

THE SABBATH SCOOP

VOLUME 26

FEBRUARY 2014

NUMBER 11

What's Wrong With Showing Love?

Valentine's Day has become a day for showing love to your sweetheart. Can that be wrong?

By Gregory Dullum

Valentine's Day is Feb. 14. It is customary on that day for people to show love to their sweethearts. Stores are filled with cards called "valentines," chocolates in red, heart-shaped boxes, little candy hearts with messages printed on them, and bouquets of red roses.

Should Christians participate in this holiday? Can it possibly be **WRONG** to show **LOVE** to our sweethearts?

The Bible commands us to love! Husbands must love their wives (Eph. 5:25). We are to love our neighbors as ourselves (Lev. 19:18, Mark 12:31). So, should we observe Valentine's Day to show love to our sweetheart?

Origins of Valentine's Day

To answer that question, we must understand the origins of Valentine's Day.

Frank Staff, in his book, *The Valentine & Its Origins* (1969), writes:

"Sending a valentine card on February 14 is no longer the serious matter it once was, and today is just a harmless and sometimes amusing way of keeping in touch with friends towards whom is felt an especial fondness" (p. 9). So there was a **SERIOUS** meaning to valentines in the past?

"In Britain and America the majority of people who use this means of saying 'I love you' do so not only out of genuine sentiment but often for innocent amusement, and have no idea that the Saint's Day they are celebrating is connected with ancient customs which can be traced back to pagan times....

"One of the most important, as well as one of the most ancient, of the festivals celebrated by the Romans was the Lupercalia. This was a Spring festival involving peculiar fertility rites, and was especially concerned with young people. The following account from an old Roman history [*Antiquities of*



NAPS photo

Heart-shaped candies are a popular Valentine's Day gift for "sweethearts."

Rome by Basil Kennett, 1776] is quoted for an interesting description:

"The most ancient Order of the Priests were the *Luperci*, sacred to *Pan* the God of the Country, and particularly of Shepherds. They had their Name from the Deity they attended on, called... a Wolf, in *Latin*, *Lupus*; because the chief employment of *Pan*, was the driving away such beasts from the Sheep that he protected. The *Lupercalia*, as *Plutarch* observes, appears to have been a Feast of Purification, being solemnised on the *Dies Nefasi*, or Non-Court Days of the month February, which derives its name from *februo* to purify: and the very Day of the Celebration was anciently called *Februarca*.

"The Ceremony was very singular and strange.

"In the first Place, there was a Sacrifice killed of Goats and a Dog. Then two Children, Noblemen's Sons, being brought thither, some of the *Luperci* stained their Foreheads with the bloody Knife, while others wiped it off with Locks of Wool dipped in Milk; the Boys must always laugh after their Foreheads had been wiped; This done, having cut the Goat-

skins into Thongs, they ran about the Streets all Naked but their Middle, and lashed all that they met in their Procession. The young Women never took any Care to avoid the Strokes, but rather offered themselves of their own Accord, fancying them to be great Helpers of Conception and Delivery. They ran naked, because *Pan* is always painted so. They sacrificed a Goat, because the same Deity was supposed to have Goat's Feet.... As for the Dog we meet in the Sacrifice, it was added as a necessary Companion to the Shepherd, and because of the natural Antipathy between them and Wolves.'...

"When the Romans invaded Britain, they introduced their religious festivals and customs, and in this way the festival of the Lupercalia was established in these Islands.

"It is because Saint Valentine was martyred on the 14th of February, that his name has ever since been associated with the Spring festival of Lupercalia,

VALENTINE'S DAY

Continued on Page 2

Valentine's Day

Continued from Page 1

which took place on a fixed date, the 15th of February. For, in later years when the early Christian fathers were busy obliterating pagan superstitions and dates by substituting those of the Christian belief, names of many of the martyred Saints were used to replace the old festivals. In this way St. Valentine, having suffered on the eve of Lupercalia, the 14th of February, was now to perpetuate for ever the memory of the festival of the return of Spring when 'a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love' and when the birds begin mating. Centuries later it was usual on St. Valentine's Day for young men to draw by lot the names of young women, a custom that lingered in some of the more remote villages of the British Isles right up to Victorian times....

"The origin of the use of the word 'wolf' in connection with love is lost in obscurity, but it is probable that there is a connection between the Greek word *lykos*, meaning wolf, and the word lechery; also with the verbs *lécher* (Fr.) and *lecken* (Ger.) (Old Teutonic *Likkon*) and licentious....

"Today we refer to one who fancies himself with the ladies as something of a 'wolf,' and when a pretty girl walks down the street, young men give a 'wolf's whistle,' which shows that the spirit of Lupercalia is still with us" (pp. 9, 11-12).

Frances Bernstein, in *Classical Living: Reconnecting with the Rituals of Ancient Rome* (2000), also describes in detail the goat ritual, and mentions how naked men ran about, striking bystanders with thongs of goatskin. She adds, "Women especially would seek to be ritually touched by the skins. The deity who was honored was the god Inuus, or Goer-In, God of Sexual Intercourse" (p. 48).

She further describes these pagan fertility rites: "One such fertility ritual, the Lupercalia, held on February 15, was unusual and dated back to prehistoric times. According to the ritual, which was popular in Rome at the beginning of the common era, young naked men, the Lupercii, would race in circles around the streets of Rome purifying and making women fertile with a ceremonial lashing of goatskin thongs. The recipient would then be made pure of all evil spirits that prevented fertility and consequently receptive to impregnation" (p. 49).

Puritans Ban Valentine's Day

When the Puritans came to power in England under Oliver Cromwell, they abolished the observance of Valentine's Day, along with other days of pagan origins, including Halloween (Staff, p. 19).

"But following the Restoration in 1660, St. Valentine's Day was remembered as ardently as formerly, with all the old customs revived" (p. 20).

The Valentine Itself

"The custom of drawing one's Valentine by lot is an ancient one, and is said to be a survival of one of the rites dating to Roman times, believed to have been part of the ceremony connected with the Lupercalia...." (Staff, p. 18).

What About Cupid?

Another part of St. Valentine's Day is Cupid. The *World Book Encyclopedia* describes him this way: "He is represented as a chubby, naked little boy with golden wings. His face is dimpled and smiling, and he carries a bow and a quiver of arrows" ("Cupid," 1956 ed., vol. 3, p. 1826).

Who is this little guy, really? He is none other than a pagan god! The *World Book* article adds that Cupid, according to Roman mythology, "was the son of the god of war, Mars, and the goddess of love, Venus. A wound from one of his arrows made a person fall in love" (ibid.).

The connection between Cupid and pagan god worship is *easily* seen. Different societies worshiped the same gods by different names. The people of northern Europe celebrated St. Valentine's Day in honor of Cupid but called him Vali.

"St. Valentine's Day is a festival of love that amalgamates the pagan traditions of Rome and northern Europe. It is also dedicated to the Norse deity Vali, the archer god, son of Odin, and to Juno Februa, goddess of love...." (*The Pagan Book of Days* by Nigel Pennick, 1992, p. 42).

Worshipping Pan, Inuus, Cupid

Anyone who observes St. Valentine's Day is unwittingly continuing the observance of a fertility festival that honors the pagan god, Pan; the god of sexual intercourse, Inuus; and the archer god, Cupid.

Does God want his people to observe days dedicated to the worship of false gods, using pagan customs?

He told the ancient Israelites, before they entered Canaan, "take heed to yourself that you are not ensnared to follow them, after they are destroyed from before you, and that you do not inquire after their gods, saying, 'How did these nations serve their gods? I also will do likewise.' You shall not worship the LORD your God in that way: for every abomination to the LORD which He hates they have done to their gods; for they burn even their sons and daughters in the fire to their gods. Whatever I command you, be careful to

observe it; you shall not add to it nor take away from it" (Deut. 12:30-32).

Paul tells New Testament Christians that they should not participate in pagan practices. He states, "And what communion has light with darkness? And what accord has Christ with Belial? Or what part has a believer with an unbeliever? And what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For you are the temple of the living God. As God has said, 'I will dwell in them and walk among them. I will be their God, and they shall be My people.' Therefore 'come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Do not touch what is unclean, and I will receive you'" (2 Cor. 6:14-16).

God does NOT want us observing pagan holidays and customs, *even if* we thought it would *honor Him* or be for the higher purpose of *showing love to our neighbor!*

God does want us to love our neighbor! But remember, this is not the **FIRST** great commandment. Loving our neighbor as ourself is the *second* great commandment. The first is "you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength" (Mark 12:30).

How do we show God love? We do it by obeying Him! "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome" (1 John 5:3).

It is *more important* that we show love to God by *obeying* Him than that we *show love to our neighbor*. If we observe Valentine's Day, we may think we are showing love to our neighbor, but in reality, we are **DISOBEYING** God and **NOT** showing Him the love He deserves. While attempting to observe the second great commandment of loving our neighbor, we are **VIOLATING** the first great commandment to **LOVE GOD!**

The SABBATH SCOOP

228 O'Connell Drive
Cape Girardeau, MO 63701-3332

Editor

Gregory Dullum

Circulation Managers:

Craig Evans • Raleigh Collins

Ed Crook • Gregory Dullum

© Copyright Gregory Dullum 2014

PRINT CIRCULATION: 81 • COST PER ISSUE: FREE
www.thesabbathcoop.org

The Sabbath Scoop is an independent publication. Opinions expressed are those of the editor (based upon more than 48 years attending the Church of God and four years of Ambassador College plus additional personal Bible study), not of any church or organization. Donations to cover costs of paper, toner and postage are gratefully accepted. You may e-mail the editor at: cbjprodept@socket.net. Unless otherwise noted, Bible quotes are from the New King James Version, ©1983, Thomas Nelson Publishers.

JOHN THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

John sees the risen Christ for himself and later receives the holy spirit on the day of Pentecost.

By Gregory Dullum
Part 17

Sunday Evening, Abib 19

Early Sunday evening, Abib 19—only 24 hours after Christ’s resurrection—John and most of the other apostles met together with some others in a private room for dinner and fellowship. As they ate broiled fish and honeycomb, Peter told them he had met the risen Jesus earlier that day (Luke 24:13, 33-34, 42)!

Shortly after sunset, there was a knock at the door. Cleopas and another disciple entered to give them an important message. They had seen the risen Jesus!

They reported that earlier in the afternoon, as they walked from Jerusalem to Emmaus, they had met a Stranger on the road, who turned out to be Jesus!

At first they didn’t recognize Him. They discussed events of the past week. Then the Stranger expounded to them the Scriptures concerning Jesus (from the Old Testament), and their hearts burned within them. When they drew nigh to their village, they invited the Stranger to have dinner and spend the night with them.

“He indicated He would have gone further but we constrained him, saying, ‘Abide with us, for it is toward evening, and the day is far spent.’ And He came in to stay with us,” John heard them say. “He sat at the table with us, took the bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to us. Suddenly our eyes were opened and we knew this Stranger was Jesus! As soon as we recognized Him, He vanished from our sight! So we arose from the table and ran back here to tell you!”

The apostles then told Cleopas and his friend, “The Lord is risen indeed, and has appeared to Simon!” (Luke 24:13-34).

As they were talking, a loud voice was heard, saying, “Peace to you.” Everyone stopped talking and turned toward the familiar voice. Standing among them was *what looked like* the risen Jesus (v. 36)!

These superstitious Jews didn’t immediately think, “This is Jesus risen from the dead!” They believed in GHOSTS and were terrified at the sight! They thought they saw a SPIRIT—either a ghost or a demon, and were scared speechless!

Jesus did NOT appear as some glowing, ethereal spirit. He appeared as SOLID

FLESH AND BONE. He was indeed a spirit being, but He could *manifest Himself* as a physical being that could be touched, and could eat and drink as other human beings. It was as if, once again, “the Word BECAME *flesh* and dwelt among us” (John 1:14), if only for a few moments.

“And He said to them, ‘Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I, Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.’ When He had said this, He showed them his hands and feet” (Luke 24:38-40).

Seeing the wounds in Jesus’ flesh, the disciples recognized Him and were glad to see Him alive (John 20:20). But they *still didn’t believe He had risen from the dead!* They didn’t understand how it was possible. “But while they still did not believe for joy, and marveled, He said to them, ‘Have you any food here?’ ” (Luke 24:41).

There was leftover fish and dessert (honeycomb), which they offered to Jesus. He ate in their presence to calm their nerves and let them know He was human—if only for the moment (vv. 42-43).

“Then Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you.’ And when He had said this, He breathed on them and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained’ ” (John 20:21-23). Jesus did NOT impart the holy spirit *at that time*. This was merely a PROMISE that they would receive the holy spirit *in the future*. They would receive the holy spirit on Pentecost, about seven weeks hence (Luke 24:49, Acts 2:1-4).

Thomas was absent at this appearance of Jesus. He didn’t believe the others when they told him Jesus had appeared to them! “But Thomas, called Didymus, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. The other disciples therefore said to him, ‘We have seen the Lord.’ But he said to them, ‘Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my hand in His side, I will not believe’ ” (John 20:24-25).

Tuesday Evening, Abib 28

“And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus

came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, ‘Peace to you!’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.’

“And Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and My God!’

“And Jesus said to him, ‘Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed’ ” (John 20:26-29).

Many have thought less of this apostle because of his unbelief. The nickname “doubting Thomas” has been used to describe those who have doubts about many different things. However, Thomas was NOT the *only* doubter! NONE of Jesus’ apostles believed in his resurrection *until they saw Him alive!*

And blessed are we, today, who have NEVER seen Jesus raised from the dead—and *yet we believe* because we *trust the testimony* of these WITNESSES!

Back Fishing in Galilee

Alone again, the disciples discussed what to do next. Some recalled Christ’s words at his last Passover: “But after I have been raised, I will go before you to Galilee” (Mat. 26:32). The angel at Christ’s tomb had told the women, “He is going before you to Galilee; there you will see Him” (Mat. 28:7; Mark 16:7). Jesus Himself had told the women, “Go and tell my brethren to go to Galilee, and there they will see Me” (Mat. 28:10).

It became obvious that if they wanted to see Christ again, they needed to go back to Galilee! This trip could have been made as early as Wednesday, Abib 28.

For a time, there was no sign of Jesus. Peter, Andrew, James and John had all been part of a fishing business on the Sea of Galilee before Christ had called them. Peter tired of sitting idly by, waiting for Christ to appear, so he decided to go fishing. He told the others, “I am going fishing” (John 21:2-3).

John, James, Thomas, Nathanael and two other disciples replied, “We are going with you also” (v. 3). They got into a boat and fished all night on the Sea of

JOHN

Continued on Page 4

John

Continued from Page 3

Galilee, catching nothing. This may have happened on Thursday night/Friday morning, Abib 30.

When the morning came, a Stranger on the shore called to them across the water, asking, “Children, have you any food?” They answered, “No.” He said to them, “Cast the net on the right side of the boat and you will find some” (vv. 4-6).

What went through the minds of John and the other apostles on the boat? They had been PROFESSIONAL fishermen! They probably were tired, hungry and frustrated after fishing all night with NO RESULTS. Now some Stranger on the shore tells them to cast the net on the *other side of their boat* and that would make a DIFFERENCE? There must have been some doubt in their minds that this Stranger knew what He was talking about!

And yet, they had NOTHING to lose! They had NOT caught *one fish* ALL NIGHT. So why not toss the net on the other side of the boat—if for no other reason than to prove this Stranger WRONG? So they cast their net on the other side of the boat and caught so many fish that they could not pull the net into the boat (v. 6).

John recognized the MIRACLE that had just happened and said to Peter, “It is the Lord!” Peter cast off his outer garment and plunged into the sea to swim ashore. The others followed in the boat, dragging the net behind them (vv. 7-8).

Breakfast With Christ

When the disciples came to shore, they saw on the beach a campfire of hot coals upon which a few fish were cooking. Also, there was some bread.

“Bring some of the fish which you just caught,” Jesus told them. Peter went to the water’s edge, grabbed the fish net and pulled it and its contents of 153 large fish onto the beach. He cleaned some of the fish and Jesus cooked them with the others over the glowing coals.

When the fish was ready, Jesus said, “Come and eat breakfast.” So they all gathered around Him. John describes this scene with a curious statement: “Yet none of the disciples dared ask Him, ‘Who are You?’—knowing that it was the Lord” (v. 12). In other words, Jesus did not look like He did when He had walked with them as a human. They were not sure who this Stranger was! All the evidence pointed to the fact it had to be Jesus, and yet they were not absolutely sure! They *wanted* to ask Him who He was, *just to be sure*, but they were AFRAID to do so!

When the food was ready, Jesus served

SUN	MON	TUES	WED	THUR	FRI	SAB
Daylight Portion of the Day:			Abib/April: 14/25 Christ Buried	15/26 1st Holy Day	16/27 Spices Bought	17/28 Jesus Rises
After Sunset:		Abib 14 Passover	Abib 15 NTBMO	Abib 16	Abib 17	Abib 18
Jesus w/Mary 18/29 Jesus w/ Two	19/30	Abib/May: 20/1	21/2 7th Day U.B.	22/3	23/4	24/5
Abib 19 Jesus w/Disciples	Abib 20	Abib 21 7th Day U.B.	Abib 22	Abib 23	Abib 24	Abib 25
25/6	26/7	27/8	28/9 <i>To Galilee?</i>	29/10	30/11 <i>Jesus Appears?</i>	Iyar/May: 1/12 <i>500 Worship?</i>
Abib 26	Abib 27	Abib 28 Jesus w/Thomas	Abib 29	Abib 30 <i>Peter Fishing?</i>	Iyar 1	Iyar 2
2/13 <i>To Jerusalem?</i>	3/14	4/15	5/16 <i>Jesus w/James?</i>	6/17	7/18	8/19 <i>Jesus w/Disciples?</i>
Iyar 3	Iyar 4	Iyar 5	Iyar 6	Iyar 7	Iyar 8	Iyar 9
9/20	10/21	11/22	12/23	13/24	14/25	15/26
Iyar 10	Iyar 11	Iyar 12	Iyar 13	Iyar 14 2nd Passover	Iyar 15	Iyar 16
16/27	17/28	18/29	19/30	20/31	Iyar/June: 21/1	22/2
Iyar 17	Iyar 18	Iyar 19	Iyar 20	Iyar 21	Iyar 22	Iyar 23
23/3	24/4	25/5	26/6	27/7 40th Day	28/8	29/9 Jesus Ascends
Iyar 24	Iyar 25	Iyar 26	Iyar 27	Iyar 28	Iyar 29	Sivan 1
Sivan/June: 1/10	2/11	3/12	4/13	5/14	6/15	7/16 <i>Matthias Chosen?</i>
Sivan 2	Sivan 3	Sivan 4	Sivan 5	Sivan 6	Sivan 7	Sivan 8 Pentecost
8/17 Pentecost	Calendar by Greg Dullum					
Sivan 9	Major events from Passover to Pentecost A.D. 31 are indicated on this calendar. Items in italics are in correct chronological order but the exact dates are unknown.					

the fish and bread to the apostles (v. 23).

Jesus Talks with Peter

When they had eaten breakfast, Christ asked Peter, whose WHOLE LIFE before his calling had been fishing, “Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than *these* [fish]?” Simon Peter replied, “Yes, Lord; You know that I love You.” Christ then said to Him, “Feed My lambs” (John 21:15). This question-and-answer session repeated itself twice more with slight variation (vv. 16-17). Then Christ told Peter his life would end with *imprisonment* and a MARTYR’S DEATH, and told him, “Follow Me” (vv. 18-19).

Peter, knowing that Christ loved John more than the other disciples, asked, “But

Lord, what about *this man*?” (vv. 20-21).

Christ said it was *none of his business* what would happen to John. “If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you? Follow me” (v. 22).

A rumor was started that John would not die, but John tried to dispel it. He wrote in his Gospel, “Yet Jesus did not say to him that he would not die, but, ‘If I will that he remain till I come, what is that to you?’ ” (v. 23).

To a Mountain in Galilee

Then the 11 disciples, together with more than 500 followers, went up a mountain in Galilee. Most of this group believed Christ had been raised from the dead but some doubted. Christ appeared to them

and they worshiped Him. Jesus gave them instructions to preach the gospel into all the world (Mat. 28:16-20, Mark 16:15-18, 1 Cor. 15:6).

This may have taken place on the Sabbath of Iyar 1, which could have been the day following the breakfast on the shore.

Return to Jerusalem

The disciples returned to Jerusalem. This could have happened as soon as the next day, Sunday, Iyar 2.

Christ Visits James, the Apostles

Christ appeared to James alone and then to all the disciples gathered in Jerusalem (1 Cor. 15:7).

The visit with James could have occurred during the week of Iyar 2-8, with Jesus' visit with all the disciples coming on the Sabbath of Iyar 8. Although the Bible gives us the order of the events, it doesn't give us exact dates.

During the Iyar 8 visit, John heard Jesus say, "These are the words which I spoke to you while I was still with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms concerning Me" (Luke 22:44).

"Then He opened their understanding, that they might comprehend the Scriptures. Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you: but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with the power from on high' " (Luke 24:45-49).

For 40 days, Jesus had appeared off and on to his disciples (Acts 1:3-5). Jesus' first appearance to Mary had been on Sunday, Abib 18. He had appeared to Peter later that day. Forty days later was Thursday, the 27th day of the second month, Iyar. We have record of several of Jesus' appearances, but there may have been others not recorded in the Bible.

Jesus Ascends to Heaven

Jesus appeared one last time with all the disciples a few days before Pentecost (Acts 1:4).

His final appearance came at a time when they were "assembled together" and made "a Sabbath day's journey" (Acts 1:4, 12). This final meeting probably was on the Sabbath of Iyar 29, eight days before Pentecost (which in A.D. 31 was Sunday, Sivan 8).

Jesus told them, "for John truly bap-

tized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5). The apostles asked Jesus if He was at that time going to overthrow the Roman government and reestablish the Kingdom of Israel.

Christ replied, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:5-8).

"And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven" (Luke 24:50). Jesus disappeared into a cloud (Acts 1:9).

While the John and the disciples stared skyward, two angels stood by and said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven" (Acts 1:10-11). From this statement, John and the others fully expected Christ to come back in their lifetime!

The disciples returned to an upper room in Jerusalem where they were staying. And they all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication (vv. 12-14). This was very likely a Sabbath service.

Choosing Judas' Replacement

The following week, possibly on the Sabbath before Pentecost (Sivan 7), Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, who now numbered about 120, and announced that one should take the place of Judas Iscariot, who had betrayed Christ and later had hanged himself.

Peter set the credentials for Judas' replacement and the disciples proposed two candidates: Joseph called Barsabas and Matthias. They all prayed for God's will to be shown in the decision and they cast lots. The lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the 11 disciples, now called apostles (Acts 1:15-26). This may have occurred late on the Sabbath day.

Pentecost, A.D. 31

At sundown, Pentecost began. During the daylight portion of this important holy day, John and the other disciples gathered together to observe this Feast.

"Now when the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as a rushing mighty

JOHN

Continued on Page 6

Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS
James Madison, at 5 feet, 4 inches, was the shortest president. Abraham Lincoln, at 6 feet, 4 inches was the tallest president.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings.

You, Inc. by Harry and Christine Beckwith, Warner Business Books, 2007, pp. 155-156.

Don't Praise Self

"My accountant told me yesterday that I can retire now; it was such good news.' What she was saying is, 'I've made a lot of money doing this, so listen carefully.'

"Or perhaps she was actually saying, 'I've made a lot of money. Aren't I special?'"

"She wasn't talking about the audience; she was applauding herself...."

"But they didn't want to hear how good she was. They wanted to hear how good they might become by listening to her advice.

"People don't want to hear how good you are. People want to hear how good they can be, and how you can help.

"Get on to common ground, and praise others, not yourself."

Ps. 75:4-5; Prov. 25:6-7, 27, 27:2

Quotable Quotes

"You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you." —**Dale Carnegie**

Memory Scripture

"Be strong and of good courage; do not be afraid, nor be dismayed, for the LORD your God is with you wherever you go." —**Joshua 1:9**

John

Continued from Page 5

wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting” (Acts 2:1-2).

It was about 9 a.m. on a beautiful late spring morning (June 17) and the sky outside sparkled blue. There was not a cloud in the sky. As they were having their holy day service, they noticed a *dis-tant* RUMBLING sound, like thunder, but there were NO clouds, not even in the distance! As the sound grew closer, it became LOUDER, turning into a ROARING noise! The disciples began to wonder if Roman chariots were charging by outside. Then the sound came *through the windows* and FILLED the room with a *deafening* ROAR!

John and the others ducked instinctively as the roar passed over their heads. They may have closed their eyes and held their hands over their ears.

When John opened his eyes and looked about the room, he couldn't see the source of the noise. But he was surprised to see something that looked like flames of fire burning atop the heads of each one there! He put his hand to his hair to feel if his own hair were on fire. He felt nothing out of the ordinary. There was no fire, no heat, and no smoke. It was just an APPEARANCE of *something like fire*.

“And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance” (v. 4).

Various ones began to speak in *other* LANGUAGES. They were NOT uttering *gibberish* and *nonsense*. They made *perfect sense* to *foreigners* who spoke that particular language (vv. 4-11).

Jews from all over the known world had gathered in Jerusalem for Pentecost. When they heard the roaring noise, they went to investigate and came to the house where Jesus' followers were! As they wondered about the noise, they began to hear people speaking in their own language! They couldn't understand how these Galileans could be speaking their language (v. 12). Some laughed and mocked them, saying, “They are full of new wine” (v. 13).

The apostle Peter gave his first sermon. He said these people were not drunk—it was only 9 a.m.! This was a fulfillment of the prophecy in Joel that God's Spirit would be poured out on all flesh.

Peter preached a convicting sermon that led about 3,000 people to repent and be baptized in one day (vv. 14-41). After being baptized and having hands laid on them, the followers of Christ were given God's holy spirit. John witnessed the very beginning of the Church of God!

(To be continued!)



Kerry Seeks to Weaken U.S. with Climate Change Pact

“...But while the public's attention has been on his diplomacy in the Middle East, behind the scenes at the State Department, Mr. [John] Kerry has initiated a systematic, top-down push to create an agency wide focus on global warming.

“His goal is to become the lead broker of a global climate treaty in 2015 that will commit the United States and other nations to historic reductions in fossil fuels pollution....

“Shortly after Mr. Kerry was sworn in last February, he issued a directive that all meetings between senior American diplomats and top foreign officials include a discussion of climate change. He put top climate policy specialists on his State Department personal staff. And he is pursuing smaller climate deals in forums like the Group of 20, the countries that make up the world's largest economies....

“‘It has not gone unnoticed that this administration is now much more engaged on climate change,’ said Jake Schmidt, the international climate policy director for the Natural Resources Defense Council. ‘Every international negotiator understands it.’ When Kerry took office, Mr. Schmidt said, ‘the dynamic changed quite a bit’ ” (“Kerry Quietly Makes Priority of Climate Pact” by Coral Davenport, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, Jan. 2, 2014, pp. 1-2).

Man-made global warming is a hoax used by the political left to weaken America. Policies to prevent an *imaginary* global warming are HARMFUL to the U.S. economy and make us more energy-dependent upon unstable foreign powers. This is a sign of a *weakening* America as we draw closer to the end of this world and to the return of Jesus Christ.

Muslim Brotherhood Fights to Survive

“The leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, now outlawed, have adjusted to life underground, even while hundreds of their fellow members have been arrested in this city [Fayoum, Egypt] since the military deposed President Mohammed

Morsi, a Brotherhood leader, and the Egyptian government branded the group a terrorist movement.

“Yet, rather than crack and disintegrate under the pressure, members say, the group has fallen back on the organizational structure that sustained it for decades as a banned and secretive movement. It is becoming more decentralized, but also more cohesive and rigid, as its members abandon activities like preaching and social work and shift their attention to a virtually singular goal: resistance to the military-backed government.

“Their focus, many Brotherhood members say, is a protracted, grinding struggle” (“The Muslim Brotherhood, Back in a Fight to Survive” by Kareem Fahim, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, Jan. 5, 2014, p. 1).

Meanwhile, U.S. Pres. Barack Obama is trying to prevent Senate Democrats from supporting strict new sanctions on Iran. Obama apparently wants Iran to acquire nuclear weapons (“Obama Fights a Push to Add Iran Sanctions” by Mark Landler and Jonathan Weisman, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, Jan. 14, 2014, p. 1).

The terrorist group called the Muslim Brotherhood may be an impetus in forming a Muslim union of nations including a nuclear-armed Iran to appear at the end time called the “king of the South” (Dan. 11:40).

Pope Reshapes Vatican

“Less than a year into his papacy, Pope Francis has raised expectations among the world's one billion Roman Catholics that change is coming. He has already changed the tone of the papacy, confessing himself a sinner, declaring ‘Who am I to judge?’ when asked about gays, and kneeling to wash the feet of inmates, including Muslims” (“Pope With the Humble Touch Is Firm in Reshaping the Vatican” by Jason Horowitz and Jim Yardley, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, Jan. 13, 2014, p. 1).

Bible prophecy says at the end time there will be a revived *Holy Roman Empire* called the “king of the North” united with a religious system, which *could be* a *transformed* Roman Catholic Church (Dan. 11:40, 2:40-44, Revelation 13).