

Living to Win

August 15, 2012
Volume 17, Number 8
Christian Educational Ministries

The Burden of Babylon

From Ronald L. Dart's *Born to Win* Broadcast

The Bible says that God doesn't change. "I the Lord do not change" (Malachi 3:6). Then we have this jarring assessment of what man is like: "The heart [of man] is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?" (Jeremiah 17:9). Human nature doesn't change, either. God can give you his Spirit which can convert the soul and change a person. But since God doesn't change, wouldn't you expect God to respond to the sins of human nature today in a very similar way that he did in the past—especially when time and circumstances are the same?

If God previously came down on a people for doing things a certain way, and later, I do the same thing, doesn't Malachi 3:6 indicate that I can count on God to respond to my sins in a very similar way to which he did previously? As Ron studies the prophets, he looks for what is the meaning for him—the message he is to glean from it—the changes he should make in his life. Since it pays to listen very carefully to God, shouldn't all of us look at messages from God to learn what's in it for us—personally? Yes, it's time we woke up to the facts! It's time we know what prophecy reveals. It's

time we know the background—the vital factors.

We've all heard that history repeats itself. We're exhorted to look at the past so we will know the future. "'Present your case,' says the LORD. 'Set forth your arguments,' says Jacob's King. 'Bring in your idols, to tell us what is going to happen. Tell us what the former things were, so that we may consider them and know their final outcome. Or declare to us the things to come, tell us what the future holds, so we may know that you are gods'" (Isaiah 41:21-23). God calls the past to account. Wouldn't that be consistent with God not changing?

The safest approach when reading the Bible and listening to the *Born to Win* broadcasts is to understand why God did what he

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

The Burden of Babylon

from Ronald L. Dart's notes 1

We Want Your Heart 1

The Christian's Legacy

By Hugh Buchanan 2

Short Takes..... 3

Calendar of Events 4

did. And why God had it written down. Doubtless, he had it written down for us to learn from it and to change our ways so we wouldn't have to experience the punishment others have before us.

A most intriguing thing is going on in Iraq. Most are missing the significance of it. Saddam Hussein thought of himself as a new King of Babylon. He actually named his military divisions after old Babylonian names. Saddam had in mind

continued on page 3. . .

We Want Your Heart. . .

The Bible says that where your treasure is there will your heart be also. CEM needs people with a heart to serve God and to get the Gospel out as effectively as possible. Time is short. Things pointing to the end-times are speeding up. CEM needs to warn people and be the support group they need so desperately. Time could come when we can't speak the truth so freely. We must act now! For your convenience, you can go to your bank and set up an automatic withdrawal every payday from your bank.

The Christian's Legacy

by Hugh Buchanan

I drive on a portion of the United States' interstate highway system at least six days of the average week. Monday through Friday, I depend on the interstate highways to go to work. On the Sabbath, I travel for about 50 miles on Interstate 70 to attend worship service. Millions of Americans rely on our marvelous system of interstate highways as they travel to work, conduct personal business, and for fun and recreational purposes. The system of roads we're discussing is actually called the "Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of Interstate and Defense Highways." Dwight Eisenhower, when he was President of the United States, launched the project to build this great transportation network, the largest public works project in history.

During World War II, General Dwight D. Eisenhower was able to study Germany's efficient superhighway system. The autobahn had allowed the Nazis to move troops and equipment so efficiently that Eisenhower estimated it had enabled Germany to resist the Allies for two additional years. In 1956, President Eisenhower, inspired by the German autobahn, proposed that an interstate highway system linking the lower 48 states be built. His plan was implemented, and today, the country benefits from the 43,000 miles of superior highway President Eisenhower built. This impressive achievement is a part of the legacy this man left to his nation.

Wouldn't it be satisfying to have a legacy such as the one created by

former President Eisenhower? To have contributed in such a great way to the quality of life in the United States? To have done something that benefits hundreds of millions of people? I would like to show you that every Christian can have a legacy. The comparison between the Christian's legacy and that of Eisenhower may surprise you, because the Bible shows us that ordinary Christians can make enormous contributions which will endure forever.

One such Christian was Cornelius, a Gentile whom God used to reveal an important truth (Acts 10). Cornelius was an ordinary man, a centurion, in charge of 80 soldiers. He had earned a good reputation. He feared God, he gave generously to those in need, and he is described as devout. The fantastic thing about this man is that God not only took notice of his good deeds and prayers, but they were a memorial of the man, a record to be kept perpetually in God's archives. That is impressive! This is a part of Cornelius' enduring legacy, recorded in heaven. We should all aspire to follow Cornelius' example in this regard. We should desire to be in God's mind continually, as a memorial, for the good works we have done. The acceptance of Gentiles into the Church is another important aspect of Cornelius' legacy, as he was used by God to bring about this change in understanding.

How about Christian women? Can they also contribute and leave behind something enduring and valuable? The story of a Christian

woman living in Joppa, related in the Book of Acts, chapter nine, shows that they can. Tabitha earned a reputation for giving, service, and generosity. Her giving is eternally documented in the pages of the Bible. That is an incredible legacy. She will always be known for her works. Tabitha used her skills and talents to serve the congregation. Apparently, she focused on filling the needs of the widows. When she died, she was sorely missed. The people whom she had served were grieving for her when Peter arrived.

Cornelius and Tabitha used their resources and their gifts to add value to the church and the community. They shared their resources, their time, their money, and they were remembered for their contributions. We must ask ourselves whether we will be missed for the services we have given when we are gone. Will we leave anything of value behind or will we vanish without a trace?

Today's Christians do indeed have opportunities to create lasting value for God and his Kingdom, the Church and the community. How can today's Christian leave behind something of lasting value? There are many ways.

First, Christian parents have a valuable opportunity to leave behind them children who are educated in God's way of life and trained to follow it. Proverbs tell us that our children and our grandchildren are a legacy that we will leave to the world (Proverbs 17:6). If you are a parent, instill in your children golden character. Take the time to

continued on page 4. . .

The Burden of Babylon
continued from page 1 . . .

rebuilding the old city of Babylon, to make it a tourist attraction. But Saddam Hussein didn't understand the prophecy in Isaiah 13:19-20. "Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there, no shepherd will rest his flocks there." All that Isaiah said has come to pass. Babylon has not been rebuilt to this day.

God put Israel under Babylon and told them to settle down, build homes, and have families. This section of the Bible has overtones for the Last Days. When you understand that Iraq is the old Babylon, then you will hear echoes in this prophecy. It's important to know the history of Babylon, that God gave Israel a vision of what seems to be for the End Times.

So what is *The Burden of Babylon*? It is recommended that you read about it in the 13th chapter of Isaiah. "See, the day of the LORD is coming—a cruel day, with wrath and fierce anger—to make the land desolate and destroy the sinners within it. The stars of heaven and their constellations will not show their light. The rising sun will be darkened and the moon will not give its light. I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins. I will put an end to the arrogance of the haughty and will humble the pride of the ruthless. I will make man scarcer than pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophri. Therefore I will make the heavens tremble; and the earth will shake from its place at the wrath

of the LORD Almighty, in the day of his burning anger. . . . Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, the glory of the Babylonians' pride, will be overthrown by God like Sodom and Gomorrah. She will never be inhabited or lived in through all generations; no Arab will pitch his tent there, no shepherd will rest his flocks there" (Isaiah 13:9-20 NIV).

The Day of the Lord appears 25 times in the Bible as a benchmark. "The day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. But ye, brethren, are not in darkness, that that day should overtake you as a thief. Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day: we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thessalonians 5:2-6).

But why does the Lord have to come back? The world is about to destroy itself and Jesus Christ will return on a rescue mission to save us. "I will punish the world for its evil, the wicked for their sins" (Isaiah 13:11 NIV). Yes, God is a loving God, but his patience can grow weary with our sins and he can become furious.

You will learn in this *Born to Win* program, *The Burden of Babylon*, how this connects to Israel and that more than one return to Israel was prophesied. The Philistines are the Palestinians. Keep this in mind as you listen and learn about *The Burden of Babylon*, because God always keeps Jerusalem in his mind.

This is a most relevant and

fascinating subject you'll want to learn more about. Just check the enclosed card and return it for your *FREE* CD to listen to time and again. Then you can pass it on to others so they can share in this sobering knowledge.

Short Takes

Uppermost in the minds of our readers and listeners is the question of how Ron Dart is doing—how is he progressing in his recovery. All of us look forward eagerly to the time when he can once again teach and preach with the depth and insight that we all enjoy so much. There is much that Ron can communicate right now, if we but take the time to listen. More and more, as he listens to his own broadcasts, watches the news, or attends a church service, he'll make a comment. We've decided to collect a few of his comments to share with you each month in this column.

"I basically feel that what needs to be said to our people is more important by far than what we have said up to today."



"People are loaded with things to say, but don't seem to have what it takes to say the things that need to be said. People seem to be hung up and don't know what to do. They are sheep without a shepherd" (Ronald L. Dart).

*The Christian's Legacy
continued from page 2. . .*

teach them the principles of godly living, of giving, and of the value of service. The character you build in your children will be your crown. Tell them not to let the legacy of character die with them. They must pass it on to their children's children. Your children's inheritance has a physical and a spiritual component that will endure long after the physical wealth is consumed. Bringing up children in the faith of God is a legacy which should endure for generations and be self-perpetuating. This is an inheritance far greater than silver and gold.

Cornelius and Tabitha were sterling examples of Christian service and giving. When we use our talents, time, and resources for the benefit of others, we are generating value for God as a financial manager does for his client. This principle is made clear in the parable of the pounds in a private lesson Jesus gave to his disciples, recorded in Matthew 25:14. Christ represents himself in this parable as a wealthy investor who allows others to speculate with his resources. In the parable, all who step out in an attempt to generate profit for their client are successful. They generate wealth and profit for him. Those who don't try to gain an increase are no longer allowed to trade.

All of us are given the opportunity to build wealth for the Lord. He endows each of us with resources that can and must be used for the benefit of God and the Church (1 Corinthians 12:7). Each member of the church, being an organ of Christ's body, has something to contribute, some value

to add to the health and well-being of the body. When we use the resources God gives us, we are adding lasting value to the church, building an inheritance and a legacy.

It might seem that the modest works of a Christian cannot be compared with those of a man who helped save the free world from tyranny and built an impressive transportation system in the United States. But consider this: The works and the accomplishments of Eisenhower are physical, temporary, and transitory. Everything that we can see is going to have an end someday (2 Corinthians 4:18; 2 Peter 3:10). The interstate highway system, and the earth that supports it, are temporary structures. The entire universe and the structure of matter itself will be dissolved one day, the Day of the Lord.

However, the Christian's legacy will endure in the character and teaching we have instilled in our children. When they inherit eternal life, that legacy will become eternal. It will endure in the record of good works and service we have contributed. These records will not be burned up with the earth, they will survive in God's archive. They will come up before him continually as a memorial, just as did those of Cornelius. "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labor of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have served the saints, and do serve" (Hebrews 6:10). Christians have the power to make a contribution which will outlast history. God will never forget our contribution, our good works, the value we have added to his family, his Kingdom. This is our enduring legacy.

Calendar of Events

Feast of Tabernacles 2012 — September 30 to October 8, 2012.

Emerald Coast Conference Center, Ft. Walton Beach, Florida. All stops are being pulled to add spiritual depth, excitement, and fun with the theme, *Keep the Feast in Old Time Jerusalem*. We'll set the stage with visuals, costumes, a market, and learning center to help young and old alike to grasp what it was like when Jesus walked the streets of Jerusalem during the Feast. You'll still find all your favorite things CEM does so well—great sermons, YEA classes and seminars, adult seminars, and fun activities: Family Picnic, Pie and Ice Cream Social, Dances, Fun Show, Beach Party, and more. Many volunteers are needed to help with these activities and events. Gain the rewards of helping. Call Paula Hughes toll free at 1-888-BIBLE-44 to contribute your time and talents, both before the Feast and during. Join the CEM Feast of Tabernacles Facebook group to keep up with the latest, and exchange ideas and information about the Feast. Visit www.borntowin.net to see updates to everything that's planned.

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*That the man of God may be proficient
and equipped for every good work.*