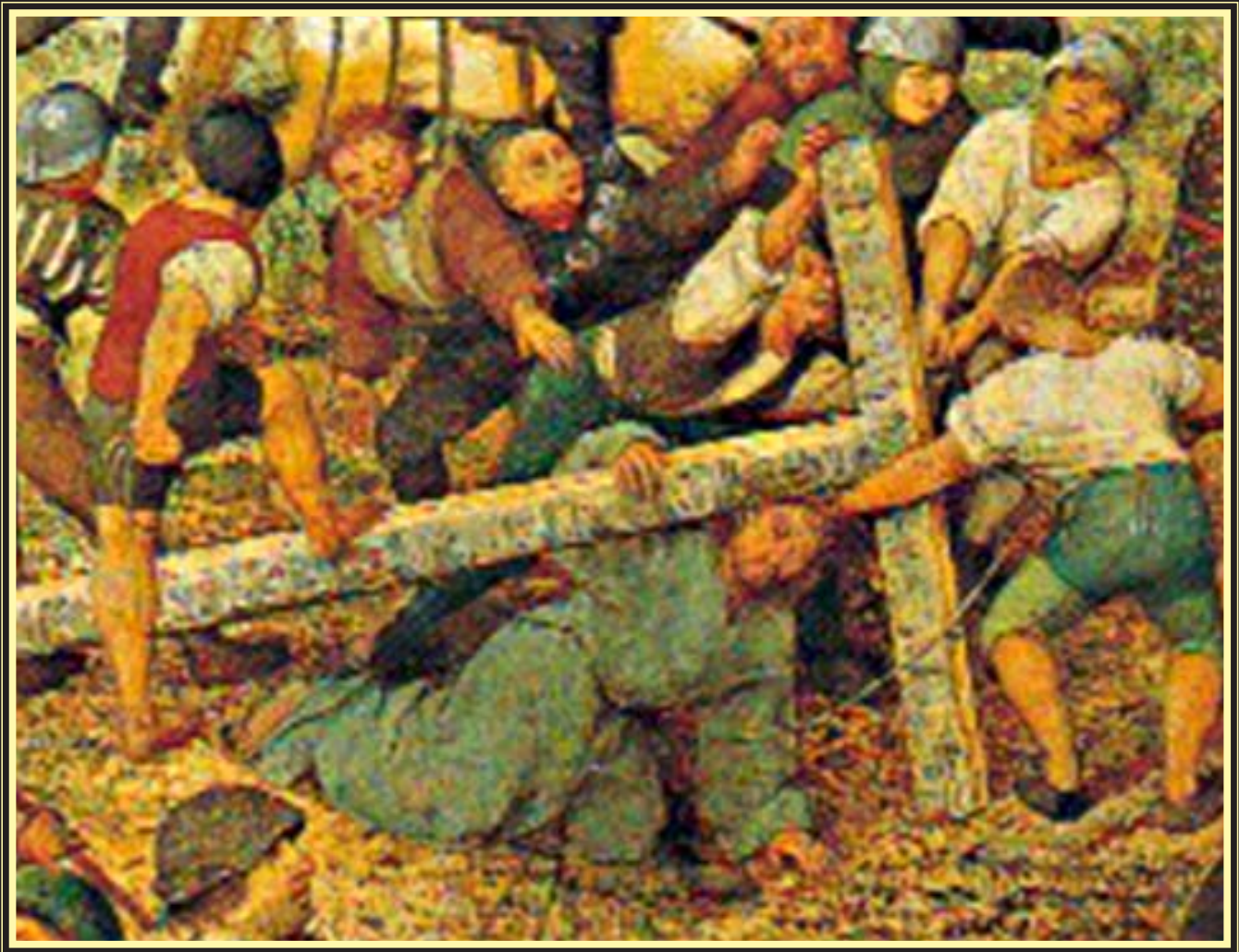


EndTime Issues...

CHRISTIAN RESOURCE – MINISTERS, TEACHERS, BIBLE STUDENTS

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The Cross of Christ

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COVER: **Christ Carrying the Cross** – Painted by Pieter Bruegel in 1564 AD. *Christ Carrying the Cross* puts history's most amazing event into a context as relevant to contemporary America as it was to the Flemish masses back in the 16th Century. In this miniature version of Bruegel's massive painting, Jesus (in the center) is barely visible. That's part of Bruegel's message. For the crowds in the picture were as oblivious to the suffering Savior in their midst as the average person on a city street might be today. Their minds were on their games, on their petty arguments, on their mischievous children, on the stately guards and, especially, on the spectacle of the execution ahead. The identities of the accused mattered little. They never recognized the King who gave His life for them.

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Facing the Eastern Sun – Easter Morning

“Easter” is mentioned once in the New Testament (Acts 12:4 – KJV). Its Greek word, *pascha*, is used 29 times elsewhere in the New Testament – where it is translated *Passover*. “Easter” is not found in the Greek or Hebrew lexicons. Why is it inserted in this one verse? This particular verse is noted contextually *when* James was executed and Peter imprisoned by King Herod – at the time of the *Passover* and *Unleavened Bread*. Why “Easter”?

This word is distinctly English. Sometime between the first century and 1611 A.D., when the King James Version was written, it was inserted in a translation. The word goes back to a Saxon word, *eostre*, from ancient northwest Germany. *Eostre* was a Germanic pagan goddess related to rebirth or beginning a new life. This, in turn, related to the “estrus” cycle of an animal when it ovulates (is in heat), creating a *time* for a new birth. A new Anglo-Saxon word was then coined, *ostara*, which was associated with a goddess related to spring (rebirth of life) and the rising sun (personification of a new beginning).

The first English Bible translation was a handwritten document by John Wycliffe. No one knows how he interpreted Acts 12:4. One hundred and fifty years later William Tyndale *printed* the first English New Testament (1525–1526 A.D.). Subsequently, this object of the wrath of the Roman Catholic Church led to the burning of most of his Bibles. They then killed him. He deeply wanted the English-speaking people to be able to read God’s Word.

In Tyndale’s Bible, the word “*ester*” is used for *pascha* in Acts 12:4. He relied on the *Textus Receptus* to a great degree, a non-Latin Vulgate Catholic translation by Dutch scholar, Desiderus Erasmus, dated 1516 A.D. Did this word appear in that Roman

Catholic Bible? It is not clear. Was it part of the Anglo-Saxon influence of Tyndal’s life? That isn’t clear either. Tyndal’s translation was even more problematic since in most areas where *pascha* existed he used either “*ester*” or “*easter*.” That introduced a foreign element into the gospels because Jesus was now the “*ester* lamb” or “*easter* lamb” instead of the Passover Lamb.

In the 1611 A.D. authorized King James Version all of these were removed except for Acts 12:4. *It appears as though that was a mistake or oversight*. All other English translations since then have the word Passover in that text. The error was corrected.

What hasn’t been remedied is the *meaning* of the goddess *Eostre* in religious practice. Historically, it can be shown to go back to a chief Babylonian goddess, Ishtar, a goddess of love and fertility. A sun god, Tammuz, was intimately associated with Ishtar. He died each year and was reborn in the spring. In turn, he was later associated with the male god Baal with the sun often depicted between its horns, representing the same – new birth and life.

In Ezekiel 8 the divine messenger introduced Ezekiel to a series of abominations. Two related to women (God’s people in Israel) weeping for Tammuz because he died and men in the temple court facing east, worshiping the sun (8:14-18). Immediately after that (chapter 9) God’s true people are sealed, these apostates are slain and the latter rain is poured out (chapter 10). Then typological messages of the last appeal to repent, the fall of Babylon and the time of trouble are given (chapters 11–18). Finally, the sword of the Lord (chapter 21) follows, which parallels Revelation 19, relating to the judgment and His coming. These visions relate to the end of time. Honoring the sun and festivals to other gods are issues

predicted to be part of those who call themselves His at that time!

Why is all this relevant to Easter? It is a pagan holiday celebrated only on Sunday and has as its time of celebration "sun-rise." Historically, those threads of apostasy have wound their way to us today from paganism, religious mythology and early apostate Christianity. It was **exactly that** abomination, *towebah*, or disgusting idolatry that brought God to declare to Ezekiel:

"Therefore will I also deal in fury: mine eye shall not spare, neither will I have pity: and though they cry in mine ears with a loud voice, yet will I not hear them." Ezekiel 8:18.

I can hear some say, "Easter, sunrise and worship – how innocent! It represents the resurrection, assurance of the covenant promise and the 'risen Savior.' The Easter bunny and colored eggs are only festive." But there is a deeper issue.

If I bow to an idol representing Jesus and declare it is only symbolic, a representation of the "One I adore" – sounds innocent, doesn't it? But God said, "Thou shalt not." If I steal from the "haves" so I can give to the "have nots," I may even save a life. Sounds logical, doesn't it? But God said, "Thou shalt not." If my Sabbath worship is on a day that God has not sanctified, and especially at the time of the rising sun (a pagan practice), innocence has been lost. The Bible says that very *symbolism* stirs the wrath of God.

Easter has its roots in paganism, not Christianity. Almost every major culture of Europe

and the Middle East has paid homage in one form or another to the mythical goddess and her lover, a sun god – sometimes seen as protector of the dead. Jesus is called the "Sun of righteousness" (Malachi 4:2). He said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore" (Revelation 1:18). Why does that salvic story have to be linked to pagan tradition, to a god that dies and rises each year? God asked Job, "Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him?" (Job 40:1). Shall we design spiritual truth for God and teach Him the best way religious exercise is to be conducted?

When did this pagan ritual obtain a Christian name and reference? It began during the Roman Empire with Emperor Constantine by the Edict of Milan. Christianity became the legal religion. That civil union with an already corrupt church in Rome soon became the Roman Catholic Church. Roman festivals became Christian holy days.

The *abominations* that lead to desolation in Daniel 8–12, the *abomination* in the harlot's cup in Revelation 17 and that of Ezekiel 8, all share the silver thread of false worship. The *transgression* of the little horn of Daniel 8:13 refers to the same *abomination* and relates to idolatry and sun worship. Something to think about as Easter approaches.

General References:

¹www.aloha.net/~mikesch/easter.htm

²www.endtimeprophecy.net/~Hbbs/EPN-1/Articles/Article-Pagan/easter-1.html



The Cross of Christ

Feared, banned, trivialized...
yet triumphant

By Andy Kjos

Kjos Ministries, led by Andy and Berit Kjos, is involved in a nondenominational fellowship. Andy is an attorney and Berit a nurse. Their greatest credential is their commitment to Jesus Christ and wanting to be led by the Spirit. Both are popular speakers at Christian workshops and conferences. <www.crossroad.to>

America seems torn by a mysterious love-hate relationship with the cross. The media mocks it. Liberal bureaucrats and politicians fear it. City and library administrators are known to ban it.[1] Countless progressive teachers have censored it. Yet Christians keep wearing it.

So do fashion-conscious teenagers across the country, and some stores can barely keep up with the demand. In stark contrast to an award-winning Christian police officer in Texas who was fired for wearing a tiny cross on his lapel,[2] girls from coast to coast sport decorative crosses stripped of any real Christian meaning.

"I saw it, and I thought, I've got to get this – for fashion," said Lynette Sharlo. Faith has nothing to do with her choice. "It just looks nice," she told Vicky Ortiz who wrote the article, "Teens' faith in fashion is their cross to wear." [3]

Sales across the country confirm the new rage, and the popular designs are as varied as the human imagination. The buyers range from committed Christians to the heavy metal rock crowd — with the trendy masses in the middle.

"Some have turned to the cross after accessorizing with the symbols of other faiths, from Buddhas to Wiccan pentagrams," writes Ruth La Ferla. "In an era of rampant spiritual sampling, Christianity — and its emblems — have asserted themselves as the latest in hip." [4]

"It comes on strong whenever the country is in trouble," [3] said jewelry designer Robert Lee Morris, who helped popularize Madonna's crosses back in the early 1980s. That's when the seductive singer gave new meaning to the word "virgin."

THE OFFENSE OF THE CROSS

Trivializing the cross, redefining words, severing Christian symbols from their Biblical meanings.... All these tactics speed today's cultural shift. They fit the vision of a new kind of world — one "freed" from allegiance to God's unchanging truth.

During the first half of the 20th century, two British brothers helped organize this march toward the new global ethic. Aldous Huxley showed us parts of it in his 1932 classic, *Brave New World*. His brother, Julian Huxley, the first head of UNESCO, brought that vision into the UN agency responsible for reshaping the world through "education" and "science." Its blueprint for global education was designed to change beliefs, values, attitudes and the way we think. Factual learning was out, experiential, feeling-based learning was in.

In 1946, Dr. Brock Chisholm, a Canadian psychiatrist and the first head of the World Health Organization (a UN agency working with UNESCO) exposed the globalist hatred for Christ and the cross in a message titled, "The Re-Establishment of Peacetime Society." His two-part strategy would first focus on "gentle" psycho-social manipulation based on behavioral science. If that didn't purge society of its need for the cross and Christ, violence and coercion would follow:

"The responsibility for *necessary changes in human behavior* rests clearly on the sciences working in that field. Psychologists, psychiatrists, sociologists, economists, and politicians must face this responsibility.

"...the only psychological force capable of producing these perversions [guilt, fear, isolationism...] is morality, the concept of right and wrong...

"We have been very slow to ... recognize the unnecessary and artificially imposed inferiority, guilt and fear, commonly known as sin, under which we have almost all labored and which produces so much of the social maladjustment and unhappiness in the world. *For many generations we have bowed our necks to the yoke of the conviction of sin. We have swallowed all manner of poisonous certainties* fed us by our parents, our Sunday and day school teachers, our politicians, our priests.... *If the race is to be freed from its crippling burden of good and evil, it must be psychiatrists who take the original responsibility...*

"There is something to be said for taking charge of our own destiny, for *gently putting aside the mistaken old ways of our elders if that is possible. It cannot be done gently, it may have to be done roughly or even violently...*"[5]

Four decades later, this UN plan for "mental health" and "lifelong learning" had filtered into schools around the world. So when former President Bush introduced his massive education program in 1991, he was merely giving us the latest version of the global program. Listen to his message:

"Nations that stick to stale old notions and ideologies will falter and fail. So I'm here today to say, America will move forward.... New schools for a new world.... Re-invent—literally start from scratch and reinvent the American school.... Our challenge amounts to nothing less than a revolution in American education."[6]

Do you wonder what those "stale old notions and ideologies" were? Keep in mind, neither our Constitution nor the old Christian truths fit the new vision of a managed, adaptable world. Everything must change. "Literally start from scratch and reinvent..."

Neil Postman, the author of *Amusing Ourselves to Death*, understood these socialist strategies. He also saw the power of a cooperative media to fuel new cravings and dull old convictions. To illustrate today's manipulation of our minds, he drew an interesting contrast between two familiar totalitarian visions: Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* and George Orwell's *1984*:

"Orwell feared that the truth would be concealed from us. Huxley feared the truth would be drowned in a sea of irrelevance. Orwell feared we would become a captive culture. Huxley feared we would become a trivial culture, preoccupied with some equivalent of the feelies....

"In *1984* ... people are controlled by inflicting pain. In *Brave New World*, they are controlled by inflicting pleasure. In short, Orwell feared that what we hate will ruin us. Huxley feared that what we love will ruin us."[7]

The spiritual war against Christ and the cross is being waged on both fronts. The assault on religious freedom fits Orwell's vision. The flood of images and suggestions that distort traditional beliefs, twist Biblical values and trivialize Christian words, fit Huxley's vision.

While Orwellian repression intimidates many into silence and conformity, it also awakens faith and stirs resistance. But Huxley's "feelies" simply dull our thinking and distract our attention until trivia becomes the norm and Biblical conviction becomes — under the new *UN Mental Health standards* — an intolerable expression of deviance and extremism.

THE VICTORY OF THE CROSS

A cross purged of Christian meaning offends no one. But the cross worn by a follower of Christ sends a message that many refuse to tolerate. Threatened by contrary convictions, the world demands a conformity that validates *its* values, not God's values. It wants approval, not truths. For "men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (John 3:19-20)

But those who love God — who are "crucified with Christ,"[8] filled with His life and walking in His light — cannot approve of that darkness. They are *in* the world, but not *of* the world. They can spread God's love, but they can't love what God forbids.[9] They are "*citizens of heaven*," and their eyes are fixed on eternity. So the world calls them extremists, for it doesn't understand.

"Remember," said Jesus, "... If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you.... because they do not know Him who sent Me." (John 15:20-21)

The cross stirs persecution — even in America. A rising number of brave uncompromising Christians can testify both to the "offense of the

cross"[8] and to the joy of sharing Christ's suffering. Few of those heaven-minded saints demonstrate Biblical conviction more humbly and kindly than Patrol Sergeant George Daniels. Yet, in September 1998, this honored "Officer of the Year" — a 13-year veteran of the Arlington, Texas Police Department — was fired. While other officers could wear symbols that expressed their beliefs and values, Sergeant Daniels was denied such freedom. Afraid that his tiny cross-shaped lapel pin "might offend someone," Police Chief David Kunkle refused to grant him permission to wear it.

George Daniels agonized over his decision. He had given his life to God, and he couldn't ignore Scriptures such as Acts 5:29. His conscience told him "to obey God rather than men," and as an American citizen, he had that right. Should he not, by faith and with his life, exercise that right?

In the end, he did. Willing to suffer for and with His Lord, he took an unpopular stand and faced the consequences. But in his heart, he agreed with the words of the apostle Paul,

"What things were gain to me, these I have counted loss for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith; that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death...." Philippians 3:7-10.

In hard times, the victory of the cross may look anything but triumphant. Jesus' disciples knew that well. Heartbroken, they had watched the torturous crucifixion. For three days,[10] they struggled with doubt and despair. They didn't yet know that the promised resurrection would indeed conquer death and grave.

We know it did! And we do well to remember that the way of the cross brings *pain* as well as joy. God's way up may first lead down; His call to victory might, at first, look like defeat; and His call to oneness with Christ means separation from the ways and values of the world — a separation that has infuriated social engineers through the centuries.

But the world's hostility matters little to God's true friends. They know the riches of the eternal gifts given them through the cross — redemption, forgiveness, freedom from bondage to sin, the indwelling Holy Spirit, a new identity and the strength needed daily to triumph in Christ.

For taking his stand with Jesus, Paul faced hatred, persecution, beatings, stoning, imprisonment, starvation and, ultimately, martyrdom. But suffering for Christ didn't quench his joy. He had counted the cost and received something infinitely greater than all the coveted thrills and treasures of the world — fellowship with Jesus, the Lord of all, both now and forever.

"Therefore we do not lose heart. Even though our outward man is perishing, yet the inward man is being renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is working for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory, while we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are not seen are eternal."

2 Corinthians 4:16-18

Endnotes:

1. Suit filed for cross-wearing employee, " *World Net Daily*, wnd.com, February 2, 2002.
2. Lawrence Morahan, "Policeman Fired for Wearing Cross Takes Case to Supremes," CNSNews.com, August 6, 2001
3. Vicky Ortiz, "Teens' faith in fashion is their cross to wear," *The Journal Sentinel*, Milwaukee, WI, March 11, 2002. <http://www.jsonline.com/lifestyle/religion/mar02/26672.asp>
4. Ruth La Ferla, "Cross Signals," *The News & Observer*, August 21, 2001.
5. G. Brock Chisholm, "The Re-Establishment of Peacetime Society," *Psychiatry*, February 1946.
6. President George Bush announcing America 2000 at the White House on April 18, 1991. *America 2000: An Education Strategy* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, 1991), pages 50,51,55.
7. Neil Postman, *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (New York: Viking Penguin, Inc., 1985), vii-viii.
8. Galatians 2:20, 5:11
9. Romans 12:2, 9.
10. By Hebrew calculations, each day in a sequence would be counted, even though the time span might only include parts of the first and last day. Since Jesus was crucified on Friday and arose on Sunday, His death spanned three days.



Why Jesus is Coming Soon

The Great Week of Time

Part 7

Six Thousand Years – An E. G. White Focus

In the writings of E. G. White the phrase “Great Week of Time” (GWT) is not used. However, within a wide array of writings she alludes to the age of this earth as six thousand years. Students of those statements have interpreted them in a variety of ways, often veering from the rich message she is conveying. Isolated statements are impossible to understand. A collective review of these statements brings out amazing insight.

One of the most frequently quoted thoughts is not her focus on the six thousand years but on a word or two *before* the number. Note the variation of expressions:

“For six thousand years ...” GC659.3 (1911 ed.)

“For nearly six thousand years ...” GC518.1
(1888)

“More than six thousand years ...” HS133.3
(1886)

“About six thousand years ...” 1SP87.1 (1870)

What is it? More, less or at six thousand years? It is our judgment that E. G. White is consistent in her use of these terms, and the context when compared with similar statements elsewhere conveys a meaning that is *very specific* and states important concepts.

The first group of quotations that are frequently quoted involve the *approximation* of the earth’s age. These are not trying to do anything more than make a statement: “The earth is *around six thousand years* old.” But the question arises, From what reference point? Let’s see if we can define her orientation to help us grasp her other statements.

Age from the Bible Record

“Infidel geologists claim that the *world* is very much older than the *Bible record makes it*. They reject the *Bible record* because of those things which are to them evidences from the earth itself that the world has existed tens of thousands of years. And many who profess to believe the Bible record are at a loss to account for wonderful things which are found in the earth, with the view that creation week was only seven literal days, and that the world is now only *about six thousand years* old. These, to free themselves from difficulties thrown in their way by infidel geologists, adopt the view that the six days of creation were six vast, indefinite periods, and the day of God’s rest was another indefinite period; making senseless the fourth commandment of God’s holy law. Some eagerly receive this position; for it destroys the force of the fourth commandment, and they feel a freedom from its claims upon them. They have limited ideas of the size of men, animals, and trees, before the flood, and of the great changes which then took place in the earth.”¹

All her thoughts are based on a simple premise! The approximate age of the earth is six thousand years. That is found in the *Biblical record*. Thus, Ussher’s work, so widely quoted, is close to a correct understanding.

General Age of the Earth

The “six thousand years” is to be *generally* referenced from most of her comments.

General Age Since Creation of Man

"The holy pair were not only children under the fatherly care of God, but students receiving instruction from the all-wise Creator. They were visited by angels, and were granted communion with their Maker, with no obscuring veil between.... The mysteries of the visible universe – 'the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge' – afforded them an exhaustless source of instruction and delight. The laws and operations of nature, which have engaged men's study *for six thousand years*, were opened to their minds by the infinite Framer and Upholder of all."²

General Preservation of Vital Power

"God endowed man with so great vital force that he has withstood the accumulation of disease brought upon the race in consequence of perverted habits, and has continued *for six thousand years*. This fact of itself is enough to evidence to us the strength and electrical energy that God gave to man at his creation. It took more than two thousand years of crime and indulgence of base passions to bring bodily disease upon the race to any great extent. If Adam, at his creation, had not been endowed with twenty times as much vital force as men now have, the race, with their present habits of living in violation of natural law, would have become extinct. At the time of Christ's first advent the race had degenerated so rapidly that an accumulation of disease pressed upon that generation, bringing in a tide of woe and a weight of misery inexpressible."³

"Man came from the hand of his Creator perfect in organization and beautiful in form. The fact that he has *for six thousand years* withstood the ever-increasing weight of disease and crime is conclusive proof of the power of endurance with which he was first endowed (CTBH 7)."⁴

General Six-millennial Period

This is referenced as *the timeframe* for the climax of the *struggle* that ends with God's wrath.

"A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword.' Jeremiah 25:31. *For six thousand years* the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His

heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. Now all have made their decisions; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God. The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. Now the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men. 'The Lord hath a controversy with the nations;' 'He will give them that are wicked to the sword.'"⁵

Sin's existence has been *for six thousand years*, and as the end approaches, Satan's temptation increases, especially in the area of appetite.

General Duration of Sinning Man

"The continual transgression of man *for six thousand years* has brought sickness, pain, and death as its fruits. And as we near the close of time, Satan's temptation to indulge appetite will be more powerful and more difficult to overcome."⁶

All these "general" quotations affix only an approximate time. Another way she expresses time:

"More than" Six Thousand Years

There appear to be two ways E. G. White extends the time of six thousand years. *One* relates to Satan's experience with evil, and *secondly*, one quotation states that a perfect creation occurred beyond six thousand years ago.

Satan's Experience: This is a fascinating timing statement regarding Satan:

"The pretended visitants from the world of spirits sometimes utter cautions and warnings which prove to be correct. Then, as confidence is gained, they present doctrines that directly undermine faith in the Scriptures. With an appearance of deep interest in the well-being of their friends on earth, they insinuate the most dangerous errors. The fact that they state some truths, and are able at times to foretell future events, gives to their statements an appearance of reliability; and their false teachings are accepted by the multitudes as readily, and believed as implicitly, as if they were the most sacred truths of the Bible. The law of God is set aside, the Spirit of grace despised, the blood of the covenant counted an unholy thing. The spirits deny the deity of Christ and place even the Creator on a level with themselves. Thus under a new disguise the great rebel still carries on his warfare against God, *begun in heaven* and for *nearly*

six thousand years continued upon the earth.”⁷

Here the war was begun in heaven and then transferred to the earth *nearly six thousand years* ago. In *that* context, carefully note the use of the words “more than” in the following thought:

“A cunning and cruel foe attends our steps, and is working every moment, with all his strength and skill, to turn us from the right way. Ever since he succeeded in overcoming our first parents in their beautiful Eden home, he has been engaged in this work. **More than six thousand years** of continual practice has greatly increased his skill to deceive and allure [includes heaven and earth]. On the other hand, he who once yields to temptation becomes spiritually weak, and yields more readily the second time. Every repetition of sin blinds his eyes, stifles conviction, and weakens his power of resistance. *Thus while the power of the human race to resist temptation is continually decreasing, Satan’s skill and power to tempt are continually increasing.* This is one great reason why the *temptations of the last days will be more severe than those of any other age.*”⁸

A cursory review of this *might* suggest that since the Edenic home, it has been greater than six thousand years. That is a statement only of Satan’s “practice time,” consistent with the previous thought in *The Great Controversy*, pp. 552-553 (cf. HS 133).

Since Creation per se: “To this earth angels have come, with the message of redemption, and its hills and valleys have echoed their songs of rejoicing. Its soil has been trodden by the feet of the Son of God. And for **more than six thousand years**, in its forms of beauty and gifts for sustenance, the earth has borne witness of the Creator’s love.”⁹

This *single quotation* appears at first to be out of harmony with all of her other thoughts. But, it suggests only that slightly more than six thousand years ago the world was *created*. It wasn’t long before sin entered and the conflict, which represent virtually when all the other quotations began. The GWT applies to the Levitical Jubilee *restoration model*. Once sin commences, it becomes a redemptive timing issue.

In six thousand years the time would come for restoration and land rest.

“Less than” Six Thousand Years

This is used in two major ways: One, to define the time period of *man’s sin* and two, to state how

long Satan has been conducting his *evil work on this earth*.

Great Controversy Period

“The world is full of those who need to be ministered unto – the weak, the helpless, the ignorant, the degraded. The continual transgression of man for *nearly six thousand years* has brought sickness, pain, and death as its fruit. Multitudes are perishing for lack of knowledge.”¹⁰

Satan’s Time: “The great controversy between Christ and Satan, that has been carried forward for *nearly six thousand years*, is soon to close; and the wicked one redoubles his efforts to defeat the work of Christ in man’s behalf and to fasten souls in his snares. To hold the people in darkness and impenitence till the Saviour’s mediation is ended, and there is no longer a sacrifice for sin, is the object which he seeks to accomplish.”¹¹

“Under a new disguise the great rebel still carries forward his warfare against God, begun in Heaven, and for *nearly six thousand years* continued upon the earth.”¹²

“Satan has great advantages. He possessed the wonderful intellectual power of an angel, of which few form any just idea. Satan was conscious of his power, or he would not have engaged in a conflict with the mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace. Satan closely watches events, and when he finds one who has a specially strong spirit of opposition to the truth of God he will even reveal to him unfulfilled events, that he may more firmly secure himself a seat in his heart. He who did not hesitate to brave a conflict with Him who holds creation as in His hand, has malignity to persecute and deceive. He holds mortals in his snare at the present time. During his experience of *nearly six thousand years* he has lost none of his skill and shrewdness. All this time he has been a close observer of all that concerns our race.”¹³

The Great Week of Time Intimation through a Restoration Theme

Notice the beautiful flow of Jubilee atonement–restoration language that she draws on:

“A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword.’ Jeremiah 25:31. *For six thousand years the great controversy has*

been in *progress*; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. *Now all have made their decisions; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God. The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law.* Now the *controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men.* 'The Lord hath a controversy with the nations;' 'He will give them that are wicked to the sword.'"¹⁴

"For six thousand years, Satan's work of rebellion has 'made the earth to tremble.' He had 'made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof.' And he 'opened not the house of his prisoners.' For six thousand years his prison house has received God's people, and he would have held them captive forever; but Christ had broken his bonds and set the prisoners free."¹⁵

"Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. Now God's creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations. 'The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break forth into singing.' Isaiah 14:7. And a shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal universe. 'The voice of a great multitude,' 'as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings,' is heard, saying: 'Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.' Revelation 19:6."¹⁶

"The great plan of redemption results in fully bringing back the world into God's favor. All that was lost by sin is restored. Not only man but the earth is redeemed, to be the eternal abode of the obedient. For six thousand years Satan has struggled to maintain possession of the earth. Now God's original purpose in its creation is accomplished. 'The saints of the Most High shall take the kingdom, and possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.' Daniel 7:18."¹⁷

Conclusion

The writings of E. G. White are consistent and support the following concepts:

1. Satan's experience in evil is greater than six thousand years because it extends from the warfare in heaven.
2. This earth's age is slightly more than six thousand years old.
3. Sin began slightly less than six thousand years ago.
4. When the restoration is complete, six thousand years will have been finished from the onset of sin.

The six-thousand-year comments of E. G. White do not argue with each other – even though written over approximately a 50-year period. Her understanding of the restorative Levitical model of six preparation and the seventh rest within a restoration theme is clear. Though she does not use the theological expression "Great Week of Time," her millennial comments lend credence to its concepts.

References

- ¹*Spirit of Prophecy*, vol. 1, p. 87 (1870).
- ²*Sons and Daughters of God*, p. 7.
- ³*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 138.
- ⁴*Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary*, vol. 1, p. 1082 (cf. *Fundamentals of Christian Education*, p. 22).
- ⁵*The Great Controversy*, p. 656 (1888).
- ⁶*Testimonies*, vol. 3, p. 492 (1875).
- ⁷*The Great Controversy*, pp. 552-553.
- ⁸*The Signs of the Times*, 9/29/1887.
- ⁹*The Story of Jesus*, p. 183 (Adapted from Ellen G. White Material 1896 and 1900).
- ¹⁰*Counsels to Parents, Teachers, and Students*, p. 467.
- ¹¹*The Great Controversy*, p. 518 (1888).
- ¹²*Ibid.*, p. 552.
- ¹³*Testimonies*, vol. 2, p. 171 (1868–1871).
- ¹⁴*The Great Controversy*, p. 656.
- ¹⁵*Ibid.*, p. 659 (1911).
- ¹⁶*The Great Controversy*, p. 673.
- ¹⁷*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 342 (1890).



Prophecy Unfolds

DANIEL CHAPTERS 8–12 – PART 8

BY FRANKLIN S. FOWLER JR., M.D.

Chapter 22

FOLLOWERS OF THE “PRINCE”

“And the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;” Daniel 9:26b.

Much debate surrounds the identity of this prince. We have previously noted destructive behavior by the he-goat, representing Satan the persecutor. Then the Little Horn (the papacy) followed, an agent of Satan, casting down God’s dwelling place, the sanctuary, and persecuting God’s people. Later we observe the *prince* of Persia was Satan (10:13-14).

But is the “prince” here Satan or the Messiah? The prince should be Prince. In verse 25 He was “Messiah the Prince.” In the first part of this verse He is Messiah and now Prince. This represents a breakup of a word pair – Messiah the Prince.

Here we are introduced to a “prince” whose people destroy the city and its sanctuary. Nebuchadnezzar had done just that 70 years before. When this encounter from Gabriel occurs, that temple and city are still in a desolate state. If this follows the death of the Messiah, which is the sequence in this verse, the city and temple would have to be rebuilt and destroyed once again. Who then is this “prince” that will bring about another destruction?

The main theme within this prophecy has been *spiritual restoration* of God’s people (Jerusalem) and His church (temple-sanctuary). Is a literal message suddenly being sandwiched between profound redemptive themes?

Six hundred years later, just before calvary the Messiah Jesus said that the temple would be

destroyed (Matthew 24:2 – it had been rebuilt). He also noted that “Jerusalem’s house” would be desolate (Matthew 23:37; 24:15 – it had been rebuilt). This history of Jerusalem’s fall and destruction of the temple is well known to historians in the attack by Titus, the Roman general in 70 A.D.

Within *one generation* from the time of Jesus this occurred, fulfilling another prediction (Matthew 24:34). In another interesting application long before Jesus’ death He told sneering Jews that a sign of His Messiahship would be to destroy the temple, and in three days He would raise it up. But He spoke of the temple of His body (John 2:19, 21). That “destruction” had a greater spiritual implication. The resurrection of the “Temple” had a future message of hope for spiritual Israel.

Daniel’s people were given a probation of 490 years. Through this part of that prophecy Gabriel is portraying through the destruction of Jerusalem and the temple that something terrible would occur to that people associated with *that probation*. Daniel would soon understand this from the 2300 evening-morning prophecy that Israel would fail. Daniel 9:26b is *directly* associated with the “cutting off” or death of the Messiah.

As Nebuchadnezzar fulfilled prophecy by taking into *captivity* the rebellious Israelites, here the Roman armies are the “people of the Prince” to now *destroy* a nation that had passed their probation. God had warned them in many ways that the end would be desolation – destruction.

This verse reveals that Israel had a spiritual fall that brought a literal destructive act.

Jesus Envisions Prophetic Fulfillment

Jerusalem (His chosen people) and the temple (His church) were annihilated. Jesus said, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:38). "Therefore say I unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matthew 21:43). Christ's words warned Israel that Daniel's prophecies (9:26b) were just about to be fulfilled.

"The history of more than a thousand years of God's special favor and guardian care, manifested to the chosen people, was open to the eye of Jesus. There was Mount Moriah, where the son of promise, an unresisting victim, had been bound to the altar – emblem of the offering of the Son of God. There the covenant of blessing, the glorious Messianic promise, had been confirmed to the father of the faithful. Genesis 22:9, 16-18. There the flames of the sacrifice ascending to heaven from the threshing floor of Ornan had turned aside the sword of the destroying angel (1 Chronicles 21) – fitting symbol of the Saviour's sacrifice and mediation for guilty men. Jerusalem had been honored of God above all the earth. The Lord had 'chosen Zion,' He had 'desired it for His habitation.' Psalm 132:13. There, for ages, holy prophets had uttered their messages of warning. There priests had waved their censers, and the cloud of incense, with the prayers of the worshipers, had ascended before God. There daily the blood of slain lambs had been offered, pointing forward to the Lamb of God. There Jehovah had revealed His presence in the cloud of glory above the mercy seat. There rested the base of that mystic ladder connecting earth with heaven (Genesis 28:12; John 1:51) – that ladder upon which angels of God descended and ascended, and which opened to the world the way into the holiest of all. Had Israel as a nation preserved her allegiance to Heaven, Jerusalem would have stood forever, the elect of God. Jeremiah 17:21-25. But the history of that favored people was a record of backsliding and rebellion. They had resisted Heaven's grace, abused their privileges, and slighted their opportunities.

"Although Israel had 'mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets' (2 Chronicles 36:16), He had still manifested Himself to them, as 'the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in

goodness and truth' (Exodus 34:6); notwithstanding repeated rejections, His mercy had continued its pleadings. With more than a father's pitying love for the son of his care, God had 'sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place.' 2 Chronicles 36:15. When remonstrance, entreaty, and rebuke had failed, He sent to them the best gift of heaven; nay, He poured out all heaven in that one Gift.

"The Son of God Himself was sent to plead with the impenitent city. It was Christ that had brought Israel as a goodly vine out of Egypt. Psalm 80:8. His own hand had cast out the heathen before it. He had planted it 'in a very fruitful hill.' His guardian care had hedged it about. His servants had been sent to nurture it. 'What could have been done more to My vineyard,' He exclaims, 'that I have not done in it?' Isaiah 5:1-4. Though when He looked that it should bring forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes, yet with a still yearning hope of fruitfulness He came in person to His vineyard, if haply it might be saved from destruction. He dug about His vine; He pruned and cherished it. He was unwearied in His efforts to save this vine of His own planting.

"For three years the Lord of light and glory had gone in and out among His people. He 'went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil,' binding up the brokenhearted, setting at liberty them that were bound, restoring sight to the blind, causing the lame to walk and the deaf to hear, cleansing the lepers, raising the dead, and preaching the gospel to the poor. Acts 10:38; Luke 4:18; Matthew 11:5. To all classes alike was addressed the gracious call: 'Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest.' Matthew 11:28.

"Though rewarded with evil for good, and hatred for His love (Psalm 109:5), He had steadfastly pursued His mission of mercy. Never were those repelled that sought His grace. A homeless wanderer, reproach and penury His daily lot, He lived to minister to the needs and lighten the woes of men, to plead with them to accept the gift of life. The waves of mercy, beaten back by those stubborn hearts, returned in a stronger tide of pitying, inexpressible love. But Israel had turned from her best Friend and only Helper. The pleadings of His love had been despised, His counsels spurned, His warnings ridiculed.

"The hour of hope and pardon was fast passing; the cup of God's long-deferred wrath was almost full. The cloud that had been gathering through ages of apostasy and rebellion, now black with woe, was about to burst upon a guilty people; and He who alone could save them from their impending fate had been slighted, abused, rejected, and was soon to be crucified. *When Christ should hang upon the cross of Calvary, Israel's day as a nation favored and blessed of God would be ended.*"¹

Deeper Spiritual Issues

Israel as a nation symbolized by Jerusalem, His people, ceased to be a favored people at calvary – 31 A.D. Jesus told them that "favor" would be given to another people – another "nation."

Who were they? That wouldn't be clear until after the 2300 evenings and mornings! This whole message is part of the *mareh* vision. Daniel's literal people would be destroyed. But Jesus has already given the very first bit of information about a beautiful restoration of another people. After 2300 atonement evenings and mornings a holy people will emerge that are forever legally right with the center of all – God's throne. The record in the sanctuary, the heavenly court, would be pure and holy.

The fulfillment to that covenant people is remarkably depicted in Revelation as the 144,000 – "the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb." "They are without fault before the throne of God" (Revelation 14:4-5. They met the requirements of Daniel 9:24. They "were redeemed from the earth" (Revelation 14:3) and entered into everlasting righteousness.

Warning

The prophecy of Jerusalem's fall and the destruction of the temple is a metaphor for the time of the end when Babylon falls.

In Revelation, Jerusalem (God's people) is depicted as Babylon (apostate people). That's why there is a **NEW** Jerusalem. Babylon is destroyed (Revelation 16:19).

God calls Babylon a "destroying mountain ... which destroyest all the earth" (Jeremiah 51:25). That imagery is one that goes beyond killing to

corruption. Babylon is like a huge mountain (beyond human resistance) that *corrupts the earth*. This is clarified further in Isaiah 21:9 where Babylon falls, and with her demise goes the "graven images of her gods." The *transgression* and *abominations* that Daniel 8–12 allude to are false doctrines and idolatrous standards that corrupt the world. The same symbol holds for the wine in the harlot's cup in Revelation 17.

A remnant, the 144,000, triumph at the end. But the Christian church, so pure in its inception (Revelation 12:1) becomes corrupt. The same fate awaits those people, just as the Jews.

"The Saviour's prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have *another fulfillment*, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that has rejected God's mercy and trampled upon His law. Dark are the records of human misery that earth has witnessed during its long centuries of crime. The heart sickens, and the mind grows faint in contemplation. Terrible have been the results of rejecting the authority of Heaven. But a scene yet darker is presented in the revelations of the future. The records of the past,—the long procession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions, the 'battle of the warrior ... with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood' (Isaiah 9:5),—what are these, in contrast with the terrors of that day when the restraining Spirit of God shall be wholly withdrawn from the wicked, no longer to hold in check the outburst of human passion and satanic wrath! The world will then behold, as never before, the results of Satan's rule.

"But in that day, as in the time of Jerusalem's destruction, God's people will be delivered, everyone that shall be found written among the living. Isaiah 4:3. Christ has declared that He will come the second time to gather His faithful ones to Himself: 'Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' Matthew 24:30, 31."²

¹*The Great Controversy*, pp. 18-21.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 36-37.

Chapter 23

GOD'S WRATH EXPRESSED

"And the end thereof [shall be] with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined."
Daniel 9:26c.

In Daniel 8:19 we noted the appointed time (*mowed*) heralded the very end of time (*eth qets*). To make clear what this was associated with Gabriel said it would be at the time of the indignation (*zaam*), which is God's wrath or time of God's final judgment.

From the 70-weeks-of-years prophecy it is clear that there is a direct application to the Jewish people and 70 A.D. But the greater and more important relevance comes at the end of this world's history. We know this by now because of the 2300-"day" prophecy (Daniel 8:14) and the meaning of *eth qets*, which directly related to Michael standing up, tribulation, deliverance of God's people and the special resurrection (Daniel 12:1-2).

The verse being reviewed now (9:26c) reveals greater details of how all apostate people will come to an end (70 A.D. or very end of time).

The seven churches of Revelation represent seven types of corporate bodies that will exist at the very end of time. Amazing as it may seem, that book categorically notes only two of those churches will be part of God's last-day people – Philadelphia and Smyrna – the 144,000 and the martyred groups, His two witnesses. Five have apostatized.

The "end" (*qets*) comes as a "flood" (*sheleph*). Though *sheleph* means a deluge of water, it alludes to a sudden end as quickly and unexpectedly as a flood. In this setting a "flood of wrath" (Naham 1:8) or judgment on the wicked.¹

Though Satan, the *prince of this world*, has had controlling accesses at times to God's people and church through persecution and martyrdom, he and his agents will at the end be under the controlled wrath of God.

Qets is once again used. At that "end" will be the "desolations" of war. In 8:13 Gabriel said that a transgression would lead to "desolation" (*shamen*) – utter destruction. In 12:11 Jesus said the "abomi-

nation" would lead to desolation or destruction. That occurred literally in 70 A.D. when Titus sacked Jerusalem and the temple. The "city" and the "sanctuary" were destroyed. That will occur once again antitypically at the time of Armageddon (Revelation 16:16) just before "Babylon came in remembrance before God" (vs 19) (the "city"). Then the synagogue of Satan (Revelation 2:9) (the apostate "sanctuary") will be forever gone. Here war is introduced as the immediate cause of its end. It is as if God is telling all his people, "Don't be concerned, ultimately apostasy, the little horn, those representing Satan and Babylon, will meet their fate in total annihilation."

We are reminded of apostasy in Isaiah's day. God's people were saying, "Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits" (Isaiah 30:10). God bears with sin and deception only so long.

The verse ends with a most comforting word – *charats* (*haras*). That destruction has already been *decided*. In fact, God *decreed* it. That is amazing and wonderful.

Again, what war (*milchamah*) will lead to this desolation? Revelation 14–20 opens the door to two wars – both called Armageddon. One is obviously a mortal conflict between men as the four winds are loosened, the other is the final battle between good and evil, principalities and powers, when the "wine of His wrath" is poured out without mixture.

Long before Babylon came onto the scene, Isaiah (chapter 21) and Jeremiah (chapters 50–51) said it would come to its end – totally – never to rise again. Here the papacy or little horn, which came out of Babylon, will come to its end – "he shall be broken without hand ... he shall come to his end, and none shall help him" (Daniel 8:25, 9:45). The "he-goat" representatives will have a *measured period* of time to work (Daniel 12:7), but at the end will be the deliverance of God's people (Daniel 12:1) and destruction of wickedness. Here in Daniel we are seeing in miniature what the book of Revelation will unfold in greater detail for the world.

¹Harris, R. Laird, et al.; *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, vol. II, p. 918.

“But the cloud of judicial wrath hangs over them, containing the elements that destroyed Sodom. In his visions of things to come the prophet John beheld this scene. This demon worship was revealed to him, and it seemed to him as if the whole world were standing on the brink of perdition....

“When the storm of God’s wrath breaks upon the world, it will be a terrible revelation for souls to find that their house is being swept away because it is built upon the sand.”²

“Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.’ ‘The land shall be utterly emptied, and utterly spoiled: for the Lord hath spoken this word.’ ‘Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate: therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned.’ Isaiah 24:1, 3, 5, 6....

“The whole earth appears like a desolate wilderness. The ruins of cities and villages destroyed by the earthquake, uprooted trees,

ragged rocks thrown out by the sea or torn out of the earth itself, are scattered over its surface, while vast caverns mark the spot where the mountains have been rent from their foundations.”³

Desolation will come.

We passed quickly through sixty-nine weeks of the seventy-week prophecy. The issues of Messiah the Prince unfolded. Then suddenly, the theme moved away from that time to the fall of literal Jerusalem, and even more relevant, to messages related to apostasy and corruption at the very end of time. Satan was successful in bringing all too many of God’s people to turn against their very Savior. In these proleptic reflective messages Gabriel opens scenes that depict the final outcome of the Little Horn’s end-time work of Daniel 8. He lingers long enough to warn what lies ahead for God’s church, then hurries back to the Messiah, only to return again to the end of time rebellion.

Remember, remember – in most prophecies there is often a literal meaning. But that is always a metaphor for a deeper spiritual message. Of *greater significance* is *always* the spiritual. In it the covenant restoration theme is forever appealed to at the great consummation.

²*Testimonies*, vol. 6, pp. 14-15.

³*Maranatha*, p. 305.

Chapter 24

THAT LAST EVENTFUL WEEK

“And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week:” Daniel 9:27a

This begins one of the most important and least understood verses in this series. Because of this, we are going to go carefully through its key words.

This verse refers to the last “seven” of the seventy of the sevens – “one week.” Within its confines we will observe the *completion* of God’s purposes for His people. Recall verse 24: Within the time period of 490 years – the seventy weeks of years – all sin would be put away, *everlasting* righteousness established, the *chazown* vision would be completed and everything would become holy once again. Time breaks *within* this seven-year period with the death of the Messiah, and the sacrifice and oblations are no longer of any use. But “everlasting” (*olam*) – the most distant of times – eternity – is to begin at the week’s end!

That may make some uncomfortable, having strictly historical views. What is God contextually saying? This prophecy sweeps history and terminates when the controversy with evil ends. It is when righteousness (*tsedeq*), the *legal resolution* of all spiritual conflict, ends with holiness in a people God can wed (Revelation 19). He has been trying to rivet that concept into our understanding since 8:14 when His people are made holy and righteous – when the *adjudicated process begins*.

We’re not eager to “toy” or “debate” the *gap theory*, and that is exactly what it is, a theory with a terrible gap where the *last week* of the 490 years is artificially thrown into the future. We must analyze in context the meaning of the Hebrew words. The beauty of chapter 9 is *repeated* in the book of Revelation relative to the heavenly invitation. There many promises associated with “he that overcometh” in the “144,000’s victory” are given. Daniel 8–12 is a preface to that amazing book, including this verse.

“he shall confirm the covenant”

This presents an important challenge. Who will confirm the covenant? The Hebrew word for “confirm” is *gabar*. In Aramaic it suggests “rise or restore.” But here in Hebrew its meaning is rich

and affirming. In the verb tense (*hiphil*) used here it means confirms or validates the covenant.

Messiah the Prince ratifies what began in the Garden of Eden when Adam and Eve were promised a way of escape from the death penalty. The beauty of promise expanded and matured as God communicated His thoughts to His people.

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight,” Hebrews 13:20-21a.

“And this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.” Jeremiah 31:33. That is holiness restored.

A *covenant* implies a transaction between two sides. God has put man on a *timed probation*. Man’s part of the contract must be completed within those *time lines*. Daniel acknowledged in his prayer that God kept His side of the covenant.

What if man doesn’t keep his part of the agreement? God reveals a remarkable principle about His justice in Genesis 6:3, “My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” Noah was then given 120 years of probation. In Daniel 9 the completion of the covenant was to be accomplished in 490 years. This time, its termination would occur at the very *end of time*.

What would cause God to cease having a covenant of mercy toward mankind? There are many end points in the Scriptures. Examples include the end of the sixth millennium (Great Week of Time) (Leviticus 25 setting), the gospel to all the world (Matthew 24:14), when God senses wickedness so deeply He wishes He hadn’t created man (Genesis 5:5-6), when “the first heaven and the first earth were passed away” (Revelation 21:1).

The last week of the 70 is Messiah-driven. Heaven pulls all stops to give God’s people a note of mercy and the sound of justice. The Rescuer comes and is anointed or set apart for His mission. He is killed by the people He came to save in the

middle of this last week. In spite of this, before and after (3-1/2 years and 3-1/2 years) He continues to affirm His love, His promises and covenant of grace. That is the note of mercy.

An essential observation to focus on is the significance of this 490-year period – now in its last week. As the clock strikes the end of the 70th week, everlasting righteousness will have entered, the opposition of Satan and his agents will have forever ceased and the heavenly courts will be cleansed of blood transactions. Daniel 9:24 is end of time restoration language. It goes way beyond 34 A.D.!

Before the cross He pleads His life of love and mercy. After the cross the disciples do the same as His representatives.

“For seven years after the Saviour entered on His ministry, the gospel was to be preached especially to the Jews; for three and a half years by Christ Himself; and afterward by the apostles.”¹

“Jesus Christ was a minister ... to confirm the promises made unto the fathers.” Romans 15:8.

“with many for one week”

“Many” (*rab*) is presumed to be an adjective referring back to the Princes’ people – “many people.” Confirming the covenant continues in a *special way* for one (*echad*) week. This refers to a cardinal number and implies unity of its individual timed parts (Exodus 26:6, 11; 36:13; Genesis 2:24, 34:16; Ezekiel 37:12; Malachi 2:5). That week is to be a unified whole in the context of restoration and redemption. “Week” here is once again *shabuwa* – a “seven-period.” That is a perfect number.

But we saw that imperfect, hellish Satan split that perfect whole into three and a half and three and a half. Three and a half is prophetically imperfect and associated with evil.

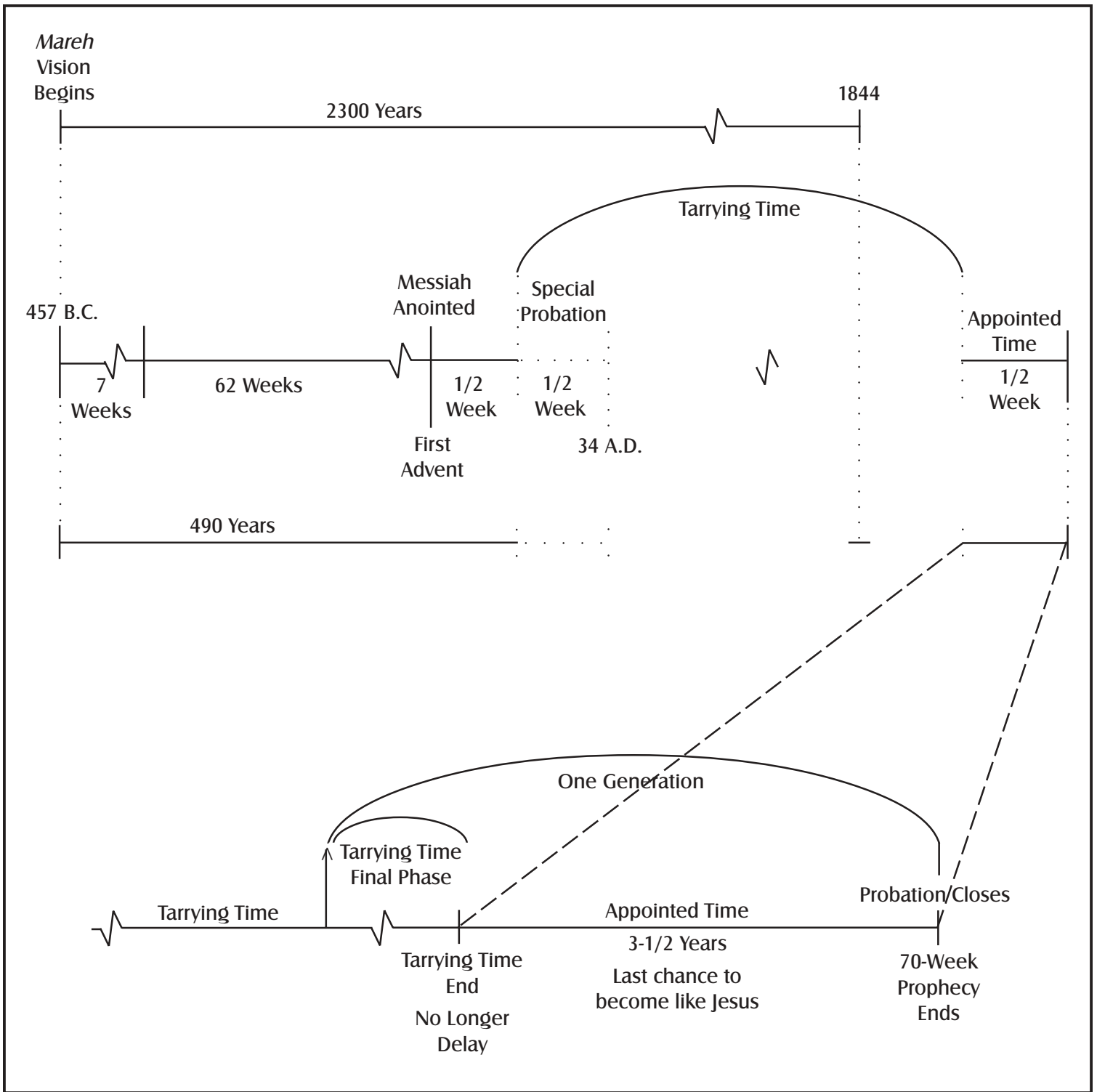
Satan or his agents will war against the covenant (*b@ryth*). Why? It *establishes* everlasting righteousness. It legally binds Satan and restores holiness to the universe. The covenant is destructive to Satan or any of his followers. He is doing everything to block its completion and, in turn, keeping the seventy weeks of probationary period from ending!

This is depicted in chapter 11 in an end-time setting:

- i The king of the North “shall be against the holy *covenant*” (11:28).
- i He shall “have indignation against the holy *covenant*” (11:30).
- i Those that do “wickedly against the *covenant* shall be corrupt by flatteries” (11:32).

Satan or his agents war not only against the covenant but against the covenant Maker and covenant people for “one week” or a total of seven years. That is a prophetic unit of time. It will be split in two but *must* be put back together. *Echad shabuwa* is a whole. That *is why* there are several 1260-day (three and a half years) prophecies in Daniel and Revelation. They *show* how the seven will be once again put back together. The last probationary week must be a whole because its last year is a Jubilee Atonement year when the covenant is complete and man’s restoration occurs!

¹*Desire of Ages*, pp. 233-234.



SHORTENING THE WEEK BUT NOT THE PROPHECY

“and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease,” Daniel 9:27b.

In the last chapter we talked about the sacred last week of seven years, the seventy weeks of years, and therefore, this last week is to end at a Jubilee Atonement when everything will be restored (outlined in verse 24). The covenant promises lead to destruction of Satan and his followers. If he can create a barrier to the restoration of a holy people, his claims as “prince of this world” remain. That last “week” must be disrupted. If so, he is preserved from doom. The setting in Daniel 8–12 reveal that Satan proceeds under that premise.

Here in the midst of that week, “he” will cause something to end. The previous pronoun goes back to the people of the Prince (*nagid*) or those helping to fulfill God’s plans.

In the “middle” or “midpoint” of the *shabuwa* the Messiah will cause the ceremonial Jewish system to cease. In the previous verse it said that *after* the sixty-nine weeks (nothing specific – a generic time declaration), the Messiah would meet a violent death. Here in the midst of this last week the theocracy of sacrificial ceremonies ceases. We know this was the point of Christ’s death because the moment Jesus “yielded up the ghost” (Matthew 27:50) “the veil of the temple was rent in twain from top to the bottom” (vs 51). The sacred divide between the Holy and Most Holy ceased for the Jewish people. Type had met antitype. Jesus became that veil – the portal to the Most Holy, God’s throne. He became the confirmed way.

“The way into the holiest is laid open. A new and living way is prepared for all. No longer need sinful, sorrowing humanity await the coming of the high priest. Henceforth the Saviour was to officiate as priest and advocate in the heaven of heavens. It was as if a living voice had spoken to the worshipers: There is now an end to all sacrifices and offerings for sin. The Son of God is come according to His word, ‘Lo, I come (in the volume of the Book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God.’ ‘By His own blood’ He entereth ‘in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us.’ Heb. 10:7; 9:12.”¹

The “he shall cause” is implied in this verse. At the three and a half-year point (“midst of the week”) the sacrifices, ceremonies and oblations cease. The sacrificial lamb was supplanted by the Lamb of God. Type met antitype. There is no longer any need for the intricate ceremonial worship rituals.

“Little did the Jews realize the terrible responsibility involved in rejecting Christ. From the time when the first innocent blood was shed, when righteous Abel fell by the hand of Cain, the same history had been repeated, with increasing guilt. In every age prophets had lifted up their voices against the sins of kings, rulers, and people, speaking the words which God gave them, and obeying His will at the peril of their lives. From generation to generation there had been heaping up a terrible punishment for the rejecters of light and truth. This the enemies of Christ were now drawing down upon their own heads. The sin of the priests and rulers was greater than that of any preceding generation. By their rejection of the Saviour, they were making themselves responsible for the blood of all the righteous men slain from Abel to Christ. They were about to fill to overflowing their cup of iniquity. And soon it was to be poured upon their heads in retributive justice. Of this, Jesus warned them: ‘That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation.’ [Matthew 23:35] ...

“Divine pity marked the countenance of the Son of God as He cast one lingering look upon the temple and then upon His hearers. In a voice choked by deep anguish of heart and bitter tears He exclaimed, ‘O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!’ This is the separation struggle. In the lamentation of Christ the very heart of God is pouring itself forth.

¹*Desire of Ages*, p. 757.

It is the mysterious farewell of the long-suffering love of the Deity...

"Israel as a nation had divorced herself from God. The natural branches of the olive tree were broken off. Looking for the last time upon the interior of the temple, Jesus said with mournful pathos, 'Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see Me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord.' Hitherto He had called the temple His Father's house; but now, *as the Son of God should pass out from those walls, God's presence would be withdrawn forever* from the temple built to His glory. Henceforth its ceremonies would be meaningless, its services a mockery."²

We can grasp the rich meaning of this prophecy by looking at the gospels when Messiah the Prince came and was cut off. The Gospels fill in the details of the *exact time* this final week would begin and this "midst" or "midpoint" would occur. It *began* at the anointing of the Messiah. At its *middle*, Jesus was crucified at Passover.

The leaders of the chosen nation of Israel and the rabble that followed brought Jesus to His death. They railed against the Messiah, bringing to an end the sacrifices and oblations that had grown ever more burdensome by tradition.

And that brings us to one of the most important and, unfortunately, opinion-filled issues. What did Jesus mean when He said:

1. The blood of the righteous will come against that generation in Jesus' day (Matthew 23:33-36) as part of a severance "woe" or curse?
2. "Behold your house is left unto you desolate" (Matthew 23:38)?
3. "The kingdom of God shall be *taken from you*, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof" (Matthew 21:43)?

There is no other conclusion that one can come to – the Jewish nation would cease to be God's chosen people. When? When Messiah the Prince was "cut off," the guilt of millenniums fell on that people. They were, as a nation, to bear an eternal curse.

Missing that point has brought in terrible misunderstanding and woe to the Protestant and

virtually all of the evangelical world. Here's why. Gabriel told Daniel several minutes ago that 490 years were "determined or decreed for thy people" to become holy and have everything ready for a Jubilee restoration. Daniel's people "blew it." Their probation ended at the cross. That was 31 A.D. That was three and a half years short of the 490 years. And – that's a problem many expositors simply ignore or find fertile ground to speculate on:

"The once favored people of God were separating themselves from Him, and were fast becoming a people disowned by Jehovah. When Christ upon the cross cried out, 'It is finished' (John 19:30), and the veil of the temple was rent in twain, the Holy Watcher declared that the Jewish people had rejected Him who was the antitype of all their types, the substance of all their shadows. Israel was divorced from God. Well might Caiaphas then rend his official robes, which signified that he claimed to be a representative of the great High Priest; for no longer had they any meaning for him or for the people. Well might the high priest rend his robes in horror for himself and for the nation."³

Before we can finish this verse, this issue must be explored in greater depth. The verse finishes with comments related to the end of the wicked people. The matter of perfecting a holy people and the completion of the covenant is *not* commented on further in chapters 8–12. But enough hints will be given from Gabriel and twice more by Jesus in person to tell us the details of the last part of the three and a half years will be unfolded in the book of Revelation.

Recall – this is all part of the *mareh* vision that was not sealed. Yet, its revelation was "cut short" at the "cutting off" of Jesus. There is simply no contextual gymnastics nor linguistic exposition that can add to what is not. The nation of Israel ceased to be God's holy people *at the cross*. What do we do with the last three and a half years? It is *not* discussed in Daniel 9! Jesus personally returns to tell what will happen in the last three and a half years – the final time of the prince of this world – all in Daniel 12.

A probation is put on hold. That will be our study in the next chapter.

²*Ibid.*, pp. 618-620.

³*Ibid.*, p. 709.

The Garden Patch



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Chemical vs. Organic Gardening

Improving the Soil

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
Romans 6:23.

“The greater the length of time the earth has been under the curse, the more difficult has it been for man to cultivate it, and make it productive.”
Spiritual Gifts, vol. 4, p. 154.

The Basics

The discussion on the merits of using chemicals or organic methods to increase soil fertility has sometimes become quite heated. The ultimate goal as stated by E. G. White above is to make the soil productive. But for some people the decision virtually becomes a religious one with adherents giving more loyalty to a method of soil fertility than is given to the God who created the heavens and the earth. I want to state right up front that I believe that so called “organic” methods of gardening are by far the best and I hope to present information that will help you to see why this is the case. But I also recognize that there is a place for the occasional use of “chemicals” in the garden – as long as it is done carefully and in moderation.

Questions to be answered

There are several questions that I

hope to answer in the course of this article.

1. What are the differences between chemical and organic fertilizers?
2. Why is it hard to switch from chemical gardening to organic gardening?
3. Why did chemical fertilizer use become so big?

Comparisons

Before we look at the differences between chemical and organic fertilizers, let's look at soil fertility in nature and in the garden.

Eden

The Bible does not tell us how soil fertility was maintained in the Garden of Eden but we do know one thing – it did not involve death. We do have one verse that states:

“But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground.” Genesis 2:6.

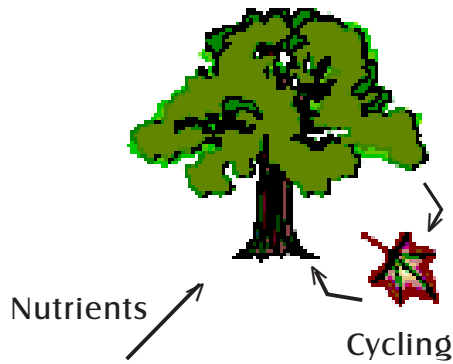
Although this verse deals more with how the garden was “irrigated” it may be that the plants were given their nutrients at the same time.

Nature

What we see in nature today is represented by the sequence following:



David Stottlemeyer



The plant takes up nutrients from the soil through its root system. Then, in the course of time, the leaves die and fall to the ground. At this point it should be noted that this death is the result of sin as stated in the verse at the beginning of this article. And this is all that sin gives us – death. Ponder for a moment the fact that we are not suffocating in leaves and other dead material and be thankful to God that in His mercy he put in place a system whereby dead material could be broken down and returned to the earth from which it came. This nutrient cycling and uptake of new nutrients is what allows forests to grow in poor soil and, given time, will gradually increase the fertility of most soils.

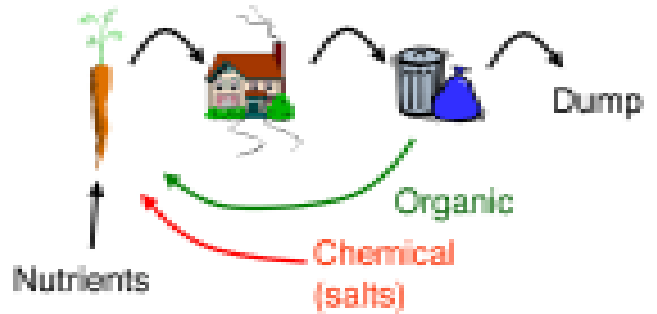
Garden

Now let's look at what happens in the garden (see below).



We grow a crop, in this example, a carrot. That carrot is harvested and taken to the home –

carrying with it all the nutrients it removed from the soil while growing. Then what happens to those nutrients? Some end up in the trash, some in our bodies, and some in the sewage. The point being that these nutrients have been removed from the garden and need to be replaced. The question is how do we replace these nutrients that have been removed from the soil?



The main difference between organic and chemical fertility methods is that with organic methods you try to duplicate the cycling that occurs in nature by returning “waste” organic material back into the garden – often in the form of compost. Chemical methods on the other hand replace the nutrients using nutrient salts.

Differences between chemical and organic fertilizers

So, what are the differences between chemical and organic fertilizers? To summarize them, take a look at the table below:

While I will not go over each of the differences in the table above, I would like to spend a few moments comparing the philosophy differences between chemical and organic methods. With chemical methods you usually start by using soil testing to determine what your soil lacks, and by following fertilizer recommendations you give your soil whatever is lacking. Then, the goal is to replace what is removed by whatever crop you are growing. For example, in my line of work

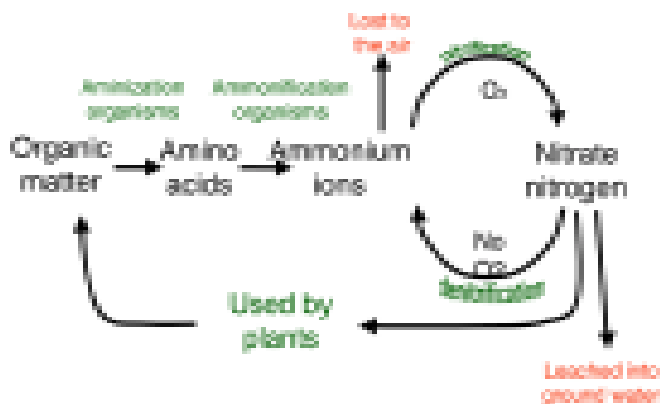
	<u>Chemical</u>	<u>Organic</u>
Form applied	Salts	Organic material and ground rock
Nutrient release	Dissolving	Bacterial action or weathering
Availability	Immediate	Gradually
Philosophy	Replace nutrients	Build-up soil fertility

(avocados) there is a web site where a grower can go, plug in how many pounds of fruit were harvested from his grove, and it will calculate exactly how much of each nutrient was removed by that crop. The grower can then replace exactly what was removed.

Organic methods are less concerned with feeding a crop than with feeding the soil – the organisms in the soil. The idea is to have a healthy soil. If you feed and take care of the soil, the result will be a good crop. To see what “feeding the soil” means, let’s take a look at how organic material is broken down in the soil.

How organic matter is broken down

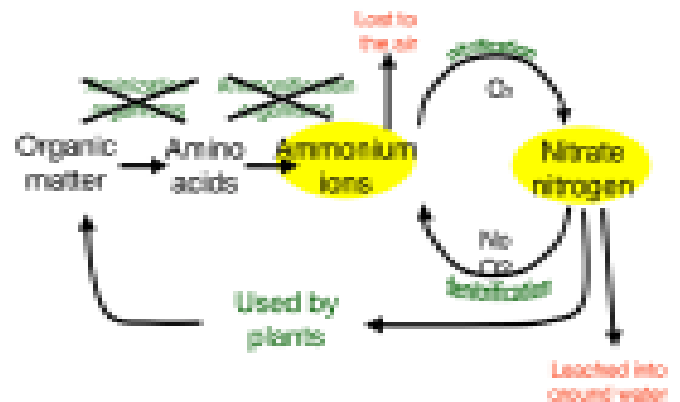
In the garden (and in nature) when organic material is added to the soil, it starts a complex series of actions that both improves the texture of the soil and releases nutrients for the plants to utilize. We will focus on only one small part of this process – the release of nitrogen – so that we can see what it means to “feed the soil” and understand more clearly the difference between chemical and organic soil fertility practices. To do this, I am going to use the drawing below.



On the left side of the drawing you see organic matter that has been added to the soil. This organic matter is food for “aminization” organisms, which break down the organic matter and give off amino acids as a waste product. These amino acids are then taken up by “ammonification” organisms which break them down and give off ammonium as a waste product. At this point, two things can happen to the ammonium. It can either be lost to the air, or, in the presence of oxygen in the soil, it can be converted by “nitrification” organisms into nitrate nitrogen. Three things can

happen at this point. If oxygen is lacking in the soil (waterlogged conditions) the nitrate can be converted back into ammonium by “denitrification” organisms. Another thing that can happen is for the nitrate to be leached into the ground water. The best option, however, is for the nitrate to be used by the plant. And when the plant dies and returns to the soil as organic matter, the cycle starts all over again.

Now, what happens when someone adds a chemical fertilizer containing nitrogen into this cycle? To demonstrate this, I am going to use the same drawing – with some additional information.



Nitrogen in a chemical fertilizer is usually either in the form of a nitrate (calcium nitrate) or as ammonium. I have indicated this in the above drawing with yellow. Notice that when you add ammonium to the soil, you are actually adding a waste product of the ammonification organisms into the soil. Any organism that is “bathed” in waste starts to die off as indicated by the “X” in the above drawing. As the ammonification organisms start dying off, amino acids start building up in the soil – the waste product of the aminization organisms. They, in turn, start dying off also. Since these organisms are essential for the breakdown of organic matter in the soil, decomposition slows down. This is one reason why many farms and gardens that use “chemical” fertilizers will test high in organic matter – because it is not being broken down.

Why is it hard to switch from “chemical” gardening to “organic” gardening?

Those who have been using chemical fertilizers in their gardens often have great difficulties when they try to switch to organic gardening. The

organisms essential for “digesting” organic matter in the soil are disrupted and even eliminated by the use of chemical fertilizers, and when one switches to organic fertilizers the soil is unable to “digest” and release the nutrients. I’ve been told that the same thing happens in the human body – the use of antibiotics can kill both the bad and the good organisms. Doctors will sometimes suggest taking yogurt to help re-establish the good organisms in the digestive system. The problem for the garden is, there is no “yogurt” for the soil. It takes time for these organisms to re-establish themselves so the nutrients can be supplied to the plants.

Why did chemical fertilizer use become so big?

It all started with Justus von Liebig (1803 – 1873) who claimed, “soil fertility can be maintained by chemical fertilizers alone.” The first fertilizer used to a large extent was nitrogen. Since most soils tend to be lacking in nitrogen, the first application brought immediate and dramatic increases in yield. This result was not lost on the farmer using the fertilizer, nor on his neighbors. Because of this, the use of chemical nitrogen fertilizer was quickly adopted by farmers. But as the organisms releasing nitrogen from organic matter were killed off, the farmer found that he had to apply more chemical nitrogen to get the same results. If the farmer applied a little too much nitrogen (under the theory that if a little is good, more must be better) the result would be

weak and spindly plants that were susceptible to various disease and insect problems. The solution that was recommended was to add chemical phosphorus and potassium to balance the nitrogen. Unfortunately, phosphorus fertilizer disrupts the organisms that release sulfur in the soil. Now, sulfur deficiencies started showing up. Sulfur fertilizers fixed that problem but had a negative impact on the “nitrification” organisms (the last step in nitrogen release) so the farmers had to add yet more chemical nitrogen to prevent deficiencies. And thus, step by step, the farmers found themselves trapped into trying to supply all of the plants nutrient needs. And what happened on the farm can happen in the garden as well.

I’ve heard it said, “feeding plants with chemical fertilizers is like feeding a person intravenously. You bypass the soils ‘digestive system.’ The soil is used only as a chemical reservoir and anchor for the plant roots.” It is true that chemical fertilizers bring quick results, but there are long-term consequences that should be considered. The farmer (or gardener) who tries to switch from using chemicals must be patient while the soil rebuilds its ability to “digest” properly.

Sources

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Focus on the *Sabbath*

[This section is devoted to news, articles, special messages, laws, sermons and political events that draw attention to the Sabbath. We are especially interested in how the Christian world views a weekly “rest day” – a pivotal prophetic end-time issue.]

Vatican: Pope Says Sundays for God, Not Sports

Fri Mar 26, 2004 8:37 a.m. ET Vatican City (Reuters) – Pope John Paul on Friday said Sunday should be a day for God, not for secular diversions like entertainment and sports.

“When Sunday loses its fundamental meaning and becomes subordinate to a secular concept of ‘weekend’ dominated by such things as entertainment and sport, people stay locked within a horizon so narrow that they can no longer see the heavens,” the pontiff said in a speech to Australian bishops.

John Paul criticized the “culture of the ‘here and now,’” urging Church leaders to “lead men and women from the shadows of moral confusion and ambiguous thinking.”

The 83-year-old pope also encouraged Christians, especially young people, to remain faithful to Sunday Mass, saying the secular culture was undermining family life.

