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Recommended Citation

Sanders, Al; Chase, J. Richard; Feinberg, Charles Lee; Sutherland, Samuel H.; Henry, James O.; Rankin, Ethel; Buss, Dietrick; and Anderson, Lloyd T., "Biola Hour Highlights, 1976 - 08" (1976). *Biola Hour Highlight Series*. 65.

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Biola Hour Highlights

Series No.8 1976
Featuring Edited July Messages

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Application to mail at Second Class Postage rates is pending at La Mirada, California, 90639. Twelve issues annually. Printed in U.S.A. by Crown Printing, Fullerton, California. Address: Biola Hour Highlights, 13800 Biola Avenue, La Mirada, California, 90639.

THE WAY OUT OF DEPRESSION

PSALM 3

By: Dr. Al Sanders

As we look at the various Psalms in this tremendous book with 150 chapters, it is extremely important that we understand the background as to how these particular portions were written. All, of course, by God's chosen servants, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Considering it for a moment, the introduction given in this particular portion is extremely significant. It is interesting to note at this point that inscriptions for these Psalms were generally regarded by the early church fathers as inspired. Such views were held by men like Augustine, Jerome, and others. Orthodox Jews, today, keep many of these inscriptions as part of their religious chant, giving as much authenticity to them as to the words of the Psalm itself.

Incidentally, this is the first use of the word "psalm" in the entire book. In the original Hebrew, "psalm" means "to cut off" as one would prune superfluous twigs from a tree being brought to maturity. Basically the idea of a psalm is simply it is a collection of short remarks which are pertinent, pithy statements, moving right to the point. Nowhere do we find this more eloquently illustrated for us than here in this third chapter.

The background of this third Psalm should take some of our time in study because David found himself amid a revolt in his own family. If you stop to think about it, a person can stand almost any other adversity, except when the trouble comes from within the home itself; from those who should be displaying love. II Samuel 15, particularly verses 13 on down to the end of the chapter, give us the setting.

It is interesting to note that when God's Word was originally penned, names were given to individuals which might typify the circumstances of their birth. As an example, Moses was so named because that word means "to be drawn out," and, indeed, he was literally so taken out of the water. Names were also given to typify the life that might be projected for the future of the infant. Apparently David looked at his third child and saw in that little baby's eyes something that he hoped would bring comfort and contentment the rest of his days. He named the child, Absalom, which literally means "his father's peace." Unfortunately, Absalom turned out just the opposite. He was rather his father's "thorn."

Without question, Absalom was one of the most handsome men in all of Israel. His older brother, Amnon, and the firstborn of David, was a wicked young man who fell in love with Absalom's sister, Tamar. As a matter of fact, when he could have her in no other way he set up a series of incidents which allowed him to get her alone, in a compromising situation, so that he could rape her. After this, in selfish gratification, he wanted to get rid of her. This so infuriated Absalom, her brother, that he killed Amnon in a fit of rage. As the son of Mahacah, the daughter of Talmai, who was the king of Geshur, he ran away knowing that his father David would surely

be after him. And to escape, he went to the province of his grandfather, the king of Geshur. At that point his hatred for his own father must have waxed greater than ever before. He began in insidious ways to steal the heart of Israel's population. How fickle that crowd soon turned from David to this murderous pretender to the throne. It reminds us of an incident some centuries later when those who had been fed, blessed, and seen the miracles of the very Son of God were later heard to raise their voices shouting, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!"

Not only was David left destitute of the people, including his soldiers and generals, but also one of his most trusted friends and counselors deserted him. His name was Ahithophel. I have three or four very close friends to whom I turn, from a human standpoint, when I want to try out some new ideas. I value their helpfulness and I love them each one dearly. They have meant much to me over the years. I wonder, too, how I would feel if all of a sudden any one of them turned against me as Ahithophel had done in David's case. Just as an aside, we might also point out that eventually Ahithophel realized he had done something awful and evil. He had chosen the wrong side, as do many in this day and age also foolishly come to find out too late. And eventually, Ahithophel went to his own home and hanged himself. This is recorded in II Samuel 17:23.

Just one other thought as to where David was when he wrote these words in the 3rd Psalm. II Samuel 15:23 tells us specifically that the king passed over the brook of Kidron and up to the Mount of Olives. Here again, a similar journey was to be repeated some centuries later by the Lord Jesus Christ on the night of His betrayal. Both King David and Christ, no doubt, looked down upon the city, having heard the jeers and mockery of the crowd. It is with this background that these words are penned.

For a broad outline we could suggest a division of four major points, two verses for each subject. The first two deal with David's complaint. Verses 3 and 4 show David's concern; verses 5 and 6 David's confidence; and verses 7 and 8 David's victory over the conflict. Some people have entitled this as "The Way Out of Depression Psalm." David truly learned that we have to let discouragement harden our determination, never our hearts. There are others who have called this "The Morning Hymn." And may we ever awaken each day of our lives with a holy confidence and trust borne of God Himself.

In verse one David shows us very graphically his complaint. "Lord, how are they increased that trouble me! Many are they who rise up against me." Have you ever felt like that? What people want the most and get the least is the proper kind of increase. We get increased expenses, increased problems, increased taxes. In fact Benjamin Franklin's the one, I believe, who is credited with saying that "The only things in life of which we can be absolutely assured are death and taxes." Some wiseacre, having heard that, gave the opinion that he wished at times the two might come in that order! Everything begins to crowd in. Sometimes in the morning, on the way to work, I see boys and girls just heading out to school, or waiting for the bus. I think to myself, "Kids, you'd better enjoy yourselves now! You've no idea of the pressures you're going to have to face in later years! Or, I see some of the young people at Biola and my heart goes out to them thinking, "enjoy yourselves! Don't get too serious with one another until that perfect mate is unmistakably shown to you from the Lord. Just enjoy the fellowship together; don't feel pressured." And then I go to a wedding and see young people who are getting married. In those happy, blissful moments they don't realize, and perhaps won't for some time, the heartaches that can develop and grow with the years.

David later observes in the 69th Psalm, verse 4: "They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head." Absalom, Ahithophel, the generals, the soldiers, the people, they had all turned their backs on David. Do you know, the sad thing about this is that the uprising for the King came from the very people who should have been the greatest source of comfort to him. And sometimes for parents, believing mothers and dads, the members of their own immediate family, children who have gone away from the Lord are the greatest burdens that they have to bear.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon pointed out, "Trouble is like a snowball. It gathers as it moves. Sorrow hath a numerous family." But God doesn't bring us into deep waters so that He may drown us, but rather to test us. Because, when you get right down to it, trials don't weaken us, but they do show us where we are weak so that we may become strong through the Holy Spirit, the Word and our Christian growth and spiritual maturity.

It is true: some people make difficulties while some difficulties make people. Not only is there trouble that has increased, but verse two focalizes the problem even more greatly. Quite frankly, it comes as the cheapest and lowest cut of all. David has to observe, "Many there are who say of my soul, There is no help for him in God." I think a turn-down by anyone else could be endurable. This is the exception. You may have been to your boss recently to ask him for a raise. He said, "no!" You may have been to your bank to try and refinance your home. Maybe you needed some cash to pay off debts. They said "No." But listen, the thing which could be more depressing than anything else would be to conceive of the idea that God had nothing left for you! All of the statistics are against us. Why not give up like everybody else? Let's just toss in the sponge and forget it all!

Notice David is lamenting, "Many there are who say of my soul, There is no help." Do you know, when you get depressed your statistics are always going to come up wrong. You just don't have the proper perspective. Think of one example. You remember Elijah? He had some tremendous victories which God graciously gave him. Yet at one time he was terribly depressed. And there, at the brook of Kidron, exactly where David had crossed, he sat down and commiserated, "I'm the only one left." But that wasn't true at all. God had to remind him that there were 700 who hadn't bowed the knee to Baal. So often we get our perspectives all mixed up. We have a tendency to exaggerate when we should be more accurate. We're like the mother whose little boy came running in one day with the exciting news, "Mommy, Mommy, I saw a dog as big as an elephant." The mother remonstrated, "Johnny, haven't I told you a million times not to stretch the truth; don't exaggerate?" She, of course, was doing exactly that; she set the example.

Never forget that when God puts a burden upon you, He at the same time puts His own arms underneath you for the necessary support. And although these people thought David should just quit, God wasn't through with him. Don't try to deviate from, nor hurry the Lord's time table.

Why would these people say such a thing about David? Simply because they knew him! This event in David's life followed in close progression his sin with Bathsheba. Down through the centuries of time, atheists and agnostics have pointed to that incident accusing, "Here's an adulterer and a murderer of whom it says in the Bible that he is a man after God's own heart. How could anyone ever reconcile that?" First of all, keep in mind that all men are sinners. The lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life, the hatred of an individual for another is the same in God's sight as the committal of the very deed. When the Bible states that

David was a man after God's own heart it doesn't mean by design, that is, that David had a heart like God's heart. Rather it was of a direction, that is, that David longed for the heart of God. This is the lesson the Holy Spirit would have us learn.

Then, we mustn't overlook the word "Selah." It is a term found 73 times in the book of Psalms and on three other occasions in the book of Habakkuk. The New Scofield Reference Bible gives this note on page 602, "The frequent use in the Psalms of the Hebrew word, Selah, possible marks those places where a musical rest in the chanting, or a change of instrumental accompaniment stressed a shift of mood." The fact of the matter is, there is no accurate translation of the word "Selah." No one really knows for sure. Some have said it means "to pause and think about what has just been said." Others have suggested that it is a rest or a pause in the music itself. There is something else, too, about the word "Selah." Some feel it is a term which would indicate full volume.

My wife is an accomplished organist, and I enjoy hearing and watching her play. I know one of the pedals she has in front of her is the "crescendo." The more she pushes on that pedal the more stops or pipes can be heard. If she lays on it fully, every note rings out the particular song she's playing. It is an exciting full sound. Now, no one can go through life with the crescendo pedal wide open. There are only appropriate times when all the notes are to be used, and this is one of those moments.

The complaint David has had in these two verses is at the very extreme. There seems to be no way out. Everything appears to be a lost cause. So let's depress that crescendo pedal down to the extreme, and then see what God will do.

Contemplate David's testimony in verse 3. Here is his solid confidence, "But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head." Do you remember those spot announcements on television some years ago, sponsored by the Colgate Company? They were endeavoring to sell toothpaste with an ingredient known as "gardol." It supposedly formed an invisible and invincible shield around the tooth, impervious to attack. In the power of the Lord we have something far better than gardol. It is that which will most certainly ward off the fiery darts of the wicked one, even Satan, the enemy of our souls. And there can be no penetration to the child of God who is watched over by the angel of the Lord. This comes through the shield which is provided.

As human beings we have many different needs. Three which I think are most basic are these: security, contentment, and appreciation. Stop and think about them. From this important verse we see that God gives all three. Security, "Thou art my shield." Contentment, "Thou art my glory." (I find my life fulfilled and complete.) And there is appreciation, too. "God, You are the One who lifts up my head."

There is something else here too. Never overlook the use of personal pronouns: "a shield for me"; "my glory"; "the lifter up of mine head." God lifts the head up spiritually as well as physically. This indicates a restoration from the time of depression and discouragement. As someone has ideally phrased it, "Obstacles are those dreadful things we see when we get our eyes off the goal." This is why, at the close of most every program, when our theme song is heard, we try to give a little sentence sermon. Then we conclude by saying, "And remember, keep looking up." You see, this is the way we can look up, because God lifts up our head. He is our glory.

Verse 4 tells us, "I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah." Now when David said that he cried, that doesn't mean that he hollered to get attention. He didn't beat his chest as a pagan might do, because God hears even a whisper from a contrite heart. What is suggested is that he shed actual tears. To often, we try to hide our emotions. This in itself could be wrong. Do you realize that we, as human beings, are the only part of God's creation endowed with the emotional ability to cry and to react in this fashion? Unfortunately we are foolishly taught to fight back our tears. Weeping needn't be a sign of weakness but rather of maturity when the tears are properly motivated. We know that our Saviour Himself wept on several occasions. He wept over a sinful world and such certainly should cause us tears, too. He wept over those whom He loved. Do we have such a compassion for others? When it comes to our relationship to God, silent prayers are heard, of course. But sometimes I think we do better if we talk to our heavenly Father aloud, letting our voices be heard. (If we articulate the words that certainly would help us to stay awake.) And this is especially true when you realize the conditions David faced. Take the time to look up II Samuel, the 30th verse of the 15th chapter. There you will see very graphically the cause for weeping. Everyone else had turned aside from the king. Interestingly, the third verse of the fourth chapter (just the reverse of this, the fourth verse of the third chapter), David has the positive assurance, "The Lord will hear when I call unto him."

The reference to the "hill" means the concept of the place where God dwelt. This didn't necessarily mean in some specific mountain, but rather it is the place where one could feel the prominence of the Lord, even as in the Holy of Holies with His Shekinah glory filling the place. This is similarly given in the earlier chapter, Psalm 2:6. Here we find Jehovah speaking, "Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion." Later in the fifteenth chapter verse one the question is asked, "Who shall dwell in Thy holy hill?"; that is, in the presence of the Lord.

I really love verse 5. This does something for me. David said, "I laid down and slept; I awaked; for the Lord sustained me." In the original, this passage is in the present tense. The importance of that is to indicate a continuing experience of David. It wasn't that he was so tired because of his journey, but rather that he had come to a place of complete dedication and committal to God. In this manner he could rest at any moment, realizing the sustaining, undergirding grace of God.

I am reminded of the little saying, credited to Dr. Vance Havner, a dear saint of God. He simply illustrates, "Some people count sheep while others talk to the Shepherd." Have you ever been awake in the night, thinking that you would never be able to get back to sleep? Insomnia is what a person has when he lies awake all night . . . for an hour. That time just seems like it is never going to end. David was able to go to sleep, even with all of his adversaries around him. That is an amazing thing. But don't overlook where he was on that occasion. He went to sleep in the Garden of Gethsemane, the Mount of Olives. I wonder if you could sleep in your garden of Gethsemane just now. Pressures may be so great, extremely difficult from every side so that you don't know how you are ever going to get everything done.

The marked and interesting thing about this verse five is not only that David lay down, but also that he slept. He wasn't at a Holiday Inn or Howard Johnson's either. There are noises in motels that just begin to get to you. I can fall off to sleep all right in the evening, but then about 2 a.m. the fellow in the next room comes in and slams the door. I guess you know that there are two kinds of people in the world, apparently. There are those who go to bed early and get up early, and there are those who stay up late and get up late. And most motels have an uncanny knack of putting those two kinds of diverse people in rooms adjoining each other.

It reminds me of the fellow who was visiting his sister and her husband. He had to sleep on a rather lumpy couch. The next morning his sister asked him, "How'd you sleep last night? Very well? And he responded, "Well, not too bad. From time-to-time I got up and rested a bit." That is the way I feel in some of these motels, especially with hard beds and lumpy pillows. But David didn't need any of that. He slept out on the ground, and his enemies were all around him. To make things worse, it was probably very cold. But here are the original three "R's": David was Rested, Refreshed, and Ready to face the new day. It reminds us of that beautiful line of six words: "So he giveth his beloved sleep." This is what God delights to do in our lives.

Haven't you found it to be a fact that there are two things most people have trouble doing? One is going to sleep, and the other is waking up. But not so with David. And sometimes, even though we have prayed, even though we have committed these things to the Lord, they still weigh on our minds. David tells us, "I will both lie down in peace, and sleep; for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety." He simply rested his case with the Lord.

An interesting story came out of Great Britain during World War II. Amid the terrible German blitz attacks, with their buzz-bombs making direct hits in the city of London, there was a dear saint of God who never seemed to be worried or perplexed. She wasn't bothered because of the impending danger that faced the citizens of her day. When friends and neighbors asked her how it was she could go to bed and sleep so calmly at night, she simply responded by saying, "Well the preacher told us that in the Bible it says God never slumbers nor sleeps. Since He's awake and since He has a special concern for me, I figure there's no use the both of us staying awake." And she was right! This woman had learned that we can positively rest our case with the Lord.

In Proverbs 3:24 we are reminded, "When thou liest down, thou shalt not be afraid; yea, thou shalt lie down, and thy sleep shall be sweet." This isn't talking about a presumptuous type of sleep. The Bible nowhere indicates this is to be the case. Complacency and lethargy are sinful. As a matter of fact, in I Corinthians 15:34 we are enjoined to "Awake to righteousness, and sin not; for some have not the knowledge of God." Then Paul adds, "I speak this to your shame." This is rather a full committal into the hands of the Lord for the needs that we have of physical rest when our case is fully placed in God's control.

Verse 6 gives us the Psalmist's reassurance, "I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, who have set themselves against me round about." There is no power strong enough to be lasting if it labors under the weight of fear. This is why David was strong in the Lord, because he wasn't afraid. Psalm 23 verse 4, one of the most familiar passages perhaps in the Word of God, states, "Yea though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Sometimes I think we almost overlook the next five words which are in actuality the most important in the entire chapter. Say them with me, "For thou art with me." This makes all the difference in the world. I don't need to be afraid if all of these problems and perplexities increase on every hand. The reason is because God is with me.

Again to the 27th Psalm, that favored portion. Verse 3 should calm our hearts, for, "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear." We all too well realize that the problem of fear can be overwhelming. We are frequently afraid of what other people might think. There are those who are afraid of what the future might hold. And you know, at night things are always more foreboding. Have you found it that way? We wonder why we did certain things, and we wonder how we can face

another day, and whether our judgments were correct. In the light of day things don't always seem that awesome and foreboding, but they do at night. "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him." And then the Word adds this blessed and powerful promise, "And delivereth them."

I think sometimes we overlook the strength and influence of angels in our lives. We have some good examples in Scripture. While we don't really know fully the intensity of angelic power, yet, just a practical insight is in the case of the Assyrian army. One hundred eighty-six thousand men were slain in one night by only one single angel. No wonder David had the confidence to express positively, "I'm not going to be afraid. They've set themselves round about me, because the Lord is there to save me." David's not underestimating the number, nor the wisdom, nor the prowess of his enemies. He sees them for what they are. They are there, they are very real, and they aren't shadows. But God Himself gives comfort. I like that word "comfort." It is actually, in the original, made up of two words, "com" which is a prefix meaning "with," and the last part is "forte" meaning "strength." In other words it is strength by being with. We are literally strengthened by being with the Lord. This is the very reason that we don't have to fear.

Now here is David's petition. This is where he got victory over the conflict. Verse 7 petitions, "Arise, O Lord; save me, O my God; for thou hast smitten all mine enemies upon the cheekbone; thou hast broken the teeth of the ungodly." The word "arise" is an interesting one. We find it several times in Scripture in reference to God. For instance the 7th chapter verse 6 pleads, "Arise, O Lord, in thine anger." And in theology, it is what is known as an "anthropomorphism," which simply means attributing to God a characteristic of man in order to gain a clearer picture of what the Lord is actually like. Our heavenly Father isn't in lethargic complacency. We don't have to awaken Him, as one would try to cry out to a false god. The Lord is always there, but what David is asking for is deliverance. And here he compares his enemies to wild beasts. Similarly, your enemies, whether real or fancied, are exactly the same thing.

One of the pasttimes that I especially enjoy doing (but I don't get to as often as I'd like), is to walk along the beach. Leisurely strolling along the sand with the surf pounding in. Whenever I can get down to the ocean front, I am fond of taking five or six mile hikes. While walking along, thinking, praying, singing, it is a great opportunity for fellowship and communion with the Lord. The other day I was doing this, not really thinking about the people around me, when all of a sudden a great big dog ran up, barking at my heels. Now I'm not too fond of barking dogs, especially when they happen to be large German Shepherds. This one didn't look too friendly. And, besides this, dogs aren't supposed to be on the beach. It is unlawful. But, of course, all of this didn't help me at that particular moment. There was a little fellow, obviously from the family who owned the dog, who tried to encourage me, "Don't worry, mister, he doesn't bite." That wasn't a whole lot of comfort. I would much rather have heard him say, "Don't worry, mister, he can't hurt you. He doesn't have any teeth." That would have removed all doubt. In a very real sense, this is what David is experiencing. The monster is attacking fiercely . . . but who cares? He's been deprived of his fangs. He can't hurt you. The sting has already been removed.

David is calling for the enemy to be hit or smitten on the cheekbone. This certainly isn't dignified warfare. It shows rather contempt. You slap somebody on the cheek, it may not be like a punch in the nose. It shows scorn or contempt for the individual. There is the enemy of our souls who would come in and rob us of our spiritual vigor, as well as our goal for a deepening maturity in the things of the Lord. It

is a contemptuous thing for him to stand in the way of our spiritual fellowship and growth. This smiting is what God does to those whose faith is placed in Him as far as the enemy who rises up against them. How did it happen in David's case? Well, note the matter of Absalom's death. He wasn't killed with the sword. That would have been the proper way for a leader to be slain, but no, not so with Absalom. Think of the undignified manner of his death. He didn't stoop quickly enough. He hit an oak tree and hanged on the boughs. This is what God is going to do with those foes, be they real or fanciful, which stand in the way of our spiritual development with Him. Psalm 58:6 is another similar injunction which urges, "Break their teeth, O God, in their mouth; break out the great teeth of the young lions, O Lord."

Finally, it is a tribute to God's greatness, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah." We enjoy living in Southern California because this has been our home for many years. We used to live in St. Petersburg, Florida for about five or six years. And one of the things I enjoy about our current home area is the fact that you can find almost any product either made here or at least carried in stock in some store. You don't have to send away for it. Not so when we lived in St. Petersburg, Florida. But regardless of the tremendous supply that is available of all the things here in Los Angeles, God alone has the stock and the store of salvation. It isn't available anywhere else. Tremendous these five words, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord."

Only two men in Scripture, empowered by the Holy Spirit, used that phrase: David and Jonah. And when you think about their writing of it, both were in pitiful positions; David surrounded by the enemy; Jonah in the belly of the whale, he declares, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that which I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord." What a tremendous realization. Deliverance can come only from God. Psalm 28:8 avows, "The Lord is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed." His blessing is that which comes to us. Psalm 29:11 reads, "The Lord will give strength unto his people: the Lord will bless his people with peace.:"

The chapter ends with "Selah." Are you ready to push in the crescendo pedal; to pull out all of the stops? To give your life a lift, knowing that God is the One who surrounds you with His love is the important thing. Are you willing to entrust everything you have to Him?

PANEL DISCUSSION

Panel: Dr. Chase, Dr. Feinberg and Dr. Sutherland

Q. "Will you please explain Malachi 4:3?"

A. Malachi teaches us about end time matters. He reminds us how formalism took over after the exile. He states that the Lord will still send the Messenger of the covenant. There would be the forerunner of the Messiah, and then the Lord Himself. The verse you mention reads, "And ye shall tread down the wicked, for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet, in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." One way we can know the time of consummation, fulfillment and completion is when He completely subjugates and subdues all the enemies. This is figurative language and doesn't necessarily mean that bodies will literally become ashes. They will be completely nullified in their opposition to Israel. God will put down every single opposition raised against them in judgment. Everyone formed against Israel has no chance of prospering. Thank the Lord, when we are on His side, victory is assured!

Q. "Mark 13:32 tells us, 'But of that day and that hour, knoweth no man, no not the angels who are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.' Please explain this verse. Why did Jesus say this when He is part of the Trinity? In another place He even says that He and the Father are one."

A. This is really an infinite subject as we consider the Trinity. Jesus Christ is certainly the second Member of the Trinity. He is both God and man. Theologians have expressed it appropriately that He is very God of very God and very Man of very man. Here in this passage Christ is talking about His situation in His earthly ministry during His first advent. He willingly gave up His infinite wisdom while He was also man. Sometimes He spoke as God; sometimes He spoke as man. No person with a finite mind could even begin to understand the mystery of the incarnation, yet we know the truth and veracity which is involved.

Q. "What is sin? One church will say a certain thing is a sin, and another will say it's not. For instance, what about going to movies or having more than one wife? (Didn't Solomon have hundreds?) Don't laws vary from state to state? Certainly crime laws differ in various countries."

A. Yes, laws certainly do vary from state-to-state and in different countries. Yet as to sin, the laws that are eternal in the Scripture don't vary. God gives us an appropriate definition of sin. "Sin is any lack of conformity to either the law of God or the nature of God." Not all of the Lord's nature is comprehended in the law. Anything that is revealed by way of deviation from holiness is sin (1 John 3:4). Romans 14:23 reminds us, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Faith means being dependent completely upon God for fulfillment. Now there are varieties of worldliness. As an example, going to movies. If we need cleansing Scripture tells

us how this is to be done (I John 1:9). As believers we don't need all these things spelled out which may not be specifically delineated in Scripture. With regard to Solomon's having hundreds of wives, some people think that would be terrific. Never forget that God's ideal is one man and one wife. The Lord Himself desires monogamy (Mal. 2:15). Read history and see that the highest level of civilization and morality has existed only in a monogamous society. Solomon's eventual downfall spiritual doubtless was a result of this unfortunate practice.

Q. "I recently heard a man say that he had some dealings with a black church. I don't feel there's any such thing as a black church. I had in mind the church spoken of in Ephesians 5 and Revelation 17. Would you please comment on this?"

A. He may have meant a church where the congregation was predominantly black or colored. The color of the skin isn't the important thing with God. What the Lord wants is the devotion of the heart. With the church spoken of in Ephesians there is no color line whatsoever. There is neither Jew, nor Greek, bond nor free, barbarian nor anyone else. We are all one by personal faith in Christ. When we get to heaven there certainly won't be any color line whatsoever. In Revelation 17 we find the harlot or apostate church. There are only redeemed souls in Ephesians 5, while in Revelation they are all unredeemed referred to.

Q. "When I was young, every minister in the churches, as well as radio preachers, used to talk about the Holy Ghost. Now I never hear much mention of Him. What happened?"

A. You have made a rather broad statement which probably couldn't be borne out in actual experience. In fact today, there are certain denominational groups which seem to talk only about the Holy Spirit. We should keep in mind the important fact that this isn't the age of the Holy Spirit. Our Saviour explained, "I tell you the truth, it is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you, and when He is come, He will reprove the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. Nevertheless, when He the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth, for he shall not speak of himself, but he shall glorify me," (John 16:13,14). Did you notice the Holy Spirit's ministry and position for this day? It is very clearly given. We know that He will guide us into all truth, and that He won't speak of Himself but rather will glorify the Lord Jesus Christ. The true Holy Spirit isn't glorified, but rather the Saviour.

It is wonderful to be led in all of our experiences of life by the Holy Spirit, who is the third member of the Trinity, co-equal with the Father and with the Son. He is infinite in all of his attributes. We must understand that these three are one, the same in substance and equal in power and glory. Thank God, by faith we accept the Trinity, even though it goes beyond our finite ability to understand.

Q. "In the second coming of Christ, there are four watch hours, namely, 6 to 9 a.m., 9 a.m. to noon, noon to 3:00 p.m., and 6 p.m. on. What is your opinion about the last hour?"

A. The question is somewhat vague, although the reference may be to the statement that "He cometh at the last hour." You have only designated four periods of time, when there are, of course, 24 for the entire day. The watches didn't start just at 6 a.m. The watch hours were familiar to the Romans in their army setup. They had certain times allotted during the darkness of night where different soldiers were on guard duty. The statement from our Lord concerning His coming in the last hour

doesn't mean He in pinpointed the 60 minutes in which He will return. One must read the general testimony and outlook, along with the framework of references in the Bible, to realize that "hour" can mean quite a number of things. Our radio ministry is known as "The Biola Hour," and yet we have never been on the air one solid hour. In common parlance we may often speak of "hour" and not mean precisely and technically 60 minutes. In John 4, our Lord Jesus talks with the woman of Samaria. She wanted to engage our Saviour in some kind of technical and theological discussion. He very graciously answers her "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him" (John 4:23). That hour of worship is still present, and obviously has been vastly more than 60 minutes or even sixty years! So there may be more than one usage of the word "hour." In John 5:28 Jesus avows, "Marvel not at this, for the hour is coming in which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good (meaning those who have placed their faith in the Lord Jesus) unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation (or condemnation)." Here again, that hour isn't going to be a 60 minute period. It will be in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. We can also honestly invite people, "This is the hour of salvation" (II Cor. 6:2). While the hour has taken a span of over 1900 years, no one knows how soon it will end. Our Lord mentioning the last hour means the termination of God's purpose for this age. No one knows when that last hour will be precisely. The attitude God wants us to be in is looking everyday for the coming of His Son!

Q. "Do you know of any evidence of the existence of God other than the ancient Jewish writings?"

A. Yes, there is certainly a great deal that can help you. In Psalm 19 there is the assurance that "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth His handiwork." All of creation attests to the existence of the Almighty. Did you ever stop to realize that every prayer of every pagan in the history of the world is a recognition of the existence of God, or at least of a supreme being? They reveal this from their own minds and hearts because they know they are sinners. Prayer to their god or gods, offering sacrifices to atone for their transgressions, is clear evidence of this. There are philosophical reasons for the existence of God. Additionally, there is the cosmological reason. The world is finite so that there must be something back of its creation and sustaining. Since the world is an effect, there must be a cause. The teleological argument for the existence of God gives evidence of order and design. There must be a master designer. We look through the telescope and see evidence of creation. We look through the microscope and see evidence of an orderly arrangement. There must be a Creator behind it all. Then there is the argument from congruity. The master key that fits all the questions pertaining to creation must require an intellectual being back of it all. The ancient Jewish writings simply confirm what we see all about us in nature. But we don't find redemption in nature. We discover the wonderful love of God as revealed in Scripture, as well as in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. The pagans know practically nothing about a god of love. We can be thankful for the Bible and for all the wonderful truths it teaches us. All the more reason for a consistent systematic daily study of this priceless Book!

Q. "When Dr. Richard Chase reads the Bible over the air in his teaching ministry it seems different from mine. I use the King James Version. Is there some reason?"

A. What he uses for his messages is the New American Standard Bible, a very splendid translation which we can highly recommend. It has been generally recognized as one

of the most accurate English versions of the Word of God. The translation is made directly from the original Greek and Hebrew languages, using the 1901 edition of the American Standard Bible as a reference work. More than 50 conservative scholars across the country worked on the project in addition to scores of stylists, linguists, proofreaders and others. The King James is the classic English translation. It has never been surpassed or equaled for its sheer beauty of expression. Sometimes there appear words and expressions which we don't understand in reference to today's terminology. This is one reason why we endorse the New American Standard Bible. Whichever copy of the Scriptures speaks most clearly to you, if it is true to the Word of God in the original language, then you may follow and receive a blessing from it.

Q. "I have read that in 25 years the seventh millennium of the history of mankind will begin, known as the 'sabbatical millennium.' It supposedly has a special promise. Could you explain this and tell me what the special promise is?"

A. Your assumption cannot be based on any explicit or implied statement from Scripture. The Bible has nothing to say about a "seventh millennium" in the history of mankind. Sabbath comes from the expression in Leviticus that every seventh year the land was to lie fallow; it was to rest, which is precisely what the word means in Hebrew. We know of no "guaranteed special promise" for any seventh millennium. It is best to stay with the known Word of God, and not make assumptions or declarations based on someone's opinions. The blessed promise we have as believers is the soon coming of our Lord Jesus Christ (Tit. 2:13).

Q. "Our pastor keeps telling us that all the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others in the Old Testament already have been fulfilled. He doesn't believe that the Jews have a special place in God's future plans. Would you comment on this?"

A. If you, as an earnest believer, would take the time to look up various passages you will soon discover that all the promises haven't been fulfilled. The Jewish nation most certainly does have a special place in God's future plans. Consider Romans 11:1, "I say, then, hath God cast away his people, whom he foreknew? God forbid." Isaiah refers to them as "an eternal nation, an everlasting nation" (Isa. 60:15). Don't minimize that word "eternal." It is just the same as when used with reference to the personality of God. Certainly He isn't limited. Ezekiel 37 and 38 shows the promises of a future regathering. The nation will come to life again, although the people have been spread abroad. Just because they have a special place doesn't mean that God has overthrown the Gentiles. As believers we should rejoice that God is going to use Israel again. Remember, when they were in God's place of usefulness, the Gentiles were blessed, too. If you think the Gentile world has been blessed because of what God has done in using Israel, you haven't seen anything yet! These people haven't been shut off from God's plan at all; they are simply on a sidetrack (Rom. 11:25-27). When the Church, the Body of Christ, is complete then we read that all Israel, the remnant that will be alive in that day after the rebels have been purged out (Ezek. 20:33-38), then all remaining Israel shall be saved. It is written, "The deliverer shall come out of Zion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob, for this is my covenant with them when I shall take away their sins" (Jer. 31:31-34).

Q. "In John 14:28, Jesus said, 'The Father is greater than I.' I know that Jesus is not greater than God because they are one. I'd like a good explanation of this scripture."

Never forget that Jesus Christ is the God-man. He was the perfect coupling of God and humanity. He was both very God of very God, as well as very Man of very Man. Jesus Christ in His godly attributes is fully God. We believe He refers to His glory (Phil. 2:5-11). Remember that on another occasion our Saviour declared, "My Father is greater than I." He emptied Himself and my Father are one." This is an attestation to the Trinity. There is one God, eternally manifest in three Persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are One, the same in substance, and equal in power and glory. This doesn't contradict our reason, it rather goes utterly beyond our ability to reason. It is an infinite subject which must be accepted by faith, even though we may not be able to understand the full significance of it.

"For 30 years I've been praying that my son will become a Christian. Recently I was singing the invitation song in my church and suddenly a breath of air came over my face and a whisper close to my ear said, 'Unless you go down front, your son will never be saved. It was so unexpected and I was so shocked I just stood there. Please tell me, was this the Lord talking to me or the devil? I am a Christian and have been since a teenager. I try so hard to be a good Christian. What must I do? I don't mind going to the altar if that's what God thinks I should do. My husband won't go to church with me on Sunday nights or Wednesday nights. Should I go on or not? The Bible says, 'Obey your husband.' He doesn't tell me not to go; he just won't go. We always go every Sunday morning."

A. There are two questions basically involved. Dear Christian listener, keep praying for that loved one, and never give up! Only the Lord is sovereign. He gave His only begotten Son to die for us. You may be assured that the Saviour has much more involved, with a far greater interest in your son's salvation than even you do! In your praying, please keep right on. God allows a child to start life under a mother's heart. All during the projected existence that child is on the heart of its mother, as well as father. When you felt led to go forward, it is difficult to know all of the circumstances. We know that the devil has many cunning devices. That it was the Lord would seem unlikely on the basis of God's Word. This runs entirely counter to the way in which any individual can be saved. It takes far more than just going down to an altar to make a profession. No one can make a decision of salvation for his children, though we wish we could. Please don't plague yourself with the concept that your son isn't saved because you are unwilling to give up some sin in your life. This doesn't minimize our personal confession of sin, but it cannot affect another's salvation.

With reference to your husband, you are to obey him in the things of the Lord. It is really wonderful that he doesn't hinder your going on the Lord's day morning. Sometime when you are talking intimately, ask him why he doesn't like to go with you for evening services. There may be some reason you haven't understood. The last thing in the world to do is to nag your husband about it. This might cause him to stop going to any service. Make it a matter of continued earnest prayer to the Lord. The Lord knows the concern of your heart.

HISTORY PANEL

A special bicentennial discussion conducted by Dr. J. Richard Chase, Biola President along with Dr. James O. Henry, retired Biola professor, Ethel Rankin and Dietrich Buss, members of the Biola History Department.

As the nation takes stock of our land in this bicentennial year, we conclude that America is indeed a land of great successes as well as pointed failures. Robert Flood, in his book, America, God Shed His Grace on Thee, catches the essence of our dilemma. He observes, "No, America isn't perfect. She has scandals, unemployment, inflation, food and fuel shortages, and pockets of poverty. And, there's even a crack in our liberty bell. But half the world goes to bed hungry. Half the world also lies behind the Iron and Bamboo Curtains where freedom, as Americans know it, simply doesn't exist." At times the American people have been exploiters, but more often they have been enterprising, energetic and productive. Few nations in modern history have a religious heritage as firmly focused upon Almighty God, as has the United States of America. To some our Christianity, even our dependence upon God, is mere tokenism. To others it is an embarrassment which they seek to eradicate. To most citizens, however, it is vital. We here at Biola College want to explore the part that Christianity has played in the history of our country.

We should begin by considering the spiritual foundations of this land in the time period of approximately 1607 through 1800. We will focus upon two major emphases. First, there is the pilgrim and puritan experience. Second, we will consider the creation of our republic. With that in mind, we see immediately that the pilgrims and puritans have had a significant influence in shaping America. To trace the background we should go to England where there was a small group of people who were a part of the Reformation tradition. These pilgrims wanted to establish a purified form of worship. They weren't well-to-do and decided initially to flee to Holland for relief. Eventually they returned to England and set sail for Plymouth, Massachusetts.

The Puritans were somewhat different coming from a broad segment of well-educated, successful, and influential English society. They also wanted to purify the church but weren't willing to leave either the country or the church. Among their members were people like John Winthrop, a lawyer and member of Parliament. He headed up what was known as the Massachusetts Bay Company, formed under charter of the King. This group left England to start a new colony. They used their influence and money to buy ships and supplies. There was a very successful establishment right from the beginning. Sometimes people tend to group these two movements together, while in actuality they were distinct entities. The Puritans had a great sense of purpose which included religious roots, seeking to advance and propagate the Gospel of Christ. They wanted to create a society where they could glorify God and serve Him forever. These people had a realization of accountability to the Lord. All work was honorable, and there was a high regard for law. The dignity of the individual

upheld. All these things still have had an important influence on our contemporary society. The Puritans above all were keenly interested in maintaining the church as primary to their community. This was the center of their life, and where their educational institutions began. Preaching wasn't to be just a matter of words, but words of wisdom.

The entire education system was crucial to the pilgrims as well. It is interesting that these people who had settled in the wilderness, six years later began the first educational institution, Harvard University, founded in 1636. They had qualified people to teach, in fact, more so than in England itself. The population included a number of ministers. To be a preacher, one had to have a graduate degree from a university. So, there were more ministers in New England than there were in Old. There were those to teach Greek, Latin and rhetoric. These were basic staples for education at that time. Professors were extremely interested in the exegesis of Scripture, going back to the original text, so that they might rediscover what had been lost through the Catholic church.

In 1647 the first general school bill was passed. It was popularly called the Satan Deluder Act in which every community of fifty householders had to appoint one teacher to instruct all the students from kindergarten through what was then the junior high school. Massachusetts led in the whole educational program in the 19th century, and has continued to contribute to the nation's system since then. We think of such men as Horace Mann, who became the first commissioner of education. We owe these people a great deal as we consider the matter of religious freedom.

The pilgrims were separatists. As we mentioned earlier the Puritans wanted to cleanse the church, working within the organized body. In the establishment of the Plymouth colony the pilgrims were even more tolerant than the Puritans. The rise of various denominations in America, as well as the independent church movement resulted in such freedom. For instance there was Roger Williams who dissented, almost on the verge of being sent back to England, when he fled to Rhode Island, starting what we now know as the first Baptist church in America. There was a variety of theological concepts yet this religious freedom carried over into our Constitution. In such early days there was room for nonconformity and dissent.

In considering the early founding fathers we discover that many of them were deists. They believed in God, but stopped short of believing in the divinity of Christ. Although moral men, they weren't evangelicals. There was lacking any personal commitment to the Saviour. As far as the Revolution is concerned, even in the Continental Congress, there were some deeply spiritual people. They asked during those days for fasting and prayer, as leaders sought God's will.

It is interesting that Benjamin Franklin was once asked by a very spiritual man what he thought of Jesus Christ. He answered that he didn't know and didn't feel it was appropriate for him to propose such an inquiry. Yet, at the Constitutional Convention, he was the one who asked that prayer be considered after a deadlock occurred. He made the comment that if a sparrow cannot fall without the Lord's knowledge, how could they expect an empire to rise without His aid? So, there was a definite feeling of a divine Providence.

In those days there was the optimistic strain to be felt which was also balanced by a very deep sense of the power of evil. For instance, James Madison at the Constitutional Convention pointed out that power corrupts, and that absolute power corrupts absolutely. He emphasized the need to check power. Our very recent history will bear out the desirability of this precept. There was then a realism about

the possibility of evil in society. The principles to hold it in check followed a biblical type of outlook.

From a bicentennial impact we find that there were evangelical influences which also shaped America. Back in 1733 and 1734 in Northampton, Massachusetts, there was a local church experiencing revival. The pastor of that flock was Jonathan Edwards. What was felt in that congregation soon spread and George Whitfield joined in the crusade which was to become known as "The Great Awakening." Such an historical event was not only significant for the impact of society but also in the continual ramifications of contemporary American life.

The foundation for our Constitution goes back to the very beginning, particularly with the pilgrims in what is known as the Mayflower Compact. Before these people even went ashore at Plymouth Harbor, they met aboard the ship to determine certain things, forming themselves into what was called a civil body politic. Their stated purpose, "To live together in peace and harmony under just and equal laws enacted for the general good." This was the very basis of our Constitution, along with all its provided liberties, especially in the area of religion.

A great influence on our Constitution came from the constitution of Connecticut. One of the ministers of that day, Thomas Hooker in 1637, made these three statements. He declared, "The choice of the public magistrates belongs to the people and must be exercised according to God's will." Second, "The privilege of election belongs to the people and must be exercised according to God's will." Third was, "The people have the power to appoint officers and magistrates, and it is in their power to set the bounds and limitations of the power and the place unto which they call these men." There was the foundation not simply for religious freedom but also the opportunity to proclaim the Gospel as the people saw fit.

The Great Awakening with Jonathan Edwards was just a little over a hundred years after the first settlers came to the shores of America. The reason was there had been a great decline in the spiritual commitment of the people in New England. They had forgotten the spiritual hardships of their forefathers. There were unbelieving children who had come into the new world. In the Massachusetts Bay Colony one could not vote unless he was also a full member of the church. Many there were who only professed but did not possess a personal knowledge of Jesus Christ. This is why Jonathan Edwards felt led to deliver sermons on justification by faith alone. It seemed to have been a new and vibrant topic not previously apparent in the preaching of that day. He himself was quite surprised at the conversion of many young people.

In 1730 Edwards wrote about conditions in his parish, "It seemed to be a time of extraordinary dullness in religion. Licentiousness for some years greatly prevailed. Many of the youth were addicted to night walking and frequenting the taverns. The lewd practices by some greatly corrupted others. It was their manner very frequently to get together in conventions of both sexes for mirth and jollity, which they called 'frolics'. They would often spend the better part of the night without any regard to order in the families to which they belonged." Jonathan Edwards must have been a very unusual and preceptive pulpiter. Very solid biblical sermons were presented from this man who was also an educator. He taught at Yale and was the preparator of individuals for the ministry, but so many felt that apostasy had crept into the school that Yale was started as a protest to the unitarianism which prevailed at Harvard.

The Great Awakening spread through every colony, from Nova Scotia to Georgia. It touched every area both rural and urban, rich and poor, educated and uneducated.

people were earnestly searching for a conversion experience. This spontaneous movement created something very vital for the American people shaping a national consciousness. For the first time there was intercolonial preaching. George Whitfield started in Georgia, but went through all the colonies. There hadn't been appeals for personal decisions in the Puritan church because that would seem to interfere with the providence of God in converting an individual. The Great Awakening changed all that.

Jonathan Edwards' preaching was so powerful that, under the Holy Spirit's convicting, some grown men fainted and women cried aloud for the mercy of God. Coming out of this movement were 150 new churches established in New England alone. There was also a great desire to do missionary work among the Indians. As a result Dartmouth College was established particularly to train the natives. William Tenet established Log College in 1746 which later became Princeton. In 1751 Benjamin Franklin had much to do with the founding of the University of Pennsylvania. Although it wasn't church-related, it did have a strong influence on training men. Brown University in Rhode Island was established in this same era. Then there was King's College, which became Columbia, and Queen's College, which became Rutgers. Although there wasn't as much religious influence in establishing those two as in the others, nevertheless, they still had a strong impact at that time.

The "awakenings" of the 1800's had a vital part in the expansion of the United States westward. The involvement of circuit riding preachers became a part of the period known as the Second Great Awakening. Societies were formed which needed to be civilized. One of the agencies for taming the very turbulent frontier, was the old camp meeting. Several men used of the Lord were Peter Cartwright and James Findlay. The planting of new churches was very significant. The Methodists were probably the fastest growing denomination on the frontier.

Peter Cartwright in his very interesting diary mentioned the fact that the Baptists had only two congregations to which they had to minister during the week, whereas the Methodist circuit rider had six flocks. In the Methodist church alone from 1800 to 1844 there were 1,862 traveling preachers. Apparently the argument over whether one should worship only on Sunday wasn't a real issue. These circuit riders had to cover a lot of ground to carry on their ministry. It was also a very dangerous undertaking because there frequently were people who weren't sympathetic to the Gospel. Often the preacher virtually had to stave off rowdies by his own physical energy. Peter Cartwright's motto was, "Love all men, and fear no man." This he typified on the frontier.

Some of the great spiritual institutions of our land were formed during the Second Great Awakening. There was the American Bible Society in 1816. The American Tract Society was started during this same era. As early as 1810 the board of commissioners for foreign missions was instituted. Many orphanages began, as well as missions and programs to help those with spiritual needs. The American Temperance Society came into existence in 1826, with the Anti-slavery Association founded a year earlier. In a sense, as with any spiritual awakening, people became concerned about souls no matter where they were. There was a consistent strong desire to reach these with a message of salvation, calling for a clear response for Christ and eternity. That should, of course, be our purpose as well today.

One of the most traumatic and physically destructive events in American history was the Civil War. Historians comment on the fact that the ten years preceding this period was very productive from a spiritual standpoint. It was a time of revival which perhaps helped to prepare the nation for this terrible holocaust beginning

In 1861. In 1857 there was a financial crisis which was very devastating, causing many people to stop and think of their real needs. This revival wasn't really based on preaching but rather prayer.

In 1857 Jeremiah Land was called to the Old North Dutch Reformed Church in the Manhattan area. He was a lay missionary assigned to a work which was looked upon as dying. Many members were moving away from the area. He started a special visitation program, taking little placards into the hotels and apartments inviting people to his services. Response was poor so on September 23, 1857 he set the time for prayer to begin at 12 noon. He himself took his seat in the auditorium of the church, bowed his head, and began to pray. He prayed alone for about 30 minutes. Then he heard some footsteps, and when he ended the hour, five other men had joined him. There was a Baptist, a Congregationalist, a Dutch Reformed, and a Presbyterian. They had prayer together and scheduled a meeting for the following Wednesday. Twenty showed for this. A week later a third meeting was proposed and forty appeared. This activity was expanded to daily prayer so that eventually all the space of the church was filled.

The group began to move to other areas in New York City, and then even further to such major cities as Philadelphia, Boston, Pittsburgh, Chicago, Washington, Detroit, and St. Louis. Their prayers focused on a general feeling of seeking God's direction. Again, the financial crisis had been rather devastating, jolting the public to a spiritual need. In New York City there were times when more than 3,000 men were present for prayer. Out of this came several movements in various church groups. One of the strongest was the Y.M.C.A. While not really born out of this movement it certainly received a new invigoration at this particular time.

The prayer movement soon had its effect from the pulpit as ministers called congregations to repent and reestablish themselves with God. During the Civil War this was a great stabilizing influence in the lives of people on both the battlefields as well as at home. Many of the people seemed to become interested in what we might label social reform, based on the need for a new life in the old world as Christians. The pulpit was used by the abolitionists sparking the anti-slavery movement. They used revival methods to educate people in the evils of slavery, calling for eradication of the evil which seemed at variance with equality, liberty, freedom and justice. Schools, too, had considerable influence during this time. The nation seemed mobilized because of the influence of these people.

Once the Civil War began there were tremendous needs and heartaches. There was the greatest destruction of life Americans have ever faced in any war. Almost immediately after the War began there was the United States Christian Commission formed. This was an outgrowth of the Y.M.C.A. Immediately after the firing on Ft. Sumter, President Lincoln issued his call for 75,000 militia. (There was no regular army as we have now.) These military units began forming immediately, in fact within a matter of hours.

It was soon noted that these young men, just uprooted from home and family, had no reading material. There was an effort on the part of the Y.M.C.A. and other similar organizations to get good Christian literature into the hands of these recruits. The United States Christian Commission put onto the field some 1500 men, whose title was "delegates." They went for varying times, some as little as two or three weeks, others for indefinite longer periods of service. The requirement for a delegate was that he be from an evangelical church. This covered the spectrum all the way from Episcopal to the Methodist. The distinction was between those who were trinitarian and those who were unitarians. These delegates went into the ranks of the

...ers, in fact right into the fields of battle to do tremendous service. They discovered there was far more to do than distribute literature. They served as ...ains where none had been assigned. They aided doctors and wrote personal letters. Many of the men during the Civil War era couldn't read and write for themselves.

...other branches and women's organizations all over the northern part of the States, ...the Union territory, provided clothing, food and other things for the needy. The churches en masse were behind the movement. The printed literature was both devotional and evangelical in nature. While there wasn't any comparable movement going on for the Southern army, yet this group was experiencing a revival which included much religious activity.

Abraham Lincoln is a key figure of this era who can't be passed by. We don't know specifically what his real spiritual beliefs were. It is very true, as we read in Scripture, that "Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh." What we get from Lincoln's writings is his perception of the Civil War. He saw that perhaps in the providence of God this war was a means by which the nation was purged from the evil of slavery. He didn't look upon the South as begin guilty. He saw slavery as a national guilt of all the people. He felt this was one way for the country to expiate a guilt of 250 years standing. He knew it was wrong for wealth to be amassed through the sweat of another human being.

As to the wounds being healed, this is where the evangelical spirit entered in. After the Civil War the Christian community was totally concerned. One important organization was the American Missionary Association. They were greatly concerned about the newly freed man and how he would be educated. Here were almost four million people now cast adrift. How could they cope, living in a devastated South? It is so very true that once one goes through a very vital religious experience, it makes him sensitive to the needs of others. Many dedicated women came south to start schools, primarily for teaching and educating the Negro. They were instrumental in starting many of the outstanding southern colleges and universities.

It could be seen clearly that where there had been a strong Christian heritage, regardless of the circumstances or conditions, there were people who had a burden for others. Many times victorious people take the spoils. In America, however, despite the tragedy and turmoil, there was the heartbeat of concerned Christians. This was demonstrated in acts of education, as well as in a variety of other ways, helping to bind up wounds. This was exactly what Lincoln had said in his second inaugural address. Dedicated men and women, despite all sorts of hardships both physical and social, moved forward for the cause of Christ as they saw the needs so clearly evidenced. We should have a great appreciation for the Christian distinctives of our country.

As we consider the evangelical influences which shaped the United States we should also examine these last 100 years which are frequently referred to as our industrial society. A number of new movements were spawned either as a direct or indirect result of the Civil War. The Y.M.C.A., already in existence, nevertheless had a tremendous ministry following this period and even up to the turn of the century. One of the co-founders of Biola, Dr. R. C. Horton, came to Los Angeles, as an associate pastor of the Immanuel Presbyterian Church. Formerly he had been director of the Y.M.C.A. in Dallas, Texas. There was also the Y.W.C.A., the women's counterpart. Christian Endeavor started in the latter part of the 19th century. This was very active in Congregational and Presbyterian churches. The Epworth League grew out of the Methodist Church, and was designed to evangelize youth movements. The

Baptist Young People's Union also was founded in those days. The Salvation Army came into being and played a tremendous role in the post-Civil War era along into the current century.

People began moving to the cities in what was seen as the rise of the industrial society. We think of Charles Sheldon's book, In His Steps, which has become a classic in terms of our Christian commitment. The author was a minister who was able to see the needs springing up about him. The book opens with a scene in which a pastor is preparing his sermon. A man comes to his office early Sunday morning asking for aid. The preacher responds, "I'm too busy preparing my message. Come back some other time." The fellow does return, right in the middle of the sermon. There he cries out in despair to the congregation dressed in all their finery. They are obviously well-fed, housed, and have employment. The visitor collapses and dies right before their eyes! This transforms the minister's life as he begins to ask himself the question, "What would Christ have me to do in such a setting?" He directs this thought to all the members of the congregation. Each person in turn examines his own life, regardless of his position and responsibility. It provided a rethinking of the Christian's responsibility in an urban industrialized society. To do this effectively called for an evangelical witness which had social conscience. There was also the danger of presenting only "social gospel" where physical needs became more dominant and the spiritual condition wasn't essential.

Dwight L. Moody was deeply concerned about the drift in American life. He wanted to communicate again the awakening or renewal which would be a return to personal commitment to Christ.

Accompanying the rapid industrialization of the United States was the immigration movement. Millions of people entered the United States which provided the necessary labor for this rapid industrialization. Mostly they moved into the inner cities which really weren't prepared for them. The church became extremely concerned about a need to minister to these people in their own language, as well as to train pastors, educate the children, and do needed service for the immigrants. The church began what we generally call the Americanization of the immigrant. Some of the churches lost their "first love" in presenting Christ and reviving the people spiritually. The emphasis was placed only on social need.

It is interesting to note that D. L. Moody began his great revivals in the large cities with populations of over one million. Earlier Finney was also urban based, although the cities weren't that large. There were now hoards of people needing conversion. There was the social gospel which eventually had a reaction in the rise of fundamentalism. Behind the drift in theology there were those who were disciples of Darwin. They believed in applying his evolutionary biological principles to society. They even held that God in such a context didn't exist. Some who were still in a church tried to reconcile the Darwinian outlook with Christian theology. Sin was defined as social injustice and salvation as simply a just society. The emphasis was upon helping labor, but God was left out of the picture. The Gospel simply became functional. There was no real theology, nor any definition of sin. In their thinking God was only the good part of man being exerted over the degenerative forces.

The fundamentalists rose up to avow, "No, there are certain things we know about God, which He has revealed especially in the Bible. These are fundamentals to which we must hold." They didn't deny the need for social improvement, but simply wanted to reaffirm that the Gospel isn't synonymous with a good meal or lending a friendly hand. There were certain propositional truths, such as the inspiration of

Scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, His substitutionary death, His bodily resurrection, and His imminent return, which were all supernatural elements and vital to the faith. Two sermons preached in the early 1900's were noteworthy. One preached by Harry Emerson Fosdick was entitled, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" The other appeared shortly thereafter, "Shall the Funny Monkeyists Win?" (This made a reference to Darwinianism.) The gauntlet was down and a great controversy raged between modernists and evangelicals, known as fundamentalists. There were solid believers who didn't minimize their commitment to Christ, and were yet concerned about people.

The evangelical community at this time sought to meet the needs of Christian young people, equipping them for this new urban world now emerging. The great evangelistic campaigns of men like Moody, Torrey, Billy Sunday, Chapman, and others were effective. Seminaries had been turning out men in many instances above the intellectual level of the people to whom the great evangelists were ministering. They couldn't communicate to them effectively. In response to this there was the formation of Bible institutes with a purpose to train people to minister to individuals basic spiritual needs. In the initial years there was the desire to train young people to teach Sunday school classes as well as to work with evangelists in these various campaigns. There had been thousands of people making decisions. They had to be dealt with personally.

Of course, as time went along the level of this training began to rise so that in more recent years the Bible college movement, common today, became more widespread. These are distinctive institutions, trying to fit into the actual needs of the day. Biola is a good testimony of the tremendous growth and very high reputation which is now evidenced in the academic world.

We can be concerned about changing the world, particularly in view of the Gospel's power. The United States can play a key role in world evangelization until the Lord comes. We must follow the pattern established in our country of believers not only praying and studying the Word of God, but also of becoming involved in the lives of others with this tremendous message. One of the most important things is to set our priorities in proper order. We mustn't forget the Great Commission. This is what the church is here for. We mustn't lose sight of other needs around us either. If anyone should be sensitive to social needs, it is the Christian. There is much in our land for which to praise the Lord! Let us never take our privilege as well as the attending responsibilities lightly!

DANIEL

By: Dr. Lloyd T. Anderson

At the feast of Belshazzar debauchery ensued at a rapid pace. There were probably 10,000 people at this drunken orgy which occurred at an unimaginable time. Outside the walls of the city the invading hoardes of Medes and Persians under King Cyrus were planning their strategy. From the top of the walls one could have seen the camps of the enemy, ready to lay siege to the city.

With lesbianism, homosexuality, the drinking of alcohol, and the use of drugs of every kind, one wonders, as God looks down from heaven upon this human race, what His thoughts must be concerning the filthiness and wretchedness of this, as well as preceding generations. There are always noble fathers and mothers whose unworthy children betray them, bringing their heads down to grief and despair. This is the tragic part of it all.

The Medes and the Persians had apparently been besieging the city of Babylon for over two and one-half years when this incident took place. Doubtless the people didn't really believe they could ever be conquered. Their downfall could be traced to senses made dull by alcohol.

It is astonishing how much we find in the Bible against strong drink. God speaks to the rulers of the people, the kings of commerce and industry, the leaders of finance and state, about the consumption of that which so dulls the senses (Proverbs 31:1,2,3,4,5; 23:29f; 20:1). That is significant, particularly in light of everything on television, radio, newspapers, magazines and billboards involving liquor, including beer and wine. This thing bothers me deeply, as I am sure it does most of you. With all the advertising dollars being expended it is no wonder that many people begin to believe that there is nothing wrong with having wine with a meal or an occasional social drink. As born again Christians remember that God speaks out against the use of strong drink.

If you should combine all the addicts of the world, those who take the hallucinogenics, narcotics, barbituates, amphetamines, the total of them isn't even a drop in the bucket compared to the uncounted millions of people whose lives have been or are now being destroyed by liquor. While the manufacturers may make it look beautiful, don't believe them for one second. Their's is a program of deception.

One of the greatest problems in America is the lowering age of children who are becoming alcoholics. Something must be done about it. Since the government takes taxes from liquor, they are very reluctant to break up the industry. It has well been observed that our country is going down the drain with the flow of liquor. This was the same curse at the feast of Belshazzar. We need to drive home the modern truth of our compromised American attitude toward the legalized liquor traffic of our day. We need to speak out against it. The widespread use of liquor

can't make it right. We should warn against this degrading compromising attitude. As long as America continues in this direction, we can't expect the blessing of God upon our nation.

When the wine boiling in Belshazzar's veins, and his mind inflamed, he had a wicked inspiration. His grandfather Nebuchadnezzar had plundered and pillaged the holy temple in Jerusalem, taking the beautiful dishes of gold and silver used in worship. Led by the devil, the inebriated king sent for these utensils. These vessels had remained holy and sacred even in Babylon where they were stored for 70 years. As trophies of war, they had been placed in a sacred shrine. Perhaps every Jewish family in Babylonia had taken their children to that museum to see these trophies of former glory. These were still sacred symbols of the one true and living God. No wonder the wrath of the Almighty waxed hot against such degradation.

Unquestionably Daniel is one of the most interesting portions in all the books of the Bible. The first nine verses of chapter five give us the narrative of Belshazzar's wicked feast. Read in connection with verses 24 to 37 we have a picture of God's coming judgment upon the debauchery of men's hearts. The gross sensuality, revelry and blasphemy of the banquet provides a significant picture of the godlessness and flagrant blasphemy which will characterize the Gentile nations at the end of this age.

As Belshazzar's feast was a religious ceremony in the name of his heathen gods, even so the climax of human wickedness in the name of religion, known as mystical Babylon will be the most daring sacrilege and insult to God the world has ever seen. As the fall of ancient Babylon came upon the night of Belshazzar's blasphemous feast, so also will the fall of mystical Babylon, the scarlet women of the 17th and 18th chapters of Revelation, be seen in the hour of most flagrant blasphemy.

By the time of Belshazzar's reign, Babylon was a city in which evil reigned supreme. Vice was a virtue, with every form of sin indulged in without any shame. Seated upon Babylon's throne was a man who was profligate in character, sensual, selfish and insulting to the God of heaven. How little did he realize that the River Euphrates, upon which the city depended for its water, was to be the means leading to his own death and overthrow. Cyrus, King of Persia, had turned the Euphrates into a new channel so that he could march his army into the city on the riverbed. In this way they could go under the walls capturing the whole of Babylon. All of this was done in the name of Darius, who was probably of the royal seed, not only of Media but also of Persia. Therefore, only the name of Darius is mentioned in the record given by Daniel (Dan. 5:31). Later, Cyrus himself became ruler of the empire. He permitted the faithful Jewish remnant to return to Jerusalem during this time (Isa. 44:28-45:6).

In Acts 15:17, Scripture reminds us, "Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world." Nearly 200 years before the fall of Babylon, God had foretold the doom of this great city. Again, more than half a century before Belshazzar met his death, God had used the prophet Jeremiah to foretell the same details. The evil king cared nothing for the Word of God. He seems not to have known Daniel before the night of his impious feast. There were devout Jews in his kingdom who could have told him about Jehovah. Finally, Daniel reminded the king of what he already knew concerning God's dealings with his grandfather, Nebuchadnezzar. Belshazzar was absolutely without excuse.

What a comfort it must have been to Daniel to know that God was going to put it into the heart of King Cyrus of the Medes and Persians to let the faithful ones return

to Jerusalem from their captivity where they could rebuild their temple and walls. The prophet also knew the doom to befall evil Babylon. He certainly believed the word of his God.

There are many, many, verses foretelling the destruction of this idolatrous city of Babylon (Isa. 13:17-22; Jer. 51:11,28,37; 50:38-40). Jehovah told aforetime that Babylon would go down into devastating defeat. It is interesting to note that these and all similar prophecies indicate that the city will never be rebuilt, nor will people inhabit the city any longer. There are some today who teach that mystical Babylon (Rev. 17,18) has reference to the actual city which will be rebuilt. We don't personally believe this to be the case. Whatever takes place in the final analysis, it will be in accordance with God's will.

The historian Herodotus tells us that on the night when the Persian army conquered Babylon, all the streets were filled with scenes of riotous revelry. It was the annual feast to the heathen gods. Adultery was rampant, and the citizens wandered up and down the streets in a dazed, drunken stupor. Even the guards on the walls were intoxicated and didn't see the enemy approaching. This teaches us that very sure and very certain is God's judgment upon the wickedness of man.

In the fifth chapter of Daniel we see the daring and evil sacrilege which Belshazzar committed against the Lord. He ordered the use of golden and silver dishes plundered from the temple in Jerusalem, used in the sinful orgy he had instituted. Nebuchadnezzar, who had taken the utensils, at least had enough respect for the religious convictions of the captive Jews, not to desecrate them. Such would be an insult to Jehovah. There is such a thing as exhausting the patience of a gracious God. Thus it will be when our Lord Jesus Christ, the smiting Stone of the second chapter of Daniel, falls upon the godless, defiant Gentile world powers in the latter days.

It was in the same hour that Belshazzar desecrated the sacred vessels, that a hand appeared to write on the wall of the great banquet hall. Understandable, this greatly troubled the king (5:6-9). He demanded his astrologers and soothsayers be brought in to interpret the meaning. Since no one was able, thoughts turned to Daniel.

You know, infidels are usually blatant until they face death. Sometimes the scoffer and agnostic waits too long, hardening his heart against the Lord. This was true of Belshazzar. He had to look back on the fearful consequences of a misspent life. Shocked and frightened by what he saw, he still didn't turn to the God of Israel. He made extravagant promises of what he would do for anyone who would interpret the writing on the wall. His own wise men and magicians were helpless. How could they know what God was writing. A person's godless friends, even today, can't help him when he is face-to-face with death and eternity. It was the queen mother who suggested that they contact Daniel. She perhaps hadn't been sympathetic to the feast since she wasn't present. Finally she came into the banquet hall (5:10). Knowing what Daniel's God had done for Nebuchadnezzar, grandfather of Belshazzar, she was a good testimony to God's greatness. Daniel listened while Belshazzar repeated what the queen had said about him (5:13), as well as to everything the king had to say. Possibly his eyes caught sight of the sacred dishes, so dear to his own reverent heart, taken from the temple in Jerusalem. He knew God's judgment was beginning to fall upon Babylon. He wanted no rewards for making great indictments on the wall. He firmly announced, "God is bringing three great indictments against you as an empire and as a king. The God is whose hand thy breath is, and those are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified." Belshazzar was filled with fear as he heard that he would die, and that his city would be conquered. He had rejected

given light, desecrated sacred vessels from the temple, and worshipped idols.

word "MENE" meant "God hath numbered thy kingdom, and hath finished it." "TEKEL" meant, "Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting." Finally, "UPHARSIN" was seen to teach, "Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." With these very words the city was being conquered. The misguided king, blind to the awful truth, commanded that Daniel be clothed with scarlet and that a chain be put around his neck, with a proclamation issued, making him the third ruler in the kingdom. Never forget that "Man proposes, but God disposes." That night Belshazzar was killed as Darius conquered the city (5:29-31). The head of gold, spoken of in the image of Daniel 2, had now run its course. The arms and chest of silver in the image now came to pass, representing the power of Media.

Just as ancient Babylon fell during an irreverent, religious feast, so will mystical Babylon, the false religious system, during the tribulation period. This will be after the Church has gone home to meet the Lord in the air. The scarlet woman of Revelation 17 who rides upon the beast, represents the political system of her day before Jesus comes again to the earth. This is actually apostate Christendom. The prophecies of the Lord will surely all come to pass.

Do you belong to the body of Christ, of which the Saviour is the wonderful Head? You can only be a member by accepting Jesus as your personal Saviour. While God is interested in local churches, also remember that the Church is Christ's body. The local church is simply the earthly manifestation and outreach. Don't become caught up in the things of this world such as materialism, secularism, and humanism. Let Jesus Christ be your Lord and Saviour.

As we consider the faithfulness of Daniel we should be reminded of the fact that Christ had much to say about discipleship. If the prophet had been living in the New Testament day, he certainly would have been one of the great followers of the Saviour. He was a man filled with spiritual discipline. When Darius took over Babylon he "set over the kingdom an hundred and twenty princes, which should be over the whole kingdom; and over these three presidents; of whom Daniel was first" (Dan. 6:1).

The Bible is filled with instruction in discipleship. Unfortunately in many quarters it has been neglected and toned down. As a matter of fact, no teaching of Christ was more unpopular and unwelcome in His day. The terms the Saviour established were so stringent that the crowds began to melt away. They saw how costly it could be to follow truly the Lord. Too often today people will compromise and scale down their demands in order to win the approval of the crowd. Jesus made following Him desperately hard and deliberately difficult. This thinned down the crowd of would-be disciples (Lk. 9:57-62). Daniel paid that cost again and again. He was cast into the den of lions, as a clear example. Christ never spoke of silver slippers and primrose paths. He never threw out bait to secure a recruit. The cost of being a true disciple was never concealed. Dynamic leaders have always been alive to the fact that the finest response is made when the hardest challenge is presented.

Garibaldi of Italy was setting out to deliver his country from an invading army. He encountered a group of idle young men and invited them to join him in his military crusade. He told them, "I offer you neither pay, nor quarters, nor provision. I offer you hunger, and thirst, and forced watches, and battle and death. Let him who loves his country in his heart, not with lips only, follow me." This was

what brought victory.

The missionary enterprise has always been marked by discomfort and deprivation. Hardship and danger is clearly seen in the noblest of all causes. The imagination of dedicated young people, such as those here at Biola, has always been captured by the call to sacrifice. We pastors make a grave mistake when we seek to tone down the cost of discipleship.

The term "disciple" means one who is a learner. Implicit in the word is the idea of translating life's lessons into activity. Jesus first invites us to come to Him, and then He follows it with, "Come after me." Not all who come to Him for salvation are willing to follow in sacrificial service. Communism always stresses the relationship between theory and action. The enemy isn't interested in preparing members to parade their Marxist I.Q.'s, passing academic examinations. Their knowledge must become a weapon to turn the world upside down for communism. It is for the party's victory around the world that their lives are thoroughly dedicated. As Christians are our day-to-day actions in the secular world determined by what we believe in our hearts?

Daniel was a real disciple of Jehovah. God is more concerned with quality than quantity. Once the disciple is convinced of the majesty and glory of Jesus Christ, he follows for the cause in which he has enlisted.

Several centuries ago an invading eastern king continued his march with unbroken success. When he neared the territory of a young chieftain, of whose valor and bravery he had previously heard, the king was reluctant to kill his opponent. Instead he sent an ambassador ahead with terms of peace. When he heard the proposal of the king, the chieftain summoned one of his soldiers handing him a dagger and commanding, "Plunge this into your heart." The soldier immediately obeyed and fell dead at the feet of the ambassador. Calling another one, he ordered, "Leap over that precipice into the river below." Without a moment's hesitation, the man leapt to his death. Turning to the ambassador, the chieftain observed, "You go tell your marching king, who has conquered everybody, that I have 500 men just like that. Within 24 hours I will have the king chained with my dogs." The ambassador went back to make the report to his monarch who simply laughed at what he heard. When he marched upon the chieftain he was absolutely annihilated by the 500 men so valorous in their warfare. You see, it is quality which is absolutely essential.

As in the days of Daniel, Christianity truly interpreted has never been a popular concept. Any religion that is popular is far removed from the teaching of our blessed Lord (Luke 6:26). One can be a fool for the sake of being a fool, but when he is a fool for the sake of Jesus, then he is on perfectly solid territory. We are invited to share, in a sense, the unpopularity of Jesus Christ (Heb. 13:13). We are invited to participate in the fellowship of his sufferings rather than to bask in His reflected glory. The Lord Himself pointed out, "Straight is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

Dr. Vance Havner calls to mind the fact that "As long as the church wore scars, she made tremendous headway. When she began to wear medals, then the cause of Christ began to languish. It was a greater day for the church when Christians were fed to the lions than when they bought season tickets and sat in the grandstand." Jesus made it crystal clear that being His disciple may cost a person a great deal. "Whoever be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple." This touches the affections of the heart. "If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, yea, and his

life also, he cannot be my disciple."

Most people, possessions, materialism, and property very easily become the objects of love and devotion. Things can exercise a terrible tyranny over us. For example, you cannot serve God and mammon. You can't give allegiance to two masters. The demands of Jesus Christ is what is called for. The Saviour asks nothing of us that He isn't willing to do Himself. He went all the way to the cross to save us from our sins. Such was the life of Daniel, who really followed the Lord, despite the costs that came to him.

Because Darius was so well pleased with the conduct of Daniel, he promoted him to the position of leadership over the entire realm. The others in leadership around him were extremely envious, anxious to find fault with him. Scripture tells us, "They could find no occasion nor fault; forasmuch as he was faithful, neither was there any error or fault found in him" (Dan. 6:4). Here is an amazing picture of a man who was certainly on the side of the Lord. The only place his enemies could find to attack Daniel was concerning the law of his God. This is why they persuaded Darius to make a law that no one could ask a petition of anyone, including their gods, except the king for a period of 30 days. The evil plot was hatched. The Bible reveals, "Then these men assembled and found Daniel praying and making supplication before his God" (vs. 11). You see, although the Babylonian empire was destroyed Daniel continued in power and wonderful acceptance before the people and their conquering monarch.

Daniel was selected over three presidents (vs. 2). This reminds us of earlier jealousy kindled in a leader's heart. In the story of Saul, Israel's leader, and David the shepherd boy, everything goes along wonderfully well until the nation's first king heard the women singing about the defeat of the armies of Philistia by young David. Saul had slain his thousands, while David had slaughtered his ten thousands (I Sam. 18:7). Jealousy began to destroy Saul's entire life. This was no less true when Daniel was elevated to first place in the cabinet of ministers under King Darius.

Daniel led a noble, pure life of dedication and integrity. You can't hide a city set on a hill any more than you can hide a worthy, steadfast believer in this age. Daniel was just the kind of person Darius wanted. He was preferred above all others. In the original Aramaic language it means he "outshone" them all. Daniel was inspired and his judgment stood as the oracle of God. His syllables were filled with glory, as though the Lord was speaking through him. There was an unusual charismatic grace about him (vs. 3).

Through Ezekiel the Lord names three great men. Noah is first and Job is third, with Daniel in the middle. Remember that he was a contemporary, living at the same time as Ezekiel. What an honor to be listed alongside these great men of ancient days.

Personally, as I read the Bible, there are three wonderfully noble, saintly, godly men in the Old Testament who stand out for me. One is Joseph about whom there was never a fault recorded. Another is Jonathan, a pure, magnanimous, loving individual and a good friend of David's. The third one is Daniel, who had an excellent spirit and no one could miss seeing. Every detail in the life of Daniel confirmed him as a faithful counselor and a true friend.

As to Daniel's age, we know that he was born about 625 B.C. When Cyrus, with the

Medes and Persians took over Babylon, it was 537 B.C. This would make him about 88 years of age when we read the account in chapter 6. Most people would think that any man nearly 90 years of age is a candidate for decrepitude, frequently living in the past, if not entirely senile. For Daniel it is summertime in his heart, with a godwardness in his soul. There is a youthful hopefulness of spirit with an optimism that is still contagious. Though he may have been old in body he was active in spirit.

In the library I looked up some statistics on the subject of age. One scholar had made a study of the lives and achievements of some 400 foremost characters of human history. In his analysis he said nearly 80 percent of these who make up the world's greatest figures closed their lives between 58 and 80 years of age. Another 25 percent continued beyond the age of 70 with 22 1/2 percent continuing beyond the age of 80. There were only six percent who went beyond the age of 90.

Consider what has been accomplished by men beyond the age of 80. As an example, at 83 Gladstone for the fourth time became prime minister of Great Britain. Michaelangelo at the age of 89 executed his Last Judgment, perhaps the most famous single picture in all the world. John Wesley preached with undiminished eloquence and power at the age of 88. He had traveled in his lifetime 250,000 miles on horseback or on foot. That was an age that knew neither electricity nor steam. He delivered 4,000 sermons and wrote hundreds of volumes of books. Thomas A. Edison was still inventing at the age of 90. Frank Lloyd Wright at 90 was considering a most creative architecture. George Bernard Shaw was still writing plays at the age of 90. Grandma Moses was still painting at the age of 79. So, here is Daniel, 88 years of age approximately, standing before the king in positive witness.

You, too, may be up in years. Perhaps you are in a convalescent home or hospital. Even though your time on earth has been protracted God can still use you if you have a contagious heart and a young spirit. The Lord wants those like Daniel who are dedicated and committed wholly to Him.

The sixth chapter of Daniel is pivotal to the book as it re-enforces the fact that in this world it is dangerous to be different, seeking to rise above the crowd. In the case of God's servant evil men connived against the prophet of the Lord. It is appalling to realize that human beings can harbor such malice, envy, jealousy, and hatred in their souls.

How much should a believer adjust his spiritual life to forces that oppose him? Under what circumstances, if any, should a Christian act with reckless disregard for his own personal consequences? What is the relationship of a believer's faith to his loyalty to the established government? The ordeal of Daniel, with its triumphant outcome, gives us the answers to these and many other questions. We, too, need to draw upon the same resources letting Almighty God vindicate us in His own way and in His own time.

Daniel was the first of three presidents over the land of Persia during the reign of Darius. He was preferred above the princes because he had an excellent spirit within him. He had been extremely valuable in the former kingdom of Babylon. Daniel was also well known for his integrity, even though at this time he was about 88 years of age.

Daniel bridged the gap between the first two Gentile world powers. The prophet of God had witnessed the rise of them having earlier predicted them in chapter 2. It is remarkable that a man should keep himself so spotless in the midst of a govern-

whose officials were sensual, sinful, and self-seeking. His purity was perhaps more pronounced by reason of the impurity surrounding him.

Daneshmand's rule in Babylon was one of an absolute monarchy. He refused to share authority with anyone. Under King Darius there was a marked change. This government was well organized with 120 leaders, and three presidents set over it. Daniel had both seniority and superiority over the others. Doubtless he was filled with the Holy Spirit. King Darius wisely knew that the men in his government would stoop to graft and dishonesty as they administered the affairs of the empire. He had confidence in Daniel. Corruption wouldn't be tolerated. God's servant could be trusted and was preferred above all the rulers over the kingdom.

Whenever anyone is lifted to a place of prominence, he has to pay a price. There are always people who will seek to destroy him. We see this in politics today. No matter who is President, Democrat or Republican, the moment he gets into office, there are those who try to emphasize his weak points. The envious, diabolical plan to destroy Daniel was born in the minds of those people who were under him and who were not promoted as he was.

To be sure, the man who succeeds is the man who works and labors. He will pay for his advancement. Responsibility always goes with tremendous success. It is wonderful to be lifted to a high position, but the obligations which come with it are tremendously laborious. Joseph was exalted, but on him fell the responsibility of the land of Egypt. He had to pay a price for being prominent. Daniel was a saintly, godly man, holy in his walk with the Lord. To the philosophers of old, even as today, sin was a slight thing. It was a cultural drag out of which someday we will evolve. According to God, however, sin has occasioned the fall of the entire human race. It is a dark, disastrous curse according to the revealed Scriptures. Sin has entered our minds, souls, heart, imagination, dreams, lives and deeds. We are fallen people whether we want to believe it or not.

Jealousy is an awesome thing. It destroys whatever it touches. It is destructive in our own heart. When others are praised, we have a tendency to close our ears in jealousy. May we pray continually that the Lord would deliver us from any such attitudes of heart. We ought to praise God for everybody who succeeds in the proper manner and with the proper motive. We ought to praise God also when someone succeeds above our success.

In Daniel 6:8,12, and 15 we read of the law of the Medes and Persians "which altereth not." It was a clever snare which these wicked men, jealous of Daniel, set for the unsuspecting king. Try as he could, there was no way to change the decree stating that nobody could pray to any god without his permission. Daniel constantly prayed to the Lord, opening his window toward Jerusalem as he did so. Darius realized the wicked intent of the conspirators. He was sore displeased with himself and labored until the sun went down to deliver Daniel (6:14). The enemies of God's prophet assembled tumultuously before the king, demanding his execution. Darius couldn't raise a finger to avert the penalty. Daniel's voice was strong as he stood before his accusers. He showed no signs of fear. He was confident the Lord would deliver him or go with him through the trial.

Darius was most unhappy about putting Daniel in the den of lions. He passed the night fasting, without any of the evening's usual entertainment. He was unable to sleep. Rising very early in the morning (Dan. 6:19,20) he hastened to the place of confinement. He cried out, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Isn't it

significant that this heathen king admitted that Daniel served the living God? Perhaps Darius never expected to hear a human response, so with wonder and amazement the voice come back from Daniel, "O king, live for ever" (6:21). This shows respect for the king. Daniel continued, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me: forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt" (6:22).

That den of lions must have presented a wonderful scene during the hours of the night. Perhaps Daniel spent the time singing the Old Testament psalms, for they were the Jewish hymnal. Maybe the Lord told him to rest, using one of the soft manes of a lion for a pillow. Certainly he must have praised God for His miraculous protecting care. Never forget that Daniel's Lord is your God, too. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever. How we need to believe and to act upon this eternal truth. If so we wouldn't spend an anxious moment, nor know a distracting worry. The Lord wants to carry the load for us. Worry is doubting the love and faithfulness of God. Daniel left everything in the hands of Jehovah.

King Darius and all the heathen enemies of Daniel witnessed the great faith of Daniel. The Holy Spirit many centuries afterward must have had this servant of the Lord in mind when he encouraged the hearts of the persecuted Jewish Christians, reminding them of the saints of old (Heb. 11:33). We can only exclaim with the apostles of old, "Lord, increase our faith!"

Certain judgment came upon those who were envious and jealous of Daniel. These wicked men brought the awful penalty upon themselves (6:24). It was a common custom among the Persians that a man's relatives should share in his own punishment. This wasn't according to the laws of God but rather pagan customs. Those accusers were cast into the den of lions, along with their family members. We today have been exhorted to forgive our enemies. Darius was a pagan king.

"Then King Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree. That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel; for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, and he delivered Daniel from the power of the lions" (6:25-27). When we get to heaven someday we will not only see Daniel and his three Hebrew friends, but also surely many souls from Babylon and Medo-Persia who must have been won to the Lord when they looked at Daniel's constant and consistent godly life.

After the Church has been taken home to be with the Lord at the Rapture, God will take up His dealings with Israel again. It is then that the 70th week of Daniel, as found in chapter nine, will begin to run its course. Many portions of the Scripture tell us of Israel's full return to her own land (Isa. 11:11,12). The antichrist will make a covenant with the regathered Jews during the Tribulation, for a seven-year period. Israel will be promised national and religious liberty and security. This covenant will only last for three and one-half years as this Satan-inspired head of this great confederated empire demands universal worship for himself. He sets up an image, just like Nebuchadnezzar, in the temple in Jerusalem. Israel will realize that he is the false christ. They will refuse to bow down to such an abomination, so that the Tribulation will follow. Meanwhile, the faithful Jewish remnant, of whom Daniel is a type, will witness to their soon-coming Messiah and King, even though they will have to suffer for what they believe. Out of it all, God will seal 144,000 Jews, 12,000 from each tribe, and, like Daniel,

they will be kept not only in the midst of a fiery furnace, but amid a spiritual and secular den of lions as they live for God.

In the division of the book of Daniel, chapters 1-6 are narrative, while chapters 7-12 are altogether biblical prophecy, dealing with things yet to come. They outline events of human history until the climax of the age. Prophecy is an authentication and confirmation of the true God and the accurate reliability of Scripture. The Lord is the only One able to predict the future (Isa. 45:21). Man can't control the flow of events. God assures us, "What I say shall definitely come to pass" (Isa. 41:22-23). Why isn't there prophecy in other religions? Why don't other men who founded them predict the future? Obviously if they attempted to do so, it would who them to be nothing more than frauds and fools. The basic test of the true God is the unerring ability to predict the future 100 percent of the time.

Babylon itself was the ancient headquarters of the soothsayers and astrologers. They even took animals to examine their viscera so that they might find omens of the future. Such practice continued down to the Romans and Greeks. Today it seems to be no different. We have a lot of people predicting the future, even in our so-called enlightened land of America. Men of great economic power, statesmen, movie stars and others do nothing about making a decision until they have gone to a fortune teller or astrologer.

The purpose of prophecy is also to authenticate and affirm the messianic truth, deity and lordship of Jesus Christ (Luke 24:27). When I hold my Bible I have in my hands a Book which is two-thirds prophecy, sealed and revealed to us by symbol, type or by overt statement. One-half of those prophecies have already come to pass literally. As you catch a glimpse of this whole portrayal in Daniel all of his visions contain remarkable prophecies covering the period of Gentile world power. Neither the Church nor the present age of grace are found in the prophecies of Daniel logically or chronologically. You don't find the New Testament Church in any book of the Old Testament. This wasn't made clear until Paul revealed in the book of Ephesians what the church is all about.

The vision of the great beasts in 7:3, which are four kings (7:17), corresponds to the four metals of the image in Daniel 2, which we have already studied. The four beasts in chapter seven corresponds to the four kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece and Rome. The ten horns, which are ten kings in chapter 7, verses 7 and 24, correspond to the ten toes of the great image. The ten horns in Revelation 13:1 and 17:12 are also representing the same thing that the ten toes of the image of Daniel 2 symbolizes. It is thrilling and exciting to realize the correlation between Scriptures.

One of the most helpful portions of Scripture dealing with prophetic events is doubtless the book of Daniel. In the seventh chapter we find the dream which was given to the Lord's servant relating to end time events. He begins by telling us, "In the first year of Belshazzar, king of Babylon," which gives us the clue as to the time of this vision in a dream. Now, far advanced in years, the prophet was no doubt devoting himself to prayer, meditation and writing. Belshazzar, leaving the aging statesman to obscurity, afforded Daniel a good opportunity to be used by God as one of the most significant prophetic writers in his time. In receiving the revelation he wrote every word as the Holy Spirit revealed it to him.

We note that he sees a tremendous sea, with the four winds of heaven troubling the waters. Four great beasts arise out of the sea. Many Bible teachers believe this sea in Daniel 7:2 refers to the Mediterranean. The Eastern coast, of course, en-

compasses the land of Israel, which is the geographic center of the earth. It will also be the focal point of God's activities with the Gentile nations at the second coming of Jesus Christ. Symbolically the sea represents Gentile world powers that are hostile to God, as well as to the people of Israel (Isa. 8:7,8; 17:12,13; 57:20; Rev. 13:1; 17:1,15). From the disturbed peoples of the earth these four great beasts arise. Obviously, the restless nations have known nothing but discord from the very beginning. Such turmoil with wars, conflicts, and untold troubles continue until the Saviour comes again.

In the second verse of Daniel 7 we read about the four winds. Further light is thrown on this Scripture in studying Revelation 7. Here again there are four winds bent on hurting God's elect during the Tribulation. A quartet of angels is seen restraining them until the servants of God are sealed in their foreheads. The context shows that the divine power is restraining an evil force.

Any disturbance of the sea is caused by some outside force, like a volcanic eruption in the ocean, an earthquake, or a strong wind. So the nations are in turmoil because of the devil's power. Remember that he is called the "prince of the power of the air." During the Tribulation the Church and the Holy Spirit will have departed from the earth. The man of sin, who is the antichrist, the devil incarnate, will appear to be in full control. Today, here on earth, the Holy Spirit is characterized as restraining the forces of evil so that the antichrist can't take charge of the earth (II Thess. 2:6-10). Never forget that the movements of the nations are in the hands of God. No matter what takes place here on earth, the child of God is always resting in the Lord's providence. Our Almighty Creator knows exactly what is going on.

These beasts are representative of nations. A comparison between the image of Daniel 2 and the beasts of chapter seven reveals this particular program and picture. The Gentile world empires are seen in the former through the eyes of men. They look tremendous with such things as the head of gold. Daniel sees the same empire in the later chapter as a lion with eagles's wings which is beautiful to behold. The second world empire has arms and chest of silver in the second chapter. The later vision is the same thing in the bear with three ribs between its teeth. There is nothing beautiful about such a ferocious animal. Greece is revealed in the belly and thighs of brass through the eyes of men. The same empire is indicated by the beast that looks like a leopard in the seventh chapter. When we reach the Roman empire man sees two legs of iron, while through the eyes of God Rome is revealed as a nameless, diverse beast with iron teeth. This really shook Daniel because he couldn't understand its terrible countenance (Dan. 7:7).

Remember that God didn't reveal to Daniel the age of the New Testament Church. This was given to the Apostle Paul by special revelation (Eph. 3:1-12). It was born on the day of Pentecost. We are now in a time of parenthesis as far as world power is concerned. The feet and toes of the image of Daniel 2 represent the tribulation period, after the Church has gone home. Daniel sees the same thing in the later vision, this time as ten horns of the fourth beast. The little horn is antichrist.

Remember in chapter two how there was a great stone cut out without hands which smote the image into pieces, and eventually filled the whole earth? Daniel's later vision gives the same portrayal, this time with the coming of the Son of Man in glory. Getting this comparative picture in mind enables us to see exactly what is going to take place in the future. It is God Himself who gives us the interpretation of chapter seven even as He gave us the interpretation of chapter two. Both represent the same course of Gentile world supremacy. How minutely the Lord has done it for our spiritual understanding and Christian growth.