



The Ryburn Christian Clarion

BIBLICAL STUDIES RESOURCE

Upholding the Accuracy of the God-Breathed Word

Vol. V, No. 1

© Fall, 2007

The Ryburn Christian Clarion, 420 Ryburn Avenue, Suite C-2, Dayton, Ohio 45405-2552, U. S. A.; (937) 275-3316; fax (937) 278-1590; ryburnclarion2@sbcglobal.net; www.godslivingroom.com

Unless otherwise stated, all passages are quoted from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible. All explanatory remarks by a writer within scripture verses are enclosed in brackets [].

INSIDE AT A GLANCE

IN THE BIBLE, the number five stands for God's grace. As the Clarion embarks upon its fifth year of outreach, we acknowledge the grace of our God that has brought us to this point, and His abundant mercy.

“THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND!” If the Word of God is correct, the return of Christ is an absolute foregone conclusion. The assertive way in which this truth is expressed in scripture is meant to give God's people hope.
by Rick Heeter, Editor-in-Chief.....1

“GOD'S MATCHLESS WORD” is where we turn for answers to life's questions, and where we discover what's important to God. In **“The Israel Of God”**, we again see that our Father concerns Himself most with issues of the heart.
by Rev. Linus A. Mathis III.....3

“FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT” takes a brief look at God's call to extend hospitality to the saints, and others. In **“The Love Of Strangers”**, we note the part generosity plays in our personal witness for the Lord.
by Bonnie Law & Rick Heeter.....5

“FROM THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT” examines so-called Biblical discrepancies in an effort to demonstrate how God protects His Word. **“Joseph: The Father Of Mary”** upholds Biblical accuracy while exposing false traditions.
by Keith Jamison, Columnist.....6

“INVESTIGATING CREATION SCIENCE”: Scripture teaches that new heavens and a new earth shall someday be, but did an ancient counterpart exist before the heavens and earth of today? We look for answers in **“Replenish The Earth”**.
by Rick Heeter, Editor-in-Chief.....8

Send your comments or submissions to our new fax number at (937) 278-1590.

“THE TRUMPET SHALL SOUND”!

Considering The Hope

WHEN IT COMES TO spiritual realities, the return of Christ seems elusive to many believers, yet it is dramatically emphasized time after time in The Word, as God seeks to imprint this truth upon the hearts of His people. The concept of receiving compensation at the end of labor or long endurance is not only something we understand in our work-a-day world, but is very much a Biblical theme and a Divine principle. Even as we look forward to a paycheck at the end of the week, our Heavenly Father assures us of dividends when the Great Paymaster, the Lord Jesus Christ, returns from Heaven to gather His saints.

In fact, God has always given His people something in the future to look forward to, something that would enable them to keep going, even when hardships were dire. For Old Testament saints, it was the promise of the Messiah, the Redeemer, Who would restore man's lost right to Paradise. For us today, who look back at the accomplishment of man's deliverance, it is the promised return from Heaven of that great Redeemer, our Lord Jesus Christ, and all that it entails. When He returns, the Scriptures declare, “...we shall be like him;...” (I John 3:2) That's quite a promise!

continued on next page...

Not only is it an extraordinary promise but, the way in which it is expressed, especially in the King James Version (KJV), is quite remarkable. Much of this remarkableness is missing from modern English versions of the Bible, for they rarely distinguish between the words “will” and “shall,” translating the Greek words used as “will” in nearly every instance. On the other hand, the Middle English employed in the KJV differentiates, and shows a distinction in nuances, between “will” and “shall.” Although the word “will” implies definite intent, the word “shall” is more emphatic, allowing for NO equivocation! As such, in the KJV, promises relating to Christ’s return are *declarations of absolute certainty*.

We have already noted, from I John 3:2, that when the Lord Jesus returns, “...we shall [absolutely] be like him;...” Now, let’s consider a few other verses, dealing with the hope of Christ’s return, in order to see God’s effort to emphasize these truths and, thus, make them indelible realities to our souls. One that comes to mind is Philippians 3:21, where God tells us plainly that, at His return, Christ “...shall [not “will”] change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body....” There is absolutely no doubt that Christ “shall” transform our weak and “humiliated” (vile) bodies so they are just like His “glorious” body!

Romans 8:18 is another verse I like to dwell upon whenever the trials of this life seem to crowd in around me. By divine revelation, the Apostle Paul declared, “For I reckon that the sufferings [“experiences,” whether good or bad] of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall [absolutely] be revealed in us [IN US!].” When our weak and feeble bodies are transformed so they are like the Lord’s body, great glory “shall” be revealed “in us.” Furthermore, nothing we experience in this life, whether it is the acquiring of tremendous riches, the devastation of our communities by tornadoes or hurricanes, or the deaths of family members or brethren in Christ, can compare to the wondrous glory that “shall” accompany our future, exalted existence.

We have seen just how definitely Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, has emphasized the certainty of the truths surrounding His Son’s return from Heaven. Even the absolute guarantee of its occurrence is boldly expressed in the Scriptures. In I Corinthians 15:52, God uses the word “shall” three times in order to drive home the point. “In a moment [*atom*, in Greek],” it reads, “in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall [absolutely] sound, and the dead shall [absolutely] be raised incorruptible, and we shall [absolutely] be changed.” If you’ve ever wondered whether we’ll actually hear the sound of a trumpet, stop wondering, for the trumpet “SHALL” sound! The

Word, which God has magnified above ALL HIS NAME (Ps. 138:2), says so!

God has gone to great lengths to make sure His children have a clear understanding of their future reward. Due to our finite minds, and their inability to comprehend the magnitude of eternity, God has revealed only an inkling of what is in store for us, but the things that have been disclosed are dramatically told, so the people of God remain steadfast and faithful. Without a doubt, as I Thessalonians 4:16 makes known, “...the Lord himself shall [absolutely] descend from heaven with a shout,....” God has been so unequivocal, so definite, in His declarations concerning the return of Christ that we simply hold fast to His words. We believe God, and we listen. We listen for Christ’s shout, and for the trumpet, for “the trumpet *SHALL* sound”!

Of course, while we listen, we labor in the outreach of God’s wonderful Word, for there are many who have never heard the Gospel, and who will believe it when they hear, and will wait with us for that same sounding trumpet. It is our calling, therefore, to move ahead. We, at the *Clarion*, “shall” press onward, also, as God gives us illumination and strength. To that end, we are pleased to announce to our readers that we are now making the *Clarion* available in Spanish. Our God recently opened a door for us into Europe, and it appears that He is doing the same concerning Latin America. In fact, we believe that particular regions of the United States will also benefit from the Spanish edition of the *Clarion*. Please pray for this new effort.

Finally, before we move on to this issue’s other features, there are a couple of things that need mentioning. The first concerns our mailing list. Most of the folks on the list are there by personal choice. We do, however, occasionally add people to our mailing list at the recommendations of others (like family members or acquaintances). If you are receiving the *Clarion* and don’t know how you got on our list, it’s because someone thought it would be a blessing to you. If, however, you are one of these individuals and you would prefer not to receive our publication, simply contact us by phone, fax, or e-mail, and we’ll promptly remove your name from the list, no questions asked. You will find our contact information displayed in the masthead at the top of page 1.

The last thing I want to mention is that we have a new fax number. You may use it to send article submissions, testimonies, original Christian poetry, letters to the editor, and so forth. The new fax number is (937) 278-1590. As always, we thank God for all who support our work, and who lift us to the Father in prayer. God bless you all.

-----by Rick Heeter, Editor-in-Chief

THE RYBURN CHRISTIAN CLARION: A Biblical Studies Resource For The Household Of Faith!

In Loving Memory...

It is with sadness that we take note of the passing of a tremendous inspiration to the Body of Christ. On July 13, 2007, our brother in Christ, Rev. David L. Lutz, fell asleep in the Lord, and silently awaits the "blessed hope," the return of Jesus Christ. David was a faithful and loving pastor but, it is safe to say that, he ministered to God's people most effectively as a songwriter and musician. His original, homespun Christian tunes, such as "Daddy's Arms," will prove to be an ongoing blessing to the children of God for many years to come.

GOD'S MATCHLESS WORD:

A Forum For Presenting The Light Of Life

(This column features a wide range of subjects from God's Word as they are set forth by a host of preachers and teachers from differing avenues of Christian thought and various areas of Biblical study and concern.)

“The Israel Of God”

by Rev. Linus A. Mathis III

[Editor's Note: All scripture used in the following article is quoted from the Authorized King James Version of 1769.]

SOME BELIEVE THE MODERN NATION of Israel has a title-deed to Palestine, because of God's covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. In fact, 70% of people polled believe the events in Israel are leading to the coming of the Antichrist and Armageddon. Other reactions are mixed, but only 1% believes it all to be coincidental.

Galatians 6:15 and 16

For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision [being circumcised] availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision [not being circumcised], but a new creature.

And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God.

There still is an "Israel of God," but who or what is it? In this study, we shall endeavor to "walk" through the magnificence of God's Word, and discover this truth for ourselves. Our purpose will be to learn, from God's Word (not history or opinion), more about this intriguing subject, which is so relevant to the turbulent struggles of our times. Let's begin by considering the first Biblical use of the word "Israel."

Genesis 32:24-28

And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day.

And when he [the man] saw that he prevailed not against him [Jacob], he [the man] touched the hollow of his [Jacob's] thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him.

And he [the man] said, Let me go, for the day breaketh.

And he [Jacob] said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me.

And he [the man] said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.

This is the first record wherein the word "Israel" is used. God renamed Jacob by calling him "Israel." The Hebrew meaning of "Israel" is "God prevails, commands, orders, or rules." (Note that it ends in "El"; e. g., DaniEL, meaning, "God judges.") The Greek, being a tad different, is understood as "He shall be a prince of God." Consider the contrast: "Jacob" means "contender," whereas "Israel" means "...as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed."

Genesis 35:9 and 10

And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him.

And God said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but Israel shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel.

In this passage, we note that God mentions this new name, "Israel," twice. From the scriptural record of Pharaoh's dream (Gen. 41:32), we learn that when God repeats a word or phrase in close succession, the same is established. Consequently, Jacob was established as "Israel." Now, we know that the first use of the word "Israel" is in reference to Jacob, or the man, Israel.

Genesis 35:11 and 12

And God said unto him, I am God Almighty: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins;

And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land.

It's important to understand that Jacob (now Israel) was related directly to Noah's son, Shem. Individuals from this bloodline are technically known as "Shemites." (Our modern version of this is "Semite.") Concerning Shem, Biblical chronology reveals that the nation of Israel has him as its progenitor, even though "Israel," as a name, is not relevant to anyone prior to Jacob. Moving on, we further see the land itself in conjunction with the nation (the people) of Israel. That which formerly was given to Abraham and Isaac, was passed on to their children after them.

Genesis 35:13-15

And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him.

And Jacob set up a pillar in the place where he talked with him, even a pillar of stone: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon.

And Jacob called the name of the place where God spake with him, Bethel.

At this point, it is clear that the context in which this word is set plays a vital role in our understanding. Like many words, the usage of this one cannot truly be defined apart from the context in which it is set. Examples of English words with similar ambiguity are "bank" and "tank." Without a consideration of context, you would not know what kind of bank or tank was being spoken of: a river bank, a Federal Reserve bank, a steep bank on the side of the highway, a fish tank, an army tank, or a gasoline tank? "Tank" you very much! All kidding aside, context plays a vital role in our understanding of many words. It's especially so in our quest to learn who or what is "the Israel of God" today.

I Chronicles 2:1 and 2

These are the sons of Israel [Jacob]; Reuben, Simeon, Levi, and Judah, Issachar, and Zebulun, Dan, Joseph, and Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher.

The above catalogs the sons (children) of Israel, the man. These found themselves in Egypt because of what they did to their younger brother, Joseph. (I exhort you to read, at your leisure, Genesis, chapters 37-47, excluding chapter 38.) For the purpose of this study, we set our focus on the following.

Genesis 46:5-8a

And Jacob rose up from Beersheba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, and all his seed with him:

His sons, and his sons' sons with him, his daughters, and his sons' daughters, and all his seed brought he with him into Egypt.

And these are the names of the children of Israel, which came into Egypt, Jacob and his sons:...

Without examining the entire chronology, we see that Israel (Jacob) and his progeny found themselves in the land of Egypt. While there, they developed into tribes numbering collectively in the millions. The man, his children, their children, the tribes, and then the actual land that God had promised them are all called "Israel." Altogether or individually, all bear the same name, however, God's Word declares more.

Romans 9:6-8

Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:

Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called.

That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

"...Not all Israel, which are of Israel..."? How can that be? You see, God is not really concerned about ancestry. He is concerned with faith and believing. Heart, not pedigree, is what He looks at.

Romans 2:28 and 29

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:

But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly: and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.

Philippians 3:3

For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.

Do you worship God in the spirit and rejoice in Christ Jesus? Do you have confidence in God's Word? If so, YOU are a "...Jew...inwardly..." (of "the Israel of God"), and shall be a "prince" or a "princess" of God!*

(Rev. Linus A. Mathis III began his pursuit of the Scriptures in 1976. He earned an Associate Degree in Theology in 1983, and was ordained to the Christian Ministry in 1985. He was involved in missionary work in Alaska, Illinois, and elsewhere, but his love for Alaska drew him back there in 1995, where he founded, and currently directs, Frontier Christian Ministries, a grassroots, non-denominational outreach based in Wasilla, Alaska. He may be contacted by e-mail at fcmm@mtaonline.net.)

Send your e-mails to the Clarion at.....ryburnclarion2@sbcglobal.net.

The Ryburn Christian Clarion: Biblical Studies Resource

THE RYBURN CHRISTIAN CLARION is published four (4) times a year on or near March 31st (spring); June 30th (summer); September 30th (fall); and December 30th (winter). Each current issue is posted to the Clarion's website on or near April 25th (spring); July 25th (summer); October 25th (fall); and January 25th (winter). The website address is www.godslivingroom.com.

The Clarion may be received free of charge in hard copy format by USPS. It may also be printed from the website. To be added to our mailing list, please fax your contact information to (937) 278-1590, or e-mail us at ryburnclarion2@sbcglobal.net.

FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT

Collaboration

(This column offers our readers a variety of inspirational and edifying submissions. In this “grab-bag,” appearing from time to time, you will find essays, book reviews, testimonies, poetry, compositions, letters, and other things designed to exhort and comfort God’s people.)

“The ‘Love Of Strangers’ ”

by Bonnie Law & Rick Heeter

[Editor’s Note: *The following collaboration is presented as a tribute to Clyde Earl Tucker, a faithful brother in Christ, who fell asleep in the Lord earlier this year. Clyde had been preparing an article on “hospitality” for publication in the Clarion when he passed away. This work is presented in memory of him.]*

WE ARE GOING TO LOOK at the verses in the Church and Pastoral Epistles dealing with “hospitality,” or being “hospitable.” There are two closely related Greek words used in the four verses we will examine. *Philoxenia* is used only once, in Romans, a doctrinal epistle. On the other hand, *philoxenos* occurs three times: once in I Timothy, once in Titus (both of which address elders in The Church), and once in I Peter, written to the “elect” of God. Before looking at these verses, however, let’s get a little background on the Greek words under consideration.

The Greek word *philoxenia*, used in Romans 12:13, is a noun, and means, the “love of strangers.” Its Latin equivalent, *hospitalitas*, implies kindness or generosity to guests or strangers. It is from the Latin root, *hospes*, meaning, “guest.” It is a willingness to entertain guests or strangers (foreigners or aliens). From these Latin words, we derive English words like “hospice” and “hospital.”

The Greek word, which is translated “hospitality” in I Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:8, and I Peter 4:9, is related to the word used in Romans 12, but is the adjective form, *philoxenos*. As such, it describes a character trait that God seeks to find in His people. Basically, God wants His children to be “hospitable” (the adjective), which leads to an environment of “hospitality” (the noun).

Now that we have a better understanding of these words, let’s look at the verses where they are used. In each case, we will first look at the King James Version (KJV), then the Amplified Bible version (AMP). Let’s begin with Romans 12.

Romans 12:13 (KJV followed by the AMP)

Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Contribute to the needs of God’s people [sharing in the necessities of the saints]; pursue the practice of hospitality.

If we read the context of Romans 12, where this verse appears, we will see that the love of God *in action* is emphasized (verse 9), especially, as we each fulfill our function or ministry in the Body of Christ (verse 6 and

following). One of the ministries mentioned is to be “given to hospitality,” as stated in verse 13. Now, let’s look at I Timothy 3.

I Timothy 3:2 (KJV followed by the AMP)

A bishop [“elder” or “supervisor”] then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant [“watchful”], sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt [“able and willing”] to teach;

Now a bishop (superintendent, overseer) must give no grounds for accusation but must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, circumspect and temperate and self-controlled; [he must be] sensible and well behaved and dignified and lead an orderly (disciplined) life; [he must be] hospitable [showing love for and being a friend to the believers, especially strangers or foreigners, and be] a capable and qualified teacher,

The context in I Timothy, beginning in chapter 1, sets forth strong admonitions to overseers and supervisors in The Church. One of the recommended characteristics of a leader is that they are to be “...given to hospitality....” They are to be “hospitable.” A clearer understanding of the Greek word, *philoxenos*, showing us what leadership in The Church is supposed to be and do, is expressed in the details of the Amplified Bible version. The warnings by the Apostle Paul, in the first chapter of I Timothy, illustrate that some who had been charged with oversight responsibilities had neglected them. Let’s not fall into the same trap. Now, we turn to Titus 1.

Titus 1:8 (KJV followed by the AMP)

But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober [“sound minded”], just, holy, temperate;

But he must be hospitable (loving and a friend to believers, especially to strangers and foreigners); [he must be] a lover of goodness [of good people and good things], sober-minded (sensible, discreet), upright and fair-minded, a devout man and religiously correct, temperate and keeping himself in hand.

Again, noting the context wherein this verse is found, we see that the book is addressed to Titus, giving him directives concerning the appointing of overseers in The Church (Titus 1:5). One of the qualities deemed

necessary to the selection of an elder is, according to verse 8, that they are a "...lover of hospitality...." We further see, again, that some of the overseers of Titus' day had fallen away from the standards of being a good elder in the Body of Christ. This should speak loudly to us today. Finally, let's take a look at I Peter 4.

1 Peter 4:9 (KJV followed by the AMP)

Use hospitality one to another without grudging.

Practice hospitality to one another (those of the household of faith). [Be hospitable, be a lover of strangers, with brotherly affection for the unknown guests, the foreigners, the poor, and all others who come your way who are of Christ's body.] And [in each instance] do it ungrudgingly (cordially and graciously, without complaining but as representing Him).

Reading the context of I Peter 4, we can see how Christ paid the price for our salvation. We can also see that as we walk with the "...household of faith..." and "...do good unto all..." (Gal. 6:10), we are to use (or "practice") hospitality one toward another. We can also observe how we can make a difference when we stand for God, putting off the old ways of the flesh, that is, the ways of the world.

Finally, we should emphasize just what a big deal it is to be hospitable one toward another, and to those who have not yet believed on the Lord Jesus Christ. In fact, it's interesting to note that the phrase, "given to hospitality," is used only twice. It is employed in Romans 12:13, written to the whole Body of Christ, every believer, and it appears in I Timothy 3:2, addressed to overseers in The Church. That covers pretty much everyone who is born again, and God has said it to ALL of us.

We never really know how we can help a brother or sister in Christ with the love of God, but our Father does. We are part of one another, as in any household (Eph. 2:19-22), and as we walk in love, mercy, grace, and "hospitality," we can have an impact. Furthermore, if we are "given to hospitality" when it comes to those we meet, people will recognize that we are God's children. As such, our Father has called us to a high standard concerning hospitality, the "love of strangers." The question is, are we up for the challenge? *

(Mrs. Bonnie Law first got into Biblical research in 1983. She has regularly supervised an in-home Bible fellowship for more than twenty years. Bonnie and her husband, Ellis, presently live and fellowship in Ferndale, Michigan.)

(Mr. Rick Heeter is the editor-in-chief, book reviewer, and a columnist for The Ryburn Christian Clarion.)

Asleep In Christ...

It is fitting that we pause for a moment to acknowledge the passing of a wonderful pastor and beloved brother in Christ. On Saturday, August 25, 2007, Rev. John Frederick Shroyer fell asleep, and awaits the return of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Rev. Shroyer served for over forty years as a minister of the Gospel, teaching God's Word throughout the United States and many foreign lands. In recent years, he founded Christian Family Fellowship Ministry of Tipp City, Ohio, and was instrumental in the development of a series of Biblical studies seminars that demonstrate the richness of the Scriptures, and provide detailed instruction for God's seeking people. John will be truly missed, but he has left a spiritual legacy that will bless multitudes on into the future.

FROM THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

(This column, featuring the work of Keith Jamison, the director of The Ryburn Christian Clarion's Research Department, examines God's Word and how its application in our Twenty-First Century lives has been influenced by mythology, philosophy, and tradition.)

“Joseph: The Father Of Mary”

OVER THE YEARS, many people have speculated on the parentage of Mary, the mother of the Lord Jesus. Long-standing traditions within Christendom name her parents, even though there is no overt Biblical evidence. Mary's mother is mentioned nowhere in scripture, but her father, whom tradition names as Joachim, is referred to. This reference, however, is not obvious, but is discernable through a careful study of the genealogy of Christ. Mary's father was named Joseph, as was her husband. Let us look to God's Word, and not traditions, for our answers.

First of all, Joseph, in Biblical times, was a common name. It was the name of one of the patriarchs of ancient

Israel, as well as the tribe that he began. Then there's Joseph of Arimathea, who is referenced in the Gospels as a secret disciple of Christ. In fact, in the Bible, there are numerous Marys, several Simons, three or more men named James, more than one Judas, a couple of Sauls, a host of Judahs, more than one John, at least six people named Jesus, and so on. Accepting that there is more than one Joseph in The Word, it is easy to see that Mary's father and husband could have shared the same name. The commonality of the name, Joseph, makes it possible, but it does not make it so. We'll need to delve into God's Word for real evidence.

To gather proof, we need to first look at the genealogy of Christ set forth in Matthew 1:2-16. Verse 16 names Joseph as "...the husband of Mary..." but there is an error in the English translation. The Greek word translated "husband" is *andra*, meaning simply, "a man." *Andra* derives from the Greek root *aner*, "a male of full age and stature." This word is variously rendered "prophet" in Luke 24:19, "men" in Acts 1:16, "murderer" in Acts 3:14, "sirs" in Acts 7:26, "fellows" in Acts 17:5, "man" in I Corinthians 13:11, and "husbands" in I Peter 3:1. Since the meaning of *aner* is so general, the way it is translated is determined largely by the context in which it is found. It is rendered correctly as "husband" in Matthew 1:19, for the context plainly shows that it refers to Mary's spouse. On the other hand, rendering it as "husband" in Matthew 1:16 is at odds with the surrounding context.

The proof that the use of "husband" in Matthew 1:16 is erroneous is three-fold. First of all, Aramaic texts use different words in Matthew 1:16 and 19. The Aramaic word used in verse 16 is *gbra*, which means, "mighty man." In Biblical culture, the "mighty man" was the eldest male of the immediate clan, the patriarch of the family. A young, newly married man would never have this title. Additionally, the word used in verse 19 is *bala*, which specifically means, "husband." The Aramaic clears up the ambiguity of the Greek texts. Matthew 1:19 is speaking of Mary's "husband," as the context confirms, while verse 16 refers to the "mighty man," the patriarch of Mary. This can only be her father.

The second aspect of our proof concerns what appears to be a contradiction. In Luke 3:23, we have the beginning of another genealogical listing. The record indicates that Joseph, the husband of Mary, had a father named "Heli." In Matthew 1:16, however, the father of Joseph is given as "Jacob." Also, Luke shows that its Joseph is the adoptive father of Jesus, while, as we have seen, the Joseph in Matthew is the "mighty man" of Mary. Furthermore, the genealogy in Luke 3 descends from David through his son, Nathan (verse 31), while the genealogy in Matthew 1 runs from King David through his son, Solomon (verse 6), which is the royal bloodline. The conclusion is inescapable. If the Word of God is true, then these two Josephs cannot be the same man!

Matthew 1:17

So all the generations from Abraham to David are fourteen generations; and from David until the carrying away into Babylon are fourteen generations; and from the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ are fourteen generations.

This verse contains our third point in evidence, for it clearly states that the generations from Abraham to Christ are divided into three groups of fourteen each. This is a divine safeguard placed in the Scriptures for our benefit. If the Joseph in Matthew 1:16 is the "husband" of Mary, then the third grouping, from "...the carrying away into Babylon unto Christ..." has only thirteen generations, for Mary and her husband would be of the same generation. If, however, this Joseph is indeed the "mighty man" of Mary's family, her father, then the fourteenth generation in the last grouping is supplied, and God's Word fits together beautifully.

Now that we have set forth our proofs from God's Word, there remain only a few points of interest to cover. The first is found in Luke 3:23. We return to this verse to examine additional information. In verse 23, regarding Christ, the phrase "...as was supposed..." could be rendered "legally." The first part of the verse would then accurately read, "And Jesus himself began to be about thirty years of age, being legally the son of Joseph..." This Joseph, the husband of Mary, legally adopted Jesus. This genealogy supports Jesus Christ's legal standing in Judean society, while the listing in Matthew 1, descending from kings David and Solomon, upholds His claim to the throne of Israel.

Both Jesus' mother and adoptive father were of the House of David, but it was Mary, His only human parent, who was in the royal bloodline. We are given two genealogies to show this. Both establish Jesus Christ's lineage, by blood and by law. Finally, the two genealogies show us that Mary was married to a man having the same name as her father, namely, Joseph.*

(Mr. Keith Jamison has been a student of the Word of God for over fifteen years. For the last three years, he has served as the director of The Ryburn Christian Clarion's Research Department.)

HELP US SHARE THE ACCURACY OF GOD'S WORD!

*If you are interested in submitting an article for our "God's Matchless Word" column or, perhaps, an essay, some original Christian poetry, or a testimony for our "For Your Spiritual Enrichment" column, please note that it is best to send them on a 3½" floppy disk, using a standard Microsoft™ Word® format. You may also e-mail your submissions, in a "plain text" format, sending them to ryburnclarion2@sbcglobal.net. If you desire, you may send a fax to (937) 278-1590. For more information, feel free to call us at (937) 275-3316. If you would like to send a letter to the editor, you may use our e-mail address or fax number, or simply write **The Ryburn Christian Clarion**, 420 Ryburn Avenue, Suite C-2, Dayton, Ohio 45405-2552. If you would like to support our outreach work financially, please make your offerings payable to "The Ryburn Christian Clarion," and mail them to the same address.*

INVESTIGATING CREATION SCIENCE

(In this column, which appears in every spring and fall issue of The Ryburn Christian Clarion, members of the Clarion's research team explore the timely and unfolding evidence that supports the Biblical assertion concerning the Divine creation of all things, visible and invisible. Join us as we take a journey into scriptures and science alike to investigate the latest, compelling proofs.)

“ ‘Replenish The Earth’ ”

by Rick Heeter

IN THIS SIXTH INSTALLMENT of this column, we will examine a single phrase in an effort to augment our appreciation of the events of Genesis 1. In fact, we shall focus primarily on a single word, for it holds a wealth of insight for God's people. The phrase in question is "...replenish the earth..." from Genesis 1:28.

We have noted in previous articles that the first couple of verses of Genesis 1 indicate that a perfect creation somehow fell into disarray. For some, this is an alarming notion. It cuts across the very fabric of strongly held beliefs that have been embedded in people's hearts, usually since childhood. To announce, therefore, that God Almighty's pristine creation fell apart by the second verse of Genesis 1, seems to many to be sacrilegious. Nevertheless, a close look at the language used in the ancient texts reveals details that have not passed into our modern Bible translations and, thus, have not passed into our understanding.

Presenting scriptural details, rather than being blasphemous, merely exalts our God, Who has so lavishly blessed His people with such a cache of spiritual richness. In I Timothy 2:3 and 4, we are told that, "...God...will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge [*epignosis*] of the truth." Most Christians seem to focus on the first part of this passage, and ignore the second. They are concerned, and rightly so, about salvation, but when God talks about coming "...unto the knowledge of the truth..." they fall short. In fact, they fall very short, for the Greek word rendered "knowledge" is *epignosis*, which denotes a thorough, exact, and precise knowledge "...of the truth." Additionally, this scripture says it is God's "will" for His people to be so thoroughly informed. We rejoice, therefore, because of the depth of understanding to which God has given us access.

Let's go, therefore, to Genesis 1:28 to look for details concerning the subject at hand. On the sixth day, God blessed Adam and Eve, commanding them, by saying, "...Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth..." This command is fascinating, for it seems to imply that Adam and Eve were to restore something that had been lost. Indeed, the accuracy of Genesis 1:2 shows that, "...the earth became without form, and void..." Of course, the King James Version says, "...the earth was [*hayah*] without form, and void..."

but the Hebrew word, *hayah*, used here, means, "to become," denoting a change in state or condition. The condition of the earth "...became without form, and void..." The Godly activity from verse 3 on is, thus, designed to restore order. In verse 28, God then enlists the support of Adam and Eve.

The Hebrew word translated "replenish," in verse 28, is *male*, to "make full," while the Latin counterpart is *replenus*, meaning, "to fill up again," or "to refill." It's plain that something lost or destroyed was to be replaced. This is verified in Genesis 9, where God gives this same command to Noah and his sons, using the same words.

After the devastation of a worldwide deluge, God, in Genesis 9:1, told Noah, "...Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish [*male*, in Hebrew; *replenus*, in Latin] the earth." Noah was commanded "to fill up again" the earth. The reason is obvious; much of the life on earth had been destroyed by the turbulence of The Flood. The logic behind God's similar command in Genesis 1:28 is less apparent, for crucial nuances are not conveyed by modern Bible translations, but the evidence is there for those who will dig for it.

It's also intriguing that both Genesis 1:28 and 9:1 use the words "be fruitful," and "multiply," along with "replenish." All of these are verbs, and demand action. The fact that there are three of them is telling, for that number in the Scriptures indicates *divine completeness*. It was necessary that man "replenish the earth," even twice, for a devastated world would have been an impediment, obstructing God's plans for the redemption of humanity and the restoration of a perfect creation. Since this exact command was given twice, both in Genesis 1 and 9, and each time after a global cataclysm, we know that God's will for man "to fill up again" the earth was established. It is this kind of richness and scriptural depth that, once again, reveals to us the Father's great love for His people.*

(We invite you to join us in every spring and fall edition of The Ryburn Christian Clarion, as we declare the depth of God's Word in "Investigating Creation Science.")

*(Mr. Rick Heeter is the editor-in-chief, book reviewer, and a columnist for The Ryburn Christian Clarion.) *Articles and columns submitted to The Ryburn Christian Clarion are edited to ensure correct spelling and punctuation, proper grammar, and clarity of expression.*