



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

Presenting every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume 28
Issue 679

Are Bride and Body Identical?

Part 7 of 10

by — F.H. Robison (1885-1932)

He who has the Bride is the Bridegroom (John 3:29).
He is the Head of the Body, the Ecclesia (Colossians 1:18).

ECCLESIASTICAL ORGANIZATIONS

Despite the fact that the ecclesiastical landscape of Christendom¹ is cluttered up with all kinds of class barriers, there is still only one method of dealing with God in this dispensation, and that is individually. We may be members of visible and human organizations or orders, great or small, old or young, more formalistic or more evangelical, but we get nothing whatever of a spiritual nature merely *because of* that membership. In fact, what spiritual blessings we get are often *in spite of* such membership.

What, then, gives rise to ecclesiastical organizations?

Rarely, if ever, a mere desire for common worship. Common worship can be had with very little machinery or government. The *supposed* advantages of organizations lie in the field of "service," and most organizations have arisen out of some misconception of service. Surely there is no harm in cooperative effort, but the difficulty lies in the fact that the means soon becomes more prominent than the end or purpose for which the cooperation was started.

There is no "army of God" now. The figure in Eph-



sians 6 is of an *individual* soldier arrayed for personal combat. Such songs as "like a mighty army moves the church of God" are not only false, being absolutely contrary to the facts, but are also foolish. An army is an *organization*. The ecclesia of Christ is an *organism* in which we should not struggle to produce a particular brand of cooperation but be diligent to *preserve* the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. The unity of the spirit is a fruitage of the spirit. It grows under the happy benefactions of that Son, whose light is truth and whose warmth is love. Organizational unity, such as there is, comes from human effort, and, like the works of man generally, may be conceived and developed in the dark, far from either truth or love.

SPIRITUAL VS. RELIGIOUS LIFE

Religious life, not spiritual life, is the chief mainstay of religious organizations. Indeed spiritual life is at a reduction because it is concerned chiefly with the will of God, its only object of worship. The will of God often crosses inconveniently with the plans of men or, yes, the religious activities of men.

The whole caste system belongs to the old creation. When God's purpose with man is accomplished there will be no more governing and governed, ►

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1. [Editor:] See the following:

- Christianity: A Religion of Works, David Sielaff, *Bible Student's Notebook* #495;
- The Fixed Ideas of Religious Notions, Vladimir Gelesnoff, *Bible Student's Notebook* #535.

no more rule or authority or power (I Corinthians 15:24), but the perfection of God's will shall have been steeped into the very fiber of His creatures so that all show of power will be unnecessary, like the veteran policeman lays off his uniform and enjoys himself in his own grown-family circle.

There was caste under the Old Covenant. There will be caste under the New, but there is rightly none now, and in the end of the long and gracious age following the Millennium there will be none; for that is the age of the New Creation proper, the New Heavens and the New Earth, of which we are but an *advance working model* (Ephesians 2:7).

The blurred mixture of law and grace which prevails in the minds of Christendom is due to a failure to distinguish between the New Creation and the New Covenant. Many think that because they are Episcopalians, Presbyterians, Catholics or something else they are entitled to some special consideration, but the grace of God pays no more attention to those man-made screens than air and sunlight do in passing through an open window. The screen certainly does not help either air or sunshine, however much it may debar the socially incorrect from entering.

Again, organizations appeal to the soul,² even to the body, but rarely to the spirit. As soon as a group of people believe they have some understanding of or insight into Scripture that is not had and has never been had before; as soon as they are unshakably fixed to any idea in or about the Word of God, or to anything other than the Word of God as such, there

2. [Editor:] For an excellent study on the soul, read the book:
– *Death, Resurrection, Immortality*, Joseph Kirk (see order form).

they have the foundation to their organization and to much human works. The thought that one has something never known by other believers is an insidious thought and has the germ of pride in it. Pride usually rests on ignorance, ignorance of how little is known by any and of how much more is known by others than by ourselves. Pride is a soulish attribute as are all self-conscious powers.

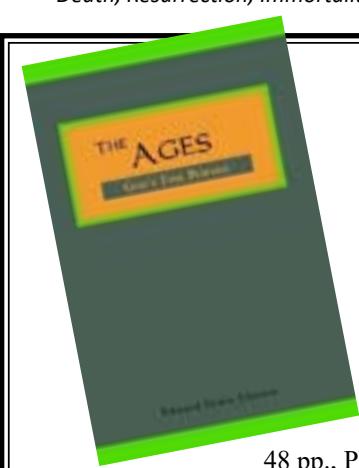
Soulish powers, God-given though they be, do not enable one to sense the presence of God in His universe nor His sovereignty in our lives.

The soulish man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned (I Corinthians 2:14).

It was for this reason that the apostle Paul did not speak the wisdom of this age, but the wisdom of God (I Corinthians 2:6-7). The world by its soulish wisdom has not known God.

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God (I Corinthians 2:9-10).

The deep things of God have to do with His motives and purposes as distinguished from His visible acts. His motives and purposes are knowable only by revelation; so those who scorn it in favor of "natural religion," the written Word in favor of the wrought Word, are not spiritual. Such might be in possession



48 pp., PB

The Ages: God's Time Periods

by — Edward Henry Clayton (1887-1972)

Chapters:

The Purpose of the Ages	The Number of Ages	The First Two Ages
Eonian Life	(Eons)	(Eons)
The Ages (Eons, Aeons)	The Present Age	The Purpose of the Ages
	The Ages (Eons) to	(Eons)
	Come	

See order form.

of facts of science³ and know nothing better to do than to play with them, theorize about them, taking particular care to leave God out of their theories.

The soulish man is anything from the world's good fellow to the most gifted litterateur or most accomplished artist in forms or tones. He may be "*earthly, soulish, demoniacal*" (James 3:15), or simply "*soulish, having not the spirit*" (Jude 19).

The point of all this here is that one may be extremely religious and not spiritual at all. In fact, to be extremely religious in this dispensation, when a *set system of worship* is not laid upon us, itself marks a dearth of the spirit.

MORALISTIC CULTURE CLUBS

The great moralistic and humanitarian culture clubs, which are called "churches," spring from and thrive on soulish attributes. They cannot live without them. Social contact with the "best" people of the community, soft, mellow lighting for the eye, nerve-soothing music for the ear, attenuated-moonshine philosophy for the head, a smug sense of being among the "better" classes of the most civilized lands – all of these things and feelings are traceable not to God-consciousness but to self-consciousness. Philosophy for the head and religion for the heart: that's the best the soul can do, alone.

Yes, that brings us to the heart, which is associated with the soul. "*The soul of all flesh is in the blood*," and since the heart is furnishing the motive power

3. [Editor:] For a look into the topic of Science and the Bible, see:

– Modern Science and the Bible *Do Not Agree*, William Bacon Stevens, [Bible Student's Notebook #345](#).

for the blood it is therefore the moving power of the soul.

In the Gospels, in Acts, and in the Jewish epistles, and even in the Pre-Prison epistles of Paul, both *soul* and *heart* are frequently used, but much more rarely in the Prison Epistles – the word "*soul*" almost never except in reference to human relations or vigor.

The purpose is not to belittle either soul or heart but to show that soul and heart may be either good or bad and that the soulish powers without the spirit of God are always deceptive. The Jews were a whole-souled people. They had a soulful attachment to their religion, but insofar as they had not the spirit they were an abomination to the Lord. So it is with organizational religion generally, as opposed to individual spiritual life. The truth is that whoever is supremely loyal to God will be loyal to all of God's children, whether those children know it or not.

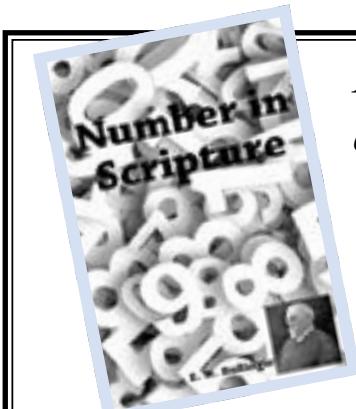
THE BOOTSTRAP-RELIGION LIE

Soulish religion is bootstrap religion, the neglected half of Satan's⁴ lie, to the effect that men by self-will can become like God.

We are born in and surrounded by the kingdom of darkness, and the first hope of light is the conviction that we are in the dark, that we are hopeless without God – without *Him*, not merely without His *assistance* – and that we are sinners, broken, helpless, ►

4. [Editor:] For more information about the creation of evil, Satan and the purpose of sin, see:

- *The Problem of Evil*, A.E. Knoch (1874-1965), see order form;
- The "Fall" of Satan, A.E. Knoch, [Bible Student's Notebook #547](#);
- The King of Tyre, E.H. Clayton, [Bible Student's Notebook #569](#).



Number in Scripture: Its Supernatural Design and Spiritual Significance

by — E.W. Bullinger. (1837-1913)

A complete synopsis of every significant number found in the Bible; one of the most famous and helpful reference books on numbers ever written; a wealth of information.

320 pp., PB,

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defenseless, and excuseless before Him, our only plea the grace-provided blood of Christ.

None are rescued until they either *believe* or *know* their ruin, and if they do not believe it they will be taught to know it, through humiliating judgments. The prodigal had to come to himself before he came to his father.

This helps us to understand the book of Hebrews. Their faith had had too much of a soulish base and body. They did not realize themselves as quite condemned. They felt that there should be special deference paid them because they were the “seed of Abraham.” They did not want *grace* (which is only for the condemned, the undeserving) so much as they wanted the distinction which comes with worldwide kingly and priestly powers. Rarely was their thought one of, “*Father, glorify thou Me that Thy Son also may glorify Thee*” (John 17:1). Their faith was based largely on miracles; so when the miracles died down the faith died down too.

The only thing left was judgment; and what was the judgment for? To appease a pettish God? Ah, no; but to humble them until grace seems good. A loving Father wastes no chastisement. It is men who magnify His justice with juristic theories not His own. God melts not for the sport in the sputter; He melts only to mold anew, to make those *know* their state who would not *believe* it.

The Hebrew believers had mostly lapsed from faith to religious zeal. Few were humble enough to take God’s gifts in God’s way. Therefore those who really had access into the holiest of all, where their Bridegroom was, cared not so much for it as for the sterile traditions of the elders.

This brings us to an understanding of the imprecatory sections of Hebrews, in chapters 6 and 10. In the first place, there is not a word in either of these passages about a “second death,”⁵ and unless we cherish that as a specially delectable morsel – always for someone else, of course – we will not read it into them. It is not really there.

The rudiments spoken of in 6:1-2 all have to do with the Kingdom as the Jews expected it, and as they will have it under Messiah’s reign. These rudiments do not constitute the foundation of present truth at all.

KINGDOM ANNOUNCEMENT POWERS

(1 and 3) Repentance and baptism are connected with the offer of the Kingdom, especially the Pentecostal offer, and are the keys of the Kingdom, which were proclaimed as the authoritative means of access into the Kingdom privileges. *Faith* is the present basis of *our* relationship to God.

(2) Belief in God is much less than believing God. “*Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.*” To believe is a righteous act. Abraham not only believed in God, believed that He exists – as do also His worst enemies – but he believed what God *said*. Our relationship goes beyond what Abraham had, but there are similarities; for reconciliation is the basis of friendship as well as of sonship.

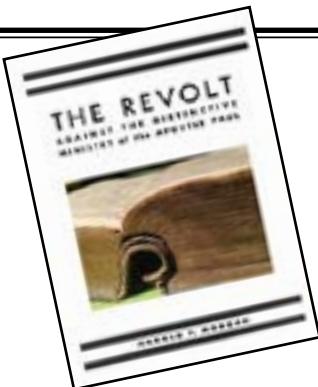
(4) Not many would now claim that the imposition of hands is a thing fitting to the present, but if any-

5. [Editor:] For more information on the Second Death, see:

- The Second Death, Arthur P. Adams, [Bible Student’s Notebook #530](#);
- The Lake of Fire and Brimstone, Charles H. Pridgeon, [Bible Student’s Notebook #531](#);
- A Touchstone, Aaron Locker, [Bible Student’s Notebook #531](#).

The Revolt

by — Dr. Harold P. Morgan (1883-1953)



This work exposes the ongoing revolt against the revelation committed to Paul the apostle. This revolt advances a theology that carries us back to the “Sermon on the Mount” and the “Day of Pentecost.” It drags Paul down from the place which Christ exalted him. The best remedy is a mastery of Paul’s message.

80 pp., PB

See order form.



one were to claim it, their claim would be unfounded on Scripture. It was one of the miraculous powers⁶ of the Kingdom-proclamation period, and there is no authorized announcement of either King or Kingdom without the special powers which the prophets of old had said would accompany that message. There is no need for either twisting or warping of Scripture: those signs simply do not belong to this dispensation, this house-holding or ministry.

(5) Resurrection of the dead is a general term, not the special expression with which our hopes are connected, *“resurrection out from among the dead.”*

(6) Eonian or age-long judgment has no bearing on us or our message. The Kingdom will find its inception in the severest judgments the earth has ever known. Yet we are not in them, but in Christ where there is no condemnation. We have not the slightest scriptural authority for making a specialty of the Day of Vengeance of our God.

6. [Editor:] For more information on sign gifts, see:

- Tongues, Signs and Visions: Not God’s Order for Today, A.E. Bishop, [*Bible Student’s Notebook #416*](#);
- Sign Gifts: For Another People and Another Time, Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr. & André Sneidar, [*Bible Student’s Notebook #417*](#);
- The Signs of Paul’s Early Ministry, A.E. Knoch, [*Bible Student’s Notebook #511*](#);
- Miraculous Demonstrations: Watch Out!, Richard Jordan, [*Bible Student’s Notebook #430*](#);
- Paul and His Early Healing Ministry, A. E. Knoch [*Bible Student’s Notebook #527*](#);
- Israel’s Signs, John LaVier, [*Bible Student’s Notebook #106*](#);
- To What Do the Signs Point? Richard Jordan, [*Bible Student’s Notebook #156*](#);
- Spiritual Gifts for Today, A.E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 108, Issue #3;
- Spiritual Endowments, James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 108, Issue #3;
- The Duration of Languages, James Coram, *Unsearchable Riches*, Volume 108, Issue #3.

Verses 4-6 take up the identification further. There are six points mentioned in the rudiments above and six counts in the indictment or, rather, warning here given. One would incline to expect them to correspond; and perhaps they all do on closer examination. Some of them do quite apparently.

Anyway, the description applies only to those who had received the Pentecostal marks and blessings. They were:

(1) illuminated; they had

(2) tasted of that calling which derived from heaven rather than from earth; they were

(3) endued with power from on high, holy spirit; they

(4) had a taste of that benign teaching about the imminence of the Kingdom and about the righteousness of its reign; they had had

(5) a sample of the powers of the coming age, the raising of the dead, the healing of the lame, the miraculous discernment and summary judgment; and now they were about to

(6) fall aside and incur the only thing left for them under the circumstances, *viz.*, eonian judgment. Instead of producing a crop worthy of the seed and of the labor and of the Owner of the field, they were producing only indifference, or grumbling, or ingratitude, just as their forebears had done in the wilderness.

Back there they perished, but not to endless oblivion. So down here their end is a curse and burning, ►



54 pp, BK

Be Likeminded

by — Daniel Andersen

Christ is the basis of Christian unity, and when Paul exhorts believers to be “likeminded” he is not entreating them to comply with the same code or creed, or to conform to the same confession or catechism. Rather he is appealing to them to accept others as Christ, Himself, accepts them.

See order form.



which is exactly what came upon them in the destruction of their city and in their national scattering for the intervening centuries.

NO RENEWAL TO REPENTANCE

They could not be renewed again to repentance, because repentance is a change of mind and the only thing that could turn their minds back to the attitude they first had as believers, when they served the saints and took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, would be for them to see more of the same kind of miracles which drew their attention then. And those little endearing gifts had fallen off, were mostly gone, because the nation had rejected her Bridegroom-King.

The Jews who received all of the disadvantages implied in this passage, who have had to pay the uttermost farthing, are not cut out of the general provision for mankind any more than those who sinned in the wilderness. In any case the passage does not belong to the same group revealed and ministered to especially in the Prison Letters.

Hebrews 10:32-34 is an unmistakable reference to the early Hebrew believers. The correct rendering of the first part of Hebrews 10:34 is, “*who sympathize with my prisoners also.*” This pins the epistle and its warnings and threatenings down upon Hebrew believers of the first century. The account is invaluable, just as the accounts of Exodus and Deuteronomy are invaluable, but the specific instructions, directions and warnings in them cannot be carried over into the present dispensation without loss and confusion to us. If we place ourselves in the atmosphere of Hebrews the best we shall have is a combination of Davidic and Abrahamic honors, both far below what we have in fact. There is general truth of a non-dispensational character, in Hebrews, as there is in all parts of the Scriptures. The Son “*through death is to destroy him that hath the power of death, that is the devil.*” That is general as to the purpose of God and is not limited to a dispensation, but we must be careful how we read in matters of type and antitype.

NOTHING COUNTS BUT GOD

Look now at the dread section, :26-31. It panders to every lower passion of the soul to fling this at those who disagree with us; however, the climax of offense is reached in the words, “*outrages the spirit of grace.*” One spurning grace has judgment to expect, expiation, which is just what those apostate believers got. Judgment is given to teach the need of grace. It is fearful, it is not pleasant, to fall under the judgments of the living God, but divine judgments are all instructive, not baldly punitive. The Jews had and still have to learn the lesson that nothing counts but God, until they learn the blessedness of answering grace with gratitude.

Jewish religion, Greek wisdom, Roman law, British justice, German *kultur* (i.e., civilization), French liberty, American progress – all have claimed with more or less blatancy to be the thing the world needs, and, curiously enough, each of them has failed most signally on the very virtue trumpeted.

God alone is the Whence, Why, and Whither of all life. He is the Source, Channel and Mouth of every stream, the Homeport of every living craft. This truth most of the Hebrew believers failed to cling to, but not all failed, and to these are given words of encouragement and tender exhortation. Some such words are in the thirteenth chapter. “*It is a good thing that the heart be established with grace*” rather than with the things of religious ritual. The real issue was: leaning on God’s grace, His unmerited, undeserved, unelicited, uncalled-for, unsought, unforced, unaided, unassisted, unearned, undiluted, unadulterated, sovereign, and despotic grace on the one hand, and human effort, self-will-to-perfection, bootstrap religion on the other.

Then comes the famous allusion to the Jewish atonement day. In no case whatever are Gentiles involved in the matter. There is not a scintilla of evidence authorizing such a thought. The simple facts are that the unjust putting of our Lord to death by the nation’s high court, and the ignominious manner of it, defiled the camp. In ideal times it would be apostasy to leave the camp, but when the camp as a whole was apostate it would be apostasy to stay there, to inhabit the city in any religious or devotional sense.

(see *BRIDE & BODY*, page 5856)



Editor's Desk

A Fellowship Retreat & Retirement Community

Looking toward the Future: Are you interested in participating?

We have shared with you in the past that we've been looking to relocate *Pilkington Abbey*. We have limited resources at our current location to accomplish some of our important ministry goals.

Since abbeys are centers of family life and ministry, *Pilkington Abbey* is abundant with them. Ministry is a major thrust of our family, to which much attention and finances are directed. Some of our ministries include: *Study Shelf*, *Bible Student's Press*, *Bible Student's Notebook*, *The Facsimile Project*, *Bible Student's Radio*, *Daily Email Goodies* and *The Fellowship Inn*.

The support for *Pilkington Abbey* comes from our family itself and from vital co-laborers. Our endeavors would be greatly constrained were it not for gra-

cious assistance from concerned, faithful co-laborers (some of whom sacrificially give on a monthly or even weekly basis).

While we have been able to conduct many of our ministries adequately and accomplish many of our goals at our current location, they are nonetheless restricted.

We are pursuing procuring a tract of land that would enable us to expand aspects of our ministry efforts more effectively. A vital part of this planned relocation would be to create a retreat environment for fellowship, education and ministry among members of the Body of Christ, allowing for space to accommodate new aspects of ministry as well as additional residential space for those who would be willing to labor with us, *side-by-side* in the ministry.

We envision, along with our own extended family units, a small, tight-knit community of resident co-laborers (permanent, seasonal and/or periodic) who, like the household of Stephanas, have a passionate addiction to the ministry of the saints (I Corinthians 16:15). The opportunity, while certainly not limited to retirees, might be especially suited to them. For some this could be *retirement with a purpose!*

Though we desire our location to have a "retreat" setting, because our lives and family ministries are lived and conducted as an outreach, we also want it not ►



140 pp., PB

See order form.

*Priceless. – OH
Awesome. – TX
A real eye opener. – MI
Groundbreaking stuff. – OH*

THE CHURCH IN RUINS

Brief Thoughts on II Timothy, Paul's Last Letter to the Church

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

This brief survey of Paul's last epistle will reveal that while almost 2000 years have transpired, the condition of the church has remained the same, and indeed has worsened in accordance with Paul's warning to Timothy.

This book is not a call for a re-awakening of "the church," because it is apparent that this is not Father's plan. Rather, it is a call to individual men – men whose place in the Christian religious system has left them empty, stagnant, and restless – to awaken to Father's call to be His faithful servant and stand outside of that system to look for other faithful men as well.

WHAT READERS ARE SAYING ABOUT THIS BOOK:

*One powerful message. – HI
Impressive. – TX
Another nail driven by the Truth. – WI
A thrill to know that I'm not crazy after all! – PA*

*Great clarification on the subject. – WI
An outstanding little book, one that needs to be read by every member of His Body, and I do not exaggerate. – KS*

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to be isolated. We see it as ideal to be in close enough proximity to a metropolitan area to have adequate access to a population base with whom Father may allow us to share our lives and ministries – or, alternatively, in close proximity to a sizable community that is in turn within a reasonable distance from a metropolitan area.

In our search for a new location for our family and ministries we're not necessarily limiting ourselves to our immediate area. Though obviously there are certain natural, transitional advantages to something relatively close to our current location, we do however keep an open mind and heart to whatever Father has in store for us in this next chapter of our lives, especially if it would involve others.

Having laid forth all of this, our vision for this work is still well beyond our own personal means to accomplish it, both in labor and resources. If we are to pursue this expansion of family ministry we will

need help from those who share our passion to accomplish it. Do you have any personal interest in such an endeavor? Do you know of a specific suitable location for our consideration? If so, let us know. We would love to hear from you and would welcome the opportunity to talk with you more specifically about our future goals and plans.

My love to each of you,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
Pilkington Abbey
Paint, PA

TOPICS:

Major: A Fellowship Retreat

ally the antitype of both “*bulls and goats*” (Hebrews 9:13-14).

(*edited*)

(*to be continued*)

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a semi-weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation that God will save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the “*preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret in ages past*” (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Ephesians 1:1-3);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:

- total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
- union in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6);
- adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

We do not claim infallibility for the contents of this publication. Our readers are asked to be as the Bereans and search the Scriptures (Acts 17:10-11; I Thessalonians 5:21).

This publication is not connected with any “church,” “denomination,” “movement,” “organization,” “mission,” “creed,” “meeting,” “school,” “conference” or “fellowship.”

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