

Glory

January-March, 2003

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Volume 6, Number 1

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Scripture:

"I, Simon Peter, a servant and apostle of Jesus Christ, wrote this to you whose experience with God is as life-changing as ours, all due to our God's straight dealing and the intervention of our God and Savior, Jesus Christ...

...So God knows how to rescue the godly from evil trials, and he knows how to hold the wicked people's feet to the fire until Judgment Day.

[Editor: Stanley Scism adapted this text from 2 Peter 1.1-2.9 in Eugene Peterson's translation, *The Message*.]

NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS NEWS:

AZERBAIJAN: In Baku, the capital city, Christian education is opening in this Islamic nation at a school led by the city's director of education.

BANGLADESH: Forty-five have recently been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, while seven have just been filled with the Spirit. And in the Shatkira area, a new place for the United Pentecostal Church, thirty people were baptized.

BELGIUM: In Belgium, twelve were baptized and ten received the Spirit between March and June, 2002.

BELIZE: During children's evangelism, 28 received the Holy Spirit.

BOTSWANA: God is moving in Women's Ministries. Seven received the spirit in Francistown. At a home missions church, another seven women received the Spirit.

In children's ministry, at the close of a lesson entitled, "The Case of the Missing Name" 11 were baptized in Jesus name (9 children with prior approval from their parents, and two adults).

BURKINA FASO: A training program has now equipped thirteen men for ministry.

BURUNDI: The UPC Burundi received 177 UPC refugees from Tanzania. 111 were baptized in Jesus name and filled with the Spirit.

CAMEROON: Eight people were baptized and two filled with the Spirit.

CHINA: As Sias U (www.sias.net.cn) there are fifty foreign teachers and about fifteen children, even homeschool programs. The childrens learn Chinese, art, PE, music, piano. Age are from preschool to teenagers. One Western girl is involved with Chinese cheerleaders. Some single mothers whose husbands have rare blood disease. Chinese students watch families and see how they function—that's an education in itself and a testimony for Jesus.

CONGO: Twenty-two churches in Kinshasha have joined the UPC, completed a three-week intensive training course. Eight churches in Lubumbashi are receiving extendd training each week. Twenty executive board members, pastors and wives have been baptized in Jesus name. Fulltime staff and volunteers are translating materials into French and Swahili. Six students have just graduated from an English as a Second Language Program.

EQUADOR: General conference attendance over 10-13,000, two thousand people filled with the Spirit, men and women climbing over the balcony rails to get into the church service, 22 Bible college graduates. Church now has more than 200 licensed ministers.

ERITREA: “Religious freedom has been gradually eroded in Eritrea until today when there seems to be a renewed clampdown on believers,” CAW (Christian Solidarity Worldwide) Chief Executive Mervyns Thomas says. “We call on the international community to speak up for those who are being persecuted for their faith before the situation becomes even more serious and we call on church leaders of all denominations to work for reconciliation and unity.” Oppression is especially bad in the armed forces after large numbers of Eritrea soldiers grew in faith by listening to a Christian radio station from the Seychelles, CAW said. Army prayer meetings are now forbidden and attendance is punishable by imprisonment. Anyone found in possession of a Bible faces severe punishment, and there are unconfirmed reports of several young Christian soldiers having been shot after being discovered reading the Bible.

GHANA: During evangelism there, 323 received the Spirit and 58 were baptized.

GUINEA: The English-speaking nation of Liberia held a crusade in French-speaking Guinea. Two receive the Spirit; eight were baptized.

KENYA: Fifty-four received the Spirit at a regional conference in Western Kenya.

KOREA: At youth camp, many people received the Holy Spirit and some baptized.

LESOTHO: Twenty-nine received the Holy Spirit in a ladies conference.

LIBERIA: Nineteen were baptized and 38 filled with the Spirit. Forty-one more received the Spirit at the annual youth conference.

MALAWI: 176 received the Spirit in a two-night meeting in Zomba. 123 received the Spirit in Bible studies and services leading up to the meetings. That's 299 in a Muslim community. Eighteen local congregations united to host the meetings. Every church had at least ten receive the Holy Spirit. Ten former Muslims joined the Church. And thirty-five people received the Spirit at the Blantyre district conference.

MEXICO: Mexico City now has 40 churches for 23 million people. A hurricane hit the Yucatan peninsula. Seventeen United Pentecostal Church buildings were destroyed and 40% of the church's people in outlying areas lost their homes.

Forty churches in the area were hit with a lot of water, but the district supervisor, Martin Gonzales, said, “We will rebuild and we will have greater revival!”

In Tijuana, the district convention had 1300 in attendance, 85 received the Spirit, 11 were baptized in Jesus name.

In Queretaro, Pastor Cesar Perez, district supervisor, now has over sixty in attendance, and at a district rally had over 240 in attendance.

A radio station manager came forward for prayer for his swollen hands. The next morning, his hands were completely healed.

And during two district conventions in Mexico, 114 received the Holy Ghost and ten were baptized.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA: New adult literacy classes for church women is yielding huge interest. Most of the women had never been to school in their lives.

Children's ministry led to seventy kids receiving the Spirit.

PHILIPPINES: During a revival in Northern Luzon, 122 received the Holy Spirit.

A. These appear on your skin when you've been out in the sun too much. They give leprosy.

Q. What's a home run in baseball?

A. This happens when rain ends a game and everyone scampers for shelter.

Q. Why does chewing gum harden after chewing?

A. Perhaps the combination of gum and spit mixes like sand and cement. Which suggests creative construction substitutions in the event of a cement shortage.

The above kindly and, I hope, humorously presented by Stanley Scism

Q. How should I compliment someone's home or property?

A. Say, as does the "discerning bird" in Wodehouse while flying over the grounds and subjecting them to a bird's eye scrutiny, "His lines are cast in pleasant places...yea, he hath a goodly heritage" (from *Barmy in Wonderland* in P. G. Wodehouse' *The Theatre Omnibus*, London: Random House, 1994, p195). This has the added advantage of being Scriptural.

Q. Should I quit or be fired?

A. One character in this predicament takes solace from Shakespeare and is, as Brutus describes himself in Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*, "armed so strong in honesty that they pass by him like the idle wind, which he respects not. Fire him, forsooth! Why, he's probably on his way up here not to spit in your eye and hand in his resignation". Much better to be so soft-spoken that "his voice was virtually a coo, as if he had been a cushat dove in conference with another cushat dove". And if you must dismiss someone, at least say, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning". (Ibid, p 201, 205.)

Q. When you're hungry and your host won't feed you, what do you do?

A. "His stomach had begun to make low, querulous noises...excellent idea to take advantage of his companion's slumber to creep out and fortify himself. If a chap asks you to dinner, he reasoned, you naturally stick around till he gives the signal for putting on the nosebag, but once it has become obvious that mine host has no intention of giving such a signal and that, as far as he is concerned, no calories may be expected, you can consider yourself at liberty to slide out and forage on your own. Emily Post, he was sure, would endorse this view" (Ibid, p224).

Q. What do I do if a big dog chases me?

A. If a large, aggressive dog, whose "strength is as the strength of ten, because his heart is pure", pursues you, and you are all for peace in our time", then pray, "O for the wings of a dove" and immediately ascend the strongest nearby tree. (Ibid, p 224, 226, 229).

Q. What do I do if a friend and I are going out to celebrate, but we can't decide where?

A. Say, "Whither thou goest, I will go" (Ibid, p227).

Q. What do I do if a boss accuses me inaccurately?

A. Say, "Lay off, Simon Legree, and drop that cowhide whip. Don't you know Lincoln had freed us slaves? Don't you ever read the papers?" (Ibid, p237). Of course, if you say this unjustly, you might find yourself more free (sans job) than you'd planned.

Q. Should I tell the object of my attentions and affections that I love her, or not?

A. "Let not concealment like a worm in the bud feed on your damask cheek" ("Jeeves and the Greasy Bird" in Wodehouse, p424).

Q. I'm tired. Should I give up?

irrigation ditches made the most of the Nile's annual gift. They had oxen pull plows and grew beans, barley and wheat. With water, they could raise two harvests per year. Oxen also threshed wheat by trampling on a hard surface to separate dry husks from grain.

The Nile's bounty allowed division of labor. Carpenters drilled holes in wood by rotating a flint point with a bow. Trade grew. Government to regulate and protect trade also inevitably grew. Scribes (government officials who, unlike most people, could read and write) traveled the Nile on reed boats, measured fields, counted cattle and calculated tax. People paid by acreage and cattle, and through barter. As government strengthened, a rich society rose.

In Egypt, Abraham met a civilization differing in many respects from his own. Egypt believed in an afterlife. Kings, already considered agents of gods, if they were properly buried, they would arise to become gods. Pharaoh Khufu (known to the Greeks as Cheops) sank his chops into the afterlife by, during his reign of 2589-2566 BC, commanding the construction of his pyramid. Slaves living in purpose-made towns nearby quarried limestone into two million stone blocks, most weighing around 500 lbs, some much heavier. They slid these on parallel logs covered with Nile mud, then up long ramps winding around the rising pyramids. Many slaves suffered bone damage and died young. Construction took twenty years, working all year but especially in the summer when the Nile flooded and people couldn't work on fields, anyway.

From Aswan, down the Nile 600 miles on reed came granite for Khufu's burial chamber. In time, the emperor's cedar and hemp, ten-oared funeral barge, carved to resemble reed boats used to transport on the Nile, carried him to the pyramid while his body remained cooled with palm leaves. Then his body was carried to the funeral in a boat-shaped sledge proceeded by many mourners to show the society's great sadness at his death (excepting, no doubt, the dead slaves), he was buried (no mummification—those techniques developed later) with a collection of food, furniture, servants and other objects he might need in an afterlife. Finally, the people buried his boat in the sand beside the pyramid to allow him to travel to the next world in style.

This pyramid, containing more stone than all the later European cathedrals combined, stood there, already an ancient relic, for Abraham to see when he came, starving, to Egypt. By the time of his visit, Egyptians still buried their dead in pyramids.

By Moses' birth, 1526 BC [the exodus was in 1446 BC, 480 years before Solomon's fourth year of reign (1K 6.1), which we know as 966], Egyptians had turned from pyramids to temples to house their royal dead. The most famous example, boy-Pharaoh Tutankhamen, born in 1341 BC, died 1323 BC, stands out primarily for his grave not having been robbed before twentieth-century archaeologists could see, evaluate, record and show to the world his tomb and rich grave goods, and perhaps accumulate for themselves his dubious curse. (Since his royal highness had died of a blow to the head, his curse would more logically have descended on his murderers.)

Prophet Daniel, exiled to Babel (known to the Greeks as Babylon) when the Neo-Chaldean empire conquered the Assyrian and Egyptian empires and many other, smaller kingdoms, including the remains of Solomon's proud empire), survived the conquest of Babel by the Medes and Persians, and, while an elderly administrator in the Persian empire, received prophetic visions and dreams about Alexander's conquest of Persia and his brief but broad Greek Empire.

Born in 356 BC to the Macedonian king, Phillip II, Alexander had grown brave and strong, rode skillfully, and, at age twelve, had tamed Bucephalus, a strong and wild horse whom no adult could control, by realizing it was afraid of its shadow, and turning it to face the sun.

Alexander's father conquered Greece in 336 BC and, when he died in 334 (foul play was suspected by Alexander's mother because Phillip had started looking at younger women), Alexander succeeded him as king. He was twenty-two years old.

That same year, Alexander started implementing his father's plan to conquer Persia (who had conquered). Persia's empire under its present—and last—king,

Darius III, stretched from Turkey to Egypt to India. Alexander invaded and soon controlled much of the western Persian empire. The next year, at Issos, Alexander led his well-trained, loyal troops across a river separating his soldiers from the Persians, defeated a much larger Persian force, and Darius fled, leaving his wife, mother and children at Alexander's mercy.

Persian chaos gave Alexander time for other pursuits. He marched south, conquering more Persian lands, many cities surrendering without a fight. Capturing Tyre took seven months, during which Alexander ordered his troops to build, using the rubble of the former city of Tyre, defeated by Babel years before, a causeway from the coast to the island on which set the new city. By clearing the old site to the bare rock, Alexander fulfilled Hebrew prophets' predictions that Tyre would become a place where fishermen stretched out nets to dry.

Tyre never tired of sending flaming ships to set alight the siege towers Alexander's troops built, and when Tyre finally fell in July 332 BC, Alexander's troops slaughtered the men and enslaved the women.

From Tyre, Alexander marched to Egypt, paying no attention to Israel, who had been restored order of the first Persian king, Cyrus, to Jerusalem.

Egyptians, hating Persian rule, welcomed Alexander as a god-king. Knowing he was a king and already believing, as had many Greek leaders long before him, that kings and heroes descended from gods and this accounted for their greatness, he nevertheless enjoyed the company of other people agreeing with him and he stayed in Egypt until April 331, meanwhile visiting a god's temple at an Egyptian oasis so as to take on the official deity. He remaining Greek enough to also send an expedition trying to find why the River Nile flooded annually.

Meanwhile, Darius III assembled a new army, so Alexander marched again, met and defeated Darius III at Guagamela. Darius III escaped, only to be murdered while a fugitive.

Alexander rode through Babel, Susa, Persepolis, Tehran, past the southern coast of the Caspian Sea, founding Alexandrias, passing through Kandahar, Kabul, Samarkand, and finally his horse died of old age and had a city, Boukephala, named after it. Alexander proceeded to Taxila, then was met in 326 BC at Hydaspes by King Porus and his 200 battle elephants trained to trample enemy underfoot and use their tusks to drive a way forward. The elephants marched in a straight line like a mobile fortress, but under attack from the Macedonian phalanx, the elephants, who knew a bad thing when they saw it, turned and fled, stampeding Indian warriors.

Alexander wanted to, and probably could, battle his way across India, but his troops had fought for eight years, were tired and far from home, and Alexander's attempt to rally them with patriotic speeches failed. He had fulfilled the extent of the empire Daniel had foreseen.

Some troops returned to Susa, the Persian capital, by sea. Alexander led the rest back overland—a big mistake as their march became a thirty scorching ordeal. The cloudbursts created flash floods, drowning many people. Sandstorms blinded them and they lost their way. Starving soldiers slaughtered pack animals and ate raw meat. He had led 85,000 into the desert; 25,000 survived. Yet his troops continued to respect him, since he suffered their same hardships.

Back in Susa in 324, Alexander feasted to celebrate his Persians conquests, and tried to consolidate his Greek-Persian empire by a mass wedding wherein he and eighty officers took Persian brides. He began to demand hero-worship and stand on Persian ceremony, and Greek soldiers resented this betrayal of democratic ideals.

He was already a legend. He had plundered gold, formed this into coins with his image looking suitably proud of his accomplishments. He had won great victories, never lost a battle, and built in eleven years an empire from Greece to Egypt to India, meanwhile founding seventy cities, naming at least several of them Alexandria, and minting coins calling himself "the Great."

The next year, in Babel, at a banquet he drank almost a gallon of wine, then collapsed. Ten days later, June 13, he died. His body was taken to Egypt and buried in a gold coffin in Alexandria. His empire was divided among his generals into four kingdoms, two of which, the Ptolemy and the Seleucid, also figure in Daniel's prophecies. These empires fought each other until the Romans, piece by piece,

cleverly and firmly assisting this, now that faction, took over the Eastern Mediterranean.

By the time Jesus walked on earth, the Roman Empire and Pax Romana firmly ruled. According to Roman legend, their empire began when orphaned twins, Romulus and Remus, set adrift in the Tiber River in Central Italy, were rescued by a she-wolf, who suckled them like cubs. They grew to men, built a settlement where they'd been abandoned, one day quarreled violently, and Romulus killed Remus. If that fight had gone otherwise, we'd be talking about the Roman Empire and reading stories by Uncle Remus. The new "city" was named Rome, and he became its first king about 750 BC—about the same time Hosea and Amos prophesied, Azariah and Jothan co-reigned in Judah, Menahem ruled in Israel, and the Assyrian Empire began to expand toward Israel's fratricidal chaos.

The Romans later expelled a cruel king, Tarquin, who returned trying to retake his throne. His only access was by a small bridge three soldiers defended while engineers cut its supports. Two soldiers fled and Horatius Cocles, alone, guarded it until it collapsed. It was 509 BC—construction on the temple continued in Jerusalem under Zerubbabel's and Jeshua's leadership, while Haggai and Zechariah encouraged the people.

After Tarquin's defeat, the Romans made their city a republic. In annual elections, they chose two leaders called consuls, who together led the city. Three hundred old men of patrician families advised the Consuls. This group became known as the Senate.

Rome's well-trained armies captured surrounding city-states, then nations further away, gathering power and enemies. They built military road networks allowing soldiers to travel wherever necessary, and by 275 BC, Rome controlled Italy.

Rome fought wars with Carthage, the north African empire. During one war, Carthage threatened to attack from Spain. Since Rome controlled the sea, the Carthaginian general Hannibal, marched overland with 40,000 foot soldiers, cavalry and war elephants, fighting hostile tribes along the way, and crossed the Pyrenees and the Alps—few elephants survived that journey. Defeating Hannibal took Rome seventeen years. So they wouldn't have to do it again, they destroyed Carthage in 146 BC. By then, in combination with results from other wars, the Mediterranean had become a Roman lake.

Prisoners of war became slaves either to work the land in the place of soldiers who had gone to war or to serve wealthy Romans. At one time, slaves outnumbered free men 3 to 1, and revolts sprang up frequently. Some slaves were conscripted to fight each other as gladiators in the public entertainments. One such slave, Spartacus, led a slave revolt in 73 BC. This was eventually crushed and thousands of slaves crucified at the roadsides.

One Roman general Julius Caesar, commanded soldiers who conquered Gaul (France), but his enemies, fearing he planned to reign as king, plotted against him. His return in 49 BC led to civil war, which his troops won. Caesar now became a dictator and named his adopted son, Octavian, as heir. On 15 March 44 BC, conspiring young senators led by Brutus and Cassius attacked and stabbed Caesar to death in the Senate. After another civil war, Octavian took control. The Senate made him Rome's first emperor, ending the Republic and giving him total power. He ruled wisely, calling himself only Princeps (first citizen). Later, the Senate called him Augustus (venerable). During his reign, the arts flourished and he turned central Rome into a city of marble.

Augustus' successor, Tiberius, ruled when Jesus was born, and the Roman empire still ruled when Jesus died, was buried and rose again. Jesus' many statements about human government are to be seen in the light of the Roman Empire and its client kingdoms in Galilee, Judea and Idumea.

The fourth emperor, Claudius, arranged the invasion of England in 44 AD. Claudius died when his wife poisoned him so that her son by a previous marriage could reign.

The fifth emperor, Nero, had his mother killed, then also ordered his wife murdered. When half of Rome burned down, he blamed the Christians, then rebuilt a

third of the city as his palace. He loved racing chariots, a Roman obsession, and this kept him in popular favor longer than his quality of administration deserved.

In 114 AD, Hadrian had a defensive wall built across England to help keep out the Pictish raiders. By 117, Rome controlled most of Europe, as well as North African (including Egypt, the capital's grainary), the Near East and Turkey, by training an army whose legionnaires would conquer a new territory, police it, then retire there. The resulting enforced rule Rome called the Pax Romana (Roman Peace).

After the empire began to reach the extent its' present policy could police, and after their wealth began to soften them, and when leadership quarrels and civil wars divided the empire, barbarian hordes, themselves pushed out of their previous lands by other, expanding tribes further away, invaded the Roman Empire in 200 AD.

The Roman empire had grown too large for one man to rule, so Constantine divided the empire into two halves, East and West, and created a new capital in the East, Constantinople. This same emperor also claimed faith in Christianity, passed an edict of toleration, thus ending the severe persecution to which Christians had been subjected, and later made Christianity the national religion.

In 410 AD, King Alaric led his Visigoths, descendants of a Scandinavian race, in defeat of Rome. Later, other barbarian tribes, such as the Vandals, did the same, and in 476 AD, barbarians deposed the last emperor and the empire ended after over 1000 years.

Romans, obsessed with recording detail, left a clear picture of their daily lives. Today, we still use the Roman 26-letter alphabet and the Roman 365-day calendar. Our month of July is named after Julius Caesar, and August after Augustus. January is named after the Roman god Janus, March after the Roman god Mars, September-December after the seventh to tenth months of the Roman calendar.



Bible Study:
Scism

by Stanley

Genesis Chapter Two:

The first three verses best go with the previous chapter.

God finished his work, so he stopped (a lesson workaholics haven't learned). He "rested" not meaning he was tired, still less that he slept. He just ceased. He set up the seventh day as a day of rest, making it holy. *Sabbath* is the Hebrew word for *rest*.

When the Law came, remembering to keep the Sabbath Day holy, was "grandfathered" into the Ten Commands. When Jesus Christ came to fulfill the Law and supersede it by a covenant of Grace, those items that had predated the Law, such as Faith, Circumcision, Sabbath, Tithing and blood sacrifice, would still have remained in place. However, Jesus confirmed all the Ten Commands except this one, saying that he was greater than the Sabbath. And Paul said that circumcision has no spiritual effect at all. And the New Testament declares many times that Jesus on the cross was the last blood sacrifice. This is why, today, we still emphasize faith and we practice tithing, but we don't require observation of the seventh day as Sabbath (it having been replaced by the Lord's Day—the first day of the week, in celebration of Jesus Christ's resurrection), nor require circumcision as a matter of faith, nor practice blood sacrifice.

"This is the account." This phrase occurs repeatedly and in so doing outlines *Genesis* thus:

- Prologue (1:1-2:3)
- 1. Account of the Heavens and Earth (2:4-4:26)
- 2. Account of Adam's Line (5:1-6:8)
- 3. Account of Noah (6:9-9:29)
- 4. Account of Shem, Ham and Japheth (10:1-11:9)
- 5. Account of Shem (11:10-26)
- 6. Account of Terah (11:27-25:11)

- 7. Account of Abraham's son, Ishmael (25:12-18)
- 8. Account of Abraham's son, Isaac (25:19-35:29)
- 9. Account of Esau (36)
- 10. Account of Jacob (37-50)

If someone complains, saying, "Isaac's section is mostly about Jacob and Jacob's is mostly about Joseph! Aren't these titles supposed to apply to the *previous* section?" the answer is no, that they apply to the following session, but that in the above two examples, Isaac *dies* at the end of his section and Jacob very near to the end of his. Most of Joseph's 110-year-long life is unrecorded—we only have the first 44 years or so.

"LORD" Genesis has two accounts of creation. The second starts with the first reference to the Tetragrammaton, the four-letter word for God, revealed to Moses at the burning bush in Exodus 3. In Exodus 6, God says no one before Moses knew God by this name. Since Hebrew of the time had no written consonants, the English equivalent would be YHWH, probably pronounced Yahweh if they had been willing to pronounce it. They were not, and, when they came to it in the text, would instead say, "Adonai" (Lord). "Yahweh" is simply the Third Person equivalent of "I AM." God says to Moses, "I AM." Moses thereafter says about God, "HE IS." That's Yahweh. This word picked up tags to complete the sentence. "Yahweh-Jireh" (HE IS my provider) and so on, including, most notably Yah-Shua (HE IS my savior). This is how you pronounce Joshua's name. By Jesus' time, the pronunciation had slightly changed to Yeshua, same meaning. Gabriel told Mary to name Jesus this because he was to save the people from sin. And Peter told the crowd that this is the saving name. Makes sense.

Moses' books contain parallel passages, some using Yahweh, others not. This has led some scholars to suggest two or more different authors for the books, but they disagree considerably as to where these divisions should be made, and the whole movement has been increasingly discredited in more recent years.

Also, Jesus Christ and other New Testament figures spoke of these books as being by Moses, and differences in style within Moses' books are easily understood as being:

1. Differences between sources Moses is quoting or adapting, as contrasted with his own writing (Yahweh portions).
2. Different portions being written over a long period of time, and his style changing over the years (the same understanding explains the difference between Isaiah 1-39 and 40-66, and the difference between the Pastoral Epistles of Paul and the rest of his work (Romans-Thessalonians, Philemon). For instance, Moses' difference in style, in getting to the heart of the law and preoccupied with getting everything written down, is noticeable in Deuteronomy—understandable for a national spiritual leader near death wanting to make sure everyone had everything recorded, and that they understood the purposes behind the Law.

"No shrub...had yet appeared...and no plant." This starts the narration during the third day of creation. The dry land has appeared, but the vegetation hasn't started yet.

"God had not sent rain...but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground." This gives an idea of how rich with blessing the earth was when God made it. Not only in water, but, for instance, also in oil products. The area of Sodom and Gomorrah used to have many tar pits where the oil simply seeped out on the ground—people didn't need to drill for it. Moses' basket as a baby was lined with bitumen available to a slave woman. The depletion of resources on earth is a result of mankind's obeying on the command to rule over and subdue the earth, but not God's command to take care of it.

"LORD God formed..." In chapter one, God speaks mankind into existence from nothing; in chapter two, God forms the man from dust, and later the woman from his flesh. So which version is correct? The answer is simple: both. Even as God on the third day could declare, "let the dry land appear" and then let it happen by volcanic or tectonic action, in the same way with man God can declare the overall plan and purpose, and then his purpose can be fulfilled physically. The second

account gives the details. This is in line with a pattern in *Genesis*—giving the overall statement first, then going back and filling in details.

“Breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.” Again, *breath, wind and spirit* come from the same Hebrew word. God’s own Spirit, who swept over the abyss in Genesis 1:2, gives us breath and life. God sparked in us part of the flame from his own divine fire. That might be largely gone now, due to mankind’s sin, in the sense of purity and innocence, but not in the sense of having life given by God himself. And even for what mankind has lost there’s a restoration remedy: clinging to God, leaning our lives on him, being sorry for our wrongdoing, asking him to forgive us, being baptized in His name to remit those sins, and being filled again with His Spirit. This can bring us back to purity and innocence.

“Planted a garden in the east, in Eden.” Again note God’s physical involvement—he forms, breathes, plants.

“Trees...pleasing to the eye and good for food.” Eve later noticed these two characteristics of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, but all the trees in the garden had appearance and nutrition. The third characteristic, “desired for making one wise,” the one tree alone had, and her decision to fulfill this desire *her own way* led to sin and death.

“Tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Some people try to translate “tree of life” as “living tree,” but all the trees live. Also, that would mean translating the other as “knowing tree,” attributing conscious life to a plant, which the Bible never elsewhere does.

“Four headwaters.” The names of these lead many people to try to locate Eden thus:

1. Anatolia, where the Tigris and Euphrates headwaters lie. The Pishon and Gihon are, in this interpretation, other, smaller rivers flowing out of the area, perhaps to the Black Sea or the Caspian Sea.
2. Iraq, where the Tigris and Euphrates delta would have been at the time, and certain branches of the delta could have been given the names Pishon and Gihon.
3. The entire Middle East, in which case Pishon and Gihon are considered to be the Nile and the Indus. I doubt this interpretation simply because Moses knows very well what the Nile is, and names it as such in Exodus. People thinking Gihon=Nile do so because this river winds through Cush, which later in the Bible refers to the area south of Egypt, from where indeed the Nile does flow. The answer to this is that, before this area was named Cush, another area could have been named Cush—after all, Cush himself lived in the Middle East, not in Africa. His descendants, traveling to the Nile headwaters, could have named that area after their ancestor. This kind of thing was done frequently enough—Abram’s family named Haran after Abram’s and Nahor’s deceased brother, the Danites named their new home in northern Israel after their ancestor, and various migrating people named new towns they founded after family members or after towns in their homeland. Egypt had a Zoar, and later, one was founded near Sodom. The process continues today—“New York,” “New Hampshire,” and so on. Also, personal names become titles—Caesar was a man’s name before it became a title in the Roman Empire, and in the German and Russian as Kaiser and Czar. The Cush in this verse is possibly Southeast Mesopotamia.

“To work it and take care of it.” The basis for Christian ecology, for responsibly treating the earth without worshipping nature.

“When you eat of it, you will surely die.” Someone might say that when Adam and Eve ate fruit from this tree, they didn’t die. But they were doomed to die. They took their time about it, true, but everyone did back then—no ultraviolet rays to age them more rapidly. And they suffered immediate separation from God. Our ministry of reconciliation is to close that gap by telling mankind what God has done for them to solve the problem of sin.

“Not good for man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable....” A fictional work, *The Forgotten Books of Eden*, speculates Adam trying to mate with various

animals and finding them unsatisfactory, which shows his standards higher than Catherine the Great's (who was found in bed, dead, beside a goat) or Indus River fishermen's (who have mated with river dolphins there) or of an anonymous Hollywood person (who said he didn't care if Bill Clinton was having sex with an animal as long as the economy was doing well), or of various people in various cultures (note statuary in Kajuraho) who have coupled with birds or beasts. These were not "suitable" and would not produce children after a kind, since the two coupling were not of the same "kind."

"The man gave names...." In chapter one, God demonstrated dominion by naming the light day, the darkness night, the expanse sky, the gathered waters seas, and so on. God told man to rule the creatures, and man demonstrates this authority by naming them. God did later again demonstrated rule through names, giving new names to Abram, Sarai and Jacob. Old Testament prophets sometimes name children according to special events taking place near or at the birth time, and royal authority continued to be demonstrated, especially in Babylon, by Babylonian kings giving new names to people they put in authority. In the New Testament, God tells Zechariah and Mary to name their children, respectively, John and Jesus. Naming names specifies a role and demonstrates rule by the one supplying the name. To this day, godfathers give a name, usually their own, and in turn help bear costs in bringing up or providing for the child so named. Various childless couples have named certain men as heirs if those persons will take the family name whose heir they are to be. It's an old custom.

"Ribs." Doesn't necessarily mean the bone we call rib today, but can mean simply part of the man's side.

"Woman...man." The Hebrew for the two words is similar, as it is in English. A woman, in English, is a womb-man—a man with a womb. The feminists should like that—it would suggest equal opportunity, indeed greater, since the woman can do everything the man does—plus bear children. Single working mothers might feel that this prophecy has been fulfilled in them.

"For this reason...." Jesus quotes this verse to confirm the permanence of marriage. The Bible gives only two excuses for divorce—infidelity, and when a partner leaves because of the other partner's Christian faith.

"Naked...no shame." So far, they had no sin, so no cause for shame.

SERMONS:

Satan, the World's Deceiver

by Stanley Scism

Genesis 3:1; Job 1:6-7; Isaiah 14:12-16; Luke 10:18; Romans 12:9;
2 Corinthians 11:14; 1 Peter 5:8; Revelation 12:9;

Jesus said, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. How he fell! He was Daystar, some of Dawn, but was cut down to the ground. He'd said, "I will ascend to heaven; I will set my throne up high; I will make myself like God..." But he was brought down to depths, and those who see him will stare at him and wonder, saying, "This is the one who made the world tremble?"

When the angels came to present themselves before God's court, Satan also came. God said, "Where have you been?" Satan said, "Out."

The serpent of *Genesis* is called the Devil and Satan elsewhere in Scripture. He disguises himself even as an angelic light, but as a roaring lion he prowls around looking for someone to eat. So beware! Watch out!



Satan's Power

by Stanley Scism

Genesis
3:1-4,13; John

8:44; 13:2,27; Acts 26:18

2 Corinthians 11:3; 2 Timothy 2:25-26; 1 Peter 5:8

The subtle serpent said, "Did God say?" She answered, "Yes, God did say." Then the serpent contradicted: "It's a lie! You won't die." When she listened and obeyed the serpent rather than God, God said, "What's this you did?" She answered, "The snake tricked me!" He deceived her by cunning. He has nothing to do with truth—he's a liar and the father of lies.

Now, like a lion roaring, he prowls around looking for someone to eat. He's a murderer from the beginning. The devil entered into Judas to betray Jesus.

May God grant that people repent and come to know truth and escape the devil's trap, after having been captured by him to do his will.



Give No Chance To Satan!

by Stanley Scism

1 Chronicles 21:1; Matthew 4:10; 16:23; Luke 8:5,11-12; 13:11,16; 22:3,31;
Romans 16:20; 2 Corinthians 2:11; Ephesians 2:2; 4:27;
1 Thessalonians 2:18; 1 Peter 5:9; 1 John 5:19;

The evil one's power holds the whole world, who follow the prince of the power of the air, the spirit now at work in disobedient people.

We are ignorant of his schemes. Like a bird stealing new-sown seed from a field, he steals God's Word from people's hard hearts.

Satan wants to sift us like wheat. He incited David to number Israel. He entered Judas, one of Jesus twelve closest disciples. He bound a woman with a spirit of illness for eighteen years. He hindered Paul and party from visiting Thessalonian Christians.

So we must say, "Get behind me, Satan! Begone!" Resist him, firm in your faith. Then the God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet.



That Ancient Serpent

by Stanley Scism

Genesis 3:14-15; John 12:31; Romans 16:20; Hebrews 2:14-15;
1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:9; 20:10; 21:4

God said to the serpent, "Because you did this, I curse you. You'll crawl on your stomach and eat dust. You and mankind will hate each other. You'll bruise Eve's offspring, but he'll crush your head."

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. Now judgment falls on this world's ruler. Jesus came to destroy the devil's works. Through death and resurrection, Jesus destroyed him who had death's power, and delivered all those who through death's fear were bound all life long.

The great dragon (the ancient serpent, Devil, Satan, the world's deceiver), was thrown down to the earth, and his fallen angels with him. And he will be thrown into the lake of fire and brimstone. Then there will be more death or mourning or crying or pain.



Be Holy, For I Am Holy

by Stanley Scism

Leviticus 11:44; Psalm 24:3-4; Psalm 51:10; Proverbs 22:11;
Isaiah 6:5,7; Matthew 5:8; Ephesians 4:22-24; 5:5;
Hebrews 12:10,14; 2 Peter 1:4

Who will ascend the Lord's hill and stand in His holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart. Happy are the pure-hearted—they will see God. Be sure that no immoral or impure man has any inheritance in Christ's kingdom. Strive for peace and holiness—without these no man will see the Lord.

Woe will come to us. We're lost, unclean. Lord, create in me a clean heart—put a new, right spirit in us. Then our guilt will be taken, our sin forgiven.

Put off your old nature, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful lusts, and be renewed in your mind's spirit, and put on a new nature, created after God's likeness in true rightness and holiness. This way, we escape the corruption in the world and take on divine nature. We share God's holiness. He who love pure-heartedness will have the King as his friend.



God's Will—Your Holiness

by Stanley Scism

Romans 6:5; 13:14; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 3:5,7-8,12,14;
Ephesians 4:22,24; 1 Thessalonians 4:3

We've been crucified with Christ; no longer we, but Christ lives in us. The life we live on earth we live by faith in Him, who loved us and gave Himself for us. If we unite with Him in a death like His, we shall surely unite with Him in His resurrection.

So kill whatever is earthly in you—immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire and covetousness, which is simply a form of idolatry. These you did, not now put them away—anger, wrath, malice, slander, foul talk. Put off your old nature.

Put on the new nature, created after God's likeness in true rightness and holiness. Put on Lord Jesus Christ and don't provide to full human desires. Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassion, kindness, lowliness, meekness and patience...And above all these put on love, binding everything together in perfect harmony.



Is Getting Mad a Good Deed?

by Stanley Scism

Proverbs 24:29; Jonah 4:4; Matthew 10:35,37,41;
Luke 10:40; 15:25-28; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Ephesians 4:32

When the prodigal son's elder sibling discovered the party was for his recently returned brat kid brother, he was mad. When the other ten disciples found out that James' and John's mother had asked Jesus to place them on thrones at His right and left in the Kingdom, they were mad. When Martha found out Mary was sitting around just listening to Jesus instead of helping in the kitchen, Martha was mad.

Love is patient, kind, not jealous or boastful, arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way, is not irritable or resentful, doesn't rejoice in wrong, but rejoices in right. Love bears, believes, hopes and endures all things. Don't repay evil for evil, but kindly, tender-heartedly forgive one another as God in Christ forgave you.



God Made Me Productive In the Midst of Trouble

by Stanley Scism

Genesis 37:3-4; 39:2-3,6-9,16-17,20-21; 41:39-41,52; 50:18-20;
Acts 7:9; Romans 8:28

Jacob played favorites, as his parents had done, and loved Joseph more than his other children. When Jacob's other sons saw this, they hated Joseph, wouldn't speak civilly and sold him into Egypt, but God was with him.

Joseph became a successful man and his master saw God was with Joseph. Joseph was handsome and well built. His master's wife made eyes at him and asked him to sleep with her. He refused, saying, "How can I do this great evil and sin against God?" His master came home, she accused Joseph of trying to rape her, and Joseph's master put Joseph in prison. But God was with Joseph.

Egypt's pharaoh (king) told Joseph, "Since God has shown you my dream's meaning, who else is as discreet and wise as you? You administrate Egypt. Eventually, Joseph's brothers fell before him. Joseph said, "You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good."

We know that in everything God works for good with those who love Him.



Perplexed, But Not Driven To Despair

by Stanley Scism

1 Kings 3:7; 2 Chronicles 20:12; Psalm 5:8; 25:15; John 12:27-28;
Acts 20:22; 22:10; Romans 8:28; 2 Corinthians 4:8

God, we can't fight the huge multiplicities of problems facing us. We don't know what to do—we look to You. We always look to You—You'll rescue us.

When we have big responsibilities at a young age, and we don't know what to do, lead us in Your rightness—make our way straight so our enemies don't destroy us.

Jesus had times not at peace. He said, "Now my soul is troubled. What should I say? "God, rescue me?" No, I came to earth for this. Instead, "God, glorify Your name." And a heavenly voice said, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again."

Paul said, "What shall I do?" God said, "Get up and go to Damascus and there you will be told." Later, Paul said, "I go to Jerusalem, bound in the Spirit, not knowing what will happen to me there."

But we know that in all things God works for good with those who love Him.



Book Reviews

Enid Blyton's *The River of Adventure*

This volume closes the *Adventure* series. This time they float down a river in Iraq and accidentally end up finding a temple 7,000 years old. Sound incredible? It's been done.

This book has much more Bible in it than the previous ones did. They refer to Abraham, Nebuchadnezzar, Sargon. The denominational connection of this English author is obvious when her characters speak of church as an "awe-inspiring" experience (p154).

Charles Schulz' *The Mad Punter Strikes Again*

First Snoopy's doghouse is going to be wiped out by bulldozers constructing a new highway. After his doghouse is rescued, Snoopy can focus on playing polkas, Scottishes and waltzes on his accordian. He tires of that and tries to scare people by pretending to be a vulture, but Lucy scares *him* out of that plan. Like other dogs, he worries about the end of the world and about his cholesterol level. Then, after a brief stint as a whirlidog, he goes in for "mad punting."

Peter Kreeft's *Socrates Meets Jesus*

Places modern fuzzy "politically correct" reasoning against pure logic in facing the claims of Jesus Christ. Dramatic form. Outstanding. I suggest that it be acted out. I'll try to condense it and provide a shortened version for practical use.

Ellis Scism's and Stanley Scism's *Northwest Passage*

So I read it again. I need to keep it fresh so I can quote myself and add spice to my conversation (if only Shaw hadn't said something very similar). I read *Northwest Passage* in preparation for writing the next volume. This is my favorite book of the ones I've written—so far.

Brian Delf and Richard Platt's *History: The Really Interesting Bits*

Double-A4-size pages, profusely illustrated, intended for children yet also accurate, informative. Interesting and reliable. Skip the introduction and go straight to the rest of the book.

Daniel Thorp's *Lewis & Clark: An American Journey*

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark captained an exploration of the Missouri River and the mountain crossing to the Columbia River, and to the Pacific, in 1804-1806. This book gives an illustrated history of their journey. Beautiful photos and interesting text. One issue, we had an excerpt from this book in the Health section.

David Letterman's *The "Late Night With David Letterman" Book of Top Ten Lists*

Reasons to read this book include: "Plentiful misprints sure to make it a valuable collector's item," "ideal for really easy book report," "randomly selected numbers could include winning lottery combinations," "paper made from criminal trees which deserved to die," and, of course, "sure to impress the babes." We include an excerpt in this issue.

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### **Tape/CD Review:**

\* If you sing, put some joy into it, not like this: "He sang this time as if nobody loved him. As a song, it was not a very pathetic song, being all about coons spooning in June under the moon, and so on and so forth, but...handled it in such a sad, crushed way that there was genuine anguish in every line. By the time he reached the refrain I was nearly in tears. It seemed such a rotten sort of world with all that kind of thing going on in it" ("Extricating Young Gussie" in P.G. Wodehouse' *The Theatre Omnibus*, London: Random House, 1994, p390).

### **Perry Como's *Sings Songs of Faith and Inspiration***

Contains 17 songs, including favorites "May the Good Lord Bless and Keep You," "Only One," "I May Never Pass This Way Again," "Whither Thou Goest," "No Well On Earth," "In the Garden," "Prayer for Peace," and "When You Come to the End of the Day." On these songs, he's the best I've heard. Mary O'Hara beats him on "Scarlet Ribbons" and "All Through the Night," Mario Lanza on "The Lord's Prayer," and Sons of the Pioneers on "Twilight on the Trail" (though Como's version has reverberated through my head a lot recently, perhaps because of his trademark ease and calm). This collection has many great songs.

**Bill Cosby's *Why Is There Air?***

He remembers, and reminds of what, we have forgotten—kindergarten, woodworking class, toothaches. And my favorite: driving in San Francisco.

**Glad's *A Capella Hymns***

Fantastic, especially "Lead On, O King Eternal," but also basically the whole collection, including "Hallelujah, What a Savior", "This Is My Father's World", "All Beauty Speaks of Thee", "How Firm a Foundation", "Joyful, Joyful", "Fairest Lord Jesus", "Love Divine All Loves Excelling", "O Worship the King." No one sings a capella music as well as these five men do.

**Ray Conniff Singers' *Young At Heart***

My favorites: "Remember", "You'll Never Know", "I'll Be Seeing You", "Harbor Lights" and, most especially, "Ma, He's Making Eyes At Me." Light-hearted songs with a light sounds.

**MEDIA:**

"You ever been corned by a wounded studio executive...? No? It's an experience every young man ought to have. Broadens the mind and helps to form the character. How well I remember the day when I was wandering through the jungle on the Metro-Goldwyn lot and Louis B. Mayer suddenly sprang out at me from the undergrowth. He had somehow managed to escape from the office where they kept him, and I could see from his glaring eyes and slaving jaws that he had already tasted blood. Fortunately I had my elephant gun and my trusty native bearer with me..." (*Barmy in Wonderland* in P.G. Wodehouse' *The Theatre Omnibus*, London: Random House, 1994, p223).



**Humor:**

**Laura Brown's Cute Little Medieval Nursery Rhymes For Old Children**

Mary had a little lamb  
It ran into a pylon.  
10,000 volts went through the lamb  
And turned it's wool to nylon.

**Top Ten Batman Pet Peeves:**

- 10. After dramatic entrance at scene of crime, having to convince everyone he's not a professional wrestler
- 9. When you can see the outline of his underwear through the Bat suit
- 8. Punks who gather around and smart off while he's getting petrol for the Batmobile
- 7. Nuclear power source for utility belt has rendered him sterile
- 6. When really stupid people shout out, "Hey! Where's Tonto?"
- 5. When dry cleaner accidentally switches Bat suit and someone's costume party outfit
- 4. When scriptwriters can't think of anything better than, "Quick, to the batfax!"
- 3. The way any two-bit moron with a flashlight and a piece of cardboard can summon him at night.
- 2. Scent when the Catwoman hasn't cleaned out her litterbox
- 1. When people call him "The Batman." It's just Batman!

***Wit on Professions***

"An actuary is someone who cannot stand the excitement of chartered accountancy."      Glan Thomas  
 "A lawyer is a learned gentleman who rescues your estate from your enemies and keeps it to himself."      Henry Brougham

