

The Hammer

WORLD WIDE REFORMATION

"He that Winneth Souls Is Wise"



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THE BANNER

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EASTERN CELEBRATION

From whence comes the command to celebrate Easter? Did Christ, the Son of God, command the Christian Church to celebrate Easter in honor of His resurrection, or is it a man made commandment?

If Easter celebration comes to the Christian Church as a command of Christ, truly every Christian should celebrate it. But if Christ did not command such a celebration, the Christian Church has no right whatever to celebrate Easter.

The divine commission is, "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded; and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:19-20.

This commission was ratified when Christ the Lord, died upon the cross. Therefore, I repeat, that if Easter celebration by the Christian Church, is a command of Christ, every Christian should celebrate Easter. But if not, no Christian has any right whatever to celebrate or observe an event of which he is not commanded of Christ.

The word Easter is found in the book of Acts 12:4, and it is a mis-translation. It should read passover. "It is wrongly associated with the Saxon Easter festival, and the Jewish Passover Feast, but corrected in R.

V., Acts 12:4."—Boyd's Dictionary.

"The word Easter is of Saxon origin, and is supposed to be derived from Easter, the goddess of love, or the Venus of the North, in the month of April." Dr. Barnes on Acts 12:4.

There is no tract of the celebration of Easter as a Christian Festival in the New Testament or in the writings of the Apostolic Fathers." Encyclopedia of Britannica. It was not until after Apostolic times that this Festival became an instituted observance of the Christian Church." Cyclopedia of Religious Knowledge.

"This Feast, or the celebration, was fixed by the (Roman) Council of Nice, 325 (A. D.) to be held on the Sunday which falls upon or immediately after the full moon which happens next after the 21st of March."—New Century Encyclopedia and Dictionary.

Noting the Feast. Why celebrate an heathen custom? "Learn not the way of the heathens, for the custom of the people are vain." Jer. 10:1-3. To observe Easter in honor of the resurrection of Christ, we do it without any Bible authority.

Jesus taught the people as one having authority. Matt. 7:29. The Christian Church has no authority even to observe the day once a year on Sunday only, as it comes from the Roman church. The celebration was fixed on Sunday, by a Roman Catholic Council, 325 A. D.

Why celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ every week on Sunday, and again once a year on Sunday? Would not that give to the Christian Church two celebrations for one event? What would you think of a man who observes his birthday every week, and again once a year? Would you count him to be a wise man? Or a man with good reasons? I answer, "No."

Easter celebration should fall in the year, the same as your birthday, or Christmas, and the Fourth of July. Any event which did not come in the first week of time will and must come in the month, which month comes around once a year, thus bringing the event which happened in that month. Therefore, since Christ was crucified on

Friday the 14th, of Abib, Jewish month, or our April (the day of Good Friday), the resurrection came on the 16th of Abib, or April, the year of our Lord 31, in the Spring.

So the event of our Lord's resurrection comes around once every year. Now, if there was a divine command of Christ to celebrate Easter in honor of His resurrection, it ought to be celebrated on the 16th of Abib or April, which date would come on Sunday, only every seven years, not until then would we have an Easter Sunday celebration. The celebration comes the same as the celebration of Christmas. Christmas comes on the 25th of December of every year, but on Sunday once every seven years.

We have no divine command of Christ, to observe neither of these days: Sunday, Christmas, Lent, Easter, nor Good Friday.

The only command which we have to observe the resurrection of Christ is to baptize. Baptism means to bury under the water, in the likeness of the burial of Christ and rise out of the water in the likeness of His resurrection. Rom. 6:4, 5. Col. 2:12; 3:1. This rite is the beginning of the celebration of our Lord's resurrection, and the only command for its celebration.

C. G. MANNS.

DES MOINES MISSION VOLUNTEERS PLAN 1935 WORK

The Young People's M. V. Society of Des Moines Church of Free S. D. A. has truly pledged themselves to do a more energetic work during 1935. Sister Mary F. Dudley is leader and Sister Elsie Robinson assistant. During the month of January Sister Dudley organized and made leadership appointment for six various bands. The Missionary Volunteers entered these organizations very enthusiastically.

The name and purpose of the Bands are as follows: Literary and Correspondence Band, Bro. Alfred Dudley. The purpose of this Band is to cultivate the reading ability and to assist the secretary in correspondence and reports. It also plans to have an interesting article for the Banner each month. The Music Cul-

ture Band, Bro. Carl Robinson, Jr., who was appointed chairman of his Band, and he has appeared on various musical programs before the community. Ways and Means Band. Brother Eugene Wright. This Band will study plans not only for financial strength, but plans for the lift of the society in general. The leader for the Welfare Band is Sister Mable Zebbs. They plan aid to needy families and sick visits will be looked after in a definite manner. The Dramatic Culture Band, Sister Quincy Robinson, leader. This Band will cultivate the speaking ability, form for giving Bible Studies, and poise in giving select readings will be studied. Sister Hester Gilmore was appointed chairman of the Recreation Board. It will study suitable plans of recreation and present them to the leaders.

Some of the Bands can report a profitable amount of work done already.

ALFRED DUDLEY.

SOUND THE ALARM

It is high time for us to awake out of sleep and be about our Father's business, for He has given us a work to do. We read in Joel 2:1, Blow ye the trumpet in Zion, and sound an alarm in My holy mountain: let all the inhabitants of the land tremble: for the day of the Lord cometh, for it is nigh at hand: God has sent us as watchmen upon the walls of Zion and we are to watch and pray day and night that we be ready to warn the people of the great day of our Lord.

"I have set watchmen upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, which shall never hold their peace day nor night: ye that make mention of the Lord, keep not silence." Isa. 62:6. So we are not to keep silence but talk about the Word of God to those we know and those we know not. God knows them all, for He made us all.

We are to sound the alarm and give the warning message to the world, warning man and woman of a soon coming Saviour; and try to get them to turn from their iniquity that they be not destroyed in their sins.

In Isa. 58:1, we read, "Cry aloud, spare not, life up thy voice

like a trumpet, and show my people their transgression and the house of Jacob their sins." Let us lift Him up so high that men will say as in the days of old, "Men and brethren what shall we do to be saved?" I am determined to bring some one to the fold of Christ this year 1935, God being my helper, and I ask the prayers of all the dear saints that God will bless my effort.

P. YOUNG.

SPRINGTIME

Lovely springtime now is here,
Happiest time of all the year;
All the earth is decked in green,
Nature makes of her a queen.
Grasses, shrubs, and flowers
bright,
Coming up to catch the light,
Teach a lesson we should learn—
Child be careful, not to spurn
One small ray of precious truth,
That God sends to light your
youth.

Just a few short days ago
Mother earth was robed in snow,
But that mantle, pure and white,
Has departed from our sight:
Northward with his wind and
snow,

Winter has been forced to go;
But before he took his leave,
Many lessons I believe
He has taught us, noble, grand,
Awe-inspiring from God's hand!

As the seasons onward fly,
As the days go swiftly by,
As our chances come and go
To serve God who loves us so,
Are we doing all we should
For the mighty brotherhood
Of mankind that lost in sin,
Has not courage to begin
Serving Jesus, who alone,
Can for sin and shame atone?

If you're not, God knoweth why,
You must answer, by and by;
God gives every one his work—
He permits no one to shirk—
Mis-spent moments ne'er return,
Wondrous lesson you must learn;
Men have talents, great and
small,

God gave one at least to all—
Let us pray for strength divine,
To make that one talent shine.

A nation cannot rise above its women, neither can the church; rise and shine, sisters, and the church will shine with you.

MY VISITS TO SAVANNAH AND CHICAGO

It seemed to have pleased our heavenly Father to send me over a great part of the country to visit the churches and companies. During the whole summer I had a great burden for the work, and to visit the eastern portion of the U. S. as well as the southern and middle west, in order to strengthen the believers, and that I might also receive comfort of them in the things of God.

I spent three months in the broad field, and I am glad to say that my plans worked with success. Traveling conditions were fine and the people everywhere did everything possible to make me comfortable. The weather was all that heart could wish for my meetings in every place, and souls were converted to the precious truth of the Third Angel's Message, the Word of God.

In every place there was a sound of triumph. To God be the glory.

Leaving Brunswick, Ga., February 7th for Savannah; there I met those who had been waiting long for my arrival, and our hearts were filled with joy that the work we had to do was done with all ease and pleasure, and many attended the meetings.

My time was not spent only in public speaking, but in house to house work as well. The unwelcome time for my departure came at last. On March 21st at the bus station, surrounded by friends, I bade them farewell for Chicago, Ill., we parted only in presence but are still joined in heart.

On my arrival in Chicago I found all the believers well and on the alert, and all fired up for work, waiting my arrival. The meetings began at once and were charged with the Holy Spirit; a soul was converted to the truth of God's Word, the Third Angels' Message, and united with us in full fellowship.

I had planned to remain a week longer with the believers there, but was called to Milk-kee for the sake of a very sick friend, who is much improved now. Oh, how we thank God for His healing power and saving grace. To God be the glory.

M. L. IVORY.

IS A PERSON CONSCIOUS IN DEATH?

(Continued from last issue)

Luke agrees with these other inspired writers that death is a sleep. In recording the death of Stephen, in Acts 7:60, he says: "And he kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

David, the man after God's own heart, instead of being at the present time in heaven, as the theory of the immortality of the soul would teach, is in his grave sleeping. This is clearly stated by Paul in a sermon at Antioch in Pisidia as recorded by Luke in Acts 13:26: "For David, after he had served his own generation by the will of God, fell on sleep, and was laid unto his fathers (in the grave), and saw corruption."

David Not in Heaven

Peter declares explicitly that David has not gone to heaven. In his sermon on the Day of Pentecost, in Acts 2:34, he says: "For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, The Lord said unto my Lord, sit thou on my right hand." In the twenty-ninth verse he also tells us plainly where David now is: "Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day."

The process of dying is not death. The loss of purity is not death. The loss of joy is not death. The loss of heaven is not death. That is, it is none of these things which is meant in the Scriptures when death is spoken of. Nothing but the loss of life constitutes death. This will be seen in a passage contained in the book of Job, the seventh chapter and twenty-first verse: "And why dost thou not pardon my transgression, and take away mine iniquity? For now I shall sleep in the dust; and thou shalt seek me in the morning, but I shall not be." Surely no more forceful expression could possibly be used to show an utter cessation of existence than this. In death "I shall not be."

In the fourteenth chapter of

Job this question of death is discussed, and the conclusions there set forth are worthy of our study. In the seventh verse Job declares that "there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant." And now man is contrasted with the tree: "But man dieth, and wasteth away: yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he? And Job answers his own question by saying, "As the waters fall from the sea, and the flood decayeth and drieth up; so man lieth down and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."

From this it is plain that until the day of the resurrection, the day when the heavens shall depart as a scroll (Rev. 6:14), those who are dead will continue in unconscious sleep.

Job then exclaims, "O that thou wouldest hide me in the grave, that wouldest keep me secret, until thy wrath be past, that thou wouldest appoint me a set time, and remember me!" Notice the expressions: "Hide me in the grave," "keep me secret." They are descriptive of death.

Having answered this question Job now propounds another: "If a man die, shall he live again?" And again he replies: "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come. Thou shalt call, and I will answer thee: thou wilt have a desire to the work of thine hands."

Attention is directed to the expression, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait." In what place he would wait we are told in Job 17:13: "If I wait, the grave is mine house: I have made my bed in the darkness."

This change for which Job waits in the grave is that spoken of in 1 Cor. 15:51-54. "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be

raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on corruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "Death is swallowed up in victory." The change for which Job still waits is that from "corruption" to "incorruption." While he waits for this change "the grave" is his house. This change will not be accomplished at death, as many are teaching, but "at the last trump," when "the dead shall be raised incorruptible."

This same blessed awakening from the tomb is spoken of in 1 Thess. 4:13-17. Notice how clearly this text sets forth the truth of this subject. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which have no hope." And then Paul shows that they are not in heaven, but in their graves awaiting the resurrection. "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not precede (precede, Revised Version) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

This was the time to which Paul was looking for his reward, not to death. He declares in 2 Tim. 4:8: "Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me," not at death, but "at that day (the day of judgment): and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing."

Death is an enemy of the human race, not a friend. "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death," but many have had their eyes so blinded by the subtle teachings of a false philosophy, born of the "ye-shall-not-surely-die" utterance of the father of lies, that they have had their hopes centered on death as the culmination of all their expectations of a future life. This is a grievous error.

Let us fix our eyes and center our hopes on that great hope of the church, the resurrection from the dead, as the fulfillment of all our joys, and the entrance into that "life everlasting" which the gospel of Christ holds out to every repentant sinner.

"De thunder's always growlin'
Got one mo' cloud ter climb!"
De lightnin' don' say nuttin',
But he git dar eve'y time!"

"So lissen now, believers,
En hear dis sayin' true;
De less you talks about it,
De mo' you gwine ter do!"

NOTICE! NOTICE!

To those sending articles for the Banner, please address them to Mrs. L. L. Johnson, 610 West 36th St., Savannah, Ga., or to the Banner Publishing Association, 610 West 36th Street, Savannah, Ga.

"Satan is an accuser of the brethren, and it is his spirit which inspires men to watch for the errors and defects of the Lord's people, and to hold them up to notice, while their good deeds are passed by without a mention."

WHY, "MR. KNOW-IT-ALL?"

Way down at the end of this story there is a moral.

Once upon a time there was a little boy whose name was Charles, Junior (come to think of it, he wasn't so little after all, for he had arrived at the mature age of ten), who regularly went to Sabbath school, not because he wanted to, but because of his mother's insistence.

Of course there were arguments about it, but the mother always won out, and way down in her heart she was glad that her child was being trained in the way he should go.

Now it so happened, one day, that her cup of joy was rudely dashed from her hand by a slip

of paper which she found in her son's room. On this paper was written:

"Resolved, If I ever live to be a man, not to go to Sabbath school, and not to make my boy go either. Signed Charles, Jr."

At first the mother was shocked at the seemingly irreligious attitude of her offspring; but when she thought of the arguments for and against attending Sabbath school, she was hurt and grieved, and being very human, she sat down on the floor and cried. It was there the guest found her, and the story came out.

Before any action was taken in the matter, the guest agreed to interview the boy in an effort to get at the root of the matter, so one day when she and the boy were having a confidential talk, she said: "Junior, how's Sabbath school going?"

"Oh, it's going," he answered in a bored tone.

"Who is your teacher?"

Junior promptly answered: "Mr. Know-It-All." Then with a stricken look on his face, he added: "Oh, I didn't mean to let that slip out. Don't tell mother I said it. His real name is Brockett."

"But why," asked the guest, "why do you call him Mr. Know-It-All?"

"Oh," said Junior, "that's just a name we boys call him, 'cause, cause he recites the whole lesson, and doesn't give us fellows a chance to tell a single thing but the title, and 'Yes, sir,' and 'No, sir,' once in a while. Sabbath school is no fun."

"But," countered the guest, "one hardly expects to find fun in a Sabbath school, does he?"

"Well," answered Junior, "maybe not fun, but a teacher ought to make a fellow like to go to Sabbath school."

Now Junior attended a Sabbath school where the order of working was faultless, and the facilities all that could be desired, and yet there was a weak link in the chain.

In a testimony written to superintendents and teachers, in this quotation: "When the hearts of the workers are brought into sympathy with Christ, when He abides in them by living faith, they will not talk one half as long, nor mani-

fest one half the smartness, that some do now; but what they say in love and simplicity will reach the heart, and they will be brought in close sympathy with teachers, scholars, and church members."

And the moral is, Teachers, don't tell all you know; give the students a chance.

There is nothing so strong or safe, in any emergency of life, as simple truth.—Dickens.

The world will be convinced, not by what the pulpit teaches, but by what the church lives. The minister in the desk announces the theory of the gospel; the practical piety of the church demonstrates its power.

BE SHORT, PLEASE!

Long visits, long stories, long essays, long exhortations, and long prayers seldom profit those who have to do with them. Life is short. Time is short. Moments are precious. Learn to condense, abridge, and intensify. We can bear things that are dull if they are only short. We can endure many an ache and ill if it is over soon; while even pleasure grows insipid, and pain intolerable, if they are protracted beyond the limits of reason and convenience. Learn to be short. Lop off the branches; stick to the main facts in your case. If you pray, ask for what you believe and you will receive, and get through; if you speak, tell your message, then hold your peace; if you write, boil down two sentences into one and three words into two.

On every occasion of uneasiness, we should retire to prayer, that we may give place to the grace and light of God!

They say a mosquito can fly ten miles. But it isn't the distance he flies that bothers us. It's what he does when he stops.

"Those who perished in the waters of the flood had an opportunity to escape. All were urged to find refuge in the ark; but the multitudes refused to heed the warning."

FREE SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTISTS PROGRAM

Our Program Is:

1st—A deeper consecration to do service in the vineyard of the Lord.

2nd—To do our BIT in preaching the everlasting gospel of Jesus Christ, in all the world, for a witness unto all nations.

3rd—As a race, maintain self-respect, and do as Our Lord has said, "Occupy until I come."

4th—To establish among Negro Seventh-Day Adventists, Negro Conferences with Negro officers—Presidents, Secretaries, Treasurers and Bookkeepers.

5th—To establish schools for the training of our children and for workers in our organization.

6th—To establish a publishing house in which we may furnish employment to Negro Men, Women, Boys and Girls, as we strive to preach the truth of the Third Angel's Message through the printed page.

An invitation is extended to all "INTELLIGENT" Negro Seventh-Day Adventists, those, with a vision, with moral courage, with backbone, those who are strong in the knees, in short, just common self-respect, who have the love of God in the heart, to join with us and help to put this program over the TOP, for over the TOP it must GO.

"Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." Acts 10:34. Therefore, we are determined to, "Stand fast . . . in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us Free." Gal. 5:1.