

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

December 2005

“Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” (Philippians 1:2) Another year is almost upon us. Looking at the events transpiring around us, we know there cannot be much time left for this old world. If any of you have not dedicated your life to our Lord Jesus Christ, I encourage you to do so now before it is forever too late.

Brazil Trip Reminder: In April 2006 Lynnford Beachy and Bob Habenicht will be visiting Brazil to conduct outreach meetings. If you know anyone in Brazil who may be benefitted by these meetings, please let us know. **Florida Camp Meeting:** The church in Orlando, Florida, will be hosting a camp meeting, February 22-26, 2006. For more information please contact Jim or Jerry Raymond by calling (407) 291-9565, or you may email them at msjerris@bellsouth.net.

The Original Language of the New Testament

by Lynnford Beachy

(If you have not read last month's lead article entitled, "Must We Use Hebrew Names to be Saved?," I would encourage you to do so. The following article is the sequel to that article. *Editor*)

In the lead article last month we noticed some alarming conclusions reached by many in the sacred-name movement, where they are willing to “modify [the New Testament] rendering as seemed appropriate.” (Introduction to *The Scriptures*, published by the Institute for Scripture Research) They feel free to “modify” the Greek New Testament (hereafter: NT) because they believe that the NT was not written in Greek, but in Hebrew or Aramaic. They think that whoever translated the NT into Greek made mistakes, and they are free to correct these mistakes. Yet, they have no Hebrew or Aramaic originals to examine to see if those who supposedly translated the NT into Greek produced a faithful translation. That is why they modified the NT as “*seemed* appropriate.” (Italics supplied) If errors needed to be corrected, the best they could do was just *guess* what should be fixed as seemed appropriate to them.

All of this liberty to modify the NT is based on the assumption that the NT was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic. But this is only an assumption, because there is no proof that the NT was originally written in any other language but Greek. All of the over 5,000 fragments of NT manuscripts that exist today are written entirely in Greek. There is not a single fragment of a Hebrew or Aramaic NT manuscript anywhere. Scholars debate whether Matthew was originally written in Aramaic or Greek, or

if Matthew wrote an Aramaic version as well as a Greek version of his gospel. Regardless of which view on this is correct, the only manuscripts of Matthew's gospel in existence today are all written in Greek.

The NT consists of 27 documents... concerning matters of belief and practice in Christian communities throughout the Mediterranean world. Although some have argued that Aramaic originals lie behind some of these documents (especially the Gospel of Matthew and the Epistle to the Hebrews), all have been handed down in Greek, very likely the language in which they were composed. (*Encarta Encyclopedia*, article: “Bible”)

When Christ was here the Biblical Hebrew language was a dead language—it was not a spoken language.

The language in which most of the Old Testament was written dates, as a living language, from the 12th to the 2nd century BC, at the latest... From about the 3rd century BC the Jews in Palestine came to use Aramaic in both speech and secular writings. Jews outside Palestine spoke in the language of the countries in which they had settled. (*Encarta Encyclopedia*, article: “Hebrew Language”)

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By the time Christ walked this earth as a man, the Greek language had become so widespread that it was a common spoken language in public, as well as the language of literature and commerce throughout the Middle East, including Palestine, where Jesus ministered.

With the conquests of Alexander the Great and the extension of Macedonian rule in the 4th century BC, a shift of population from Greece proper to the Greek settlements in the Middle East occurred. In this period, known as the Hellenistic, the Attic dialect, spoken by the educated classes as well as by the merchants and many emigrants, became the language common to all the Middle East. As the Greeks mixed with other peoples, linguistic changes took place, Attic became the foundation of a new form of Greek, Koine, which spread throughout all areas of Greek influence. Koine was the language of the court and of literature and commerce throughout the Hellenistic empires. (*Encarta Encyclopedia*, article: "Greek Language")

When Christ was here Koine Greek, the language of all NT manuscripts, was a the primary spoken language of the common people, as well as the written language of commerce and literature, even in Jerusalem. At that time, Greek was widely used, similar to how English is used today. English is quickly becoming a universal language, taught in schools throughout the world. English "is the official language of many nations in the Commonwealth of Nations and is widely understood and used in all of them. It is spoken in more parts of the world than any other language and by more people than any other tongue except Chinese." (*Encarta Encyclopedia*, article: "English Language") Throughout the Middle East the Greek language was used in a similar way. It was a language that allowed people of various mother tongues to communicate using a common language. To be successful in business it was necessary to know the Greek language.

Galilee of the Gentiles

Jesus was "a Galilaean" (Luke 23:6) who grew up in "Nazareth of Galilee." (Matthew 21:11) After Jesus began His ministry He spent much of His time ministering in Galilee, which was called, "Galilee of the Gentiles." (Matthew 4:15) This was populated by a large number of Greek-speaking people, who did not know how to speak Hebrew or Aramaic. About three hundred years earlier the Greek language was becoming so widely used that the Jews translated the Scriptures into Greek (called the Septuagint or LXX). The Septuagint was used widely in synagogues throughout the Middle East. It was used in the synagogue in Nazareth, where Jesus had been raised.

Right after Jesus began His ministry, "he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up: and, as his custom

was, he went into the synagogue on the sabbath day, and stood up for to read. And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias [Isaiah]. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and **recovering of sight to the blind**, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down." (Luke 4:16-20)

Jesus read from Isaiah 61:1, 2. He was reading from the Greek Septuagint. We know this because the phrase "recovering of sight to the blind" is not in the Hebrew Old Testament (hereafter: OT), but it is in the Greek Septuagint. Since Nazareth was in Galilee of the Gentiles, it is understandable why they would use the Greek Scriptures to allow the numerous Greek-speaking Jews to understand its reading. Jews who only spoke Greek were numerous in Galilee, but some even lived in Jerusalem. In the early days of the Christian church in Jerusalem, "there arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews, because their widows were neglected in the daily ministrations." (Acts 6:1) A Grecian was "one who imitates the manners and customs or the worship of the Greeks, and uses the Greek tongue. Used in the NT of Jews born in foreign lands and speaking Greek." (*Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon*)

The disciples were called "men of Galilee." (Acts 1:11) Many of them were fisherman who worked on the Sea of Galilee. (Matthew 4:18) They sold their fish in Galilee, and must have been able to speak Greek to communicate with their buyers. In the book of John we read, "And there were certain Greeks among them that came up to worship at the feast: The same came therefore to Philip, which was of Bethsaida of Galilee, and desired him, saying, Sir, we would see Jesus. Philip cometh and telleth Andrew: and again Andrew and Philip tell Jesus." (John 12:20-22) The disciples were able to communicate with these Greek believers who attended the feast.

Teach all nations

Just before Jesus left His disciples, He commissioned them, "Go ye therefore, and *teach all nations*." (Matthew 28:19) He also instructed them, saying, "ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1:8) Jesus designed that the gospel would be preached in *all* nations. The Jews had mostly kept to themselves and rarely ministered unto those of other nations. The gospel of Christ was not to be thus constrained

to the Hebrew people. It was to go to all nations, and the most widely used language of that area in those days was the Greek language. It would have been foolish to lock up the gospel writings in a dead language such as Hebrew, or a language with limited use, such as Aramaic. Jesus charged the disciples to go unto all nations, and we can be certain that they spoke to those nations in a language they could understand. In most places surrounding Israel, Greek was the language to use to reach them because it was the universal language of that time.

God called Paul to especially minister to Gentiles—most of whom did not know Hebrew or Aramaic. He was “the apostle of the Gentiles.” (Romans 11:13) Most of the places he visited on his missionary journeys were Greek-speaking nations. Greek was their mother tongue, and they did not know any other language. In most of these places, there were Jewish synagogues, attended by Greek-speaking Jews who did not know Hebrew or Aramaic. Jews by birth, as well as Greeks, attended these synagogues. Corinth was located in Greece and was a Greek-speaking city. When Paul was in Corinth “he reasoned in the synagogue every sabbath, and persuaded the Jews and the Greeks.” (Acts 18:4) The Bible records Paul’s experiences in converting the Jews and Greeks in a similar way in just about every area he visited. Greeks were a large part of his audience wherever he went. When he wrote letters to these people we can be certain that he wrote to them in a language they could understand, the Greek language. Much of the NT is made up of letters from Paul to the churches in Greek-speaking lands, some in Greece itself, such as Corinth, Philippi, and Thessalonica. It would have been unthinkable for Paul to have written his letters to Greece in a language they could not understand.

Paul spoke Greek

We know that Paul could speak Greek. After a mob had almost killed him and he was being led into a castle by Roman soldiers, “he said unto the chief captain, May I speak unto thee? Who said, Canst thou speak Greek? Art not thou that Egyptian, which before these days madest an uproar, and leddest out into the wilderness four thousand men that were murderers?” (Acts 21:37, 38) The chief captain was surprised that Paul could speak Greek because he mistook him for a particular Egyptian who did not know Greek. Paul continued to talk with the chief captain in Greek—he knew the language well.

After the chief captain gave Paul permission to speak to the people, “Paul stood on the stairs, and beckoned with the hand unto the people. And when there was made a great silence, he spake unto them in the Hebrew tongue [Aramaic], saying, Men, brethren, and fathers, hear ye

my defence which I make now unto you. And when they heard that he spake in the Hebrew tongue to them, they kept the more silence:...” (Acts 21:40-22:2)

When Paul began to speak, the crowd was pleasantly surprised when he spoke Hebrew. This was not biblical Hebrew, for that had not been spoken for many years, but he spoke the language of the Hebrew people at that time, which was Aramaic. “They would have understood Paul’s Koiné Greek, but they much preferred the Aramaic.” (*Robertson’s NT Word Pictures* on Acts 22:2) This shows that Aramaic was not always spoken in public, even in Jerusalem where this took place. It also shows that the general population could speak and understand a language other than Aramaic, and this certainly was Greek.

One of Paul’s most faithful companions and co-laborers was a Greek. Paul wrote, “Titus, who was with me, being a Greek,...” (Galatians 2:3) Another man whom Paul worked closely with was “a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria,...” (Acts 18:24) Apollos was the name of a pagan Greek god. Alexandria was the chief city of Egypt, founded by Alexander the Great. Apollos had a Greek background, and he was one of the chief workers in the early NT church. Paul said, “I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase.” (1 Corinthians 3:6) The Greek language was a big part of the ministry of the early church. If they had limited their writings to Hebrew or Aramaic they would have left much of the early church without the ability to understand them. There was no need for these early Christians to learn Hebrew or Aramaic, for they had had the Scriptures in their own language, Greek, for more than 300 years. Greek was the language used more than any other in that area at that time. It was used in literature, in courts, in commerce, and in virtually every other aspect of everyday life for hundreds of years prior to the NT writings.

Josephus

Josephus was a Jewish priest who was born in 37 or 38 AD and died sometime after 100 AD. He made it his life’s work to translate historical records of the Jewish people from Hebrew into Greek so they could be read by a much larger audience than if they were kept in the Hebrew language. Josephus wrote, “I intended to do no more than translate the Hebrew books into the Greek language, and promised them to explain those facts, without adding any thing to them of my own, or taking any thing away from there.” (*The Antiquities of the Jews*, by Flavius Josephus, Book 10, Chapter 10)

The works of Josephus were all composed in the Greek language, with the exception of his first draft of the “Jewish

War,” which was in Aramaic. His principal purpose was to communicate to the Greco-Roman world the knowledge of the history of his people, whom he defends and glorifies in every possible way. (*New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, Vol. VI, page 235)

At the time of Josephus (which was also the time when the NT was written), writings in the Hebrew language were not suitable to reach the majority of people, especially if they were designed to reach people outside of the nation of Israel. The fact that Josephus saw the great need to rescue what he deemed precious works from a dead language and translate them into Greek so their influence could be prolonged and expanded proves that Greek was a much more common language than Hebrew at that time. The books of the NT were written during this same time, and it would have been foolish to write them in Hebrew or Aramaic when their intended purpose was to reach as many as possible with the gospel.

The Peshitta

For those who claim there was an original Hebrew or Aramaic NT, the closest they can come is the Aramaic Peshitta. George Lamsa translated the Peshitta into English, and claims that the NT was originally written in Aramaic, and that the Peshitta is a copy of the original NT. This is the closest that anyone can come to having an original Hebrew or Aramaic NT, but it was actually translated from Greek, which we will see in a moment.

Interpreted

Let us take time to examine the NT itself to see if there is any internal evidence to reveal the original language in which it was written.

Matthew 1:23: “Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, **which being interpreted is, God with us.**” Matthew quoted from Isaiah 7:14, where it says, “Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel.” Notice that the phrase, “which being interpreted is, God with us,” is not found in Isaiah 7:14. Matthew saw it necessary to interpret the Hebrew name, Immanuel, because he knew that his readers would not understand what the word means. This would not have been necessary if his intended audience knew Hebrew. This proves that Matthew did not write in Hebrew. (It is possible that he wrote an Aramaic version in addition to the Greek version available to us today, as noted at the beginning of this article, even though there is not even a single fragment of such a document in existence today.)

The Aramaic Peshitta also includes the phrase, “which being interpreted is, God with us,” just like the Greek.

Lamsa’s translation of it says, “Behold, a virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, **which is interpreted, Our God is with us.**” Perhaps in the Aramaic version it was necessary to translate the Hebrew name Emmanuel into Aramaic, but it is unlikely because the languages are so similar. But the next verse leaves no doubt.

Mark 7:34—“And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened.” The word “Ephphatha” is an Aramaic word. Mark saw it necessary to translate this word so his readers would understand it. If Mark had originally written in Aramaic, he would not have explained, “which means, Be opened.” This proves that Aramaic was not the language of Mark’s gospel. Lamsa’s translation of the Aramaic Peshitta says, “And he looked up to heaven and sighed, and he said to him, Ethpatakh, **which means, Be opened.**” The Aramaic Peshitta was translated from Greek manuscripts. The original NT was written in Greek, as we will see demonstrated over and over again in the NT.

Mark 15:22—“And they bring him unto the place Golgotha, which is, being interpreted, The place of a skull.” The word “Golgotha” is an Aramaic word. Again, Mark saw it necessary to translate an Aramaic word so his readers would understand it. If Mark had originally written in Aramaic, he would not have included the phrase, “a place which is interpreted The Skull,” his readers would have already known what this Aramaic word means, and it would be useless for Mark to have interpreted it for them. Lamsa’s translation of the Aramaic Peshitta says, “And they brought him to Golgotha, **a place which is interpreted The Skull.**” This proves, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that the Aramaic Peshitta was translated from the Greek manuscripts. We can be certain that Aramaic was not the original language of the NT.

Mark 15:34—“And at the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani? **which is, being interpreted, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?**” Here is another Aramaic phrase which Mark translated for his readers to understand. Lamsa’s translation of the Peshitta says, “And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying Eli, Eli, lemana, shabakthani! **which means, My God, my God, for this I was spared!**” All that was said of Mark 15:22 is equally true of this verse, confirming the fact that Mark wrote his gospel in Greek, not Aramaic. Here are a few more examples of evidence substantiating this fact.

Mark 5:41—“And he took the damsel by the hand, and said unto her, Talitha cumi [Aramaic]; **which is, being interpreted, Damsel, I say unto thee, arise.**”

Mark 7:11—“But ye say, If a man shall say to his father or mother, It is Corban [Aramaic], **that is to say**, a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; he shall be free.”

John 1:38—“Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye? They said unto him, Rabbi, (which is to say, **being interpreted, Master,**) where dwellest thou?” The Hebrew word “Rabbi” was a very common word among the Jews—even a small Jewish child would know the meaning of this word. Yet, John saw the necessity of translating this word into the language of his gospel, Greek, so that his readers would understand its meaning. He would not have translated such a common word if he was writing in Hebrew or Aramaic. John was writing in Greek.

John 1:41—“He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, **which is, being interpreted,** the Christ.” John was expecting people to read his gospel who were not familiar with common Hebrew words, such as Messiah. John saw it necessary to translate common Hebrew words into the language of his gospel so his readers would understand it. He wrote in Greek so that he could be understood by the common people throughout the Middle East. Here are a few more verses to substantiate this fact:

John 1:42—“And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas [Aramaic], **which is by interpretation,** A stone.”

John 9:7—“And said unto him, Go, wash in the pool of Siloam [Hebrew], (**which is by interpretation,** Sent.) He went his way therefore, and washed, and came seeing.”

Acts 1:19—“It was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, **that is to say, The field of blood.**” Here again is an Aramaic word that was translated by Luke so that his readers could understand. James Murdock’s translation of the Peshitta says, “And this was known to all that dwelt at Jerusalem; so that the field was called, in the language of the country, Aceldama, **which is interpreted Field of Blood.**” It is certain that Luke did not write the book of Acts in Aramaic, or he would not have translated this Aramaic word for his readers. Luke wrote his gospel and the book of Acts in the Greek language so that they could be read by Theophilus, the Greek man whom he had specifically written them for. (See Luke 1:3 and Acts 1:1.) Here are some more examples:

Acts 4:36—“And Joses, who by the apostles was surnamed Barnabas [Aramaic], (**which is, being**

interpreted, The son of consolation,) a Levite, and of the country of Cyprus.”

Acts 9:36—“Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha [Aramaic], **which by interpretation** is called Dorcas [Greek]: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did.”

Revelation 9:11—“And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue is Abaddon, but **in the Greek tongue** hath his name Apollyon.”

We have noted a large amount of internal evidence in the NT that clearly demonstrates the fact that the intended audience included many who were unfamiliar with common Hebrew and Aramaic words. Therefore when the writers allowed some of these words to be used in their writings they interpreted them into Greek so their audience would understand them. Yet, there is more evidence, as we will see in a moment.

Greek audience

Not only did the writers of the NT see it necessary to translate common Hebrew or Aramaic words into the language of their audience, they also saw it necessary to explain certain Jewish practices that would not have been necessary if the intended audience had been limited to Aramaic-speaking Jews. Let us notice a few examples.

John 6:4—“And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh.” To the Jews, the Passover was one of the most well-known events of the year. John expected that many of his readers would not know what the Passover is, so he saw it necessary to explain that the Passover is “a feast of the Jews.” This would be useless if he had written his gospel for Jewish people.

John 7:2—“Now the Jews’ feast of tabernacles was at hand.” If John were writing to primarily to Jews he would not have had to inform his audience that the feast of tabernacles was “the Jews’ feast.” He would have simply said, “the feast of tabernacles was at hand.”

Luke 23:51—“(The same had not consented to the counsel and deed of them;) he was of Arimathaea, a city of the Jews: who also himself waited for the kingdom of God.” It is very unlikely for Luke to inform his readers that Arimathaea was “a city of the Jews” if he expected the majority of his readers to be Aramaic-speaking Jews, who would already be familiar with this fact.

Luke 22:1—“Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover.” Luke saw it necessary to explain to his readers that “the feast of unleavened bread” is also called “the Passover.” If he was intending his readers to be Aramaic-speaking Jews he

would not have had to explain something that is common knowledge among the Jews.

John 19:40—“Then took they the body of Jesus, and wound it in linen clothes with the spices, as the manner of the Jews is to bury.” Here, John saw it necessary to explain this burial practice that was peculiar to the Jews, something that would not have been done if his audience had been restricted to Aramaic-speaking Jews.

Mark 7:2, 3—“And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.” Mark wrote his gospel for people who would not know that the Jews have a tradition that prohibits them from eating unless they wash their hands often. It would not be necessary to explain this practice to Jewish people, for they would have been taught this since childhood. Mark was writing to Greek-speaking people.

John 2:6—“And there were set there six waterpots of stone, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews, containing two or three firkins apiece.” In John’s account of this event it was necessary to mention the six waterpots of stone that were setting there at the wedding feast. Realizing that his readers would not understand why these waterpots were there, John explained that they were there because of “the manner of the purifying of the Jews.” John knew that Jewish people would know why they were there, but since he was also expecting a large number of non-Jews to read his gospel, he saw the need for explaining this oddity to his audience.

Septuagint in the New Testament

About 300 years before Christ came to this earth, in response to the growing popularity of the Greek language and the increasing amount of Jews who could not read Hebrew, a group of Jewish scholars translated the Hebrew OT into Greek. This translation is commonly called the Septuagint, or LXX. It became very popular, and by the time Christ came here it was widely used, because it was written in a common language understood by many. When Christ was here he often quoted from the Septuagint as opposed to the Hebrew OT. (See Matthew 13:14, 15; 21:16; Luke 4:18, 19.) Many of the NT writers used the Septuagint when quoting OT Scriptures. R. Grant Jones did an extensive study on the usage of the Septuagint in the NT. He concluded, “The New Testament authors show a clear preference for the Septuagint over [Hebrew] Masoretic readings.” (www.geocities.com/r_grant_jones/Rick/Septuagint/spexecsum.htm) Jones catalogued every time an OT text was quoted in the New, and

listed 78 times where NT writers chose the Septuagint reading of a text when it differed from the Hebrew reading. (You can see this list at: www.geocities.com/r_grant_jones/Rick/Septuagint/splist1.htm.) Jones only cited six places where the NT writers chose the Hebrew reading over the Septuagint rendering. (You can see this list at: www.geocities.com/r_grant_jones/Rick/Septuagint/spindex.htm.)

This evidence makes it clear that the main source book for OT texts used by NT writers was the Greek Septuagint. This would be very unlikely if they had written the NT in Hebrew or Aramaic. They were writing to Greek people in the Greek language, and it was much easier for them, when quoting from the OT, to use the Greek version rather than the Hebrew. This way they did not have to translate the Hebrew verses every time they wanted to quote the OT. This also demonstrates that the Greek Septuagint was a widely used version of the OT in the days of Christ and His apostles.

No Hebrew manuscripts

Today there is not a single fragment of a NT Hebrew manuscript, while there are over 5,000 fragments of Greek NT manuscripts. Some scholars claim that there were several NT fragments found among the Dead Sea Scrolls (all dating before 70 AD). All of these fragments were written in Greek. (For more information on this point, please read the book, *The Original Language of the New Testament Was Greek*, by Gary Mink, online at: www.sacrednamemovement.com/NTisGreekContents.htm.)

There are several Hebrew and Aramaic portions of the NT that date back to the early Christian church, but they have all been translated from Greek, as we noted earlier regarding the Peshitta. Most of the above-mentioned peculiar Greek text evidence is found in the Aramaic NT, because the Peshitta was translated from Greek.

The authors of a prominent sacred-name Bible, *The Scriptures*, are forced to acknowledge that no Hebrew or Aramaic original manuscripts exist today. They state:

“We extend an ongoing invitation to any who can give input that will improve future editions of *The Scriptures*, especially in regard to the matter of Semitic [Hebrew or Aramaic] originals.” They continue, “Since the originals are no longer extant [in existence], there was no alternative but to make use of the existing Greek manuscripts... We cannot therefore claim that our text represents a translation of any particular underlying text. As a *modus operandi* then, we have started out using the *Textus Receptus*, modifying our rendering as seemed appropriate...” Did you catch that? The prominent leaders of the sacred-name movement do not have what they consider an original NT. All they have is Greek, which they

distrust, and they feel it necessary to “modify [its] rendering as seemed appropriate.” (Preface to *The Scriptures*, page xvi)

The fact that no Hebrew or Aramaic NT manuscripts exist today, while over 5,000 Greek NT manuscripts exist, is compelling evidence that there never was an original Hebrew or Aramaic NT. The NT was written in Greek.

“My words shall not pass away”

Jesus said, “Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.” (Luke 21:33) If the words of Jesus were originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic and no Hebrew or Aramaic manuscripts exist today, then Christ’s words have passed away. But Jesus said this will not happen. Today, the only original record of Christ’s words are in Greek. Those who maintain that the NT was originally written in Hebrew or Aramaic feel free to “modify [its] rendering as seemed appropriate.” This is a serious problem, friends. When a man comes to the point that he feels free to modify the only record of Christ’s words in existence, he has a real problem. Jesus said, “I am Alpha and Omega [Greek letters],... If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.” (Revelation 22:13, 18, 19)

There are clearly some serious dangers in the sacred-name movement of today, most notably in the rejection of the only NT we have, the Greek NT. It is completely contrary to the Bible and historical facts, to insist on using a particular name for God or His Son, to the exclusion of every other name or title, such as God, Lord, Christ, etc. A sad tendency among those who take such extreme positions is that they refuse to fellowship with those who do not use the name of God the same way as they do. This is understandable. If a person believes that when someone uses words such as God, Lord, Christ, Jesus, etc., a pagan deity is being worshiped, it makes sense to avoid fellowship with those whom they think are worshiping false gods. Yet, as we have clearly seen in last month’s article, this claim is completely unfounded, with absolutely no valid proof for this assertion. Too often people hear or read something that *seems* to make sense and they jump on the bandwagon without checking out all the facts first. Then many others follow their example, until a doctrine without Biblical or factual foundation gains quite a large following of people blindly following others and unwilling to examine the evidence for themselves to see if it is

true. This has been done, to a large extent, in the sacred-name movement.

Another danger is that it can turn a person’s religion into making the right sounds with his lips. They say you must call Jesus, Yeshua, or something similar. This makes it very difficult for many people in the world who do not have a SH sound in their language. For us it is no problem because SH is such a common sound in English, but this is not the case in all languages. Remember the Ephraimites could not say Shibboleth; instead, they said Sibboleth because they could not pronounce the SH sound. “Then said they unto him, Say now Shibboleth: and he said Sibboleth: for he could not frame to pronounce it right. Then they took him, and slew him at the passages of Jordan: and there fell at that time of the Ephraimites forty and two thousand.” (Judges 12:6) God is not so particular that He would destroy us if we do not pronounce His name correctly.

The Bible does not prohibit us from using the personal name of God (unless we do it in vain), however that name may be pronounced. The Bible is quite clear that the primary, personal name of God is Yahweh or one of its variants. This name, along with the many other names and titles of God given in the Bible, can be used to address Him. Yet, the Bible does not teach that there is some magical blessing in speaking God’s name, nor in pronouncing it in a certain way. God is not so particular to demand that you must pronounce a particular word in order to be saved. That does not concern Him. He is concerned about the condition of your heart.

I pray that this will not be the case with you, dear reader. Please take the time to study things out for yourself and let the Bible speak to you just as it is written. Take time to pray and seek God for wisdom, for without that we will all be led astray. Get to know God on a very personal level. Jesus said, “If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself.” (John 7:17)

Keep looking up, for your redemption draweth nigh.✍

A Note of Correction

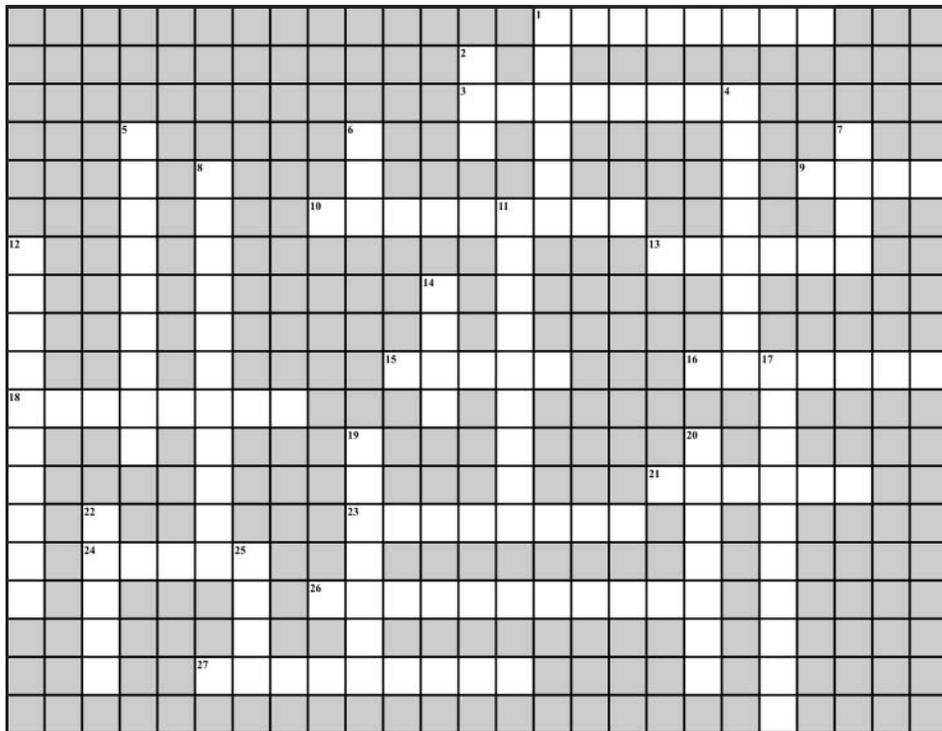
In last month’s lead article, based upon Exodus 6:3, I stated, “Abraham and Isaac called upon the name of the LORD without using His name Yahweh.” A dear friend directed me to Genesis 22:14 which indicates that Abraham must have known the sound of God’s name. I apologize for the mistake. I am sure there is harmony between these two verses, and we should study to find it.

Editor

Something for the Young at Heart

This month we are continuing a series of crossword Bible studies that are based on the “These Last Days” Bible Lessons. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line.

The Christian and the World



Answers are on page 12

- Do not ____ the world, neither the things that are in it. 1 John 2:15—**9 Across**
 - Be not ____ to this world. Romans 12:1—**5 Down**
 - Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world is the ____ of God. James 4:4—**15 Across**
 - If we will come out and be ____ the Lord promises to receive us. 2 Corinthians 6:17—**4 Down**
 - We are to be ____ by the renewing of the mind. Romans 12:1—**26 Across**
- Note:** Our mind is made up of what we feed it. If we would develop the mind of Christ we must be very selective in what we allow to enter it through our eyes and ears.
- The righteous man closes his ears from ____ of blood and shuts his eyes from seeing evil. Isaiah 33:15—**16 Across**
 - Job made a ____ with his eyes. Job 31:1—**18 Across**
 - I will ____ no wicked thing before my eyes. Psalms 101:3—**2 Down**

- We ought to choose things that are true, pure and praiseworthy to ____ on. Philippians 4:8—**22 Down**
- Note:** A true Christian will allow these principles to direct all his choices of reading, listening, viewing, recreation and leisure activities. As a reminder, why not place the words of Philippians 4:8 on top of the television?
- In the last days men will be lovers of ____ more than lovers of God. 2 Timothy 3:4—**1 Across**
 - Outside the holy city [New Jerusalem] are those who love and make a _____. Revelation 22:15—**6 Down**
 - Many brought their wicked books and ____ them before all. Acts 19:19—**13 Across**
 - With grace in your hearts, sing psalms, and ____ and spiritual songs to the Lord. Colossians 3:16—**24 Across**
 - A companion to fools will be _____. Proverbs 13:20—**10 Across**

- As a defense against sin, hide the ____ in your heart. Psalms 119:11—**7 Down**
 - Let my words and thoughts be ____ in Thy sight, O Lord. Psalm 19:14—**17 Down**
 - Women should adorn themselves with ____ apparel and good works. 1 Timothy 2:9, 10—**21 Across**
 - In preparation for going before God, Jacob’s household gave up their idols and all their _____. Genesis 35:2-4—**3 Across**
- Note:** The Bible associates cosmetics and jewelry with the vain worldliness of the wicked. See Judges 8:24; 2 Kings 9:30; Jeremiah 4:30; Ezekiel 23:36-49; Hosea 2:13; Revelation 17:4; Isaiah 3:16-24.
- By divine direction the children of Israel stripped themselves of their _____. Exodus 33:5, 6—**11 Down**
 - Adorn yourselves, not as in wearing of gold or putting on of _____, but with a meek and quiet spirit. 1 Peter 3:3, 4—**19 Down**
 - A woman should not wear anything that pertains to a man, nor should a man wear women’s clothing, for those who do this are an ____ to the Lord. Deuteronomy 22:5—**8 Down**
 - Does not even nature teach that it is a shame for a man to have ____ hair? 1 Corinthians 11:14—**14 Down**
 - For many people, the motivation for their actions is the desire to be ____ by others. Matthew 23:5—**25 Down**
 - God’s grace teaches us that by denying ____ lusts, we should live righteously in this present world. Titus 2:11, 12—**20 Down**
 - Jesus gave Himself for us to redeem and ____ us. Titus 2:14—**1 Down**
 - Paul counted all things as worthless in exchange for the excellency of the ____ of Christ. Philippians 3:8—**27 Across**
 - As Christians we keep His commandments and do those things that are ____ in His sight. 1 John 3:22—**23 Across**
 - Whatsoever is born of God ____ the world. 1 John 5:4—**12 Down**

Fundamental Principles of Health

by Curtis Kline

(In the last four years George McDaniel has done an outstanding job of presenting health principles. This article is the beginning of a new series of articles covering some foundational principles of health from a fresh point of view. Editor)

Faithful in the Little Things

In Luke 16:10 we read, “He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much: and he that is unjust in the least is unjust also in much.” Today we would like to take a look at how this principle may apply to health. In Psalm 11:3 we read, “If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?” In a time when there are almost as many gospels as there are people and where there is also as much information concerning health as there are people, I believe that it is very important for everyone to build on a strong foundation. When it comes to the issue of health, I believe the whole outcome of your health will be drastically affected by the foundation you build upon. So, in a time of almost universal confusion, let’s embark upon a journey to re-establish some fundamental principles concerning health.

The body is made up of systems, which are made up of organs, which are made up of tissue, which are made up of cells. Every day our bodies are constantly eliminating and rebuilding new cells. Within the course of time, almost every cell of the body will be replaced, therefore, when it comes to health, I believe our focus needs to be at the cellular level. The reason I say this is because healthy cells will build healthy tissue, healthy tissue will build healthy organs, and healthy organs will build healthy systems. If we have healthy systems, we will have healthy bodies. As you will notice in the above equation, there is nothing symptomatic concerning true health. True health comes from a pro-active approach and a biblical foundation that requires us to take responsibility and accountability for our health.

Here is a list of eight elements required by the body to build healthy cells, given in an easy-to-remember acronym, New Start.

- Nutrition
- Exercise
- Water
- Sunlight
- Temperance
- Air
- Rest
- Trust in Divine Power

In the next few articles we will focus on each of these elements and how they affect our health. In connection with these principles we will examine the body’s ability to eliminate waste and to become free from poisons.

It is my personal belief that, regardless of our current state of health, providing the cells with the above components will enable us all to enjoy a much greater degree of health. May I even dare say, for some people, 100% pure health.

When it comes to health, one of the truly fatal mistakes that is made is that modern man tends to look at health as various independent parts without seeing it as many parts that make up a whole. You can clearly see this when you look at the various ways man practices medicine today. True health, however, looks at all the parts as a whole. Jesus came to make people whole and when he healed people they were made physically, mentally, and spiritually whole. So whenever we are dealing with health, let us look at the body, mind, and spirit as one great whole. There is much sympathy among the mind, body, and spirit. When one is affected, all are affected, to a greater or lesser degree.

Let us remember that true health comes not from trying to manipulate organs and chemical reactions in the body. Do you realize that just one cell in the body is more complex than the entire city of Chicago? Man could be provided with an infinite amount of knowledge and an infinite amount of time and he would still never be able to come to a complete understanding of even one of the simplest organs of the body. So, foundational principle number one is to stop trying to tell the body what to do and when to do it. Let us humbly go to God’s Word and give the body the materials it requires to operate the way God intrinsically designed it to. If we would humble ourselves in this fashion, I believe we would enjoy far greater health than we do today.

Until next month, let us remember 3 John 1:2: “Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.” 

(The above article was provided by Curtis Kline, Director of Ministry of Healing and Restoration, Canvas, WV. For more in-depth information he can be contacted at (304) 872-4463 or curkli@yahoo.com. While we believe the principles in this article can be helpful, we are not responsible for any negative effects resulting from the use of remedies or recommendations herein. Use them at your own risk. Editor)

WAGGONER ON ROMANS — THE GOSPEL IN PAUL'S GREAT LETTER (PART 5)

by Ellet J. Waggoner

(We are continuing a series of articles commenting on Paul's epistle to the Romans. We pray that they will be a blessing to you.
Editor)

The Gospel in Creation—We have seen that in every created thing the power of God is manifested. And we also learned from the scripture studied last month that the gospel is “the power of God unto salvation.” God's power is ever the same, for the text before us speaks of “his eternal power.” The power, therefore, which is manifested in the things which God has made is the same power that works in the hearts of men to save them from sin and death. Therefore we may be assured that God has constituted every portion of his universe a preacher of the gospel. So then men may not only know the fact of God's existence from the things which he has made, but they may know his eternal power to save them. The twentieth verse of the first chapter of Romans is an expansion of the sixteenth. It tells us how we may know the power of the gospel.

The Stars as Preachers—“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard [or, “without these their voice is heard”]. Their line is gone out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.” (Psalm 19:1-4) Now read Romans 10:13-18:

For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

In this text all the objections which men raise against the punishment of the heathen are answered. As stated in the first chapter, they are without excuse. The gospel has been made known to every creature under heaven. It is admitted that men can not call on one in whom they have not believed, and that they can not believe in one of whom they have not heard, and that they can not hear without a preacher. And that which they ought to hear, and which they have not obeyed, is the gospel.

Having stated this, the apostle asks, “Have they not heard?” and at once answers his own question by repeating the words of the nineteenth psalm, “Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.” Thus we learn that the speech which the heavens

utter from day unto day is the gospel; and the knowledge which they show from night unto night is the knowledge of God.

The Heavens Reveal Righteousness—With the knowledge that that which the heavens declare is the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation, we can easily follow the nineteenth Psalm through. It seems to the casual reader that there is a break in the continuity of this Psalm. From talking about the heavens, the writer suddenly begins to speak of the perfection of the law of God, and its converting power. “The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul; the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple.” (Verse 7) But there is no break at all. The law of God is the righteousness of God, and the gospel reveals the righteousness of God, and the heavens declare the gospel; therefore it follows that the heavens reveal the righteousness of God. “The heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory.” (Psalm 97:6)

The glory of God is his goodness, because we are told that it is through sin that men come short of his glory. (Romans 3:23) Therefore we may know that whoever looks upon the heavens with reverence, seeing in them the power of the Creator, and will yield himself to that power, will be led to the saving righteousness of God. Even the sun, moon, and stars, whose light is but a part of the glory of the Lord, will shine that glory into his soul.

Without Excuse—How evident it is, therefore, that men are without excuse for their idolatrous practices. When the true God reveals himself in everything, and with his power makes known his love, what excuse can men have for not knowing and worshipping him?

But is it true that God makes known his love to all men? Yes, it is just as true as that he makes himself known, for “God is love.” Whoever knows the Lord must know his love. This being the case with regard to the heathen, how utterly without excuse are people who live in lands where the gospel is preached with an audible voice from his written word.

The Cause of Idolatry—How is it that if God has so clearly revealed himself and his truth, there are so many who are in utter ignorance of him? The answer is given, “Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful.”

There is one thing which God has given as the seal and sign of his divinity, and that is the Sabbath. Speaking of men, he says, “Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.” (Ezekiel 20:12) This is in keeping with what we have learned in Romans; for our text tells us that God's power and divinity are perceived by thoughtful people through the things that he has made; and the Sabbath is the great memorial of creation. “Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God; in it thou shalt not do any work;... for in six

days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it." (Exodus 20:8-11) If people had always kept the Sabbath as it was given, there would never have been any idolatry; for the Sabbath reveals the power of the word of the Lord to create and to work righteousness.

Vain Imaginations—Men became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Gibbon says of the speculations of the ancient philosophers that "their reason had often been guided by their imagination, and their imagination had been prompted by their vanity." The course of their fall was the same as that of the angel who became Satan. "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." (Isaiah 14:12-14)

What was the cause of this self-exaltation and fall? "Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness." (Ezekiel 27:17) Dependent entirely upon God for all the wisdom and glory that he had, he did not glorify God, but assumed that all his talents sprang from himself; and so, as he disconnected himself in his pride from the Source of light, he became the prince of darkness. Even thus it was with man.

Changing the Truth into a Lie—"There is no power but of God." In nature we see the manifestation of mighty power, but it is the working of God. All the different forms of force which philosophers name, and which they declare to be inherent in matter, are but the working of the life of God in the things that he has made. Christ is "before all things, and by him all things consist," or hold together. (Colossians 1:17) Cohesion therefore is but the direct power of the life of Christ. Gravitation also is the same power, as we read of the heavenly bodies, "for that he is strong in power; not one faileth." (Isaiah 40:26) But men looked upon all the operations of nature, and, instead of seeing the power of the one supreme God in them, they attributed divinity to the things themselves.

So, as they looked upon themselves; and saw what great things they could achieve, instead of honoring God as the giver and upholder of all things, the One in whom they lived and moved and had their being, they assumed that they themselves were by nature divine. Thus they changed the truth of God into a lie.

The truth is that the life and power of God are manifested in everything that he has made; the lie is that the force which is manifest in all things is inherent in the things themselves. So men put the creature in the place of the Creator.

Looking Within—Marcus Aurelius, who is accounted the best of the heathen philosophers, said: "Look within. Within is the fountain of good, and it will ever bubble up, if thou wilt ever dig." That expresses the spirit of all

heathenism. Self was the supreme thing. But that spirit is not peculiar to what is known as heathenism, for it is very common in these days; nevertheless, it is nothing but the spirit of heathenism. It is a part of the worship of the creature instead of the Creator. It is but natural that they should put themselves in his place; and when they do that, it is a necessary consequence that they look to themselves, and not to God, for goodness.

When men look within, what is the only thing that they can see? "Evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness." (Mark 7:21, 22) Even the apostle Paul said, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing." (Romans 7:18) Now, when a man looks at all this evil which is in him by nature, and thinks that it is good, and that he can get good out of himself, the result can be plainly seen: the vilest wickedness must be the result. He virtually says, "Evil, be thou my good."

The Wisdom of this World—"The world by wisdom knew not God." Keeness of intellect is not faith, nor is it a substitute for faith. A man may be a brilliant scholar, and still be the basest of men. Several years ago a man charged with half a score or more brutal murders was hanged, and yet he was a scholar and a scientist, and had held a high position in society. Learning is not Christianity, although a Christian may be a learned man. Modern inventions will never save men from perdition. Some modern philosopher has said that "idolatry can not live by the side of the highest art and culture that the world has ever known." But at the same time men were sunk in such wickedness as referred to by the apostle in the last part of the first chapter of Romans.* Even the reputed wise men were such as are there described. It was the natural result of their looking at themselves for righteousness.

In the Last Days—Read the last verses of the first chapter of Romans if you wish to have a picture of the world in the last days. The one who believes in a millennium of peace and righteousness before the coming of the Lord will doubtless be shocked; but he needs to be. Read that list of sins carefully, and then see how exactly it tallies with the following:

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:1-5) This all springs from self, the very source of the evil with which Paul charged the heathen. Those things are the works of the flesh. (See Galatians 5:19-21.) They are the natural result of trusting in self.

* The author, writing in 1895, could hardly have imagined the horrors of World Wars I and II perpetrated by some of the most highly educated, cultured people the world has ever known.

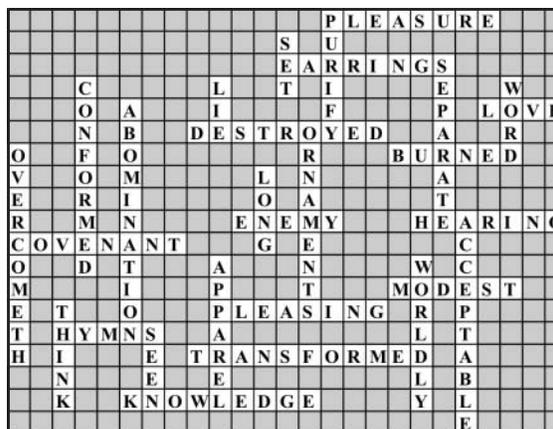
In spite of the declaration of the apostle, there are very few who will believe that this state of things will ever be general, and especially among those who profess godliness. But the seed which produces such a crop is already sown broadcast. The Papacy, "that man of sin," "the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped" (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4), is the strongest force in professed Christendom, and its power is daily increasing. And how is it increasing? Not so much by the direct accessions as by the blind acceptance of its principles by professed Protestants. It has placed itself above God in thinking to change his law. (Daniel 7:25) It boldly adopted the heathen sun festival day, Sunday, in the place of the Sabbath of the Lord, the memorial of creation, and defiantly points to it as its badge of authority. And the majority of Protestants follow in its train, accepting a custom which stands for the exaltation of man above God, the symbol of justification by works instead of by faith.

When professed Christians cling to a human ordinance in spite of the express command of the Lord, and support their custom by appeals to the Fathers, men who were learned in the philosophy of heathenism, the road to any evil which their hearts may choose is but a down grade. "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." (Matthew 11:15)

(To be continued)

(This article was taken from a series of articles printed in *The Signs of the Times* from October, 1895 through September, 1896. Some editing has been done for this publication. *Editor*)

Answers to Crossword Puzzle on page 8



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