United States to become home to the largest number of Jews in the world. This according to the Institute of the World Jewish Congress, which is shortly to publish the new Jewish population statistics in its updated "Jewish Communities of the World." Since the last survey, published two years ago, America's Jewish population has decreased by 200,000, while Israel's has grown by 300,000. Today, according to the institute, there are around 700,000 more Jews living in the U.S. than in Israel. The WJC institute puts today's world Jewish population at 13.8 million. Fifty years ago, after the Holocaust, that number was estimated at 11 million.

\* \* \*

**Anti-abortion Groups Liable Under Racketeering**

**Law.** Relying on a racketeering law intended to be used against organized crime, a federal jury in Chicago ruled April 20 that anti-abortion groups conspired to use violence or threats of violence to close down abortion clinics. In a landmark decision, the jury of two men and four women used a 1970 federal law against racketeering to reach a verdict against three pro-life activists and two organizations -- the Pro-Life Action League and Operation Res-

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WNR . . .

(Continued from page 15)

cue. The jury awarded \$85,000 to two abortion clinics, an amount based on what they spent on security forces against anti-abortion protests. That amount will be tripled because the lawsuit was filed under the Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organization Act. The ruling opens the door for 900 other clinics involved in the class-action suit to recover triple damages, potentially costing the pro-life movement millions of dollars.

\* \* \*

**Clinton Communion At Catholic Church.** Under a cloud of sexual scandal, President Clinton took "Holy Communion" from the Rev. Mohlomi Makobane during Mass at a Catholic church in South Africa, March 29, arousing the ire of Catholics around the world. The appointed "uncomfortable" Scripture passage for the day was John 8:1-11 (the woman taken in adultery). -- CC

\* \* \*

**"Pro-Choice" or Just "Pro-Abortion"?** George Will says: "Many who call themselves 'pro-choice' demand tolerance of the right to choose to kill almost-born babies, but are intolerant of the right to choose one's public school, to smoke, to own a gun, to rent your basement apartment to whom you choose ... or to broadcast a truthful description of ... killing [by partial-birth abortion]." Some say abortion prevents many unwanted/unloved babies, and

child abuse. It may. But it's like using a hatchet to kill a fly on your friend's forehead. Or murdering a husband or wife to prevent possible later spousal abuse. Using such extreme violence to prevent possible lesser violence seems insane.

\* \* \*

**Mugabe Criticizes "Gays" and World Council.** Zimbabwe's Marxist President Robert Mugabe has once again lashed out at homosexuals and criticized the World Council of Churches, scheduled to meet there in December, for being soft on homosexuals. He said: "Animals in the jungle are better than [homosexuals] because at least they know how to distinguish between a male and a female." He repeated his earlier criticism that homosexuality is neither African nor Christian and is completely unacceptable. It is ironic that a communist has more discernment than an apostate church council! -- CC

NILS . . .

(Continued from page 7)

Constitutional court to declare portions of the law unconstitutional. He will urge representatives to the Duma to amend the law after this year's elections, Loginov said.

Yeltsin is urging the changes because of pressure from the U.S. Congress, which has made it clear that the issue is a litmus test of U.S.-Russia relations. Dr. Ariel Cohen, senior analyst at the Heritage Foundation, a religious rights organization, cautioned that the

promises might be designed to placate Western governments and human rights organizations. 'We shall know them by their deeds, not by their words,' Cohen told Religion Today.

Reports of harassment by local authorities against minority religious groups have intensified since the law's passage last September, according to Russia's St. Petersburg Times. "Local authorities in small villages and towns immediately felt they were authorized to start harassing their parishes," said Igor Nikitin of the Association of Christian Churches in Russia. In some cases, churches have been closed and ministries shut down because local officials feel like the law is "a trumpet call" to move against them, he said. The law passed with the strong support of the Russian Orthodox Church, which sees itself as the guardian of religious life in the country.

The ROC is given special status under the law and much of the local harassment of religious minorities has been inspired by local priests, according to news reports. The church regards Protestant and Roman Catholic groups as threats to its authority and accuses smaller religious groups of being cults.

The ROC has opposed the influx of Western religious organizations in the country since the fall of communism. The law also had strong support among Russian citizens who were alarmed at the increase of cults in the country, said Michael Johnson of the Slavic Gospel Association.

"I am surprised that Yeltsin is backing off of the 15-year rule because the cult situation is a concern to

many Russians," he said. "But we are pleased with the promise of continued freedom and the opportunity to minister in Russia.." (ChristianNet, February 15, 1998)

**EARTH...**

(Continued from page 9)

"If all we can do is nip at the heels of Darwinism, we're not doing much good."

Besides college and high school instructors and students, the conference attracted pastors, chaplains, home schoolers, attorneys and other laypersons.

Some have led discussion in their churches, such as Ed Gibson, an airline pilot from Atlanta. He said high school students were "like sponges" when he presented a six-week seminar on creation at his independent Bible church.

"I was searching for the latest model in (Noah's) flood geology and how it could have occurred," he said of his reason for attending.

**AGE...**

(Continued from page 8)

marines today? Did it evolve without an intelligent designer? Was it left to chance through the process of natural selection? Remember, the dolphin's sonar is far superior to the submarine's sonar!


Everyone knows scientists and engineers designed and built the sonar aboard ships and submarines. Since the dolphin/sonar is better, thinking people come to one of two conclusions: either God designed and created the dolphin, or the sonar on board

(See AGE on page 17)

## Our President, A Baptist In Good Standing?

Assuming that all the women are lying about adulterous affairs with President Clinton (incredible!), he still should be excluded from any true Bible-believing church for his pro-abortion and pro-homosexuality views. Yet he remains a member in good standing at Immanuel Baptist Church (SBC) in Little Rock.

We see no remorse or repentance, and he keeps attending the liberal pro-homosexual Foundry Methodist Church in Washington, D.C.

If conservatives are in power in the Southern Baptist Convention, why is Clinton still in good standing with an SBC church, and his church in good standing with the SBC? -- CC 

## Rotten Egg

Once upon a time Eostre, the Anglo-Saxon goddess of spring and sunrise, found a bird whose wings were frozen from a harsh winter. She kindly turned the bird into a rabbit and saved it's life! Yet it remained a different kind of rabbit — it laid eggs! (After all, it used to be a bird!)

Since rabbits are often associated with fertility because of their rapid reproduction rate, and since eggs are a sign of the beginning of life, and since the goddess of spring is involved, shouldn't this be a celebration? How about on the first day of the week after the spring equinox or full moon? Seems kind of fitting. Let's


name it after the goddess Eostre, which today is called "Easter."

The Ukraine is famous for it's Easter eggs — they really consider them an art. In Poland you can take your eggs to church and have the priest bless them. Some "Christian" groups dye eggs red, symbolizing the blood of a risen Christ. In one tradition people hit their eggs together and the first one that receives a crack will have good luck. One custom is that the eggs are exchanged on Sunday with the phrase "Christ is risen." In Britain the custom of "egg rolling" still exists. Thanks to our past president James Madison the White House still has an egg rolling and Easter egg hunt every Easter on the front lawn. After our morning service I will be able to watch the Catholic church across the street end their mass with an Easter egg hunt.

In the latest edition of the Secular Humanist Bulletin, there is an article about Easter written by an atheist who concludes the article by saying, "The fact that all of these people celebrate at about the same time, with many of the same symbols, doesn't seem to matter much to them." Sadly, the writer's got a point.

We have created a cultural holiday of great irony. The irony is that across our nation people will resurrect to celebrate a resurrection. However, immediately afterwards they will return to their dead life. Do they not miss the very point they are celebrating? Imagine having a New Year's party but never recognizing that the next day is a new year?


Where do we draw the line of social tradition

benefitting or hurting the gospel? Is not the resurrection supposed to be a year-round celebration for Christians? I think Eostre's rabbit laid a rotten egg, and it seems many are having a hard time discerning the rotten eggs from the good eggs. Did I miss something? Personally, I reject all eggs laid by rabbits. Something not natural about it... 

## GOD...


(Continued from page 8)

we need to bear in mind the word of the Lord through one of His prophets: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord" (Zech. 4:6).

Self-reliance, whether the enemy be the world, the flesh, or the devil, is disastrous and results in sure defeat. Reliance upon the Lord, whatever or whoever the foe, issues in triumph. "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 15:57). 

## AGE...

(Continued from page 16)

ships today evolved and was not designed by intelligent scientists at all... and we have been fooled. I think it's clear there was an intelligent designer for both. But the dolphin had the better designer. His name is the Lord Jesus Christ, and the Bible says that in Him are found "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. 2:3). The Bible also says that Jesus Christ knows all about you, and He knows that what you need more than anything else is for Him to come into your life and make you a new person. "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." 

## A Patriotic Prayer

A patriotic prayer offered a few years ago.

"Almighty God, we thank Thee for a free land where private property is a sacred reality. For millions it is not. Among us, Lord, are millions who own no home, no land, and no business. Owning nothing, they demand everything from a paternal government. Dear Lord, we fear they are potential victims for the panacea of socialism.

Help us, our Father, to remember that all we have — our schools, businesses, homes, banks, farms, mines and all buildings — are here because somebody worked for them and worked hard.


Shake out the cobwebs from among us, dear Lord, and give us a fresh look at ourselves. May there be enough problems to sharpen our wits and enough opposition to clarify issues.

Bless all among us who work, produce, save and invest, creating real wealth for our well-being.

Help us to rely less on government and more on ourselves. Gird us to fight anything that destroys incentive, kills initiative, penalizes superior ability, and subsidizes laziness.

Remind us strongly, O God, that without good business with a good profit, we can have no non-profit churches, schools, foundations, hospitals, tax-paid politicians or a government giving away so-called free benefits or welfare subsidies.

Preside in our lives: O Lord, sanctify our conversation, and may the glow of Thy presence shine on all our faces.

In the Master's Name, Amen." 

# What If They Quit?

I beheld in my dream and lo, five men, Peter, Andrew, Matthew, John, and Paul, sat on a hillside looking out over the sea of Galilee. It was 20 years after the day of Pentecost and they had met together by appointment to consider a crisis in the lives and the program of three of their number. The work had been going hard with them. Paul had suffered the loss of all things. Peter had forsaken all to follow Christ and was finding it hard to support his family. Matthew had just had an attractive proposition to return to his old place in the Customs House.

Peter as usual opened the discussion: "Simon the Tanner had just inherited the estate of his brother, who was a fisherman and a friend of mine in Bethesda, and he offered to give me a complete fishing outfit — boats, nets and tackle and an established trade down in Capernaum. Now this looks like a providential leading because my wife's mother had just opened a boarding house in Capernaum and it will cost us almost nothing to live with her while we are getting established in the fishing business again. I can make a good living by fishing five days a week and I'll still have my Sundays left for evangelistic work in the cities around the lake."

And then Paul spoke, "Aquila and Priscilla have been greatly blessed in the tent-making business and they have offered me a permanent position at a good salary to open a branch in

Philippi and from there to superintend their interests in the principal cities around the lake. Now I can do this work and it will not be any harder on me than the care of all the churches and I will have abundant opportunity for Christian work. And besides, I can lay something by for a rainy day that I can see coming."

Matthew then entered the conversation: "My story of the life of Christ is having a wide sale and bringing me in enough to pay my expenses. But my business experience tells me I ought to have a wider margin. Persecution may come. Sales may fall off. Now I have this chance to return to my old place in the Customs House. I will be able to not only make a good living for myself and my family but I will also be able to take care of any of you should you get in trouble. And besides, I'll have more time left for writing and can probably help the cause more this way than by traveling around the country."

Then Andrew spoke, "Peter, do you remember that day you thought you had lost your wife's mother? And Peter, do you see that sand beach over there? That is where we quit the fishing business and where the Master said, *'Fear not, from henceforth thou shalt catch men.'*" Peter, how long a time is "henceforth"? And you see that grassy hillside over there. Peter, that's where the Master fed the 5000 people and I can see the very spot where that lad stood when they asked him to give up

his lunch for the Lord to multiply. And Peter don't you remember that look of compassion and longing in the Master's face when He bade us pray that the Lord of the Harvest would thrust forth laborers into His vineyard? Now Peter, if we are going to continue to pray that other men might rise up, leave all and follow Him, can we do less?"

John, who was standing against Peter, felt a tear fall on his hand. And looking over to Paul he saw his jaw and fire in his eyes and that old war-horse look on his face as he rose quietly and said, "Men I don't think we need talk about this any longer. Let us pray." And as they prayed the things of time and sense receded and a faint rustling of the wind in the nearby treetops reminded them of that rushing mighty wind of the day of Pentecost and the marvelous power with which Peter had preached the gospel on that occasion and they seemed also to see the Master Himself standing on the shore but a few yards away, and once again to hear Him say, *'Fear not. From henceforth, thou shalt catch men.'*

They looked and the evening caravan for Tyre was just swinging into sight. "Good-bye," said Paul. "I must catch the next boat for Ephesus. I will get Aquila and Priscilla to join me in a campaign in that old city that will shake the whole of Asia."

"Good-bye," said Peter. "Andrew and I will just have time to say good-bye to the folks at home and we will catch the midnight caravan for Babylon and we will keep on going east as far as the land of Sinum."

"Good-bye," said Mat-

thew. "There was a group of Jews going with me in this tax-gathering proposition but I'll get them to join me in a five-year campaign up the Nile as far as Ethiopia. I have heard from the Ethiopian treasurer that the whole country is open to us and that he believes that before long Ethiopia will stretch her hands towards God."

"Good-bye," said John. And he sat there alone.

The waves on the beach impelled by the rushing wind sounded like the voice of many waters. And he turned and said to him that stood by, "Lord, lay not this thing to their charge. Thou knowest I have felt the same way myself at times and would have left the work but for the fact that Thou didst prevent and strengthen me. They, too, are ready to live for Thee and to die for Thee as I am. I thank Thee for Andrew, for his deep life and his steady faith. And Lord, if it please Thee, may he stay and work with Peter. And then the one that shall chase a thousand shall put 10,000 to flight."

A sudden storm broke over the lake and I awoke. And as I thought upon my dream I heard the voice of a modern day John calling to me out of his rich experience.

"Go, labor on; spend, and be spent—  
The joy to do the Father's will;  
It is the way the Master went;  
Should not the servant tread it still?"  
Ah yes, 'twas but a dream but what if they they had quit?!

—Author Unknown

**ORIGIN...**

(Continued from page 3)

freed himself from the Pope; they proclaimed freedom from Luther, and from all other human authority so far as religion was concerned."

Again he says: "When Luther blew the trumpet of religious freedom, the Baptists came out of their hiding-places to share in the general gladness and to take part in the conflict. For years they had lived in concealment, worshipping God by stealth." They agreed with the Reformers in the leading doctrines of the gospel, such as justification by faith and the necessity of the Spirit's influence. But they went further according to Cramp: "The sole authority of Scripture in matters of religion was carried out to its legitimate issues, and everything which could not stand the test was rejected, so that all rites and observances which were not expressly enjoined in the word of God were swept away at once. Steadfastly maintaining that believers, and believers only, were the proper subjects of baptism, they pleaded for a pure Church."

Other points may be alluded to: They sternly asserted the rights of conscience. They would not take an oath. While they obeyed the magistrate's office as needless among Christians, who, they said, would not commit crime. They abjured war and the use of carnal weapons. The spirit of brotherhood so prevailed among them, and they so abounded in acts of kindness, that they were even regarded as advocates of community of goods. On these accounts, they were treated as the enemies of

civil society, fit only to be exterminated. But though they were more scrupulous than most religionists are now, their very peculiarities sprang from the love of peace. Such men could not be dangerous. All they asked was to be let alone, that they might serve God according to their consciences, And yet they were hunted like wild beasts, and poured out their blood like water. Still they spread astonishingly. Leonard Bouwens, an eminent Baptist minister in Holland, who died in 1578, left in writing a list of upwards of 10,000 persons whom he had baptized. In the same century, in England, more than 70,000 Baptists suffered by fine, imprisonment, banishment, or burning [This paragraph is taken substantially from Cramp's History].

We have thus seen how, in the sixteenth century, Baptists abounded, both in England and on the continent.

We proceed next to inquire as to their existence *before* the sixteenth century — before the Protestant Reformation — before any of the other denominations had an existence.

The following remarkable and conclusive testimony is furnished by Dr. Ypeig, Professor of Theology at the University of Groningen, and Dr. J. J. Dermont, Chaplain to the King of Holland. These gentlemen are not Baptists, but learned and pious members of the Dutch Reformed Church, and wrote a History of Dutch Baptists at the request of their sovereign.

"The Mennonites (i.e. the Dutch Baptists) are descended from the tolerably pure evangelical Waldenses,

who were driven by persecution into various countries, and who, during the latter part of the twelfth century, fled into Flanders, and into the provinces of Holland and Zeeland, where they lived simple and exemplary lives, professing the most pure and simple principles, which they exemplified in a holy conversation. *They were, therefore, in existence long before the Reformed Church of the Netherlands.*" Again: "We have now seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists, and in later times Mennonites, were the original Waldenses, and who have long in the history of the Church received the honor of that origin. *On this account*, the Baptists may be considered as the only Christian community which has stood since the days of the Apostles; and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrines of the gospel through all the ages."

Dr. Cramp, who seems to me to excel in soberness and impartiality as a historian, thus refers to the Waldenses: "Some have represented them as being originally all Baptists. Others, on the contrary, persist in affirming that they were all Pedobaptists. Neither statement is correct . . . A number of them, particularly in the early part of their history, judged that baptism should be administered to believers only, and practiced accordingly; others entirely rejected that ordinance, as well as the Lord's Supper; a third class held pedobaptism. If the question relates to the Waldenses in the strict and modern sense of the term, i.e., to the inhabitants of the valleys of

Piedmont, there is reason to believe that originally the majority of them were Baptists . . . The language of some of their confessions cannot be interpreted except on Baptist principles. One of them, ascribed to the twelfth century, contains the following article: 'We consider the sacraments as the signs of holy things, or as the visible emblems of invisible blessings. We regard it as proper, and even necessary, that believers use these symbols of visible forms, when it can be done. Notwithstanding which, we maintain that believers may be saved without these signs, when they have neither place nor opportunity of observing them.' Here, the use of sacraments is limited to believers; and they add in another article: 'We acknowledge no sacraments as of divine appointment but Baptism and the Lord's Supper.' " Dr. Cramp adds: "It is sufficiently manifest that their views harmonized with ours in the early stages of their history."

From the twelfth century on to the Reformation in the sixteenth, then, there abounded those who insisted on faith in Christ as a prerequisite to baptism. Four councils, meeting in the twelfth and fourteenth centuries, condemned those who rejected the baptism of children; and be it observed, those who denied it, denied it on the ground of the non-existence of faith in the child.

In the early part of the twelfth century, one Peter of Bruys was preaching in the south of France, with great power and success. He contended that the Church

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should be composed only of converted persons, that all who believed in Christ should be baptized, and that without faith baptism was a nullity. Dr. Cramp says: "Peter was not merely what is called a 'Baptist in principle.' When the truths he inculcated were received, and men and women were raised to newness of life, they were directed to the path of duty. Baptism followed faith. Enemies said this was *Ana*-baptism (a rebaptism). But Peter and his friend indignantly repelled the imputation. The rite performed in infancy, they maintained, was no baptism at all, since it wanted the essential ingredient of faith in Christ. Then, and then only, when that faith was professed, were the converts really baptized."

For twenty years Peter preached, with great success, through a considerable region, and then suffered martyrdom. He was succeeded in that region by Henry of Lausanne, a kindred spirit, under whose labors many souls were converted, and many Baptist churches formed.

Mark! I do not say they had that name, but they were such in fact. They held the principles and practices that we hold, and that were held by the churches in Apostolic times. Wall, in his "History of Infant Baptism," says that Peter of Bruys and Henry were "the first anti-pedobaptist preachers that ever set up a church or society of men holding that opinion against infant baptism, and rebaptizing such as had been baptized in infancy." I deny that they

were the first, and am about to trace such churches and ministers farther back. But Mr. Wall's testimony is very good, if testimony is needed, against any who presume to ascribe our origin to Munster, or the sixteenth century. Even he places that origin four centuries earlier.

I have, so far, spoken principally of the Continent of Europe. But Baptists abounded in England during the centuries preceding the Reformation. Some of these were called Lollards, their origin and the origin of the *name* being matters of dispute. Others were called Wickliffites, from the great man who, by his lectures and books, and specially his translation of the Bible into English, prepared the way for the great Reformation in England. While he never left the Church of Rome, as Luther never *meant* to leave it, he so exposed her corruption's, and so preached truth fatal to her claims and doctrines, that he was again and again "condemned as a heretic by the clergy and the Pope, and would have been sacrificed as a martyr but for the protection of his friends at court and other providential interposition." To adopt an expression used just now, I would say Wickliffe was a "Baptist in principle." Let me give you the proof of this. He held that no doctrine or ceremony was to be received unless "*plainly expressed in Scripture.*" Now, I ask how many would baptize infants, if they had to find it "plainly expressed in Scripture?" It is seldom put on that ground. The great and good Presbyterian, Archibald Alexander, in his early life had such doubts of the propriety of infant baptism, that

he ceased to administer it. After a time his doubts were removed. How? By finding it "plainly expressed in Scripture?" No. But by these considerations: "That the universal prevalence of infant baptism as early as the fourth and fifth centuries was unaccountable, on the supposition that no such practice existed in the time of the Apostles;" and that, "if the Baptists are right, they are the only visible church on earth, and all other denominations are out of the visible church." So I say, the sentiment quoted from Wickliffe, if carried out, would have made Dr. Alexander a Baptist, and would make any man a Baptist now.

But Wickliffe went even further. He rejected the efficacy of baptism to wash away sins, and denied the perdition of unbaptized infants — the foundation on which infant baptism *then rested*; and I may add, the foundation on which it, to some extent, rests now. Moreover, he was charged by contemporary writers with the express denial of infant baptism itself. Among others, Thomas Waldensis, Confessor to Henry V., who had access to his writings, and published "Fasciculi Zizaniorum, or Bundle of Tares," selected from Wickliffe's writings, says, "He doth positively assert that infants are not to be sacramentally baptized."

It is, however, certain that many of his followers carried out his views practically, and to their legitimate consequences. Many of those known as Lollards, Wickliffites, and Picards were Baptists; and multitudes sealed their testimony with their blood.

I have thus indicated the existence, and despite persecution, the prevalence and increase of Christian churches holding Baptist principles during the four centuries preceding the great Protestant Reformation — the period well called the "Revival Period," since it was characterized, not only by great religious movements and progress, but also by the general awakening of the human mind, and by great advances in politics, science, and civilization. It was the period — to quote in part Cramp's enumeration — of Magna Charta; the establishment of the House of Commons; and invention of the mariner's compass, of gunpowder, of linen paper, of the printing press; several of the great battles of the world; the discovery of America, and of the passage to the East Indies round the Cape of Good Hope. We may well ask, with Cramp, if those were not times of activity and progress? — if that was not a Revival Period in things earthly, as well as things heavenly?

But now, in our backward march, we are coming to a period of comparative stagnation, of greater darkness; in which, for that reason, rather than because it is farther removed, we may have greater difficulty in finding such clear marks of the existence of our people. And yet, even in that "Obscure Period," from the seventh to the eleventh century, we do find those who not only practiced believers' baptism and rejected infant baptism, but rejected it on the very grounds in which we reject it, and the grounds,

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**ORIGIN...**

(Continued from page 20)

on which Peter de Bruys rejected it, *viz.*, that the Scriptures require faith first.

One remark is proper here. I have said little of the act of baptism, and shall say but little; and for two reasons. Not only do Baptists — contrary to the popular impression — hold it to be, though important, subordinate to the *subject* of baptism, but, for thirteen hundred years, immersion was so well nigh universal that it was nothing distinctive. So far as the *act* goes — often improperly called the *mode* — the whole Christian world was for thirteen hundred years Baptist; inasmuch as immersion, whether of adults or infants, was the almost universal practice.

With these explanatory remarks, I come to the inquiry as to the existence of Baptists in the Obscure Period of Church History, extending say from the seventh to the eleventh centuries. Here I should have an easy task, did I choose to quote from certain Baptist writers who have written loosely upon the subject, or even to quote second hand from Church historians to whose works I have not access. I prefer to rely on Cramp, who, claiming less, is much more to be relied on for what he does claim. I repeat, that I have been greatly impressed with his soberness, impartiality, and truthfulness as a historian. He is, in the first place, careful to state that he considers as Baptists only those who hold baptism as an ordinance binding on all believers, and refuse it to all other persons. Hence he not only does not claim, but he

does not admit all opponents of infant baptism as Baptists; for there were many in the period under consideration who rejected baptism altogether. They were in this like the Quakers of our day, and were probably led to the extreme of rejecting ordinances altogether, from seeing the abuses and ceremonies which had come to be connected with them. At the same time it seems probable that there were some who did not go to that extreme. It must be remembered that the accounts we have are mostly the accounts of enemies, who deal mainly in negatives, telling us what things held by the Roman Catholics these people denied, but not telling us in many important particulars what they believed and practiced; and in some cases attributing to them sentiments which they disclaim and repudiate. This is the case with reference to the Paulicians, who appeared about the beginning of the period under consideration, and who are claimed by many as Baptists. Their enemies accused them of Manicheism, a system of mysticism named from Manes, a Persian. But the Paulicians repelled this accusation. Cramp admits what some individuals may have been tainted with these views, but insists that their distinction was an adherence to Scriptural truth and spiritual worship, and their rejection of the superstitions of the age and the ecclesiastical hierarchy — as he calls them, “Protestants before the Reformation, and even before those generally reckoned its precursors.” He also, while declining to say with Joseph

Milner, that they were “simply scriptural in the use of the sacraments,” suggests the probability that they may by their enemies have been called rejecters of the ordinances, simply because they rejected “the unauthorized additions made to the ordinances, and the current opinions respecting their design and efficacy.”

He also presents the consideration that “the Paulicians were not altogether agreed among themselves;” and says in conclusion, with great moderation: “It may possibly be that Photius and Petrus Siculus designedly referred to those of them whose opinions were in their judgment the farthest removed from Catholic verity; and that, while some wandered into errors and excesses, the remainder pursued a Scriptural course. Photius himself states that some of them observed the Lord’s Supper; though, as he affects to believe, they did it ‘to deceive the simple.’ This indicates the existence of two parties. Those who observed one ordinance were not likely to neglect the other. I am therefore not indisposed to believe that there were among the Paulicians many who preserved the truths and worship of Christianity, as derived from the New Testament.”

It may be added of this people, that they were remarkable, both for the terrible persecutions they suffered, and also for the rapidity with which they increased in numbers, spreading over a vast extent of country.

One Sergius, an educated young man, but ignorant of religion, was led by a woman who was a

Paulician to read the Scriptures. He became a Christian, an eminently holy man, and a most laborious minister. He spent thirty-four years traversing a large part of Western Asia, accomplishing a mighty work. So general was the defection from the established Church that the severest measures were adopted against them. They had been persecuted before, but now extermination seemed imminent. It was stated that, under Theodora, 100,000 Paulicians were put to death “by the sword, the gibbet, or the flames,” Sergius himself being one of the sufferers. Are not some of these to be numbered among our *Baptist martyrs*?

In reference to the period which I have just considered, I would say, that the general conclusion of eminent Baptists, who have written upon it, is, that during it Baptists in large numbers existed and spread. This conclusion seems to be immensely probable. But of this period it is specially true that Baptist History is yet to be written. Great light has been thrown on the Munster matter by modern researches. Doubtless the same will be true of the Paulicians. We might suppose that the passage of time would render historical investigation more difficult and less satisfactory. This is not always the case. Documents that have existed for centuries are not likely to pass out of being, while sources of information not before examined are brought to light, and new canons of historical criticism are reached. Thus, Niebuhr has within this century thrown floods of light upon the his-

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tory of ancient Rome. And it is not improbable that God will raise up a Baptist Niebuhr, and that after we have gone to our rest our children may know more than we do of the principles and practices of these slandered martyrs of the dark ages.

The remainder of my task is easy. I labor only under the awkwardness that has troubled me throughout — the awkwardness inherent to the method, which still it seemed well to adopt, of going backward with my investigation.

About the middle of the third century, infant baptism was introduced. But it was nearly two hundred years before it became general. More than one hundred years after, there were men born of Christian parents who were not baptized till they reached adult age. "Gregory Nazianzen, Archbishop of Constantinople, who died in 389, and whose father was Bishop of Nazianzen, was not baptized till he was nearly thirty years old. Chrysostom, also Archbishop of Constantinople, and born of Christian parents, received baptism at the age of twenty-eight. He died in 407. Basil of Cesarea, though he could boast of Christian ancestry for several generations, was not baptized till he was twenty-seven years old ... Ephraim of Odessa, a learned writer of the Syriac Church in the fourth century, was born of parents who, as Alban Butler remarks, were ennobled by the blood of martyrs in their family, and had themselves both confessed Christ before the persecutions under Diocletian and

his successors. They consecrated Ephraim to God, from his cradle, like another Samuel, but he was eighteen years old when he was baptized. They would be called good Baptists nowadays. They 'consecrated' their child, that is prayed for him and trained him in the 'nurture and admonition of the Lord;' but they did not think of his being baptized till he was a believer." Do not such instances prove that as late as the middle of the fourth century, infant baptism was not regarded as of binding force in the church?

I may mention, before passing on, that at first baptism had been "administered in rivers, pools, baths — wherever a sufficient quantity of water could be conveniently obtained. In the fourth century, baptisteries began to be erected. They were large buildings contiguous to the churches. There was usually but one in a city, attached to the bishop's or cathedral church. The baptistery proper, or font, was in the center of the building, and at the sides were numerous apartments for the accommodation of the candidates. Several of these baptisteries yet remain."

Along with infant baptism, many corruption's and superstitions crept in. Scripture gave way to tradition. The Church began to be allied with the State. Now, too, the Church government began to degenerate into a religious monarchy, and those who had been simple pastors aspired to high power and authority, therewith to plunge into luxury and vice. The doctrine of baptismal regeneration began to prevail.

We may well say with the historian, that the

progress of religion in the Church was now downward, and to find gospel truth and ordinances we must look out of the Church among those whom she called heretics and schismatics.

During this period two sects existed, known as the Novatians and the Donatists. The Novatians contended for a pure spiritual church. "Novatianism and infant baptism," says Dr. Cramp, "were diametrically opposed" to each other. It was impossible to preserve the purity for which they contended in any Church which has admitted the novel institution. He says, with a decision all the more gratifying in view of his usual caution, "We may safely infer that they abstained from compliance with the innovation, and that the Novatian churches were what are now called Baptist churches, adhering to the apostolic and primitive practice."

The Donatists held principles inconsistent with infant baptism. In practice, Dr. Cramp thinks they were divided, the majority adhering to the New Testament order. But the rejecters of infant baptism were sorely persecuted. The imperial sword and the anathemas of councils went forth against them; and numbers suffered confiscation of their goods, imprisonment, death. They were not the *first* Baptist martyrs. For were not Stephen and the Apostles, and those who in the first two centuries suffered — were not these Baptists? But these Novatians and Donatists of the fourth and fifth centuries — were they not the first Baptist martyrs who suffered for their distinctively Baptist principles and practices?

We have thus gone back

to the middle of the third century, at which time infant baptism was introduced. And during all the centuries, from the Reformation to the middle of the third century, we have found evidence, more or less convincing, of the existence of Christians refusing to baptize infants, and insisting that only believers in Christ should receive that ordinance.

During the first two and one-half centuries, we claim that no traces of the existence of infant baptism are to be found; but that personal faith in Christ was universally required as a condition of the ordinance. Hence, as immersion was universally practiced, and as each church was independent, we claim that the churches then existing were Baptist churches, though not without error, which was creeping in, even in Apostolic times. And thus, ancient as is the Roman hierarchy, going back sixteen hundred years, we claim that Baptist are more ancient still, going back to the very Apostolic age, and finding their origin there.

I disclaim all arrogance. I appeal to history for the truth of what I have said. There are few facts of history better established than that immersion generally prevailed, not only for two and one-half, but for thirteen centuries; so that clearly, during those two and one-half centuries, all Christians were Baptists, so far as the *act* of baptism is concerned. And that only believers' baptism prevailed in that period is also now generally conceded.

Some have laid hold of expressions used by Justin

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Martyr, and Irenaeus, and Origen, and Tertullian in the second and early in the third centuries, as evidence of the existence of the rite. But the best scholars now abandon such claims; and Baron Bunsen, formerly Prussian ambassador in England, and distinguished for his investigations in Church history, declares that "Pedobaptism in the more modern sense, meaning thereby the baptism of new born infants with the vicarious promised of parents and other sponsors, was utterly unknown to the early Church, not only down to the end of the second, but indeed to the middle of the third century."

I repeat then the conclusion, that no only have there been Baptists in all the ages, but that in the age immediately succeeding the Apostolic, all were Baptists. None other were known.

And now will you be surprised if I say, that I lay little or no stress upon all this as proof that we are right. It has its value, for it is truth, and all truth is precious. It is also well calculated to encourage Baptists of the present day, and specially those who, like ourselves, have much to contend with, to see that our principles have thus fought their way through the ages, conducted by God's own mighty hand. But it is not on the example of man that we depend, but on the word of God. Satisfactory evidence that the principles we hold and the ordinances we administer are taught in the New Testament is worth more than all human testimony or practice in their favor. In fact, the practice

of the churches of the age immediately after the Apostles is worth nothing, except so far as it is presumption that such was the teaching of the Apostles and the practice of the churches reared by their hands. And even this evidence, strong as it may be, is not to be compared with a plain text from the New Testament itself, declaring directly what Christ and the Apostles said and did, and what was done under their direction. What we want as the warrant for our principles and practices is, as Wickliffe said, that they be "plainly expressed in Scripture." And such is my conviction that Scripture is the true, the *only* standard, that if there were not a Baptist on earth, and I had no evidence there had ever been one since Apostolic times, finding Baptist principles and practices in the New Testament, I would leave all Christendom, and leap over the ages, contented to be found in the path of simple obedience to the word of God.

I ask, then, in conclusion, were not the churches of the New Testament Baptist churches? We believe that they *were*, being made up of believers, and believers only, who believing in Christ and confessing their sins were buried with Christ in baptism. I humbly claim that we originated, not at the Reformation, nor in the dark ages, nor in any century after the Apostles; but that our marching orders are the Commission, and that the first Baptist Church was the Church at Jerusalem. And I beg you, calling no man master, like the Berean Jews, to search the Scriptures daily, whether these things be so. 

**FINAL...**

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say thanks.

There is also a special thanks to Central Baptist Church, where my father pastored for 34 years before I became a servant of the church. I have spent over 67 years in the Central Baptist Church as I became a member of the Sunday School in 1931 when I was but five years old. Later I was saved, called to preach, ordained, sent as a missionary to Mexico, and finally, called as pastor. I was in Mexico for 13 years, and pastor for 26 years until I retired as pastor in 1991 and the church by vote named me "Pastor Emeritus," for my many years of service. But I continued to work with Challenge Press and our mission work in Mexico until May of this year. I have never been a member of any other church, and no one can know the depth of my love for Central Baptist Church.

There have been many "hills and valleys" down through the years, but we have stood firm together in our love for the truth and we have had a mutual love for each other that can only develop over such a long-term relationship. We especially thank the church for the generous love offering and plaque given to us at the last service that I preached at the church. Thanks Central Baptist, we will always remember you in our prayers.

Yet the time has come for us (my wife and me) to move our membership. We have joined the Rogers Independent Baptist Church in Rogers, Arkansas, a church that we organized some years ago, and which Bro.

Larry Potts, their pastor, refers to as a "daughter" church of Central Baptist Church.

Though we again have retired from one phase of our ministry, we have not retired from the ministry itself. I have several books that I would like to write, and I want to complete the "Outline Study Guide" to each of the books of the Bible, several of which have already been published, and others that I have worked on but have not yet finished. I hope to devote more time to finishing these books.

For those who may be interested, we are available for revivals, Bible conferences, seminars, or a series of messages, such as a series on the church or missions, etc. We could also help a church by serving as interim pastor while they are without a pastor.

For the past year Central Baptist Church has provided us with a Motor Home and car to travel in while representing Latin American Baptist Missions. Since I no longer will be doing this work it was necessary for us to purchase an automobile. We do not have the Motor Home, so we will need a place for my wife and me to stay. However, both of our sons helped us purchase a car, and we are considering the purchase of a Motor Home (if we can find one available in our price range and where we can fit it into our budget), and if so, we could stay in the Motor Home wherever the Lord would lead us. Would you pray about this matter with us.

**Funds To Be Returned**

To those of you who re-

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Also, plans are to place back issues of **The Baptist Challenge** on the church's internet site, going back as far as February 1994, as we have most of these on disquettes.

A few years ago we moved from Little Rock to Benton, Arkansas, and we probably will make another move in the near future, so for those of you who would like to write to us directly, you can send all personal correspondence to me at my home address:

M. L. Moser  
5724 Alcoa Rd.  
Benton, AR 72015  
(501) 315-0320

**Email Address:**  
[mlmoser@earthlink.net](mailto:mlmoser@earthlink.net)

It is with a sad heart that I close this article since it will be my last. I am not aware of another magazine that covers the same issues that we have sought to cover during these many years, but I pray that God will raise up someone else to do so. Once again, thank you for your prayers and faithful support during these many years, and I covet your prayers for me and my wife during the twilight years of our ministry.

Good-bye, and may God bless each and every one of you. 

**NICK...**  
(Continued from page 1)

ceptable to unbelievers. They hope to profess a certain allegiance to the scriptures, and at the same time attempt to harmonize the evolutionist theory along with it. The Biblical record suffers at the hands of such teachers.


The word translated "day" is the Hebrew word "Yom," and is used over 2,000 times in the Old Testament, and in over 95 percent of the cases the word is clearly shown to mean a 24-hour day, or of the daylight portion of a normal day. Many of the other five percent usages refer to expressions such as "the day of the Lord" (Joel 2:1; Zech. 14:11, or the "day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6:2). Therefore, even without a context, an unbiased translator would normally understand the idea of a "24-hour period" for the Hebrew word "Yom" (day).

For example, "God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day" (Gen. 1:5). here we can see, unless we are theologically tampered with, a "day" which consists of a period of light and a period of darkness. This period is called "the first day." This is repeated for the "third day," the "fourth day," the "fifth day," and the "sixth day" (Gen. 1:8, 13, 19, 23, 31). We are then told that God rested on the "seventh day" (Gen. 2:1), not because He was tired, but that He had finished the created order of things. Moses makes this even clearer in Exodus 20:8-11 when he wrote that "in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day." Moses wrote both inspired accounts as found in Genesis and Exodus, and uses the same Hebrew word "yom" for day. It is evident the Holy Spirit moved him to do so because the same period of a 24-hour day was intended.

If the Sabbath day was a literal day, then God's day of rest was a literal day, and that means that

His days of creation were literal days, too.

By the way, God wrote the Sabbath commandment (4th commandment) with His own finger on tablets of stone (Ex. 31:18; 32:16-19; Dt. 10:4). If anyone should have known how long the days were, it should be the Creator Himself. Imagine Jonah bring in the whale's belly, not three days and three nights (Mt. 12:40), but for three ages or three indefinite periods of time!

In conclusion, there is no possible argument that "six days" could mean "six ages." Six days means six literal days. 


**HELL...**  
(Continued from page 11)

salvation  
To us through Jesus' name."

The preacher turns in horror,  
He tries to leave the scene,  
He knows the awful future  
For every soul unclean.

But there he meets the devil,  
Whom he had served so well,  
He feels the demon powers,  
They drag him into hell.

Throughout eternal ages  
His groans, too, must be heard —  
He, too, must suffer torment  
He failed to heed God's Word.

He feels God's wrath upon him,  
He hears the hot flames roar,  
His doctrine now is different,  
He ridicules no more." 

**FINAL...**  
(Continued from page 24)

ponded to our articles in the issues since January, we want to return these special offerings that you sent in. All our bills were paid, and if you will drop a card or letter to the Central Baptist Church in Little Rock, with your check number and mailing address clearly printed, these funds will be returned to you promptly. The address is:

Central Baptist Church  
P. O. Box 25848  
Little Rock, AR 72221  
(501) 868-7703

Though **The Baptist Challenge** will cease, Challenge Press will continue and books can be purchased as before by writing to the church address above or ordering them through the Internet. The Internet address is:

[www.centralbaptistchurch.org](http://www.centralbaptistchurch.org)