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Bible Explorations Newsletter

February 2009 Issue

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PASSOVER/UNLEAVENED BREAD: [April 10 - 18](#)



This beautiful picture comes from “[The Sabbatarian Network](#).” It is a reminder of the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. While people were gathering for Passover Jesus said: “Yet a little while the light is with you. Walk while ye have the light.” In the picture are streams of light falling upon the earth. How beautiful it is that Christ left for us such a reminder as we enjoy

Passover together here in Terra Bella each year. At that same Passover, Christ told certain Greeks that: “if *any man* serve Me, him will my Father honor.” John 12:26. “*Any man*” would include the Greeks to whom He was talking at the time.

PASSOVER SERVICES

“These are the feasts of the Lord, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even *is* the Lord’s Passover.”

What makes it special, beyond the two facts that it reminds us, as Abraham’s seed, that our spiritual ancestors were freed from Egypt; and also that it reminds us of the sacrifice of the Lamb of God on Calvary? The third point of beauty I hasten to make is that it is *His* feast. As the Scripture says, it is “the Lord’s Passover.” That too makes it special. Yes, all the reasons are important, but what makes it personal is that He puts His claim on it. It is His “set apart” time for His “set apart” people — not only here, but in eternity. One of the beauties of Passover is to be reminded of the things He promised during that time. “And He said unto them, with desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer: for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.”

The speakers in the main auditorium, in Terra Bella, this spring will have much to offer as you shall soon read, and the youth department has one of the best ever programs planned by Cheri Hall, Donna Nicholas, Lori Dee Ketcherside, Connie Dahlke, and Lisa Silva.

Give your youth the best of gifts; gifts from heaven. “Bring them in, bring them in...” to help them understand the Passover and all the hope we have because of Christ’s sacrifice for us.

One emphasis for the young will be how to memorize sacred Scriptures. Other things, such as the reasons for holy days, what they mean, and how to make time for them, are also a part of the program. Yes, there will be fun and games, but a whole lot more. This is one program you will want your young folk to take part in.

All of us adults will be encouraged to set our sights on higher ground. Plan to learn about the important issues, prophecies, and holiness of character. Worship with us at Passover, April 10-18, and find your spiritual life revitalized again.

CREATION



We must not be surprised at the multitude of folk who question creation. If Satan is to divert our attention from the Sabbath, what better way to do it than to cast doubt on creation, and consequently, the Creator Himself.

Last month our attention was directed to the three angels' messages and how they each related to the Sabbath of creation. First the Sabbath was singled out, then the fall of Babylon for ignoring it, and finally the Mark of the Beast to permanently destroy it. Read Revelation 14:6-12. See, once again, the results of trusting God and trusting Him not, as expressed in the above verses.

No wonder there are two different responses portrayed in graphic form in the Revelation. In chapter 5:5, He appears as the Lion of the tribe of Judah; but, in the 6th verse, He appears as a Lamb as it had been slain.

You and I will sing praise to the Lamb this Passover, but soon others will be cursing the Lion for His judgments on them. Their judgments are just and right, balancing the evil deeds they are soon to inflict against those who are faithful -- the end-time saints.

“And the 5th angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and *blasphemed the God of heaven* because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

Their deeds are described in the 6th verse. “For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets.”

The saints are described in Rev. 14:12 as those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. The prophets are described in Joel 2:28. “And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit

upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, our old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions:”

Now, for a few minutes, let's examine the beauty of what happened about 6,000 years ago when the world was created and when its memorial was established.

ELLEN WHITE AND CREATION

It is enjoyable to see what Ellen White says about creation. All can enjoy the word pictures she drew. Notice how she gives honor to the One who became “our Passover for us.” (1Cor 5:7)

“The great Creator assembled the heavenly host, that He might in the presence of all the angels confer special honor upon His Son. The Son was seated on the throne with the Father, and the heavenly throng of holy angels was gathered around them. The Father then made known that it was ordained by Himself that Christ, His Son, should be equal with Himself: so that wherever was the presence of His son, it was as His own presence. The word of the Son was to be obeyed as readily as the word of the Father. His Son He had invested with authority to command the heavenly host. Especially was His Son to work in union with Himself in the anticipated creation of the earth and every living thing that should exist upon the earth. His Son would carry out His will and His purposes but would do nothing of Himself alone. The Father's will would be fulfilled in Him.” Story of Redemption, pp. 13, 14.

“The sovereign of the universe was not alone in His work of beneficence. He had an associate, - - a co-worker who could appreciate His purposes, and could share His joy in giving happiness to created beings. ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God.’ Christ, the Word, the only begotten of God, was one with the eternal Father, - - one in nature, in character, in purpose, - - the only being that could enter into all the counsels and purposes of God.” PP 34.

“Before the fall of Satan, the Father consulted His Son. In regard to the formation of man. They purposed to make this world, and create beasts and living things upon it, and to make man in the image of God, to reign as a ruling monarch over every living thing which God should create. When Satan learned the purpose of God, he was envious at Christ, and jealous because the Father had not consulted him in regard to the creation of man.” 3Spiritual Gifts, p. 36.

“Satan was once an honored angel in heaven, next to Christ. His countenance, like those of the other angels, was mild and expressive of happiness. His forehead was high and broad, showing great intelligence. His form was perfect; his bearing noble and majestic. BUT when God said to His Son ‘Let us make man in our image,’

Satan was jealous of Jesus. He wished to be consulted concerning the formation of man, and because he was not, he was filled with envy, jealousy, and hatred. He desired to receive the highest honors in heaven next to God.” EW p 145.

Hold on, there is more . . .

“After the earth was created, and the beasts upon it, the Father and Son carried out their purpose, which was designed before the fall of Satan, to make man in their own image. They had wrought together in the creation of the earth and every living thing upon it. And now God said to His Son, ‘Let us make man in our image.’ As Adam came forth from the hand of his Creator he was of noble height and of beautiful symmetry. He was more than twice as tall as man now living upon the earth, and was well proportioned. His features were perfect and beautiful. His complexion was neither white nor sallow, but ruddy, glowing with the rich tint of health. Eve was not quite as tall as Adam. Her head reached a little above his shoulders. She, too, was noble, perfect in symmetry, and very beautiful. This sinless pair wore no artificial garments. They were clothed with a covering of light and glory, such as the angels wear.” The Story of Redemption, pp. 20, 21.

“The news of man’s fall spread through heaven. Every harp was hushed. The angels cast their crowns from their heads in sorrow. All heaven was in agitation. A council was held to decide what must be done with the guilty pair.

“The angels feared that they would put forth the hand and eat of the tree of life, and become immortal sinners. But God said that He would drive the transgressors from the garden. Angels were immediately commissioned to guard the way of the tree of life. It had been Satan’s studied plan that Adam and Eve should disobey God, receive His frown, and then partake of the tree of life, that they might live forever in sin and disobedience, and thus sin be immortalized.

“But holy angels were sent to drive them out of the garden, and to bar their way to the tree of life. Each of these mighty angels had in his right hand something which had the appearance of a glittering sword.

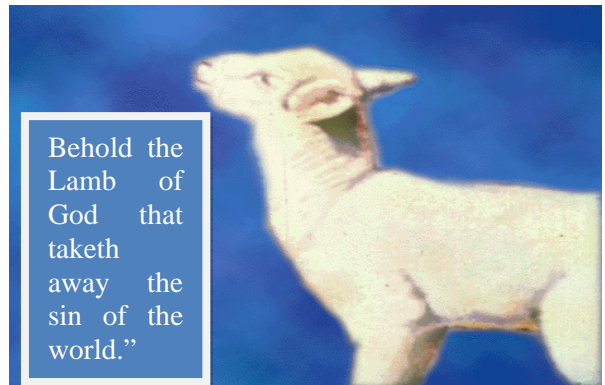
“Then Satan triumphed. He had made others suffer by his fall. He had been shut out of heaven, they out of Paradise.” EW pp. 148,149.

But there is more!

“Sorrow filled heaven, as it was realized that man was lost and that world which God had created was to be filled with mortals doomed to misery, sickness, and death, and there was no way of escape for the offender. The whole family of Adam must die. I saw the lovely Jesus and beheld an expression of sympathy and sorrow upon His countenance. Soon I saw Him approach the exceeding bright light which enshrouded the Father. Said my accompanying angel, ‘He is in close converse with

His Father.’ The anxiety of the angels seemed to be intense while Jesus was communing with His Father. Three times He was shut in by the glorious light about the Father, and the third time He came out from the Father, His person could be seen. His countenance was calm, free from perplexity and doubt, and shone with benevolence and loveliness, such as words cannot express.

“He then made known to the angelic host that a way of escape had been made for lost man. He told them that He had been pleading with His Father, and had offered to give His life a ransom, to take the sentence of death upon Himself, that through him man might find pardon; that through the merits of His blood, and obedience to the law of God, they could have the favor of God and be brought into the beautiful garden and eat of the fruit of the tree of life.” The Story of Redemption, pp. 42, 43.



I wonder if John the Baptist knew all that was implied when, on the banks of the River Jordan, he said: “Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world.”

I wonder if we understand all that is implied when we give Christ the honor due him as the “Lamb of God, slain from the foundation of the world,” as we gather on this once-a-year, dedicated feast to show our appreciation of all that He did, is doing, and will do for us.

SPEAKERS AND SUBJECTS FOR PASSOVER

In the March letter we will include a black and white schedule of all the speakers, with their subjects, but below is a head start.

Some of the Subjects include:

Putting together the End-Time Time-Line; Going the Distance; Practical Preparation for the Close of Probation; How the Prophecies Describe Our End-Time Wilderness Experience; Evolution or Creation?; How Old is that Rock Anyway?; Darwin and Neo – Darwinism; Paradise Lost; Dinosaurs; Raw with Yah; Jesus is the God who Makes and Keeps Covenants; Christ in *All* His Sabbaths; Ellen White and the Feasts of the Lord; Discussion of Twisted Statute Texts; Signs and Symbols of Sun Worship; New Insights into Ephesians Two and Colossians 2:16. Five Lectures on Natural Healing and the use of herbs by Mike Casey.

Jonah Gets a Bad Wrap. The Elijah Message; and Keen Biblical Insights Establishing the Investigative Judgment; the Red Coats Have Moved In.

The above is a partial list, but a list you will hardly find duplicated elsewhere. It is the Spirit of Yahweh that we are to thank for this list — and we do. We praise Him for every good thing He sends our way. You might wonder just why does Bible Explorations provide so many topics and so many speakers (at least 10 speakers will participate)? Because two or three speakers cannot specialize in all the issues we need to be on top of. We must get heavy in our learning to help keep our spiritual priorities in right order. Too little time for dilly-dallying.

Also, we know the sacrifice some of you make to be here and we pray and work to make everything available to you that we possibly can. Yahweh has abundantly blessed for the coming retreat. Nevertheless, eight days in six months provides but a very short bit of precious opportunity. We don't feel right inviting folk to vacation half the time when their minds are half starved for spiritual food. However, we do provide two- or three-hour breaks for lunch and supper. At least, we try to. 😊

We also understand such a thing as an overload of material. How can you remember it all? That is why the DVDs are made quickly available. DVDs are not like being here, but they serve as great reminders, and are really excellent study material. It's great to ask a speaker about a certain aspect of his subject. We can't do that to a DVD.

Among the list of speakers are: Randy Peterson, Connie Dahlke, Jim Buller, Allen Fine, Quint Hjernevic, Pam Hjornivic, Mike Casey, David Baxter, Brad Williams, and a little from John VanDenburgh.

I was looking forward to more of Daniel and Revelation from Lori Dee Ketcherside and two more encouraging lectures from her mother, Donna Nicholas; but they have graciously consented to take the salvation of our youth fully to heart. The young must be better schooled in the basics of Adventism — as well as in the present truth. These two ladies join Cheri Hall, Connie Dahlke, and Lisa Silva to help fill this need. Vern Lawson and Judy Koch will take the kids on a couple of field trips. We will need to depend on our youth in the near future and our young people's leaders are well aware of this. Lori Dee and Donna are invited to the lectern in the main division for the coming fall meetings. By that time a routine for the kids should be established that will free these two leaders to work for them as well as speak to us. We *need* what they have to offer, it's just that we think every bit as much of the young and their needs as we do of ours. Right now, Lori Dee and Donna's talents are heavily needed for our kids and we have an abundance of speakers. We appreciate their contribution.

Passover dinner will be prepared by Weimar cook Kelly Bonner, and will include his famous lasagna, plus broccoli, salad, and desert.

TWO WAYS TO SERVE

Randy Brehms assures us he will be at his station in the music department next fall, but will not be with us this spring. Therefore we need a good sight-reading pianist for song services. We have a good musician coming from Montana to play our keyboard, but need someone for the Yamaha piano/organ that Randy usually plays. Might this be you?

The other need is for an athletically-inclined adult to teach and supervise field games for the kids. This would be an occasional program for a couple hours now and again throughout the week. Might this be you? Give us a call if you can fill either of these needs.



FINANCE VS RELIGIOUS LAW

There is no question that millions of Americans are in trouble. They are without jobs, unemployment compensation can't last forever, and their nest egg has barely one egg left in it — and some such nests are empty.

When I graduated from University, several class mates opted out of Social Security in favor of the 401K program. Without SS, and with 2 trillion dollars now lost from 401K, I wonder how they are making it?

In the lecture, "Economic Meltdown," I wondered if our present national economic woes would continue long enough to spark the religious legislation mentioned by E.G. White.

Once again, this time in the newsletter, I am going to codify that paragraph from Great Controversy. I believe all my readers will know what I am describing as I quote from the Great Controversy — changing a few words; practicing for coded lectures in the future.

"It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of their new religious law; that this sin of violating their religious law has brought calamities which will not cease until its observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of God's religious law are therefore troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity." GC 590; 4SP 408.

A PROMISED FINANCIAL BLESSING

I suggest restoration is not necessary until something is lost, marred, or has become practically non-existent. “Temporal prosperity” had been lost in this case, because they are saying their religious law must be strictly enforced to restore it.

The question a couple of months ago was, is the present money crisis critical enough to eventually lead to the enforcement of a religious law, or will it simply go away and all things be brought back to normal.

The crisis did not go away — at least, not yet. We have a new president, we have billions borrowed to keep us afloat, but the stock market keeps going down with a few small upswings, more mortgages have been lost, and businesses keep closing while more people are out of work.

The truth is: “There are not many, even among educators and statesmen, who comprehend the causes that underlie the present state of society. . . . they are struggling in vain to place business operations on a more secure basis.” 9T 13. Could we not be nearing the time?

Since our last communiqué with you, on this subject, Macy’s is cutting 7,000 jobs, Time Warner 800 jobs, Pfizer and Sprint are cutting 8,000 jobs each, Home Depot will get rid of 7,000 jobs, GM another 2,000 jobs, “Caterpillar to slash 20,000 jobs as profit falls.”, Microsoft Corp will slash up to 5,000 jobs, Intel 6,000, and United Airlines parent UAL another 1,000 jobs, already having cut 1500. Target announced it will cancel 1600 jobs. On good Moring America, 1/30/09 Robin disclosed that 100,000 people lost their jobs this week. Charles Gibson ABC evening news anchor said 3 million more jobs will soon be lost (1/22/09). WOW!

California has stopped paying many bills. Checks are not being issued for Cal Grant college scholarships, county social services, and even the California Highway Patrol. No state tax rebates will be issued until a plan is adopted to deal with the state’s huge deficit.

In addition, more than 200,000 state workers are scheduled to take two days a month off without pay starting this Friday. “This time there are real-world consequences,” said H.D. Palmer “Because we have not been able to get to a budget agreement, payments aren’t going to be made.” The state faces a \$42 billion deficit.

In the mean time, most everyone hopes that President Obama’s 900 billion dollar economic plan will put everything back on track. We hope that it does. But, for now, we sorrow that certain favorite stores and restaurants in Porterville are already vacant and gasoline prices are on the way up again.

So, the question remains... Is this becoming the loss of temporal prosperity that religious legislation is scheduled to relieve? ...or, do we wait for another?

“Let not your hearts be troubled.” and as the song says, “Keep looking up, thy God is still the same today.”

“Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. But unto the wicked God saith, What hast thou to do to declare my statutes, or that thou shouldest take my covenant in thy mouth? Seeing thou hatest instruction, and castest my words behind thee.” Psalm 50:14 -17.

After the text, both detailed commandments and statutes are cited. (Lev. 5:4, 5; Deut. 5:18, 19.)

This text is dynamite. First, we are to express our thankfulness for the things we do have, and second we are to pay our vows. This involves promises to do, or not to do personal things for Him, tithes and offerings, and I might add — vowing to keep the appointments He has made with us. Strongly condemned is hypocrisy. To talk of his commandments, statutes, and judgments, and not do them ourselves, is likened to casting His words behind you.

The promise given is that He will deliver the one who is grateful for His generous gifts; one of which is the power to get wealth.

“But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day. Deut 8:18.



But the promise is conditional, even as it should be. The words in verse 11 are a part of it.

“Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day.” Deut. 8:11.

This promise was given to all the Israelites when they were about to enter the promised land. A further truth is that the signs of the times tell us we, too, are about to enter into the promised land, of heavenly design, and the principles are still the same. The Bible is not written as merely a history book, but is full of vital instruction for us.

Let us think of the great gifts that he has given to those who love God and keep His law. Especially will we remember the Passover Lamb together



Where would I rather be at Pasover, or at any of His appointed times? ...be they weekly, monthly, or annual?

During times of peace, during times of uncertainty, and especially at times of calamity, I would rather be doing God's will and keeping His statutes than trusting in my ways.

Even the common person knew that the power of God was more prevalent during His appointed times. 2Kings 20:23

May praises extend into heaven as we strive to do His will, as we strive to enter into the straight gate, and as we take seriously the admonitions of His commandments, statutes, and judgments.

AROUND THE WORLD

All around the world are statements of concern for its future. While they are concerned, writing and talking of their trials, we will make our calling and election sure. We, by grace, are members of the Church of the Firstborn, and our city is the New Jerusalem, and our citizenship is the Earth Made New. Halleluia! Hallelu Jah!

Telegraph.co.uk the headline states: "Gordon Brown brings **Britain** to the edge of bankruptcy. The article goes on to say that the country stands on the precipice. We are at risk of utter humiliation."

Times On Line: World Agenda. Riots in **Iceland, Latvia and Bulgaria** are a sign of things to come. Our third global political column explodes the start of an age of rebellion over the financial crisis – beginning in Iceland."

Yahoo News, 2/4/09. **Japan's** Panasonic to cut 15,000 jobs and shuts plants. Panasonic reported a 63.1 billion yen loss for the fiscal third quarter.

Globalresearch.ca **Canada's** 75 billion dollar bank bailout. The \$64 billion federal budget deficit is intended to finance Canada's chartered banks.

BE AWARE, BUT DO NOT BROOD



Talk not of our trials brood not over our privations, but remember Jesus, the Son of God. {21MR 308.2} Praise His name for Passover whereof the Son of God is the main theme and the primary focus. We look forward to seeing many of you here in Terra Bella as we honor "Christ our Passover sacrificed for us." April 10 – 18.

APPRECIATION

This month we had to purchase \$1800 more telephone fees for special construction charges of a T1 line facility to sharpen up our internet on-line programs. This past month saw some increase in the return of the pink envelopes that helped. We are still doing O.K thanks to those of you who bless this ministry. You are the greatest. Our evangelism of the SDA truths and the commission given in Malachi 4 continues to grow.

WALTER – Continued Story.

"We are believers in the gospel of Christ," Pierre Murat replied. "So you say" the peasant muttered. "I know nothing of fine arguments, for I have never learned a word of Latin. "Are you faithful to the Holy Catholic Church?" "We have been denied fellowship among the Catholic Church. We have been cast out." Brother Murat responded.

The man looked about anxiously; obviously afraid someone might have heard what his guest said. "Then you shall not eat at my table or sleep in my home!" He whispered menacingly.

"Will you return my coin?" Brother Murat asked. "We have very little." "One is not bound to keep faith with heretics." The peasants scorn was thick in his voice. "You are fortunate that I do not deliver you up to the priest's men here who are asking about our tax for the Crusade."

He opened the door and pointed outside. "You get around those men any way you can. I do not want blood on my hands, even heretic blood, but I will not have it said in this village that I aided an Albigensian!"

The men at the end of the village shouted a lot, and a skirmish began. Walter assumed it was because one householder objected to paying the extra church tax. They dragged one man in rich clothing from the millhouse.

While everyone rushed to see what might be going on, Walter and his family slipped out of the village. His stomach still growled with the lingering smell of food to aggravate it. Ahead lay another all-night walk with no prospect of either food or bed.

In the morning Walter lay thinking while they rested in a straw pile high on a slope above a farming village. On the horizon rose the high Alps. Behind them stretched the fertile plains of Toulouse and Provence, the places he had always known.

Directions to our campground: Come early for favorite RV or tent space. Motel 6 in Porterville is available. Travel Interstate 99 to Pixley. Go east on Ave 96 (It becomes Ave 95). Cross 99, and later HWY 65, and continue easterly to RD 256. Turn left, (north) a short distance to AVE 100. Turn right one block to camp site. Address 25810 Ave 100; phone: 559-535-5441.