



THE BIBLE TEACHER

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New Delhi-110024

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	Morning Worship	10 : 00 A.M.
	Evening Service	6 : 00 P.M.
Wednesday :	Midweek Bible Study	6 : 00 P.M.

विशेष सूचना !

प्रत्येक शनिवार तथा शुक्रवार को रात्री ८:४५ से ९:१५ तक सुनिधे

हमारा विशेष कार्यक्रम

“सत्य सुसमाचार”

यह कार्यक्रम रेडियो श्रीलंका से २५ तथा

४१ मीटर ब्रेड पर सुना जा सकता है।

हमारे दिवों के प्रकाशन

१. सत्य सुसमाचार — लेखक : सती हरिव

२. उद्धार की योजना — लेखक : सती हरिव

३. क्रैस की कथा — लेखक : सती हरिव

४. खाली कमरा — लेखक : सती हरिव

५. सुसमाचार बीजेवाला — लेखक : डॉ० सी० चोट

(अनुवादक : सती हरिव)

आज ही प्राप्त कीजिए! प्रत्येक प्रतक की सुमत प्राप्त करने के लिये केवल २५ पैसे का डाक टिकट भेजिए।

प्राची प्रतक एक साथ प्राप्त करने के लिये केवल २० : २५ के डाक

टिकट भेजिए। कृपया अपना पता साफ लिखें।

सत्य सुसमाचार
प्री० ब्राँस ३८१५, नई दिल्ली-११००४६,

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Pleading for the restoration of pure New Testament Christianity

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Your Jerusalem

In New Testament times, the Lord, after his death, burial, and resurrection, and just prior to his return to the Father in heaven, appeared before the Apostles and gave them the great commission. (Matthew 28 : 19, 20 ; Mark 16 : 15, 16). In this he commanded them to go and teach all the nations of the world, even every creature of every nation of all the world. He specified the beginning point as Jerusalem. This was the great religious city of that day and of all time. This was where the Lord was falsely accused, tried, crucified, buried, and resurrected. It was also the centre where many other things had happened and would happen. The Apostles came from nearby. If there was to be a beginning point then for the preaching of the gospel, the establishment of the church, and for Christianity itself, what better place could be chosen than Jerusalem? So this is the way the Lord planned it, and long before it actually happened the prophets foretold it (Isaiah 2 : 2, 3; Joel 2 : 28, 29), and this is why he commanded the Apostles to tarry in Jerusalem until they be endued with power from on high, where repentance and remission of sins would first be preached, and from which the gospel was to go into all the world. (Luke 24 : 46-49). Christ further instructed,

But ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in "Judaëa, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1 : 9). With this, he ascended back to the Father in heaven.

Then what happened ? The Lord's plan came to pass. The prophecies were fulfilled. The Apostles remained in Jerusalem and the Holy Spirit was poured out on them. With a mighty throng gathered there on the day of Pentecost, they began to preach the gospel in the languages of those present. The result was that some three thousand believed, repented, were baptized for the remission of their sins and were added to the church. (Acts 2). But this wasn't all. They preached again and again and the church grew and spread. Even with persecution, it continued to grow, (Acts 8 : 4). Soon Philip went down to samaria and preached and many believed and were baptized. (Acts 8). Also, in that same chapter Philip was directed to go to a man in the desert where he would have the opportunity to teach him. He did so and the Ethiopian Eunuch eagerly received the word, believed it, obeyed it went on his way rejoicing. In Acts 9 we have the conversion of Saul and this man was to make history on his various missionary journies in spreading the cause of Christ. In Acts 10 we are introduced to Cornelius and his household and thus we have the conversion of the first Gentiles. And on and on it goes until the gospel had been preached to every creature under heaven. (Colossians 1 : 23).

What did the Lord say in the beginning ? He commanded that the gospel be taken to all the world. He said the beginning point was to be at Jerusalem. It all began with a dozen men. They were uneducated, poor, had no transportation, no fast way of communicating the gospel, not to mention all of the other obstacles, and yet what began there in Jerusalem with those few would shake the very foundations of the world and change the course of history. The vibrations, influences, and impact is still being felt all over the world.

Now almost two thousand years later, and thousands of miles away from Jerusalem, how do we fit into all of this ? As the Lord's people, we still have the same command to take

the gospel into all the world. With the world in sin, and in need of forgiveness, the gospel is as fresh, relative, and as powerful today as it was when it was first preached. But where shall we begin? Wherever we are. If we are in New Delhi then we begin here. If we are in Bombay, then we begin there. The same is true with Calcutta, Madras, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Lucknow, and all of the other cities across this great land. If we are in a village, in the jungle, in the mountains, in the desert, or wherever we may be, then that is where we must begin. Wherever we may be then that is our Jerusalem. That is our beginning point if we know the truth, have obeyed it, then it is up to us to take it to our family, to our loved ones, to our friends, to those living with us or near us, to those living in our community or city. Yes, we are to tell them of Jesus, what he wants them to do to be saved, the church they should be a member of, the kind of worship they are to engage in, and the kind of life they are to live. This is a great job and it will take each one of us doing all we can to do the work that needs to be done.

Why wait for others to come to do the job that the Lord has given to us? We, here in India must realize that if our country is ever evangelized with the gospel of Christ then it will be up to us to do it. We know our people and we know that they need Christ and salvation. We also know how to do the job and we can do it. We have been disciplined for it, we know the languages, we know the temperament of the people, and we know their thinking. We know the culture, the religions that are here, and the philosophies that the people live by. We know the customs and traditions. We know the cities and the villages. We eat the food they do. We dress like they do. We know the transportation system and how to get around. And we know that we will be well received and hospitably treated wherever we go. We know too that to do the job that needs to be done that it is not a matter of material support but rather it comes down to the matter of faith, courage, and determination. Do we want to obey the Lord? Do we want the people of India to have the gospel? Can we do the job? It is up to you and me. We must begin with our

Jerusalem and go forth to all of India with the gospel, and not just India, but neighbouring countries, and to the world itself. Oh yes, we can do it if we want to do it. The Apostles and their converts did it and they had far more obstacles than we do. Surely if they could do what they did then we can do likewise in an age in which we are blessed with better transportation, communication, and many other assets.

What are you doing right now in your Jerusalem? Are you teaching any one? Are you giving out any tracts? Are you setting a good example? You might be surprized at all you can do if you will just think about it and decide that you are going to take some initiative. Don't wait on anyone. Just go on and try. Go to a nearby city or village where the church does not exist and start the work. Don't say you can't. Neither allow anyone to tell you that you can't. Jesus said that you are to go and if he commanded you to do so then you can and you must. If you will do this then you will soon be amazed at all that you have been able to do.

May God help us here in india to preach the gospel in our Jerusalem, that is, in our home city, village, or wherever it may be, and then continue to move on out until of all the millions that make up this country have heard the gospel of Christ. Many are waiting. Will you not go to them now?



**associate
editorial**

But The Bible Says

Some teach that Manuals, disciplines, and the various creeds of men should be read and followed. But the Bible says, "Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read....." (Isaiah 34 : 16). "Search the scriptures ; for in them ye think ye have eternal life : and they are they which testify of me."

(John 5 : 39). "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Timothy 3 : 16,17). Therefore, we should seek, read, and search out of the book of the Lord only; because in them we have the life eternal. The scripture, the Bible, is written by God's inspiration and is profitable and makes man perfect and thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Some people say that **faith only**, that is, a mental acceptance of Christ as personal saviour, is enough to be saved. But the Bible says, "Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.....For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2 : 17, 26). "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven" said Jesus, "but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matthew 7 : 21). According to 2 Thessalonians 1 : 7-9, "When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power." Therefore, the gospel of Jesus must be obeyed to be saved. The scripture reveals that the facts of the gospel of Christ are the death, burial, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (I Corinthians 15 : 1-4). Therefore, to obey the gospel of Christ means one must die to his sin by repenting, and must be buried in water of baptism, and come up out of it to walk in newness of life. (Romans 6 : 1-4). There is, beside this, no other way to obey the gospel of Christ. Thus, Jesus said, Commanding his disciples, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. (Mark 16 : 15, 16).

Some teach that infants should be baptized. But the Bible says that people must be taught before they are baptized (Matthew 28 : 19), and they must be old enough to believe and repent of their sins before they are baptized (Mark 16 : 16;

Acts 2 : 38). Further, infants have no sin to be forgiven (Matthew 18 : 3), and the Bible says, one should be baptized for the forgiveness of sin. (Acts 2 : 38 ; 22 : 16).

Some people believe that one can be baptized by sprinkling, pouring or immersion. But the Bible says, "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death : that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6 : 4). "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." (Colossians 2 : 12).

Some people say that preachers and ministers of church should be addressed as Reverend, Father, Padri (which also means father). But the Bible says, "Holy and reverend is his (God's) name" (Psalm 111 : 9), and Jesus said, "Call no man your father upon the earth : For one is your Father, which is in heaven". (Matthew 23 : 9). Therefore, religiously or spiritually speaking, we have only one Father, God Almighty.

Some believe that the Lord's Supper may be observed once in a month or after every three months according to ones own choice and convenience. But the Bible says, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow ; and continued his speech until midnight." (Acts 20 : 7). We are told that the three thousand who were baptized on the day of Pentecost, among the other things they continued "**in breaking of bread**". (Acts 2 : 42). When did they come together for breaking of bread ? "Upon the first day of the week." How often did the first day of the week come ? Every week. Therefore, they assembled together to break bread upon every first day of the week, every Sunday. Those who observe the Lord's Supper monthly, quarterly or yearly are therefore in direct opposition to the Bible.

We shall discuss some other things that men teach in direct opposition to the Bible in our next issue of the Bible Teacher.

The Church Of Christ

Who we Really Are

We are a body of true believers in Jesus Christ, who have become obedient from the heart to that form of the doctrine delivered unto men (Rom. 6 : 17), being thereby made free from all past sins and constituted Christians or children of God in Christ. (Gal. 3 : 26, 27.)

We believe in a thorough change of heart from a love of sin and worldliness to a devotion to righteousness and the fruits of the Spirit of God. This complete change of heart was accomplished by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit through His own chosen instrument, "the sword of the Spirit"—the Word of God. (Eph. 6 : 17.)

In undergoing this change wrought by the Spirit, we became believers in Christ through the Spirit's testimony in the Gospel: believing this testimony, we became believers in Christ. (Rom. 1 : 16 ; 1 Cor. 4 : 15.)

We not only believed on Christ, but we became obedient to the Faith, (Rom. 1 : 16 ; 16 : 26), at which point Christ became the author of our salvation. (Heb. 5 : 9.) Our souls were purified in our "obedience to the truth." (1 Peter 1 : 22.) We thus made Christ our Lord, by becoming obedient servants to Him.

Our belief in the Spirit's testimony that Christ died for us because we were sinners, and therefore lost, moved us to thoroughly repent of our sins in deep anguish of heart, in which sorrow and helplessness we acknowledged "Jesus as Lord." (Rom. 10 : 9, 10.)

Realizing that only in Him is salvation possible, we desired to enter into Christ that we might rejoice in His precious salvation; and learning from the Spirit's testimony that men must be "baptized into Christ" (Rom. 6 : 3 ; Gal. 3 : 27), and that "unto the remission of sins" (Acts 2 : 38), we were then "buried with Him in baptism." (Col. 2 : 12 ; Rom. 6 : 4), and from that burial were resurrected to walk in newness of life—as "new creatures" in Christ. (2 Cor. 5 : 17 ; Eph. 2 : 15, 16.)

As those baptized according to the Spirit's command were by the Lord "added to the church" (Acts 2 : 41, 47), so we also, by the same Lord, were in the same manner added to the same church. This church being the "body of Christ" (Eph. 1 : 22, 23 ; Col. 1 : 18, 24), we became members of Christ's spiritual body when baptized into that body. 1 Cor. 12 : 13 ; Eph. 4 : 5.) We thus, by grace, became sons of God in Christ—"heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." (Rom. 8 : 17.) Because we are sons, God gave unto us the Holy Spirit. (Gal. 4 : 6 ; Acts 5 : 32.)

As members of the body or church of Christ, we assemble on the first day of the week "to break bread" (partake of the Lord's Supper) (Acts 2 : 42 ; 20 : 7 ; 1 Cor. 11 : 17-30), by which solemn service we "proclaim the Lord's death till He come." (1 Cor. 11 : 26.)

We also sing "psalms and hymns and spiritual songs" (Eph. 5 : 19 ; Col. 3 : 16), using no musical instrument except the human heart—"making melody WITH our HEARTS to the Lord." (Eph. 5 : 19.)

We engage in the study of the Apostles' teaching (Acts 2 : 42), the Word of God, and likewise in prayer—just as did the church in its beginning.

We "lay by in store" or contribute of our means when we assemble on the first day of the week (1 Cor. 16 : 2), out of which funds we have the Gospel preached and do such other good as we can, ever remembering the poor.

We strongly advocate a strictly moral life, a life consecrated to righteousness and spirituality. We believe in preaching the Gospel to every creature (Matt. 28 : 19, 20 ; Mark 16 : 15, 16), and we today have missionaries throughout the world. In fact, there is no good work in which we are not interested. We try to do as Christ would do in all things, for we are Christians only. (Acts 11 : 26 ; 26 : 28 ; 1 Peter 4 : 16.)

While we are Christians only, we judge no man, save as an obedient life essentially judges a disobedient life. We tell others

what to do to be saved, in the identical language of the Word of God. Whether or not they accept, is their responsibility, not ours; but we try to induce all to believe and do exactly and only as God's Word requires. He who is obedient to God in Christ, is our brother beloved, with whom we are glad to associate in every religious way. We make the Word of God, not ourselves, the standard by which religions are to be tried. We believe the Word of God is easy to obey, and through that obedience we endeavor to practice true Christian unity.

The Rapture

By Johnny Ramsey

As we travel the streets and highways we often see this bumper sticker: "In Case of Rapture This Car Will No Longer Have a Driver."

While some religious leaders identify with this message, millions are puzzled by it. The word "rapture" is not in the Bible. And the teaching that surrounds it is anti-biblical.

Dr. Robert Strong has given this definition of the doctrine:

"By the rapture is meant the sudden and possible secret coming of Christ in the air to catch away from the earth the resurrected bodies of those who have died in the faith and with them the living saints."

Nothing Secret

However, according to Revelation 1 : 7 every eye will see the Lord when he comes—even the wicked who pierced his side! There will be much noise to acclaim the Lord's return, "for the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God" (1 Thessalonians 4 : 16). Nothing will be secret about it.

No Separation until the end

Dispensationalists proclaim that the rapture will last seven years. During this time saints are at peace while sinners are in "great tribulation" on earth. But, the Lord taught in two

parables—the tares and the fishnet—that there will be no separation of good and evil until the end of the world (Matthew 13). Three times, in John 6, Christ stated that this separation would take place in the last day. Jesus promised that **all** who are in their graves will hear his voice and come forth at the same time to receive judgment. There will be one resurrection composed of both the good and the evil (Acts 24 : 15).

Paul, according to 1 Thessalonians 4, taught specifically what will happen to the saints when the Redeemer comes. On the very next page he wrote, “**when** [adverb of time] he comes on that day to be glorified in his saints” the wicked will be inflicted with his vengeance (2 Thessalonians 1 : 4-10). There is neither place nor time for the so-called rapture (Hebrews 6 : 19, 20).

Only one hope

For the Christian there is but one hope (Ephesians 4 : 5). And that is heaven, the holy of holies (Hebrews 6 : 19, 20). Yet today some are ensnared by false hope for a “glorified earth,” while others eagerly anticipate the rapture.

In 1 Timothy 6 : 13, 14 and 2 Timothy 4 : 8, we find clear teaching that joins the resurrection of the dead, the reward of the saints, and the glorious appearing of Christ (Titus 2 : 12) at the same precise moment (1 Corinthians 15 : 52).

In the very passage immediately following the chief proof text of rapture devotees (1 Thessalonians 5 : 1-4), we read vivid words that forever teach that the righteous are **not** taken away before the judgment day, but are present with the wicked **until** the time the wicked receive punishment. **At which time** the righteous receive their reward.

The gospel is to be preached by God’s children until the end of the world (Matthew 28 : 20). This would be impossible if the saints are raptured seven years prior to the world’s end. As Boettner powerfully stated :

“Jesus said that he would raise up those who believe on him at the last day (John 6 : 39, 40, 44, 45). Clearly there can be no other days after the last day.”

One of these days—known only to Jehovah—(Matthew 24 : 36) the end of the world will come. Only those who live and die in Christ (John 8 : 21 ; Revelation 14 : 13) will be prepared and thus be able to stand (Revelation 6 : 17). What a tragedy to be unprepared and unable to sing redemption's sweet song !

The Antichrist

Lemoine G. Lewis

The messiah of evil, the very opposite of Christ—better known as the antichrist”—has had a prominent place in Christian thought.

The Gospels record the disciples' questions of Jesus concerning the signs of his coming and the close of the age. Jesus warned them against false christs and false prophets who would try to lead them astray. "Many will come in my name saying I am the Christ."

In the same context he spoke of great calamities : wars and rumors of wars, famines earthquakes, sufferings, tribulation, and sacrilege in the holy place. The false christs and accompanying false prophets would show great signs and wonders to win following. Wickedness would multiply and men's love for Christ would grow cold. Safety for the disciples consist of being forewarned, being faithfully watchful, and being in constant readiness for the coming of the Lord. Though men cannot predict that coming, it will be unmistakable when it happens.

Paul's Warnings

In the second letter to the church at Thessalonica, Paul warned against "the man of lawlessness" and "the son of perdition," stating that he would rebel against Christ, proclaiming himself to be God. Paul reminded the Thessalonians that he himself had warned them against the lawless one. He had taught them of the power of the antichrist to deceive with pretended signs. "The mystery of lawlessness is already at work ; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed

and the Lord Jesus will slay him with the breath of his mouth and destroy him by his appearing and coming" (2 Thessalonians 2 : 7-9). Paul comforted those Christians with the promise that the lawless one would have power only over those who did not love the truth and who found pleasure in unrighteousness.

John's Warnings

The only New Testament writer to use the word "anti-Christ" was John. In his first and second letters he reminded his readers that warnings against the antichrist were a part of the oral teaching they had received : "You have already heard that antichrist is coming" John asserted that many antichrists had come and he identified them with those who had gone out from the followers of the Holy One and deserted the truth for lies.

In another place John identified the antichrist as the one who denied that Jesus is the Christ, as well as anyone who denied the Father and the Son (chapter 4). In his second letter (verse 7) John identified the deceiver and antichrist as those who denied that Jesus came in the flesh. Therefore, the safety of the Christian is in abiding in the Son of God and his truth.

In Revelation (chapter 12) we read of "the great dragon... that ancient serpent, who is called the Devil and Satan, the deceiver of the whole world." In chapter thirteen there is mention of the beast from the sea who blasphemed against God and made war on the saints. There is also the beast from the earth that deceived men with the signs he worked, leading them to worship the first beast whose number was six hundred and sixty-six. We read (chapter 17) of the mother of harlots who wore scarlet and rode a scarlet beast. She was drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus. In chapter nineteen the beast and false prophet and all their followers were finally defeated by the Faithful and True, by the Word of God and were thrown into the lake of fire. The revelation continues by picturing the blessedness of those who resisted the devil and were loyal to the Lord Jesus.

Attempts at Identity

Many students find foreshadowings of the antichrist in the Old Testament, as in Ezekiel's prophecies about Gog and Magog (chapter 38) and in Daniel's references to the beasts and the king of the north (chapter 7 and 11). Jewish thought about the archenemy of God was focused by their experiences under Antiochus Epiphanes, their potential destroyer, as well as under Pompey, who defiled their temple. They also thought Herod the Great fulfilled these prophecies, as well as Caligula, the Roman emperor who wanted his statue erected for worship in the temple.

Christian students have associated the antichrist with many historical figures such as Nero, Domitian, Decius, and Mohammed. In the Middle Ages Joachim of Floris tried to identify the antichrist with a pseudo pope. In the thirteenth century Pope Gregory IX termed the Emperor Frederick II the beast. The emperor replied that the Pope was the great dragon who was deceiving the world. The reformers were sure the Pope was the antichrist, while the pope pointed to Luther as the antichrist. In modern times some have tried to identify the antichrist with Hitler, Stalin, and Communism.

Christians should take warning from these numerous attempts to specifically identify the antichrist. Yet they should see manifestations of the antichrist in all forms of false doctrine and wicked living. They should be prepared for even more evil before the coming of the Lord, & should purpose in their hearts to be true to Christ regardless of the cost. Christians should remember that their safety lies in loving loyalty to Christ, in full devotion to truth and right. To these the Lord has promised victory.

Will Christ Reign on Earth One Thousand Years ?

Roy H. Lanier

DOES the Bible teach that Jesus is coming to reign in Jerusalem upon a literal throne for 1,000 years ? This doctrine is taught by most of the religious world today. But it is not biblical. Notice three things :

First, Jesus must serve as king at the same time he is serving as priest. God taught through Zechariah, "And he shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne : and he shall be a priest upon his throne" (6 : 12, 13). This brief prophecy of 516 B.C. pictures the Messiah as functioning in both Capacities at the same time. The prophet pointed toward a priest who would also be our king ! Since Jesus is now our priest, he must also be our king NOW (Hebrews 4 : 14).

Second, Jesus could not serve as an earthly priest. "Now if he were on earth, he would not be a priest at all" (Hebrews 8 : 4). The first verse of that chapter states, "We have such a high priest, who sat down on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens." Under Moses Law only those of the tribe of Levi could serve as priests. But Jesus is of the tribe of Judah. Since Jesus cannot serve as an earthly priest, and since he is to serve as king and priest simultaneously, he cannot be a king on this earth.

Third, the Bible teaches that the kingdom of Christ is now in operation. Jesus taught that his kingdom would come in the lifetime of his hearers (Mark 9 : 1). Power from heaven was to accompany its beginning. Jesus added that such "power" would come when the Holy Spirit came (Acts 1:8). That power came on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4). Therefore, the kingdom also must have begun on that day (in A.D. 33).

Jesus taught, the Lord's Supper was to be eaten in his kingdom (Luke 22 : 29, 30). Since the early churches ate the Supper, they apparently recognized their citizenship in Jesus' kingdom (Acts 2 : 42 ; 20 : 7). Furthermore, Paul declared the Father "translated us into the kingdom" (Colossians 1 : 13), and John said he was a brother "in the kingdom" (Revelation 1 : 6, 9).

Daniel prophesied that the kingdom was to be established in the days of the fourth empire after Babylon (Daniel 2 : 44). History establishes that this was the Roman Empire, the ruling power of Jesus' day. If Jesus did not begin his kingdom under that government, Daniel was mistaken. Also, James

affirmed that the Gentiles should be allowed in the church since they were to be included when the "tabernacle of David" was built again (Acts 15 : 13-21). The building of this "tabernacle" referred to the returning of the rule to the family of David. This Davidic rule must have occurred when the church was established, or else, James misapplied the prophecy of Amos 9 : 11, 12. Thus, Jesus is on David's throne now.

Jesus is coming the second time to deliver up the kingdom, not to establish it (1 Corinthians 15 : 20-28). A timetable is also included here. First, Jesus died and was resurrected, signalling the conquering of death. Next, Jesus will reign until he abolishes death. That will be done at the end of his reign, when he comes again. Last, he will deliver up that kingdom to the Father. Dispensationalists have Jesus reigning after his second coming, but Paul stated that he is reigning before his second coming.

Peter preached that God's promise to David concerning one to sit on David's throne was fulfilled (Acts 2 : 29-36). He taught that the resurrection enabled Jesus to be exalted to the "right hand of God," where he was made "both the Lord and Christ." The Jews who heard and believed this preaching were convinced that Jesus was the Messiah, the one sitting on David's throne. Acting upon that conviction they repented and were baptized. They continued in the fellowship of others who had responded in the same way to the reigning Jesus (Acts 2 : 37-42).

Jesus is not coming to establish an earthly kingdom. The theory that Christ will reign on this earth one thousand years at his second coming has no biblical basis. Scripture does not support this theory.

Revelation 20 : 1-10 is used as a proof text for the thousand year reign. However, here are some necessary ingredients which are conspicuously absent in the passage : (1) The second coming of Christ ; (2) Throne of David ; (3) Jesus reigning on earth ; (4) A bodily resurrection ; (5) All the righteous of all ages ; (6) Jesus on earth ; (7) The establishment of the kingdom ; (8) Jews gathered back to Palestine ;

(9) Rome re-established as a world empire. All these points are necessary fibers of the theory, yet none appears in this chapter.

The Bible teaches the kingdom of Christ is NOW in operation Christians are citizens of it Christ is its king ; his teaching is its law ; the world is its territory. The work of the kingdom will be complete when Jesus comes the second time.

Let us recognize his kingship now and evermore !

Are These the Last Days ?

By Ray Beeson

THE Apostle Peter believed he was living in the last days. Quoting the prophecy of Joel, in his sermon of Acts 2, he pinpointed that day as the beginning of its fulfillment. Likewise, Paul spoke of the kingdom as an established fact—having been personally translated into it (Colossians 1 : 12, 13).

Four Old Testament thoughts require our attention in considering the question, "Are these the last days ?"

1. The promised lawgiver was fulfilled in Jesus. Moses saw his work as temporary and promised a new prophet. (Deuteronomy 18 : 15-18). Peter insists that Jesus is that prophet (Acts 3 : 19-21).

2. The promised law was to be a "new covenant," suitable for both Jew and Gentile (Jeremiah 31 : 31-34). The Hebrew writer points to Jesus as having brought this promise or fruition (Hebrews 1 : 1, 2). The Mosaic law was annulled in favour of the new covenant of Jesus (Hebrews 7 : 12-25). Christ sent forth a message, global in scope and eternal in duration (Matthew 28 : 18-20 ; John 12 : 47-50). The unalterable conclusion is that these are "the last days."

3. The house of God promised by the prophet is a New Testament reality. Isaiah saw the building of Jehovah's in the "latter days." At that time the word of God would go forth from Jerusalem. This line is easily traced (Isaiah 2:1, 2 ; Luke 24 : 46-49 ; Acts 1 : 6-8 ; Acts 2). The last reference

finds Peter in Jerusalem preaching the promised message—resulting in the institution of God's house. Paul refers to this house as the church of the living God (1 Timothy 3 : 14, 15). It is also described as the body of Christ (Ephesians 1 : 22, 23)—or the church kingdom of Colossians 1. (Also note Matthew 16 : 18 ; Mark 9 : 1 ; 1 Peter 2 : 5-9.)

4. Finally, there was the promise of the coming Spirit (Joel 2 : 28). Peter labels this as fulfilled (Acts 2 : 16).

With the advent of Christianity came the unveiling of God's eternal mystery—hidden through the ages. This mystery was revealed through the gospel (Ephesians 3). These points offer reasonable proof that we live in the last days.

We are not seeking to limit, the **number** of these last days. This was the error of the Thessalonian Christians (2 Thessalonians 2 : 2). Jesus makes it clear that the **final day** is unknowable (Matthew 24 : 36). We must not attempt to date the **last day** (John 6 : 39 ; 6 : 40 ; 7 : 37)—but only the period of time known as "**the last day**."

Are these the last days ? Yes, according to Bible promises and fulfillment. Yes, according to the characteristics of this period of history.

1 These are days of fear and cruelty on a larger scope than the atrocities of evil dictators like Antiochus, Titus and rulers of Rome (Daniel 12 : 1)—"time of trouble such as never was."

2. These are days of learning and knowledge. Our present world reminds us of the prophet's comment : "Many shall run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased" (Daniel 12 : 4).

Yes, this period of history offers **bright hope**. We are blessed with the time and tools to accomplish the happy task of Christ-sharing. Let us be among the "wise that winneth souls" (Daniel 12 : 2, 3). Our affluence must be used to serve. We live rejoicing over the gift of a God who loves us and a Savior who leads us (1 John 3 : 1 ; Matthew 11 : 28). Life is no longer a trackless road without a star to guide (John 14 : 1-6).

Jesus is the way and heaven our destination as we live in these **last days**.

Three Things will happen at the Second Coming

THE DOCTRINE of the second coming of Christ is the subject of over 200 passages of scripture in our New Testament. This teaching was cherished by first century Christians. In fact, they believed Jesus would come again in their lifetime. And the Scriptures indicate that he wants all of us to live with this same expectancy.

Glorious thought—Jesus is coming again! Three great events will accompany his second coming : the resurrection, the judgment, and the end of the world.

The Resurrection

Adam's descendants have all been endowed with a strong desire to live. Even ancient heathen peoples fought the grave. And when they buried their loved ones they believed they would one day live again. This is the "good news" of the gospel. All men who are laid in the grave will "stand up" again for that is the literal meaning of the Greek word for resurrection. New Testament history and doctrine both centre on the resurrection of Jesus. He is "the first fruits" of the resurrection and all who "live in him and die in him shall be raised in him."

The Scriptures teach a **simultaneous** resurrection of all the dead—both good and bad. Daniel said those "who sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:2). Isaiah wrote, "Awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust ; for thy dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast forth the dead" (Isaiah 26 : 19). In Matthew's gospel, chapter 25, Jesus speaks of "coming in his glory, and all the angels with him." He sits on the throne of his glory and before him "are gathered all the nations." The resurrection of **all** the dead is complete, for he now makes a separation of "sheep from "goats". Some hear him say, "come" and others hear him say, "depart" ; some "enter into eternal life" and some "go away into eternal punishment."

John refers to the same simultaneous resurrection of good

and bad : "Marvel not at this : for the hour cometh in which all that are in the tombs shall hear his voice, and shall come forth ; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life ; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of judgment (condemnation)" (John 5 : 28, 29).

Paul, in making defense before the governor, Felix, states : "Having hope toward God, which these also themselves look for, that there shall be a [singular] resurrection both of the just and the unjust" (Acts 24 : 15). He concludes. "Touching the resurrection [singular] of the dead [plural] am I called in question before you this day" (Acts 24 : 21).

The context of 1 Thessalonians 4 indicates that these Christians thought if you died before Christ came again you had missed all. But Paul showed that this was not the case. In fact, he wrote, "The dead in Christ shall rise first ; then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord" Paul is not here considering the wicked dead, for he said, "the dead in Christ." The "we that are alive" refers to Christians. It is this combined group of Christians who had died and those who were still alive at his coming who would "ever be with the Lord."

The Corinthians Christians also had questions about the resurrections of the dead and the change of those who were yet alive when the Lord would come again. Paul argued that they shouldn't worry, "for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed" (1 Corinthians 15 : 52). This is the "last trump" that signals the heavenly charge for victory over all things opposing him, especially death.

The teaching of the Scriptures on the simultaneous resurrection of good and bad from the grave is inseparably tied to the doctrine of a great judgment that will immediately follow.

The Judgment

Christ's second coming will mean judgment for all. It will signal the end of earthly history and the final separation of the righteous from the wicked. "Time shall be no more."

All who have ever lived will stand together before the judgment seat of Christ.

There are many passages which state that God will judge—and many more which state that Jesus will judge. The difficulty is easily resolved when we consider Jesus' statement: "and he [God] gave him [the Son] authority to execute judgment, because he is a son of man" (John 5 : 27). Again, "he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness **by the man** whom he hath ordained" (Acts 17 : 31).

Cornelius and his household heard Peter conclude his memorable sermon with these words : "And he charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is he who is ordained of God to be the Judge of the living and the dead" (Acts 10 : 42).

Jesus said to his critics, "For neither doth the Father judge any man, but he hath given all judgment unto the Son" (John 5 : 22). And Paul insists, "We must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Corinthians 5:10). This literally means **all, every human** will be made manifest—"laid open."

Paul had already touched on this in his first letter to these Christians : "Wherefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the hearts..." (1 Corinthians 4 : 5). When Jesus comes he will resurrect all and judge all, even making known the purposes of their hearts. Jesus told those who rejected him that it would be more tolerable in "the **day** of judgment for Tyre and Sidon" (Matthew 11 : 22). Judgement would be upon a "day," or one period, just as "all in the graves" would hear his voice in "that hour," or one period.

The whole human family awaits his return. That great host who now dwell in "the silent halls of death" await the universal call, "come forth." The living also will see this triumphal return and experience the change to immortality.

And then every mortal will stand in company with all who have ever lived—"the small and the great." Then Jesus will judge each soul and assign eternal destiny. Then the elements of this universe will melt "with fervent heat." Time is no more : eternity has begun.

The End of the World

Many feel that our present creation was never meant to pass away ; that God will "renew" it and return it to its original state of purity. The Scriptures, however, teach that God will destroy this creation and give his people "a new heaven and a new earth."

The Psalmist said, "The earth, and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure..." (Psalm 102:26) Isaiah added, "Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look upon the earth beneath ; for the heavens shall vanish away like smoke, and the earth shall wax old like a garment..." (Isaiah 51 : 6).

The Apostle Peter speaks plainly about the end of our cosmos : "The day of the Lord will come as a thief ; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the **elements shall be dissolved** with fervent heat, and the earth and the works that are therein shall be **burned up**. Seeing that these things are thus all to be **dissolved**, what manner of persons ought ye to be..." (2 Peter 3 : 10, 11).

The next to last chapter of the Bible begins : "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth : for the first heaven and the first earth are passed away..." (Revelation 21 : 1).

Three great events will occur when our Lord comes again : **the resurrection**, "for all who are in the grave shall hear his voice and come forth" ; **the judgment**, "And I saw the the dead, the great, and the small, standing before the throne" of his judgment ; and **the end of this creation** when it shall "be burned up." We will be a part; we will experience them. They will be an experience of extreme terror or supreme bliss. We are each in the process of determining which it shall be.

Let The Bible Speak On Accepting Christ

Clifford Reel

Much is heard today about the need for accepting Christ. Even among those who use the term there often seems to be a difference of meaning. Exactly what is one supposed to do who is told to "accept Christ as your personal Saviour?"

It is significant that these words used in this fashion are not found in the Bible. We are admonished in I Pet. 4 : 11, "If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God." Paul had the opportunity to declare "the conversion of Gentiles" Acts 15 : 3. The admonition of Acts 3 : 19 was that "Repent ye therefore and be converted that your sins may be blotted out....." To refer to conversion is correct according to the scriptures.

The Bible does speak of some gladly receiving Jesus in Lk. 8 : 40. Others would not receive him. "He came to his own and his own received him not," Jn. 1 : 11. Also, the Samaritans refused to receive him, Lk. 9 : 53. We are told "as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name," 1 : 12. This is more than just believing that Jesus lived or trembling at this word. Jas. 2 : 19 states, "Thou believest that there is one God : thou doest well : the devils also believe and tremble." Jas. 1 : 21 tells us, "Receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls." One can reject Christ by not receiving his words (Jn. 12 : 48). Jesus said we could hear the words of the apostles and "believe on me through their word." Jn. 17 : 20. If we receive those sent by Christ we receive him (Jn. 13 : 20). The importance of receiving the word and keeping it is seen in the parable of the sower in Lk. 8 : 11-15. One has not accepted Christ who has not heard the word and obeyed it.

A Matter Of Taste

The heart (mind) is the seat of one's desires and affections, and thus determines his choices in life, which gradually mould the character of the person. A vulture looks down for carrion because of his taste. and the humming bird looks up for nectar in beautiful flowers because of his taste. When you depart this life, you will either be a fit subject for higher realms because you developed proper taste in life, or one of the many who lived after the flesh (Rom. 8 : 13), and are fit only for lower regions.

I. ONLY TWO KINDS OF TASTE : On this earth, all the choices we make or tastes we develop are of two classes or types ; Fleshly or Spiritual : Those coming from the earth (Satan), or those from Heaven (God). We need to remember this in order to avoid being deceived, James 3 : 15-17. If we do not love the truth and things of God, he will send false things to suit our taste (2 Thess. 2 : 11). Because of this, we must govern our interests at all times, remembering that they **WHO ARE IN THE FLESH CAN NOT PLEASE GOD** (Rom. 8 : 5-8). **KNOW YE NOT THAT THE FRIENDSHIP OF THE WORLD IS ENMITY WITH GOD ? WHOSOEVER THEREFORE WILL BE A FRIEND OF THE WORLD IS THE ENEMY OF GOD.** (James 4 : 4). So, **LOVE NOT THE WORLD, NEITHER THE THINGS OF THE WORLD. IF ANY MAN LOVE THE WORLD, THE LOVE OF THE FATHER IS NOT IN HIM.** (1 John 2 : 15).

The Bible is filled with stories and examples contrasting the values of these two fields of choice, emphasizing the need to guide our interest. Consider a few, such as Esau's choice between a morsel of meat and spiritual food Heb. 12:16 ; Peter's failure to understand the choice between love of fish and Christ, John 21 : 15 ; Christ's warning not **TO LABOUR FOR MEAT WHICH PERISHES**, John 6:27, and in verse 63, **THE FLESH PROFITETH NOTHING. IT IS THE SPIRIT THAT QUICKENETH.** Thus, **MAN SHOULD NOT LIVE BY BREAD ALONE, BUT BY EVERY WORD THAT PROCE-**

EDETH FROM THE MOUTH OF GOD-Matthew 4 : 4. Remember the man in Matthew 13 : 44 who sold all he had to buy the field (church) in which the treasure (salvation) had been hidden, and that in Matthew 6 : 19-33, Christ explains the comparative value of earthly treasure and heavenly, and the compulsion to choose between the two. when we face the fact that we can not choose both, we are then ready for His promise in verse 23, that worldly blessings will be added after we seek first the Spiritual. let us not make the choice of the rich man in Matthew 19 : 22, living in sorrow on this earth and in torment in that to come. **WATCH AND PRAY, THAT YE ENTER NOT INTO TEMPTATION : THE SPIRIT INDEED IS WILLING BUT THE FLESH IS WEAK.** Matthew 26 : 41.

A. WORLDLY TASTES : There are many worldly pleasures, and desire for the same, which are permissible by God, but we must control them rather than the other way round. The Christian need not deny himself anything that would bring him peace and happiness (John 10:10). Do not be deceived by this statement, however, Pleasures which we must refuse (stealing, drinking, fighting, gambling, fornication) do not bring peace & happiness. True peace comes only from the arrangement of God. Marital relations with the one to whom God has joined you, good food clothing and security in the home where Christ is the unseen guest ; fellowship and love of God and his children. Even these God-given pleasures do not bring peace unless enjoyed under the control of the participant. Phil. 4 : 5. Satan is able to ensnare the unwary until the individual has allowed pleasure to become his god, his religion, and is in the condition of "being dead while she liveth" (1 Tim. 5 : 6). This is why the only safe course to pursue in some pleasures is to Abstain from fleshly Lusts which war against the soul (1 Peter 2 : 11). For, a man might enjoy all the pleasure of the world-gain the whole world, and lose his soul, and it profits him nothing, (Matthew 16 : 26). The rich fool of Luke 12 : 19 learned this when it was too late. This enslavement works through many channels, as the household duties of Martha. Martha, Martha, Thou art careful and

troubled about many things but one thing is needful and Mary hath chosen that good part which shall not be taken away from her, (Luke 10 : 41-42). To have the proper attitude in choices, we need faith like Moses to Choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for A season (Hebrew 11 : 25). When we assume this attitude of simplicity, we then become the Babes to which God reveals truth in preference to the wise. (Matthew 11 : 25).

B. Spiritual Tastes : The greatest difference between physical and spiritual tastes is the way in which they are instilled into the life of the individual ; the physical desires are like weeds-innately present, coming forth when not wanted, necessitating constant suppression ; the spiritual tastes must be acquired, planted and nurtured carefully-Satan is fighting their development in every inch of growth. However, spiritual blessings will come only to those who have learned this lesson: Christ says, Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness. For they shall be filled (Matthew 5 : 6). Those who do not develop this taste will not be filled.

The development of this essential hunger is possible only after we have Tasted of the Lord. That he is good, (Psalms 34 : 8). Some who have never tried the Lord seem to fear that he is bitter. Being creatures of habit, too often people seek happiness in worldly pleasure because that is all they have experienced. We need to look past these temporal enticements, to have vision in the future. Learn from Lot who had his choice of the fertile valley of wicked people or the rocky hillsides, minus those evils. (Genesis 13 : 13-14).

After learning to appreciate the lasting value of spiritual things above physical ones, we need to remember there is only one place where they can be found. Ephesians 1 : 3 states that all spiritual blessings are in Jesus : John 8 : 24, that if you don't believe this you will die in your sins ; Luke 13 : 3, that this faith must cause you to repent of your sins, and in this way you have come to Jesus, ready to enter him to obtain the spiritual blessings. Christ has only one entrance : John 10 : 9

1 Cor. 12 : 13 ; Gal. 3 : 27. Romans 6 : 3-5 ; Col. 2 : 9-13. Once we have come into Christ by this door we must remain to enjoy those spiritual things which can only be found in his spiritual body.

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The Sign of His Coming

by **Furman Kearley**

Famines ! Earthquakes ! Wars and rumors of wars ! These are the signs many expect to herald the second coming of Christ. In almost every century since Christ ascended to heaven some Christian sect has focused on a rash of physical and military calamities and predicted the imminent return of our Lord. These predictions are based on a misinterpretation of Jesus' discourse in Matthew 24, Mark 13, and Luke 21. What is the real meaning and message of our Lord's prophecy in these chapters ? What is the truth concerning the signs of his coming ?

Key to interpretation of Matthew 24

The key to understanding Christ's words is to realize that

he was answering two basic questions, each posed in two different wording and that his answer covers both Matthew 24 and 25.

After being shown the buildings of the temple, Jesus said, "There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down" (v. 2). Upon hearing this, his disciples asked him questions. The first question concerned the destruction of the temple : "When shall these things be ?" (v. 3), or "What shall be the sign when these things are all about to be accomplished ?" (Mark 13:4; Luke 21:7) The second question was about the second coming : "What shall be the sign of thy coming and of the end of the world ?" (v. 3).

Jesus then proceeded to answer the two questions in order. In Matthew 24:4-22 he gave the disciples warnings, instructions, descriptions and signs pertaining to the times from A.D. 30 until the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple in A.D. 70. In verses 23-28 Jesus clearly affirmed that the signs described in verses 4-22, such as was, earthquakes, famines, persecutions, and the abomination of desolation did not pertain to the coming of the Son of Man because his coming will not be preceded by signs, but will be sudden and universal.

In verses 29-31 the Lord described with highly figurative language the conditions after the fall of Jerusalem until the coming of the Son of Man. A careful study of Isaiah 13:9-11; 34:1-15; Ezekiel 32:6-10 and other passages will show that the Lord's punishment against Babylon, Edom, Egypt, Israel, and other nations is frequently described with cataclysmic terminology. Therefore, for Jesus to describe the effect of the fall of Jerusalem and the temple with such terms as the sun being dark, the moon not shining, and the stars falling is not unusual at all. Thus, in verses 29-31 Christ was simply stating that after the fall of the temple and Jerusalem, chaotic conditions would prevail and continue until the time for the coming of the Son of man.

Next in verses 32-36 the Lord contrasted the destruction of Jerusalem with the second coming. He indicated that the destruction of Jerusalem would be preceded by signs as easily

seen as leaves on a branch and would occur during the lifetime of the generation to whom he was speaking ; that is, before the death of some of the disciples. In contrast, the time of the coming of the Son of Man is unknown to all, including the angel and the Son. Only the Father knows (v. 36).

Finally, Christ described the nature of the coming of the Son of Man in Matthew 24:37 through 25:46. By comparison and illustration he affirmed that the second coming would be like the unexpected flood in the days of Noah (24:37-42). It would be like the silent, secret entrance of the thief (24:43, 44), or the unheralded return of a lord upon his evil servant (24:45-51). The second coming of the Lord is further compared to the coming of the bridegroom to the ten virgins (25:1-13), and the coming the man to make a reckoning with his servants concerning their talents (25:14-30). Then Jesus described the judgment scene of the sheep and the goats (25:31-46).

Evidence for the Fulfillment of Matthew 24:4-22

Abundant existing evidence clearly proves that the signs Jesus spoke of were fulfilled during the lifetime or generation of the apostles (1) After the destruction of Jerusalem essentially not one stone of the temple was left upon another. (2) Statements from Josephus and Gamaliel prove that many false prophets and false Christs tried to deceive the people and helped start the war with Rome A. D. 66-70. (3) There were "wars and rumors of wars" between A. D. 30 and A. D. 70 Gentiles fought against Jews, Barbarians against Romans, and civil-war raged in Rome. (4) Suetonius Tacitus, and others give evidence, of many famines and earthquakes Just prior to A. D. 70. Great persecutions were waged against Jews and Christians. Eusebius tells how Christians took Jesus' warning literally and fled Jerusalem at the sight of the "abomination of desolation". This was in all probability the Roman ensigns consisting of eagles and images of the emperor which were symbols of idolatry.

The message of Matthew 24

The true message and central admonition of Christ to his apostles in response to their questions is summed up in

(Contd on last page)

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Matthew 24:42 : "Watch therefore for ye know not on what day your Lord cometh."

The summary of his message is that there will be signs preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, but there will be no signs definitely pointing out the coming of the Son of Man. Matthew 24 gave signs heralding the destruction of Jerusalem in A. D. 70, but its message for us is that there will be no signs announcing the second coming. Rather, Jesus warns. "Therefore be ye also ready ; for in an hour that ye think not the Son of Man cometh" (Matthew 24:44).

Christ Returneth

It may be at morn, when the day is awaking,
When sunlight thro darkness and shadow is breaking,
That Jesus will come in the fulness of glory,
To receive from the world his own.

It may be at mid-day, it may be at twilight,
It may be, perchance, that the blackness of midnight,
Will burst into light in the blaze of his glory,
When Jesus receives his own.

O joy ! O delight ! should we go without dying,
No sickness, no sadness, no dread and no crying,
Caught up thro' the clouds with our Lord into glory,
When Jesus receives his own.

O, Lord Jesus, how long, how long,

Ere we shout the glad song,

Christ returneth ! Hallelujah ! Hallelujah ! Amen.

Hallelujah ! Amen.

—H. L. TURNER.

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