



# Bible Student's Notebook™

## The Herald of His Grace

Presenting *every man* perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

Volume XV  
Issue 367

# Preparing Us for the Evil of the Heavens

by — Clyde L. Pilkington, Jr.

*Competent for a part of the allotment of the saints* (Colossians 1:12).

When God gave Israel their *promised land*, it was already occupied. It was filled with enemy nations. They had to battle these adversaries and drive them out – *taking* their place of dominion from them. This is an earthly shadow of what we will be doing in the heavens.



pointment of administrative personnel in the “ages to come” (Ephesians 2:7). Never could He place untried, untrained, spiritual children in the seats of high authority alongside His Son, even as His Own Word declares,

*Woe to thee, O land, when your king is a child* (Ecclesiastes 10:16).

God is now preparing us for His celestial service. We do not qualify in ourselves for such a high calling, but He is now in the process of qualifying us through suffering. He is currently making us “*competent for a part of the allotment of the saints*” (Colossians 1:12).

The celestials will be filled with evil when we arrive at our post (Ephesians 6:12).<sup>1</sup> We must be divinely qualified to handle such evil. We are thus being made competent now through our experiences with evil.

God will not spare us such evil experiences, because He has destined us for the celestial thrones. The exalted One is now “leading” us through suffering into glory. He Who was immersed into suffering takes us by the hand in our own suffering, having joined us in them, and now is “*leading many sons to glory*” (Hebrews 2:10).

Let it be clearly understood that only mature, perfected, full-grown sons can ever fulfill God’s ap-

To acquire such full-grown sons – who are experienced, seasoned, trained, fully equipped and highly qualified for their transcendent station – God cannot afford to spare us our immersion into evil. As with His dealings with our Lord, for His sake and ours, He must be the God Who spares not His Own sons. Yet this suffering, for which He spares us not, is quite a high honor and privilege to bear. It is His loving gift to the sonship – with immeasurable compensated glory.

In our heavenly post, we’ll be gaining the righteous control of the celestials, just as Israel will gain the righteous rule of the earth. The heavens – as well as the earth – currently are in creation-rebellion. This is why they are in need of rulership.

(see *PREPARING*, page 3299)

1. *sovereignties, authorities, world-mights of this darkness, spiritual forces of wickedness among the celestials* (CV).

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## **Bible Student's Notebook™**

*Paul Our Guide – Christ Our Goal*

ISSN: 1936-9360

Volume XV, No. 367 – October 23, 2012

This free weekly electronic publication (52 times a year) is dedicated to:

- the proclamation of the riches of God's abundant, exceeding grace (Romans 5:20; 11:6; Ephesians 1:7);
- the affirmation of God's purpose to save all mankind through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ (I Timothy 2:3, 4; 4:10; Titus 2:11);
- the "preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans 16:25);
- true freedom and liberty apart from law (Galatians 5:1);
- the organic nature of the church, the Body of Christ (I Corinthians 12);
- the distinct message and ministry of Paul, the apostle to the nations (Romans 11:13);
- the importance of receiving all whom Christ has received (Romans 14-15);
- the recovery of rich Biblical truth that has too long remained hidden under the veils of traditionalism, prejudice, misunderstanding, and fear (Mark 7:7, 13);
- the completeness of the believer in Christ (Colossians 2:10), with:
  - total freedom from sins (Colossians 1:14);
  - identity in His death, burial, and resurrection (Romans 6);
  - adult sonship position (Galatians 4).

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**PREPARING** (continued from front page)

Earthly evil will be “restrained” by a *rod of iron* with much resistance and rebellion. This uprising will climax at the end of the millennial reign of Christ with Satan being loosed to instigate mass rebellion once again.

During Christ’s 1000 year reign evil will be present, but *dominated* by the *dominion* of Christ’s iron club – under the authority of the Twelve, and the Nation of Israel.

We will mirror this in the *dominion* in the heavens. This is why we *rule* with Him. Dominion and rule necessitates resistance. The heavens are far more evil than the earth. In fact, the worst evils on earth are activated from the heavens.

Our biggest battles are yet ahead. We are in training now to experience and combat evil with good. Of course, we’ll have one *huge* advantage then – we’ll be immortal! We will have the added *vitality of life* to assist in ruling the celestials.

However, immortality can’t supply experience. Our experiences with evil in this life are preparing us for the next. This is why, even now,

*We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in heavenly places* (Ephesians 6:12).

The current celestial authorities know about our election to unseat them. We are currently learning to trust Father in our battle with them. One day Father will add immortality to our experience.

There are many millennia of evil uprising that the earth and celestials will endure. We will be managing it in the celestials, as Israel will on the earth. Obviously, Father is the only source of victory in overcoming evil. Our evil experiences here – trusting Him in the face of evil – will give us the confidence, strength and experience to face even *greater* and more *direct* evil there.

We learn from the Book of Daniel that earthly events

mirror heavenly ones. Earthly territories and rulers mirror corresponding heavenly ones. When political/governmental events happen on earth, it is because they are happening to their greater counterparts in heaven.

Israel will be handling the lower enemies on earth, we will be handling the higher enemies in the heavens – the ones causing the reflectionary activity on earth.

### **SOME PRACTICAL EXAMPLES OF OUR TRAINING IN EVERYDAY LIFE**

Examples of our preparation can be found in everything evil that we face: minor, moderate and major ones. “Evil” is just that which is NOT “good.” Father is teaching us in the evil experience to trust Him. Remember that it is God Who actually initiates *all* of the evil in our lives. We learn this from the account of Job. It was God Who said to the Adversary, “*Have you considered My servant Job*” (Job 1:8).

#### **Minor Evil**

A lost screw while working on a project is an example of a minor evil. So is a busted garbage bag resulting in nastiness all over the kitchen floor.

What is our response to these? The natural response is *frustration*. As God teaches us more about Himself and His ways, and this frustration rises in our being, Father works in us to meet it with contentment in a spirit of heartfelt worship before Him.

#### **Moderate Evil**

An example of a moderate evil is the car breakdown on the side of the road, or a tree lying on the roof after a storm.

In frustration we could fume, curse and complain. Our immediate thought may be, “Oh, no, I don’t want this to be happening! Why did this have to happen? Couldn’t I have been spared this experience?” Father, in the meantime, is building in us the faith-rest realization that He has written our days before we were born.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>. *My days, all of them were written in Your book; the days, they*

## Major Evil

Examples of major evils are serious sicknesses, separation and divorce, devastating financial loss, and death.

These are gut-wrenching evils. These are places we don't want Father to take us. These are evils that we dare not even imagine, as they are crushing beyond our ability even to think about them. There are evils that would make us want to die – to despair even of life.

Of course, there is *nothing* wrong with not wanting these, or any type of evil in our lives. Christ did not want Gethsemane. Paul didn't want his severe trials of evil, but he learned to glory in them.

There's a *big* difference in *wanting* something and *glorifying* in it. Make no mistake about it: Paul didn't *want* evil. In fact, he repeatedly prayed for its removal! However, he learned to trust Father in evil, and in understanding its grand purpose he also learned to *glory* in it.

After passionately recoiling from the evil in the deepest place of our beings; after the initial thoughts of, "For real? This is really happening to me?" Father reminds us of what He has taught us before, that *all*

*were formed when there was not one of them* (Psalm 139:16).

is of Him,<sup>3</sup> that He is in complete control, that He is working all for our good.

Now *this is the place where real worship takes place*. Worshipping God in the face of evil! Worshipping the Loving Father Who brought the evil into our life for grander purposes than we can now see. Bringing thanksgiving to our heart – "*for all things.*"<sup>4</sup> This is faith! This is faith's rest! This is faith's worship!

In Father's teaching us to trust Him in minor evils, He prepares us to trust Him in moderate ones. In Father's teaching us to trust Him in moderate evils, He prepares us to trust Him in major evils.

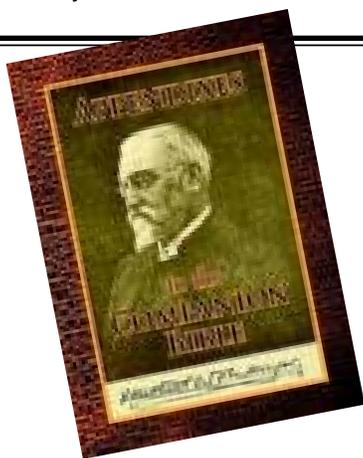
### THREE LEVELS OF UNDERSTATING

Level One: The realization that the *true source* of evil irritation is not you, or those around you, or your circumstances.

Level Two: The realization that you are *more relatively* being irritated by celestial powers. The comprehension of your battle with them is to get you past

(see **PREPARING**, last page)

3. *O, the depth of the riches and of the wisdom, and of the knowledge of God! How inscrutable are His judgments, and untraceable His ways ... seeing that all is out of Him, and through Him, and for Him: to Him be glory for the eons! Amen!* (Romans 11:33, 36).
4. *Giving thanks always for all things to God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ* (Ephesians 5:20).



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# The First Resurrection

by — André Piet  
The Netherlands

The Bible distinguishes between two kinds of resurrections:

1. "the resurrection FROM AMONG the dead,"<sup>1</sup> and
2. "the resurrection OF THE dead."<sup>2</sup>



There is no chapter in the Bible where such a fundamental explanation is given about the meaning of Christ's resurrection as I Corinthians 15:22.

*For even as, in Adam, all are dying, thus also, in Christ, shall all be vivified.*

The "resurrection FROM AMONG the dead" is a resurrection of a select group in which "the rest of the dead" remain behind, in their graves (Revelation 20:5). Elsewhere this is called "the resurrection of the just" (Luke 14:14) and "the resurrection of life" (John 5:29). Compare this with the resurrection of Lazarus. Jesus shouted, "Lazarus, come out!" (John 11:43). He was mentioned by name so that others, who were buried in the same area, would remain in their grave.

"The resurrection OF THE dead" will take place when all of the (remaining) dead arise. This resurrection will be "after the thousand years" (Revelation 20:5), at the Great White Throne (Revelation 20:12). This is "the resurrection of judging" (John 5:29).

"The first resurrection" is not so much a moment, but a kind of resurrection: others, who are dead, remain in their grave. It is a resurrection which takes place in a series of moments.<sup>3</sup>

## SUMMARIZED

"The first resurrection" is the resurrection "FROM AMONG the dead," which takes place at a number of times,<sup>4</sup> but all of them before the beginning of the thousand years (Revelation 20:5).

1. e.g. Luke 20:35.
2. e.g. Hebrews 6:2.
3. (1a) The Firstfruit, Christ, already about two thousand years ago.  
(1b) The "snatching away" in I Thessalonians 4 is the next in the series. After that,  
(1c) will be the resurrection of the righteous, 75 days after the great tribulation (the 1335 days in Daniel 12). And then, there will be,  
(1d) the final resurrection of martyrs, right before the thousand years, referred to in Revelation 20. In fact, this resurrection is the last one within the category of "the first resurrection."
4. 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d.

## EACH IN HIS OWN CLASS

As universal as is the truth that in Adam all men are mortal, so universal is the truth that in Christ all of humanity will be made alive, beyond the reach of death. Paul continues in :23 with,

*Yet each in his own class: the Firstfruit, Christ ...*

The vivification of all people occurs in phases.

### The Firstfruit

The Firstfruit in the vivification is Christ. In this statement, Paul clarifies a very important detail on what he understands by vivification. Was Christ the first to rise from the dead? No, there are many people to whom this happened before it happened to Him. Consider, for example, the young man of Nain, and Lazarus; but those who earlier than He rose from the dead, would die again. Their resurrection was a return to the old, transitory life; completely different than what took place in the garden of Arimathea,

*Because we know that Christ, being raised from the dead, dies no more: death, no more has dominion over Him (Romans 6:9).*

In His resurrection, Christ Jesus,

*Indeed, abolishes death, yet illuminates life and incorruption (II Timothy 1:10).*

The vivification which Paul writes about is more than a resurrection. With vivification, Paul refers to life that lies beyond the reach of death.



## Christ’s in His Presence

In I Corinthians 15:23, Paul continues to write:

*Thereupon those who are Christ’s in His presence;*

After the resurrection of the Firstfruit, Christ in the past, the next phase of the vivification will take place during Christ’s future *parousia*. This is usually translated as coming, but literally, *parousia* means *presence*. Different from what the word “coming” suggests, the word *parousia* (presence) does not merely denote a moment of arriving, but also of staying thereafter.

This *parousia* begins at the snatching away (I Thesalonians 4:15-17), and will have a continuation in His appearing to Israel and the nations of the world. The sequence of events, at those occasions, is not now the subject. It is enough to note that during the period of the *parousia*, at different times, they “*who are Christ’s*” will experience “*the first resurrection*.”

## The Consummation

After the mentioning of the vivification of those “*who are Christ’s*,” there is awaiting one more category: namely, the rest of humanity to be vivified. After all, the starting point was that all who are dying in Adam, in Christ will be vivified (15:22).

*Thereafter the consummation* (15:24).

Since the subject is the order or classification of the vivification, Paul’s mentioning of “*the end*” (“*the consummation*”) refers here to the final vivification. When that will occur, he now explains in :24-26.

*Whenever He may be giving up the kingdom to His God and Father, whenever He should be nullifying all sovereignty and all authority and power. For He must be reigning until He should be placing all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy is being abolished: death.*

The usual explanation is that Paul, in these verses, was referring to the resurrection of judgment, at the Great White Throne, after the thousand years (Revelation 20), but that is impossible for two reasons:

1. At the Great White Throne, there will not be a vivification, as Paul describes in I Corinthians 15. There will, indeed, be a resurrection “*of the rest of the dead*”

(Revelation 20:5), but all of those whose names are not written in the book of life will end up in the lake of fire, the “*second death*” (Revelation 20:14). They will have risen again to die, certainly not to a life that is beyond the reach of death.

2. At the Great White Throne, Christ’s reign will not, as yet, have come to an end. Christ will reign “*for the eons of the eons*” (Revelation 11:15). He will reign not only during, but also after the thousand years, as is revealed in Revelation 22:5. When a new heaven and a new earth will come, Christ will continue to reign. The reason is simple: *Christ must reign until death, as the last enemy, will be nullified*. Since, at the start of the new heaven and the new earth, many will still be in “*the second death*” (Revelation 21:8), Christ’s reign will continue. Death there is, indeed, under control (because nobody will die anymore), but it will not, as yet, have been destroyed. Despite the excellent glory of this “*eon of the eons*,” people will still need healing (Revelation 22:2).

This confirms that Paul, writing of “*the consummation*,” is not referring to “*the resurrection of judgment*” at the Great White Throne. This event plays no role in Paul’s explanation in I Corinthians 15, because no vivification such as Christ the Firstfruit encountered will be involved. With “*the consummation*,” Paul is referring, unmistakably, to a *much* later occasion. That will be when Christ’s reign will be completed by the abolishing of death, *i.e.*, by permanently making alive all of those who still will be dead!

Then, and not before this, will Christ’s mission be fully accomplished. Elsewhere, Paul wrote that,

*As it was through one offense for all mankind for condemnation, thus also it is through One just award for all mankind for life’s justifying* (Romans 5:18).

A perfected Kingdom, where every creature will be subject, where there will be no more death, and (therefore) all will be vivified, will Christ be delivering up to His God and Father. Then,

*Whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be All in all* (I Corinthians 15:28).



Thanks for the teaching over the years from a pure heart (II Timothy 2:22). – *IN*

You are God's man who is being used mightily to encourage and bring hope to many! – *AZ*

[Bible Students Radio](#) is such a wonderful blessing. – *OH*

Thank you for providing the [Bible Student's Notebook](#). It is greatly appreciated. – *NV*

I have been reading [God's Holy Nation](#); I am really appreciating this work. All of your books are very good and speak truth to me but I wanted to tell you that I so appreciate being able to study with this book, it has allowed me to see a little more clearly as I study what you have written, of course it is helping so much that you provided all the Scriptures in the book for us to search and see. This is such a blessing to be able to see these wonderful truths in God's Word and gain some satisfaction in learning more as I have such a passion for the truth! – *WA*

What a wonderful blessing you are brother. Our Father never ceases to bless me! Your book, [Due Benevolence: A Study of Biblical Sexuality](#), such a sensitive subject! The Lord had opened up this truth many years back when I was going through the deepest darkest hours of my life. When Father opened up the truth concerning sex was so incredible; but because I thought I was alone with what I was seeing, I kept it to myself!

Father has been showing me so much that all I am able to do is absolutely nothing but thank Him! I know we are all His marvelous work! IT IS GLORIOUS! I thank our Father for your gifts, but I thank Him for YOU! – *ME*

I have just finished [What Is Truth?: Absolute and Relative](#) by Don Bast, and I have found it wonderful and helping to deepen my understanding of Father and His Son.

As I read the books you recommend my understanding is deepening and I am just filled with wonder and gratitude and His love. How free we are now (not speaking of my husband in this because he is not a believer, however it does have a profound effect on him, as I grow more and more peaceful and loving). The freedom Father has given is so beautiful and amazing and I am grateful to Him for my painful, blind walk of about 40 years because the contrast

is so wonderful and He planned it all this way. – *Australia*

I enjoyed the book [Being OK With Not Being OK](#). I am so overwhelmed with God's love for me and seeing more and more how He is so much more than what I was taught about in church. He is bringing me to such a peace and rest in Him about everything and everybody. I know it is because God has opened my eyes, ears, heart and mind to receive all that I am reading, after so many years of being in the dark of Religion being taught lies and half-truths, it is such a relief to every fiber of my being.

I do thank God our Father for giving those as yourself the words to speak/write His truths in such a way for others as myself to really understand His ways. I just finished the chapter about Contrasts (28), Re: Adam and Eve not really knowing God's love as He wanted them to. No one has ever put it down in words so exactly as you have. Thank you for this! Whatever I do read in the book brings such peace and rest to me, to come to a greater understanding of God's great love for ALL His creation, and that He, and He alone is in control of EVERYTHING is mind boggling to say the least! God Bless you Clyde, and I send a hug in the Spirit to you. – *NM*

After over 40 years of seriously searching the Scriptures with the aid of writings from men of many varied walks, no literature has so profoundly changed my life as the book: [Suffering: God's Forgotten Gift](#). This writing has brought me to a deep and abiding love relationship of our God and Father that I do not believe would have been possible without.

No one can really begin to lay hold of the truth of Father's love without this message of our sufferings in Christ! Without this message they always doubt His Love or at least the extent of it. The lack of this understanding stands in the way of growth and the ability to love our God and Father as He desires!

I encourage all to read this book. Many barriers exist in our love relationships which hold us back from the depths and heights of genuine fondness that we wish we could achieve – even with our Creator God. At the age of 63 the greatest barrier of them all was little by little disintegrated for me. This was accomplished by studying, learning, perceiving and, in the end, growing to love the precious truths of this book. If you have ever felt out of touch while in prayer with the Author of your salvation; if you have ever felt that others have a closer walk with our Master than you; if you have ever felt that something is missing due to your ever-changing feelings toward God – then, this book was written for you. Please remember; God is Love. You need not only know it; you must feel it and return it. Only now can I begin to do this in a way that is unexplainable and growing daily. My sincere hope and prayer is that you will gradually and profoundly come to feel this way too. – *LA*

[His Eye is on the Sparrow](#) is a great audio! I can't listen ►

to this or even read anything (especially Scripture) pertaining to this subject without my heart racing and my eyes brimming with tears of joy at the prospect of this grand event! Thank you so much for all your diligent work and heartfelt effort in edifying and encouraging the Body as we grow. Grace and peace to you my dear brother in Christ. – **AL**

I treasure all your books in my library and I read all the [Daily Email Goodies](#) and keep them. I also read and keep all the [Bible Student Notebooks](#) and I record all your [short audio casts](#) and listen to them on my ipod. I love what you do. You are a source of light to me in a world of false teaching. God bless you and yours. – **TN**

**PREPARING** (continued from page 3300)

level two to level three.

Level Three: The realization that you are *absolutely* being trained with the experience of evil by the Father.

Job was attacked directly by the Adversary. Yet, he moved to level three, attributing the evil to God.

*Shall we receive good from the hand of the Lord, and not evil?* (Job 2:10).

As Father brings *us* to this same realization, that all things are from Him, then as frustration immediately swells up in us over evil (the “not good”) we face – a humble worship of Him begins to set in and then overwhelms us.

**Everything** is about Him.

Every good, and every evil is from Him. Every *single* one of them.

What frustrates you today? *That’s Him.*

When He really teaches this to us, it turns our frustrations into glorying. Seeing Father at work in everything brings a whole different outlook on life.

Father is at work.

He always has been, He always will be.



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(#1836) Format, 264 pp., PB  
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