



Bible Student's Notebook™

The Herald of His Grace

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

Volume 26
Issue 649

The Original Bible Restored

by — Ernest L. Martin (1984)

Book Review & Notes by – Bob Evelyn
(Including Some Additional Comments)

Part 2 of 3

Of the sign-manual, E.W. Bullinger writes,

The use of this tri-grammaton is uniform and continuous at the end of each book, until we come to the death of Hezekiah ... [after which] we find a different formula. Instead of the simple sign (HZK), we find two words, making a sentence – instead of forming the initials. At the end of Kings, we have “Be bound, and we will bind.” This looks as though the subsequent editors, whether Josiah, Ezra, or others, understood the tri-grammaton as a solemn injunction transmitted to them; and they took up the work and carried it out in the same spirit in which it had come down to them, and said, “Be bound,” and they responded. “We will bind.”

The same form [of two words] is used after Ezekiel, at the end of the Minor Prophets, the Psalms, Proverbs and Job. We do not find it after the Song of Solomon, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes or Esther. We meet with it again after Daniel, and after Ezra-Nehemiah (Bullinger – The Song of Degrees, (*Things To Come*, XIII (1907), page 112).

After the Book of Chronicles ... the last book of the Hebrew Old Testament ... we find the final, and longer form of the sign-manual ... “Be bound. So we will bind. The Lawgiver is not straitened (or powerless).” Thus Ezra and the Great Assembly of priests, having concluded the writing of the Book of Chronicles, finalized the Old Testament canonization.⁽⁹¹⁾

DANIEL'S ROLE

Daniel was an important link in the canonization process, as he was the responsible person thru whom the divine books of the Temple were preserved at Babylon. This enabled them to be returned to Jerusalem by Ezra in later years.⁽¹⁰¹⁾

OLD TESTAMENT CANON FIXED BY EZRA

The efforts of Hezekiah and others to “canonize” the Old Testament only contribute to the history leading to the official canonization by Ezra and the 120 priests who comprised the “Great Assembly,” who determined exactly which writings would be included in the Old Testament of today.⁽¹⁰¹⁾

Early Jewish scholars agree that the Old Testament Scriptures were selected and placed in an official order by Ezra the priest (with the help of Nehemiah) in the fifth century B.C.⁽⁴⁹⁾

II Maccabees 2:12-15 makes reference to Nehemiah collecting various written works:

Solomon also kept the eight days. The same thing was related also in the records and memoirs about Nehemiah, that he founded a library and collected the books about the kings, and the prophets, ►

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Editorial: She Strayed 5615



and the works of David, and royal letters about sacred gifts.

Josephus also noted that the 22 books of the Old Testament were brought together and canonized in the time of Ezra and Nehemiah (*Contra Apion*, I.8):

We have not a countless number of books, discordant and arrayed against each other; but only twenty-two books, containing the history of every age, which are justly accredited as divine. Of these, five belong to Moses, which contain both the laws and the history of the generations of men until his death. This period lacks but little of 3000 years. From the death of Moses, moreover, until the time of Artaxerxes, king of the Persians after Xerxes (*i.e.* to the time of Ezra and Nehemiah), the prophets, who followed Moses, wrote down what was done during the age of each one respectively, in thirteen books. The remaining four contain hymns to God, and rules of life for men. From the time of Artaxerxes, moreover, until our present period, all occurrences have been written down but they are not regarded as entitled to the like credit with those which precede them, because there was no certain succession of prophets ... For although so many ages have passed away, no one has dared to add to them, nor to take anything from, nor to make alterations. In all Jews it is implanted, even from their birth, to regard them as being the instructions of God, and to abide steadfastly by them, and if it be necessary, to die gladly for them.⁽⁵⁸⁻⁵⁹⁾

In effect Josephus is saying that the Jewish people late in the first century believed the Old Testament had been put together and completed in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. No works written after the time of Ezra, including the Apocrypha, were reckoned as being inspired by God ... since no one with the prophetic spirit had come after the days of Ezra.⁽⁵⁹⁾

It was the universal testimony of Jews and later Christians that Ezra and Nehemiah in the fifth century B.C. were the ones commissioned to complete the Hebrew canon.⁽⁶³⁾

Ezra selected the books to be accepted in the canon, arranged them in proper order, and edited them to make them understandable for the readers of his time. Edits would have included the words “unto Dan” in Genesis 14:14 and the concluding sections of Deuteronomy concerning Moses’ death.⁽⁶³⁾

Ezra’s edits were not vast changes to the Old Testament text. He edited to allow the Jewish nations of his time to have the complete and full revelation of God in the Hebrew language. An example is Genesis 36:31-39 which records the names of the Edomite kings down to the time of King Saul. Moses would not have known the names of the Edomite kings living 300 years after his death.⁽¹⁰²⁾

Another example would be Deuteronomy 34:5-6 which reports that Moses’ burial place was not known “*unto this day.*” It is hardly possible for Moses to have recorded his own death, and also to prophesy that his burial place was unknown “*unto this day.*”⁽¹⁰⁴⁾

Ezra also changed the style of the Hebrew letters from the old Phoenician script of the early prophets to the “square script” which had become common for international communication by the fifth century. This enabled Ezra’s official manuscripts to be distinguished from the heretical Samaritan manuscripts which were written in the old Hebrew script. It has been supposed that Christ referred to Ezra’s square script when referring to the “jot or tittle” in Matthew 5:18, since these small horn-like projections were not used in the old Hebrew script before Ezra’s day.⁽⁶³⁾

Ezra arranged the authorized scrolls into a proper order for teaching the people and deposited them with



Critical Lexicon & Concordance to the English & Greek New Testament

by — E.W. Bullinger (1837-1913)

1040 pages, HB

See order form.

English words appear in alphabetical order along with the equivalent Greek words, their literal and derivative meanings, and a list of passages in which they appear. Includes a comprehensive Greek-English index. A key reference work in the study of the Scriptures.

the priests in the archives of the Temple (Deuteronomy 17:18; 31:9). A group of 120 priests was ordained to be the Supreme Court of the land (the “Great Assembly”) of which Ezra was the chief. These priests, also known as the “Sopherim” (*i.e.*, “counters” of letters in manuscripts) were responsible for reproducing the authorized books for use in the synagogues throughout the land. They counted the letters in each manuscript they reproduced to insure that the exact number of letters were found, matching the number in the authorized Temple scrolls.⁽⁶⁴⁾

After Ezra’s death some genealogical additions and certain textual emendations were made by the authorized Sopherim.¹ This ceased with the advent of Antiochus Epiphanes in 168 B.C. The Book of Jubilees speaks of the final 22 books as though they were a set of standard scrolls.⁽⁶⁴⁾

WHAT MOTIVATED EZRA TO “CANONIZE”?

The main difficulty facing Ezra was false religious beliefs and customs entering Judaic society because of the intermarriage of Jewish men with heathen women. Ezra was horrified as to where this might lead and thought it prudent to write the Book of Chronicles as a history of what happened in the past when such things had occurred. We note the examples given of Solomon’s rebellious son Rehoboam, and the “*many wives*” of Solomon (II Chronicles 11:21-23).⁽⁶⁸⁻⁶⁹⁾

The books were arranged in the various divisions to

teach all facets of Old Testament life in a proper and harmonious fashion. The order was not understood by the later Greeks and Romans who changed the order into a more subject-oriented or encyclopedic fashion.⁽⁷¹⁾

THE NEED FOR A NEW TESTAMENT

The apostles did not believe it was necessary to record revelation for future generations until they came to the realization that Christ was not returning in their generation. The epistles written after 61 A.D. shift from Christ’s imminent return to matters that imply a longer period of time would take place.⁽¹⁰⁶⁾

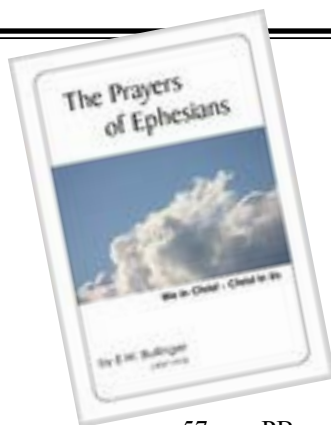
In I Timothy 5:14 Paul began to encourage widows to marry and bear children. This is the reverse of what he had said earlier in I Corinthians 7:25-35. He wrote to Timothy about the church organization, as if Christ would not be immediately returning.⁽¹²⁰⁾

Likewise Peter, who said that these are “the last times” in I Peter 1:20, later spoke of the last days as futuristic (II Peter 3:4). He even explains why the expected coming did not materialize ... “*that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years*” ... and “*the Lord is not slack concerning His coming*” (II Peter 3:8-9).⁽¹²¹⁻¹²²⁾

At Passover in 62 A.D. the martyrdom of James, leader of the Jerusalem church, could have caused the others to see that Christ may not return in the immediate future.

1. [Editor:] For more information on the Sopherim, see:
– *Companion Bible Appendixes*, #31-33, E.W. Bullinger, see order form.

Also consider Christ’s prophecy in Matthew 24:6-7 ... of wars, and a revolt of the various kingdoms ►



57 pp., PB

See order form.

Prayers of Ephesians, The: We in Christ – Christ in Us

by — E.W. Bullinger

The Epistle to the Ephesians contains two long prayers plus a shorter concluding one. The two longer prayers have a common subject: Jesus Christ and Believers. The first prayer concentrates on Christ’s purpose for us, whereas the second focuses on what God has made us in Christ. In other words, the first asserts “We in Christ,” while the second proclaims “Christ in Us.” The first prayer deals with God’s power which He wrought in Christ, while the second one deals with God’s power which is at work in us.

www.EWBullinger.com

within the Roman dominion. In 63 A.D. just the opposite was occurring ... Rome was stronger than ever.⁽¹³⁶⁾

Beginning in the Autumn of 62 A.D. Joshua ben Ananias prophesied the fall of Jerusalem, continuing for seven years and five months. Since Christ himself had said that Jerusalem and the Temple would be destroyed (Matthew 24:1-2; Luke 21:20), many Christians left Palestine at this time.⁽¹⁴⁵⁾

Eusebius reported that the apostles, not long after the death of James in 62 A.D., “were driven out of Judea.”⁽¹⁴⁵⁾

When Rome burned in 64 A.D., the fire was blamed on a Messiah figure trying to establish a world government by overthrowing the Roman Empire.⁽¹⁴⁷⁾ Christians were persecuted throughout the Roman Empire. I Peter 4:12 makes reference to the fiery trial then occurring upon many Christians throughout the world.⁽¹⁴⁸⁾

Paul’s teaching was viewed as so revolutionary and counter to the traditional Jewish teachings that “all the men in Asia have turned away from me” (II Timothy 1:15). The Jewish Christians were zealous for the law (Acts 21:20-21) and were careful to keep all of the Mosaic customs. But Paul insisted that the Sabbaths, holy days, new moons and food laws of the Mosaic Law were no longer essential ... not even for Jews (Ephesians 2:14-22; Colossians 2:14-16). The original apostles were zealous for retaining the Mosaic Law within the doctrinal teachings of Christianity.⁽¹⁵²⁾

Josephus records three major miraculous occurrences

dealing with the Temple over a two month period in the Spring of 66 A.D. ... just a few months before the major Roman/Jewish War broke out and the Temple and city of Jerusalem were destroyed.⁽¹⁵⁴⁻¹⁵⁶⁾

- A brilliant light around the altar at 3:00 a.m. that lasted for half an hour (interpreted by the scribes as a signal that God was moving away from Mount Moriah ... as when the light moved in the wilderness days to signal the movement of the Tabernacle).
- The eastern gate of the inner court opened of its own accord at midnight (interpreted that the temple was a gift to the enemy, pointing toward its impending desolation).
- The voice of a great multitude was heard by all 24 priests representing the 24 orders of the Aaronic priesthood ... saying, “We are departing hence.”

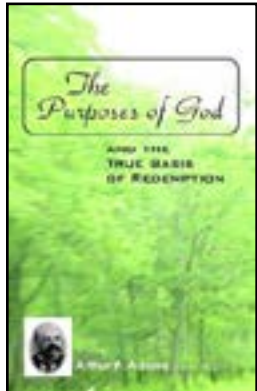
Josephus reports one more supernatural occurrence:

Before sunset, throughout all areas of the country, there were seen in the air many chariots and armed battalions coursing through the clouds and encircling the cities.⁽¹⁵⁸⁾

Christ had told His disciples that,

When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh (Luke 21:20).

All of this may have led Peter and John to realize that Paul’s teaching was indeed correct ... that the Temple would be destroyed ... that Paul had been given special revelations concerning the fullness of the Gospel ... and that it was necessary to leave future Christians



This is a compilation of some of Arthur P. Adams’ smaller works that first appeared in his periodical *The Spirit of the Word* in 1885. Adams suffered greatly for the truths presented here. The riches found within these pages deserve to be preserved for future generations. Even though Adams wrote over one hundred years ago, in many ways his writings are just as fresh as if they had been written today.

This is THE TRUE BASIS OF REDEMPTION – God our Creator, responsible for His Own creation, and every attribute of His being pledged to its successful completion. God is able, and He will. The creature may rest secure on that basis – the all sufficient ground and full assurance of his deliverance and final triumph in the redemption of Jesus Christ. – A.P. Adams

135 pp, PB *See order form.*

with a divine library of authorized books to preserve the Christian truths.⁽¹⁵⁹⁾

TURNING AWAY

A key to the apostles seeing the need to preserve the inspired writings for future generations was the turning away of many from the teachings of the apostles.

Within 3-4 years of James' death, John reported that many rebels were emerging from within the church itself (I John 2:18-19). They were beginning to deny Christ (I John 4:1-2) and were no longer listening to or submitting to the original apostles (I John 4:6). Some elders within the church were rejecting John's authority (III John 9-10).⁽¹⁶²⁾

Peter had said that destructive sects would soon rise from within the church, committing abominable acts and denying Christ's return (II Peter 2:1-2, 13; 3:3-4).⁽¹⁶²⁾

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

II Peter also prophesied of the coming war between the Jews and the Romans. Peter describes an apostasy from the truth, and a widespread lapse of former Christians into a rebellion against God and against all constituted authorities, no matter who they were. Peter told his readers that he was giving them advanced knowledge of the sedition so they would be on guard against the coming errors (II Peter 3:17).⁽¹⁶⁶⁾

Peter said there "*will be false teachers*" (II Peter 2:1)

who "*will bring in destructive sects*" (:1); and that the many "*will follow their acts of loose conduct*" (:2), and that "*they will make their way into your midst*" (:3), and that people "*will be corrupted*" (:12). When Jude later wrote his letter, these things had already begun.⁽¹⁶⁶⁾

Peter was speaking of the upcoming Jewish war against the Romans.⁽¹⁶⁷⁾ Both Peter and Jude wrote to warn true Christians not to take part in a war with Rome because it would lead to utter destruction – and it did.⁽¹⁷¹⁾

Since Peter gave advance knowledge of what would happen, we can date Peter's letter to about Autumn 66 A.D.⁽¹⁷¹⁾

Peter and Jude were warning the true Christians not to take part in the national revolt against the Roman Empire. But Peter prophesied that many would relinquish their faith in Christ and begin to participate in the war against Rome (II Peter 2:1). These revolutionaries denied Christ ... saying that Christ was not coming back to earth (II Peter 3:4).⁽¹⁶⁸⁾

The revolutionaries were crying, "Come over to the cause of liberty" (Josephus – *War*, IV.282); fight for the "defense of liberty" (IV.273); become "the champions of liberty" (IV.272). This is exactly what Peter prophesied ... that they were "promising them liberty" (II Peter 2:19).⁽¹⁶⁹⁾

Peter warned the Jewish Christians not to participate in the rebellion as they would come to "*swift destruction*" (II Peter 2:1) and a "*judgment of desolation*" ►



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(:3). He said their cities would be turned to ashes as Sodom and Gomorrah (II Peter 2:6). This is exactly what happened.⁽¹⁷¹⁾

With the destruction, the apostles understood that Paul's teachings were correct, and that no longer was the outward physical worship of the Temple the Christian way to righteousness.⁽¹⁷¹⁾

EVENTS LEADING TO NEW TESTAMENT "CANONIZATION"

- It was becoming apparent to the apostles that Christ was not returning to earth in their generation.⁽¹⁷³⁾
- The church was being bombarded from within by teachers of many different false doctrines.⁽¹⁷³⁾
- The apostasies mentioned by Peter and John were in full swing (II Peter 2; I John 2:18-19; I John 4:1).⁽²⁴⁵⁾
- Many were turning away from Paul.⁽²⁴⁵⁾

All the men of Asia have turned away from me (II Timothy 1:15).

- Ministers were abandoning the authority of John (III John 9-10), including Diotrefes who liked to have first place among those in the church and who did not accept John's authority.⁽²⁴⁵⁾

It became essential for the apostles to provide the future church with the purity of truth entrusted to them. (See II Timothy 3:1-7; 4:2-4; II Peter 3:3).⁽¹⁷⁴⁾

When Paul wrote to Timothy, it was clear that his main desire was for sound doctrine to be continually

preached after his death, because a great falling away from the truth was on the horizon, and people would begin to believe fables (see II Timothy 4:1-8).

To preserve the truth it was necessary for the apostles to produce some official document before their deaths. Does it seem sensible that the apostles would simply die and let others (whom they knew nothing about) formulate an official set of standard Scriptures? If they couldn't trust the doctrines of many in their midst, how could they depend on those in future times that they didn't know at all?⁽¹⁷⁴⁾

Many were composing Gospels (Luke 1:1). Since they were being written in a time of growing rebellion, how could one be certain these Gospels were providing an accurate account?⁽¹⁷⁵⁾

GOSPEL OF JOHN

The Gospel of John could have been written quite late, perhaps not long before his death. Many accounts had been written about the life of Jesus (Luke 1:1). When John prepared the final inspired account to counter the fables that were destined to be put forth (II Peter 1:16; II Timothy 4:4), long after the events he wrote about had taken place, the holy spirit was active, just as Jesus had promised.⁽²⁶⁹⁾

These things have I spoken to you, remaining with you. Now the consoler, the holy spirit, which the Father will be sending in My name, that will be teaching you all, and reminding you of all that I said to you (John 14:25-26).

(to be continued)



344 pp, PB

See order form.

Is Hell Eternal?

or, Will God's Plan Fail?

by — Charles H. Pridgeon (1863-1932)

"Our readers will rejoice with us at [this] publication by Charles H. Pridgeon, President of the Pittsburgh Bible Institute. A firm stand is taken for the salvation of all based on the doctrine of the eons as revealed in the Scriptures. Many other books on this subject, lacking the light which the doctrine of the eons brings, have never seemed sufficiently conclusive to carry conviction to those who wish a scriptural basis for their belief." – A.E. Knoch, *Unsearchable Riches*. Reprint of the 1920 edition.



Editor's Desk

She Strayed

Cheryl Strayed, an award winning author, is the subject of the movie *Wild* (2014), which is adapted from her book *Wild: From Lost to Found on the Pacific Crest Trail*. It reached #1 on the *New York Times Best Seller* list and has been translated into 30 languages. She was portrayed in the picture by actress Reese Witherspoon.

She was born Cheryl Nyland in Spangler PA, which is just 35 miles north of Windber. After a desperately tumultuous early life, she legally changed her last name to Strayed, a "name she adopted ... in recognition of the extent to which she was lost."¹

1. *Cheryl Strayed: The Hike that Saved My Life*, The Telegraph, February 19 2015.

Contemplating divorce, she realized she couldn't continue to use the hyphenated married name she'd shared with her husband, "nor could I go back to having the name I had had in high school and be the girl I used to be. ... I pondered the question of my last name, mentally scanning words that sounded good with Cheryl. ... Nothing fit until one day when the word strayed came into my mind. Immediately I looked it up in the dictionary and knew it was mine. Its layered definitions spoke directly to my life and also struck a poetic chord: to wander from the proper path, to deviate from the direct course, to be lost, to become wild, to be without a mother or father, to be without a home, to move

Enjoying movies based on true accounts, especially those that portray the human condition, some time back we watched this film, which recounted her lone, life-changing, 1,100-mile hike on the Pacific Crest Trail.

For me, the real takeaway was a series of exceptional quotes. So, I tell you all of this merely to set the stage for them. I trust, in light of what we know about God's sovereignty and where He is skillfully leading all of His creation, that you will be able to appreciate the words of one struggling member of humanity attempting to find herself and the meaning of life.

"It took me years to be the woman my mother raised. It took me 4 years, 7 months and 3 days to do it, without her. After I lost myself in the wilderness of my grief, I found my own way out of the woods." – Cheryl Strayed, *Wild*

"I didn't even know where I was going until I got there, on the last day of my hike. Thank you, I thought over and over again, for everything the trail had taught me and everything I couldn't yet know. ... Now in 4 years, I'd cross this very ►

about aimlessly in search of something, to diverge or digress. I had diverged, digressed, wandered and become wild. ... I saw the power of the darkness. Saw that, in fact, I had strayed and that I was a stray and that from the wild places my straying had brought me, I knew things I couldn't have known before." *The High Road: "Wild," A Hiking Memoir by Cheryl Strayed*, by Dani Shapiro, *Sunday Book Review* March 30, 2012.



Wife Loving: The Husband's Paramount Privilege

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

This book is about Christ-mentored husbandry; a look at husbands' important and honored role of loving their wives. So lofty and divine is its pursuit, Paul presents none other than Christ Himself as the mentor: "*Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church.*"

"What wonderful thoughts. They are so true and practical. I love it!" – *The Netherlands*

"I have seldom read so much wisdom on marriage in relation to biblical principles." – *Denmark*

"Powerful, powerful stuff! As a woman I am honored by it. I am deeply grateful for your boldness to honor women and to portray the marriage relationship as simply yet profoundly as God intended." – *CA*

185 pp., PB

See order form.

bridge. I'll marry a man in a spot almost visible from where I was standing. Now in 9 years, that man and I would have a son named Carver and a year later, a daughter named after my mother, Bobbi." – Cheryl Strayed, *Wild*

"What if I forgave myself? I thought. What if I forgave myself even though I'd done something I shouldn't have? What if I was a liar and a cheat and there was no excuse for what I'd done other than because it was what I wanted and needed to do? What if I was sorry, but if I could go back in time I wouldn't do anything differently than I had done? ... What if what made me do all those things everyone thought I shouldn't have done was what also had got me here? What if I was never redeemed? What if I already was?" – Cheryl Strayed, *Wild*

"The useless days will add up to something." – Cheryl Strayed, *Wild*

"You will learn a lot about yourself if you stretch in the direction of goodness, of bigness, of kindness, of forgiveness, of emotional bravery. Be a

warrior for love." – Cheryl Strayed, *Wild*

This one final quote is a reminder from Cheryl's mother.

"There is a sunrise and a sunset every day, and you can choose to be there for it. You can put yourself in the way of beauty." – Bobbi Nyland, *Wild*

We have all strayed,



Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.
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TOPICS:

Major: Editor's Desk; Movies; Quotes (untitled)

Bible Student's Notebook™

Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal

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Scripture education in a semi-weekly format!

This free electronic publication is dedicated to:

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

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

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

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

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