

THE

January 1975

REFLECTOR

THE RESURRECTION:

Page 4

Saturday or Sunday?

Jehovah's Witnesses & 1914 Page 6

Last Will & Testament

Page 9

Morons & Salt

Page 5

Bussing and Prizes pg. 10

Volume 15

Number 1

THE REFLECTOR

January 1975

Published
once each month
by the

FULTONDALE CHURCH OF CHRIST
1116 Walker's Chapel Road
Fultondale, Alabama

EDITED BY:

Edward O. Bragwell

P. O. Box 146
Fultondale, AL 35068

SUNDAYS:

Bible Classes 9:45 a. m.

Worship 10:45 a. m.

Worship 6:00 p. m.

WEDNESDAYS:

Bible Classes 7:30 p. m.

Mary had a little boy.

Mary had a little boy,
His soul was white as snow
He never went to Bible class,
'cause Mary wouldn't go.

He never heard the tales of Christ
That thrill the childish mind;
While other children went to class,
This child was left behind.

And, as he grew from babe to youth,
She saw to her dismay;
A soul that once was snowy white,
Became a dingy gray.

Realizing he was lost,
She tried to win him back,
But now the soul that once was white,
Had turned an ugly black.

She even started back to church
And Bible study too.
She begged the preacher: "Isn't there
A thing that YOU can do?"

The preacher tried, and failed, and said,
"We're just too far behind,
I tried to tell you years ago.
But you would pay no mind."

And so, another soul is lost
That once was white as snow,
Bible study would have helped--
But, Mary wouldn't go.

— Blake Martin

Our Religious World

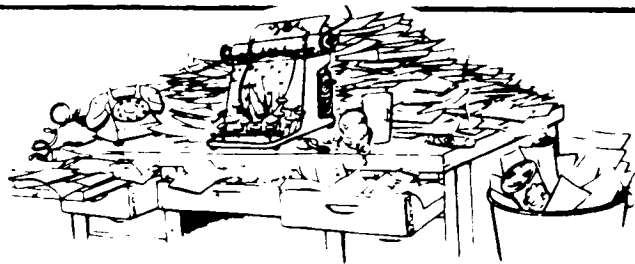


from **EDITOR'S DESK**

Volume XV

Bigger and Better

By **Edward O. Bragwell**



The REFLECTOR now takes on a new look. We hope it will prove not only to be bigger, but better. Because we feel that the printed page is one of the more effective means of teaching the truth of God, we have decided to expand our efforts in this paper. As you can see the paper is larger in page size and as well as in the number of pages. We hope to maintain this size to include more teaching material than we have been able to present in the past.

A Tool Of Fultondale Church

The REFLECTOR is a work of the Fultondale church of Christ as a part of its over-all work of preaching the gospel to the lost and edifying saints. It is sent free to anyone upon request. It is paid for by this church, hence subscription fees are not charged, nor do we desire contributions from our readers. The REFLECTOR is simply a teaching tool of this church like other tools such as: Bible classes, charts, correspondence courses, etc.

Not A Rival

In going to this size paper we are not trying to take anything away from those papers that depend on subscriptions. We recognize the right of individual Christians to go into the paper publishing business and their right to sell their papers. We commend such efforts and gladly recommend that Christians subscribe to good papers. This writer subscribes to a number of such papers. Much good is done by these brethren.

Trying To Fill A Gap

We are trying to fill a gap that exists between the larger subscription-type papers and papers the size the REFLECTOR used to be. Papers the size of the old REFLECTOR do a lot of good, but they are limited in the amount of material that can be run in a given issue. This limits somewhat the dept of study that could be. The larger subscription-type papers are able to run the greater amount of material and cover subjects in more depth--but are limited in their coverage to those who are willing and able to subscribe to them. Subscription prices run from \$5.00 to \$10.00 per year. These prices are reasonable at today's

printing costs. It is our feeling that preachers and a few stronger brethren are the more likely ones to subscribe to these papers. The REFLECTOR will be going into homes that would not subscribe to a paper.

Source Of Material

We plan to print teaching material from a variety of writers. Some of it will be written especially for for this paper, some will be lifted from the many good church papers that we receive almost daily, and material written by the editor. We plan to have a "word study" column from time to time written by Hiram Hutto. We hope to have a regular Question and Answer column as well as other features. We welcome manuscripts from brethren. We do not promise to print every article that we receive. We will have to use our judgement in these matters to the best of our ability.

Balanced

We hope to strike a balance between articles of interest to members of the church and those who are not members. We shall not avoid controversy, but we do not plan to major in it. We shall insist that controversial matters be handled in good taste--at least, in our judgement. We shall deal with principles and not personalities. That is not to say that we will not identify the source of a position with which we must take exception--but we will do just that. We will IDENTIFY but not INTIMIDATE. These are men of like passions as we--they have feelings too. We shall respect them.

So, you now have in your hands our first enlarged edition of the REFLECTOR. We hope you profit from it. We would like to hear from you. Let us know how you like the paper or how you don't like it.

MOVING?

Remember to send us a change of address (with zip code)! Do not miss a single issue



WHEN DID JESUS RISE?

For many years there has been discussion among Bible students as to the day on which Jesus was crucified. The scholarship of the world has for centuries accepted Friday as the day of the crucifixion, but there have been some who have dissented. They have thought that Jesus was crucified on Thursday, remained literally "three days and three nights" in the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea (Jonah 1:17; Matt. 12:40), and arose on Sunday morning, the first day of the week. Brother T. B. Larimore, a great preacher among our brethren a generation ago, very sincerely and devoutly believed this. He contended that Friday was the first day of the Passover Feast, hence was a "high day"--a sabbath (John 19:31.), therefore, that Jesus was crucified on Thursday afternoon and buried hurriedly because of the approaching "high sabbath". According to his theory, the women rested on the two sabbaths, Friday and Saturday, and came to the tomb early on Sunday morning to find that Jesus had been raised just prior to their coming. While we do not believe this theory to be correct, it does no particular violence to anything that is vital connected with the doctrine of Christ and can be safely tolerated. The question is more or less academic from a doctrinal point of view.

However, we have recently been confronted with the problem of a member of the Lord's church denying that Jesus arose on the "first day of the week." It is contended that he arose on Saturday or the Jewish Sabbath, hence that he was crucified on Wednesday afternoon. This is not academic. Such a view attacks a fact which is vitally connected with the worship and service of Christians. The resurrection of Christ on the first day of the week is basic to our Lord's day worship. A denial of his resurrection on that day cannot, therefore, be safely ignored nor properly tolerated. It is a false doctrine and must be opposed.

The confusion that surrounds the determination of

the day of the crucifixion is an outgrowth of semantics. All languages are characterized by idiomatic expressions -- expressions peculiar to the language. People who speak the languages have their own peculiarities of expression in the use of the languages. Expressions that are not literally equivalent in meaning from a strictly technical point of view are often used synonymously. A student of languages recognizes this fact and seeks to ascertain when such is the case. Proper interpretation depends upon such procedure. Many usages in the field of language are accommodative in character. We speak of the sun rising and setting. The sun does neither from a technical point of view, yet the language describing the phenomena is perfectly lucid. The Bible speaks of the "four corners of the earth," yet the earth does not have corners from a technical point of view. However, we have no difficulty understanding the import of the expression. It is an expression meaning all parts of the earth derived from the four directions--east, west, north and south.

The Bible describes the resurrection of Jesus as to time with the following expressions: (1) "Three days and three nights" (Jonah 1:17; Matt. 12:40.); (2) "Until the third day" (Matt. 27:64.); (3) "In three days" (John 2:19; Matt. 26:61; 27:40; Mark 15:29.); (4) "within three days" (Mk. 14:58.); (5) "after three days" (Matt. 27:63; Mk. 8:31.); (6) "the third day". (Matt. 20:19; Lk. 24:7, 46.) Obviously, these statements cannot all be taken literally. A thing could not happen "after three days," "the third day," and "within three days," at the same time. Yet, the inspired writers used all of these expressions to describe the time of the resurrection of Jesus along with "three days and three nights."

The only satisfactory explanation of this matter which we have seen has to do with Eastern or Oriental manner of speaking. In Western culture in ex-

Continued On The Next Page

pressing time relative to happenings, we count the first day as the day following the occurrence. In the East or among Orientals, the day of occurrence is counted as the first day. Consequently, among these people, Friday would have been the first day, Saturday the second day, and Sunday the third day. With us, under such circumstances, Sunday would be the second day. Too, a part of a day is regarded as a whole day. A day and a night are regarded as one day. A part of any three solar days would be "three days and three nights." If this was not the case with the inspired writers relative to the resurrection of Jesus, then their accounts are completely confused and unreliable. We do not believe them to be so, hence accept this explanation as the cohesive force binding them together and validating their accuracy.

Whatever may be the explanation of varying expressions relative to the time of our Lord's resurrection, one thing is certain; namely, our Lord arose on the first day of the week. Luke, a Greek who wrote for Greeks, makes this very clear. (1) Luke tells us that very early on the first day of the week the women came to the tomb and found that Jesus had been raised (Lk. 24:1-6); (2) he then tells us that the apostles and the apostles verified the fact that the body of Jesus was gone from the tomb (Lk. 24:7-12); (3) He then tells how, later that same day, two of the disciples started on a journey to Emmaus, a village nearby, and of the appearance of Jesus to them (Lk. 24:13-35); (4) Luke tells us that in the course of their conversation with Jesus the two disciples make this remark concerning the crucifixion of Jesus and the events which followed, "But we trusted that it had been he which should have redeemed Israel: and beside all this, today is the third day since these things were done (Emphasis mine J. W. A.) (Lk. 24:41); (5) Luke then tells us how the two disciples return to Jerusalem and are reunited with the others and of Jesus appearing to them (Lk. 24:36-49); (6) in the recording of these events, Luke tells us that Jesus said, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day . . ." (Emphasis mine. J. W. A.) (Lk. 24:46) Let us now summarize Luke's record: (1) The women found Jesus risen on the first day of the week. Later that same day, the first day of the week, in fact, late in the evening of that day, the two disciples on the road to Emmaus said, "Today (the first day of the week J. W. A.) is the third day" since the crucifixion of Christ. Therefore, we conclude that "the first day of the week was the third day after the crucifixion. (2) Luke records that Jesus said he did "rise from the dead the third day." (Emphasis mine. J. W. A.) (Lk. 24:46) Since the first day of the week was the third day (Lk. 24:21) and Jesus arose the third day (Lk. 24:46), it follows without question that Jesus arose the first day of the week. He who teaches otherwise denies the word of God, hence to this extent is an infidel!

WORDS

Hiram Hutto

"MORONS"

[Since I first picked up White's The Beginner's Greek Book, the study of the language in which the NT was written has been a fascinating experience for me. If nothing else, it has taught me to appreciate the English! I never have felt that a knowledge of Greek was indispensable for one's salvation or even for understanding the scriptures. Like H. Leo Boles, I am confident that "Any proposition in the realm of religion that cannot be proved by our English Bible is not true--it cannot be proved". Still, the study of the original language can be informative and delightful if for no other reason than the interesting shades of meaning of its various words and constructions. I think it might be worthwhile to occasionally note some of these words, etc. At any rate, they are interesting to me and I hope to you.]

MORONS?

Among the many figures of speech which the Lord used to describe Christians is that of "Salt" in Matt. 5:13, "Ye are the salt of the earth; but if the salt have lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? it is thenceforth good for nothing. . . ." The thing that interests me in this passage is the expression "have lost its savor". All of this comes from one word, the verb form of the Greek word "moros", which comes into English as our word "moron". When salt lost that quality that caused it to be worthwhile (saltiness) it became dull, insipid, worthless; it was "moros". If I might coin a word, the salt was "moronified"! But just as salt has a certain thing that ought to characterize it (and without it the salt was "good for nothing") so Christians ought to possess certain qualities. Sometimes, however, Christians lose those qualities (just as salt does) and could become "moronified"; they are acting like spiritual "salt"; spiritually dull, unwise, and deficient. Space forbids elaboration as to the numerous applications of this, but I hope the point is clear: A Christian who quits doing what a Christian ought to do is not acting sensibly and intelligently. He should take heed lest, like salt, he become "moronified".

CALL 841-5293

ASK ABOUT OUR HOME BIBLE STUDY PROGRAMS

The Jehovah's Witnesses and 1914 A. D.

by- edward o. bragwell

It would be difficult to overstate the importance of the year 1914 A. D. in the thinking of a Jehovah's Witness. To him it is by far the most important year of all years. It is the year around which his entire life and religion revolves. Take away the significance of 1914 and you take away his reason for being a Witness. In a word, the Jehovah's Witnesses Movement stands or falls with the significance of 1914 A. D.

The "Witness" sees all the signs of Christ's coming (they say "His presence") of Matthew 24th chapter fulfilled in world events since 1914.

The "Witness" sees Satan cast out of heaven to the earth (and started World War I) in 1914. "When Christ hurled the Devil down to the earth, it was certain to mean 'woe for the earth,' (Rev. 12:12). So during the 'time of the end' the world can never be the same as before 1914. Never again will the world be normal and peaceful. We know this must be true, Jesus said so. For Jesus called World War I and the woes that came with it by a special name. What is that name? Jesus called it 'a beginning of pangs of distress' (Matt. 24:8)." -- PARADISE LOST TO TO PARADISE REGAINED, p. 180.

The "Witness" sees 1914 A. D. as a marked year in the Bible. "In the first year of its publication it (WATCH TOWER -- EOB) pointed to the date 1914 as marked in the Bible." -- WHAT HAS RELIGION DONE FOR MANKIND? p. 308.

The "Witness" sees the establishment of the kingdom of God in 1914 and God's bringing forth the final remnant of spiritual Israelites in that kingdom since 1914. "The remnant of spiritual Israelites have proclaimed worldwide the establishment of God's kingdom in 1914." -- LET GOD BE TRUE, p. 218. "After giving birth to the royal Ruler in 1914 God's woman brought forth the final remnant of her seed." -- WHAT HAS RELIGION DONE FOR MANKIND?, p. 302. God's kingdom was born in 1914." -- Ibid., p. 304.

Why 1914?

Charles Taze Russell, the founder of the Movement, first conceived the idea that 1914 was an important year in God's plan. He first predicted the Lord would return in 1874. He arrived at this date as follows: He said the establishment of the papacy was in 539 A. D. He then said the 1,335 days of Dan. 12:12 were significant. Using a day for a year he made the 1,335 days equal as many years. Add this to 539 and it brings one to 1874 A. D., the year Christ was to return. He then added, later, 40 years to bring it to 1914. This 40 years were years of "Gentile harvest" to correspond to 40 years of Jewish harvest. To explain why Christ did not come visibly in 1874 or 1914 the idea was inserted that He came and is present, but invisibly. In fairness to modern "Witnesses," I have read no evidence that they use Russell's method of computing the year 1914.

The modern "Witness" uses the year, 607 B. C., as his starting date. "Since the overthrow of the kingdom of Judah by Babylon in 607 B. C., no king of David's line had sat upon the 'throne of Jehovah' at Jerusalem. No one was to sit upon the divine throne in the everlasting kingdom until the 'appointed time of the nations' which began that year, were fulfilled 2,520 years later, in 1914 A. D." -- WHAT HAS RELIGION DONE FOR MANKIND?, p. 227. "Because 2,520 years before that date, (1914) namely in 607 B. C., Jehovah God used Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon as his executorial servant to destroy Jerusalem..." Ibid. p. 209

Various of their writings show that they correctly consider ZEDEKIAH as last king of Judah.

The modern "Witness" then adds his 2,520 years to 607 B. C. as follows: "Seven times to pass until God gives the kingdom 'to whom he wants to' (Dan. 4:31, 32)" -- MAKE SURE OF ALL THINGS, p. 90. Next, from Rev. 12:6, 14; 11:2,3, he establishes "time,

times and a half time" (3.5 times) to 1,260 days. Then, "seven times" (twice 3.5 times) of Daniel must be 2,520 days. Then, "each prophetic day counted as a year, make 2,520 years." -- MAKE SURE OF ALL THINGS, p. 90.

Thus, to the "Witness," the kingdom came in 1914 A. D. "2,520 years from autumn 607 B. C. E. runs to autumn of 1914." -- MAKE SURE OF ALL THINGS, p. 90.

Nothing plus nothing equals nothing!

The "Witness" has no basis for his starting figure. The overthrow of the kingdom of Judah (with its last king, Zedekiah) was in 586 B. C. and not in 607 B. C. "When the little Hebrew kingdom of Judah rebelled against his rule, the Chaldean King destroyed Jerusalem (586 B. C.) and carried several thousand Hebrews captive to Babylon." -- CIVILIZATION PAST AND PRESENT, published by Scott, Foresman and Co., p. 75. "Zedekiah, original name Mattaniah, last king of Judah (597-586 B. C.) and final ruler of the line of David." -- FUNK & WAGNALLS STANDARD REFERENCE ENCYCLOPEDIA, Vol. 25, p. 946). Other references: ENCYCLOPEDIA BRITANNICA, p. 157; BRITANNICA JUNIOR, Index, Vol. 10, p. 153.

The "Witness" has no basis for his adding figure of 2,520 years. He bases it on the "seven times" of Dan 4:31,32. The best "interpretation" as to when verse 32 was fulfilled that I have ever read begins with verse 33. "At that moment the word itself was fulfilled upon Nabuchadnezzar, and from mankind he was being driven away and vegetation he began to eat just like bulls, and with the dew of heaven his own body got to be wet, until his very hair grew long just like eagles' (feathers) and his nails like birds' (claws)." And at the end of the days I, Nebuchadnezzar, lifted up to the heavens my eyes, and my own understanding began to return to me; and blessed the Most High himself, and the One living to time indefinite I praised and glorified because his rulership is a rulership to time indefinite and his kingdom is from generation after generation. . . At the same time my understanding itself began to return to me, and for the dignity of my kingdom my majesty and my brightness themselves began to return to me; . . and I was reestablished upon my own kingdom, and greatness extraordinary was added to me." -- Dan. 4:33,34,36. NEW WORLD TRANSLATION OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES as "rendered from the Original languages by the New World Bible Translation Committee" and Copyright, 1961 by WATCHTOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY OF PENNSYLVANIA. "(All Emphasis mine--EOB). Verse 33 in the King James Version starts: "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar. . ." But even the Watch Tower's translation clearly spells out the fulfillment!

When the "Witnesses" starting date is viewed in

the light of historical fact it is of no value. When the interpretation of the "seven times" which is added to the starting date is viewed in the light of the very next verse, it comes to naught. Friend, when you add nothing to nothing you get NOTHING--not 1914 A. D.

What about Jeremiah's 70 years?

To arrive at 607 B. C. as a starting point, the "Witness" begins with a well-established historical date--the fall of Babylon in 539 B. C. He then correctly notes that two years later (2nd year of Cyrus) the return of Jews to their land. This being in 537 B. C. He then notices that Jeremiah prophesied of "seventy years of desolation" in Jer. 25:10,11. He goes back 70 years from the restoration to the destruction, putting it at 607 B. C. as the year the last king of Judah (Zedekiah) was overthrown. He then enlists the testimony of Josephus, the well-known Jewish historian: "I will now relate what hath been written concerning us in the Chaldean histories, which records have a great agreement with our books. . . (Berosus (Babylonian priest and historian of the third century B. C. E.) shall be witness of what I say. . . relating the acts of (Nabopolassar), he describes to us, --'How he sent his son Nabuchodonosor (Nebuchadnezzar). . . against our land. . . and how. . . he. . . set our temple that was at Jerusalem on fire; nay, and removed our people entirely out of the country, and transferred them to Babylon; when it so happened, that our city was desolate during the interval of seventy years, until the days of Cyrus king of Persia. -- 'Josephus Against Apion,' Book 1, Section 19," (All the above information is taken from the WATCH TOWER published book: MAKE ALL THINGS SURE, p. 85.

The "Witness" is wrong about the time involved in Jeremiah's seventy years. Jeremiah's 70 years date from Nebuchadnezzar's first siege of Jerusalem (some 19 or 20 years) before the siege that overthrew Zedekiah, the last king to sit on "Jehovah's throne" in Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar laid siege to Jerusalem three times: (1) in the days of King Jehoiakim--2 Kings 24:1; Jer. 25; (2) In the days of King Jehoiachin--2 Kings 24:11; and (3) In the days of King Zedekiah--2 Kings 25. It was the first of these and not the last that Jeremiah's seventy years date from.

A careful reading of Josephus confirms this fact. The passage from this historian quoted by the WATCH TOWER publication shows the 70 years he refers to dates from the first rather than last siege. Just two sections later, Josephus says: "These accounts (those of Berosus and others) agree with the true histories of our books for in them it is written that Nebuchadnezzar in the eighteenth (a footnote says, "nineteenth") year of his reign, laid our temple desolate, and so it lay in the state of obscurity for fifty years; but that in the second year of the reign of Cyrus its foundations were laid, and it was finished again the second

year of Darius." -- JOSEPHESUS AGAINST APION, Book 1, Section 21. Thus, the seige described two sections earlier (Section 19) was the first seige and and his 70 years date from it until the 2nd year of Cyrus in 537 B. C.

Dating 50 years back from the return from Babylon (537 B. C.) puts the overthrow of the last king to sit on "Jehovah's throne in Jerusalem" at about 587 B. C. --agreeing with all recognized historical sources who give it around 586 B. C. or 587 B. C. There is simply no way to get Zedekiah's overthrow at 607 B. C.

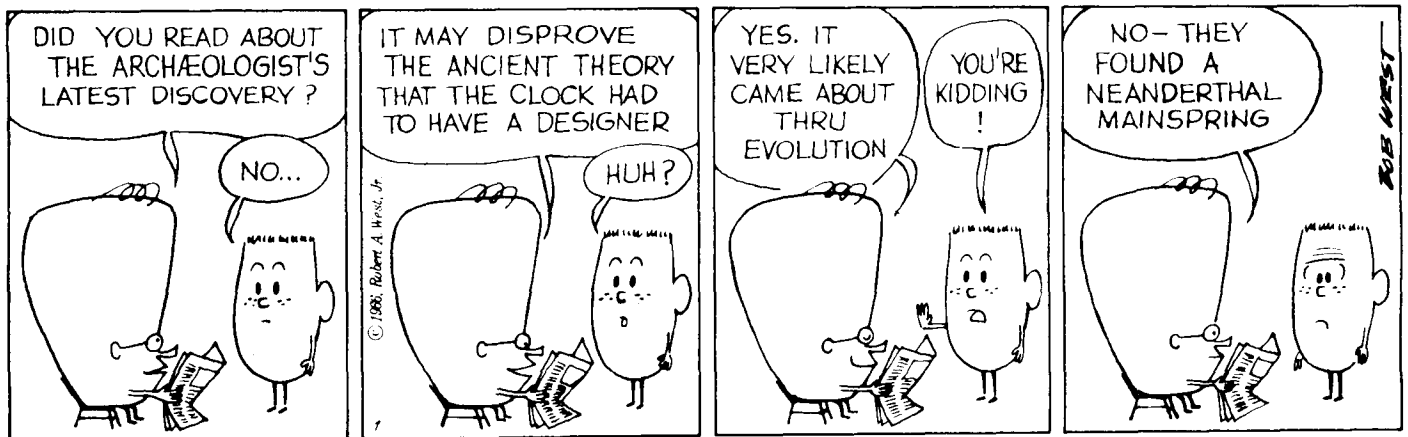
This throws a damper on the "Witnesses" entire timetable. It destroys the 1914 date, since it based on the assumption that the last king of David's line (Zedekiah) was overthrown in 607 B. C., when it was really in 586 B. C. or 587 at the earliest. It throws a damper on his prediction that the millennium is to begin in 1975 (a prediction made in the 1966 WATCH TOWER book, LIFE EVERLASTING IN FREEDOM OF THE SONS OF GOD). He thinks the millinnium is to begin at the end of 6,000 years of man's existence on earth. But with about 20 years adding in his chronology, it throws that date all out of kilter too. That sure does make date-setting awfully complicated, besides being unnecessary, presumptuous and foolish.

Friend, the kingdom of God was in existence in the first century -- long before 1914. "And he said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power." (Mark 9:1). If it didn't come until 1914 then there were people around that year that would have made Methuselah look like a teen-ager! Paul wrote: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. 1:13). Thus, sometime between the Lord's words in Mark and Paul's words in Colossians, the kingdom was established. Read carefully the second chapter of Acts for the account of its establishment.

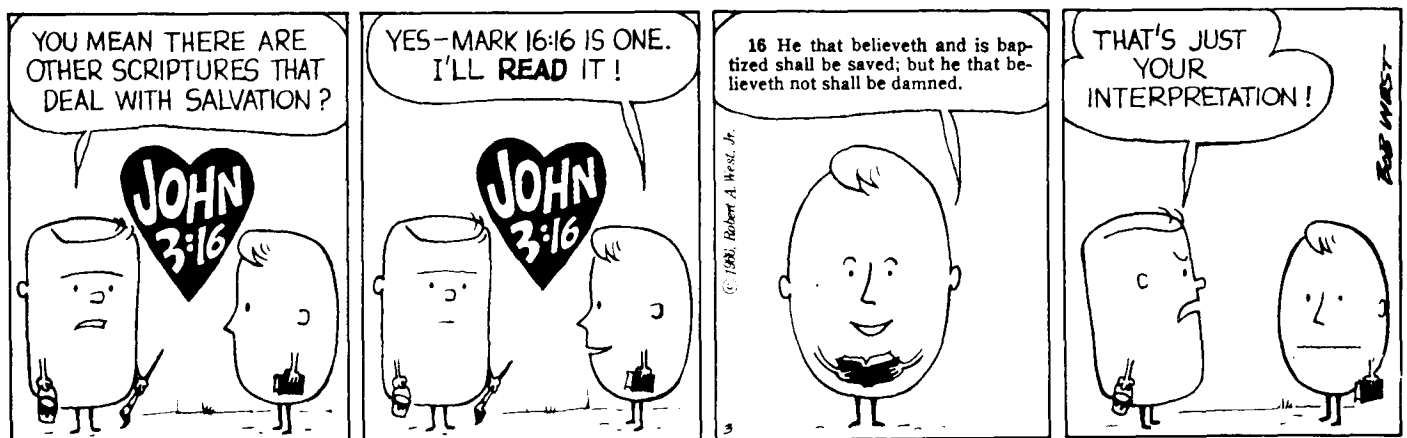
If you are studying with the Jehovah's Witnesses, think about these things before you give your allegiance to a system based on so faulty a foundation.

(Note: "Paradise Lost To Paradise Regained"; "What Has Religion Done For Mankind?"; "Let God Be True"; "Make Sure Of All Things"; "New World Translation Of The Holy Scriptures"; and "Life Everlasting In Freedom Of The Sons Of God" are all books published sold by WATCH TOWER BIBLE AND TRACT SOCIETY.)

THEOPHILUS



THEOPHILUS



LAST WILL

and

TESTAMENT

A feature of common law has come down to us from as early as the Hebrew nation through the Grecian and Roman empires. A man may make a statement concerning the disposition of his estate after death, but such a statement is not of force until there has been the death of him who made it. While living he has the to do as he wills with his estate, no matter what his statement may have said. This statement is called his last will and testament. Even though it is so called, he may make another, and if it can be shown that there is a later one the former is superceded. This is described as characteristic of what is commonly referred to as the New Testament.

"For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of thim that made it. For a testament is of force where there hath been death: for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth." (Hebrews 9: 16-17).

While he was upon the earth Jesus had the power to forgive sins. Since the New Testament had not been made effective by his death, he could make any condi-

tions he chose, or could make forgiveness without conditions, without the necessity of abiding by the conditions of his will which would later be effective. "Son, which is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven; or to say, Arise, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath authority on earth to forgive sins..." (Matt. 9:2-6).

People fail to see this point which is made so clear in Hebrews. When we are striving to impress upon people the necessity of obeying the will of Christ in being baptized in order for God to forgive their sins, they will respond that Jesus forgave this man without his having to be baptized and that he can forgive them in the same manner. They must be made to realize that the New Testament did not avail while he that made it was alive on earth, but that now it has been made effective by the death on the cross.

While he was upon the earth he could command his disciples to "Go not into any way of the Gentiles, and enter not into any city of the Samaritans; but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10: 5, 6). But the New Testament which has become effective by reason of his death positively removes such exclusiveness: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations..." (Matt. 28:19). This feature is further emphasized by Peter: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is acceptable to him." (Acts 10:34, 35). The man today can as easily exclude the Gentiles from the gospel as he can teach that a man can be forgiven on the same terms which the Lord used while he was on the earth. Men must learn that now the will of the Lord is in effect and that its conditions must be met in order to obtain the promises.

The most effective misapplication made by people today in this matter is the use of the thief on the cross as proof that they do not have to be baptized to be forgiven of their sins. When the Lord said to him, "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:42) Jesus had not yet died, making the New Testament effective. He could forgive this man's sins just as he did with the palsied man to which reference has already been made.

We are not saved under the same conditions as the palsied man or as the thief on the cross. He could do as he chose with his powers while he was alive on the earth. But now that his will is become effective by his death, it avails and we will have to be content with and abide by its terms and conditions. It is by this "will we have been sanctified" (Heb. 10:10), and not by the ordinances of the Old Testament, nor by the words of Jesus to the palsied and the thief, nor by his temporary commission to the Israelites only. So much misunderstanding comes from so much failure to handle aright the word of truth.

For Bussing Success...

Give Carnal Minds,

Carnal Rewards

by: Harold Comer

How far will men go to try to find Biblical proof for the practice of giving toys, kites, food and money to fill church buses with riders? Some young bussing promoters go pretty far.

The younger men go beyond the older, more cautious bussing advocates as they accept the logical ends of the practice and argue for it. A speaker at the Freed Hardeman Lectures, 1974, observed that the student always goes beyond the teacher as he takes the basic premise of his teacher's argument to its logical conclusion, normally going much further than the teacher is willing to go.

In this article we will review all of the scriptures that have been cited as authority for the gifts and prizes and show a progression of argument as the younger men state clearly what all of them are doing. These scriptures come from seven different bussing manuals written by brethren and from various speeches and articles.

Promises About What God Will Do

More conservative promoters will cite scriptures where God promises to give some material blessings to man. They contend that these scriptures prove that since God can bless man here on earth, then Christians can motivate men to good with material rewards. These passages are: Matt. 6:33; Matt. 19:29-30; Lk. 6:38.

It is always dangerous to presume that man can do what he finds God doing. In what other area do we take our authority from the action of God when we never find the early church or early Christians doing it? By such reasoning we could change worship (as God did) or change His laws (since He did). It is ridiculous to think that an action of God gives man authority to do the same thing. It is presumptuous to so act!

God's Promises Of Spiritual Rewards

Even further from the point are the scriptures in which God gives a promise of spiritual or eternal rewards. One would think that the promises of the crown of life, heaven, and spiritual strength would obviously be in a class different from the action of

man giving material prizes to motivate church attendance or to stimulate a bus captain to work harder. Scriptures like Mt. 5:11-12; Jn. 14:2; Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:23; I Cor. 9:25; I Thess. 2:19; II Tim. 4:8; Heb. 11:6; James 1:12; I Pet. 5:4; Rev. 2:10; 2:17; 22:12, are used.

These scriptures are all promises of a spiritual reward, not of a physical gift such as the kites, toys and radios today. Also, they all appeal to an action of God. None of them describes what the early church did. The pattern of the early church is our pattern for authority and the actions of God are not.

Have A Cup Of Cold Water...Kool Aid

The emphatic arguments for bussing prizes are normally taken from a passage that is twisted from its setting. Matt. 10:42 is abused by almost every author, young or old, who has written on bussing promotions. Matt. 10:42 talks about giving a disciple a cup of cold water. The "little ones" are not children but the twelve apostles who are being sent out. The pattern of Mt. 10:41 shows that the "little ones" and "a disciple" are describing the same person. One speaker referred to weakened, sweetened, cold water (Kool Aid) going to bus riders as fulfilling this passage. Christ taught, as he sent the twelve out, that anyone who assisted one of his disciples, even if it was just a cup of cold water, would be blessed by God.

Wild Arguments Of Younger Men

HAVE A QUESTION?

If you have a Bible Question that you would like to have answered in this paper, please mail it to:

QUESTION
The Reflector
Box 146
Fultondale, AL 35068

With this kind of foundation some young men have come up with statements that show the true nature of this position. One noted young promoter argued that carnal minded men need carnal rewards to "save" them. He taught that the lost do not understand spiritual rewards, and if they are ever going to be "saved" they must be appealed to in a carnal way. I would consider that a concise and true statement of their position. It should help one to see how directly opposed to God's word this practice is.

Paul knew about the carnal mind of the Corinthians (I Cor. 3:2) and would only appeal to it with the milk of teaching. Paul said he would not use "carnal weapons" and he would "not war after the flesh" (II Cor. 10:3,4). Yet bussing promoters will!

Making Services As Pleasurable As Sin

A young bussing director felt he had strong proof for the need of "promotions" when he argued that there is pleasure in sin (Heb. 11:25, Moses rejected the pleasure of sin which are for a season), and Christianity ought to be pleasurable also. Since the gifts and parties make bussing churches so pleasurable, they must be good for God and the church. What will become of the families and their children who stay in such an environment of carnal emphasis?

Three minor arguments will be passed over for space reasons because we believe that most of our readers will see how Mk. 14:3; Jn. 2:8 and the story of Job are misapplied when used to authorize bringing

Did Jesus Approve Of "Loaves And Fishes" Followers?

One speaker and author who defended the scripturality of "promotions" said that Christ approved of men coming for loaves and fishes (Jn. 6:26) because he fed another large crowd (the 4,000) later "knowing their motives." He failed to consider that the 4,000 was a different group in a different area and that they had already listened to him for three days before he fed them (Mt. 15:32). How could one say that their motive was the desire for loaves and fishes? Read John 6:26-27 and see if Jesus approved of the "loaves and fishes" followers or if he rather reproved them and commanded them to seek spiritual food. How shocking it is to see a man directly contradict Jesus Christ!

When all the proofs for any practice abuse the scripture so, it is time for Bible believing people to speak up and get out. Look for those who seek to save every lost soul in the world but who will not compromise the character and pattern of the New Testament church in doing so. There are still some who teach and do personal work but reject the carnal carnival of most church bussing programs!

Tune in BIBLE TALK

(A CALL-IN QUESTION AND ANSWER PROGRAM)

MONDAY Thru FRIDAY-12:30 P. M.

PANELISTS:

Dick Ward

Hiram Hutto

Edward Bragwell

WATV radio 900 on a. m. dial

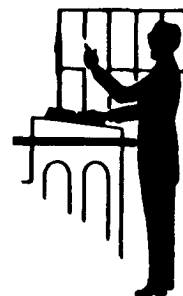
We want

YOU



at our next service!

Sermon Outline



What One Can Be And Still Be Lost

Acts 22:1-16

INTRODUCTION:

1. Saul lost when Ananias came, else saved in his sins. (v. 16)
2. Saul had good qualities, still lost.

DISCUSSION:

I. SAUL WAS A RELIGIOUS MAN, BUT LOST. (ACTS 26:5)

1. As a Pharisee, he lived his religion. (Acts 26:5; 22:3)
2. As a Pharisee, he directed religion to God, not a pagan. (Acts 22:3)
3. As a Pharisee, he practiced vain religion. (cf. Matt. 15:1-9).
 - (1). Religion is vain if directed to wrong object. (Cf. Acts 14:15; 17:22, 23).
 - (2). Religion is vain if prompted by wrong doctrine. (Matt. 15:9).
 - (3). Religion is vain if void of daily living. (cf. James 1:26, 27).

II. SAUL WAS AN EDUCATED MAN, BUT LOST. (CF. ACTS 22:3)

1. His education was best Jewish boy could get. (Acts 5:34)
 - (1). Gamaliel was a renowned doctor of law.
 - (2). Gamaliel evidently taught Paul from "youth up". (Acts 26:4).
2. His education could not save him. (cf. Phil. 3:4-8).
 - (1). A good education is helpful in many areas of life.
 - (2). A good education can not save your soul. (cf. I Cor. 1:20-21).
 - (3). A good education can hinder salvation, if trusted in. (I Cor. 1:22-31).

III. SAUL WAS A SINCERE MAN, BUT LOST. (ACTS 23:1).

1. His conscience was clear because he thought he was right. (Acts 26:9).
 - (1). To think things right in ordinary affairs does not make it so. (cf. Luke 2:44).
 - (2). To think things right in religion does not make it so.
2. His conscience was clear because it was a misinformed conscience. (cf. I Tim. 1:13).
 - (1). A conscience reacts to "stored up information".
 - (2). A conscience, like a clock, must be set right.
 - (3). A conscience must be clear, not seared, for own good.
3. His conscience was clear while Paul was "chief of sinners". (cf. I Tim. 1:15).

IV. SAUL WAS A PRAYING MAN, BUT LOST. (ACTS 9:11, 18, 22:16).

1. His praying was fine, but prayer is not a condition of salvation for unbaptized one.
 - (1). Prayer a condition of forgiveness of baptized believers. (cf. Acts 8:13, 22).
 - (2). Prayer is a privilege of God's children, not to become children. (Gal. 3:26, 27)
2. His praying needed interruption for baptism to wash sins away. (Acts. 22:16).

CONCLUSION:

1. Do not trust in religion, education, sincerity nor praying to save--obey God!
2. Do trust Jesus by doing his will : Believe, Repent, Confess and be baptized; worship and serve Scripturally. (John 8:24; Luke 13:3; Rom. 10:10; Acts 22:16; Rev. 2:10).