

AMERICA'S Hope

MONTHLY

MARCH, 1989

"THE GREAT ISSUE"

C.O. STADSKLEV

"And the seventh angel sounded: and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever." (Revelation 11:15) Throughout the ages the great issue between Christ and Satan has been who shall gain control and rule over the kingdoms of this world.

When Christ came to earth, in the form of a babe, Satan had practically all the kingdoms of this world under his control. Even God's kingdom people had been brought under the control of heathen people due to the sin, the wickedness and the apostasy of ten tribed Israel. And God, as a righteous God, had to place them in the Assyrian captivity. Later, because of the sin, the wickedness and the apostasy of Judah, God had to place the Judah nation in the Babylonian captivity. Christ called Satan the prince of this world. I John 5:19 states: "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness."

In Matthew 4:1 we read: "Then was Jesus led up of the spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil (or Satan)." Satan apparently waited forty days until Christ's physical strength was exhausted by fasting. Verses 5 through 7 state: "Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, if thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."

It is interesting to note what the devil said because a part of what he said was certainly true, but the other part was plainly a lie. It was true that the kingdoms of the earth at that time were under his control but it was not in his power to give it to whomsoever he would. This has been Satan's method throughout history, to mix a little truth in with his lie.

In Daniel 4 it states several times it is our sovereign God who has the final say as to who is to have authority over nations, and at times God

sets over a people the basest of men to punish them. In Daniel 10 we also learn Satan has powerful, evil spirits he appoints over various nations to influence and especially to lead the whole nation into corruption and deception. It seems the prince of Persia is still active for Persia is Iran today.

At the time Christ came to earth in the form of a babe, how did the cruel and wicked Herod the Edomite become king ruling over both the true Judahites and those who said they were Judah and were not? Why did an angel appear to Joseph and tell him to take Mary and Jesus the babe and flee to Egypt?

When Christ returned to Egypt to begin His public ministry, why did the Herodians, scribes and Pharisees plot and plan together to have Christ killed? Why did Satan inspire the Herodians, who were from Esau "who was red all over as with a red garment" when he was born, and the scribes and the Pharisees who demanded and accomplished the crucifixion of the Christ? Was it by the descendants of Esau (the Reds), the scribes and the Pharisees from Babylon that Satan planned and purposed his rule over all nations? A much more serious question is, did Jesus prophesy correctly in regard to His crucifixion? And did the writers in the New Scripture relate the truth concerning the crucifixion of the Christ?

The apostle John devoted two whole chapters, 18 and 19, in his report on the trial of Christ before Pilate, showing that Pilate did everything in his power to deliver Jesus from the hands of those who were demanding His crucifixion. Twice John stated that Pilate said, "I find no fault in him."

In Matthew 27, verse 24, it states: "When Pilate saw that he could prevail nothing, but that rather a tumult was made, he took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person: see ye to it." The question is much more serious than who demanded the crucifixion of the Christ. Christ offered Himself for sacrifice for the sins of the world. And the crucifixion was in the predetermined council of God. The serious question is, are we to believe what the New Scriptures relate concerning