

LIGHT BEARERS MINISTRY

MISSION UPDATE

November 2001

LIGHT BEARERS MINISTRY'S
2002 CONVOCATION SCHEDULE

East Coast in Fletcher, North Carolina
June 24-29, 2002 • Eve Sing @ 828-687-5125

Copper Mountain Resort, Copper Mountain, Colorado
July 9-13, 2002 • Barbara Taylor @ 303-297-9300

18th Annual Convocation in Malo, Washington
July 24-27, 2002

An Act of ~~God~~ Satan

by James Rafferty

The recent outbursts of terror in the U.S. bring to mind a weighty question: Why did God allow this to happen? It is an age-old question that has no quick or easy answer. Some of us take for granted, based on God's sovereignty, that He is to blame for this tragedy, and others. But if this is so, we are faced with a glaring contradiction to the God described as "love" in 1 John 4:8.

I heard an unusual story of a man who had fallen on hard times. His business had been struck by lightning and was destroyed in the ensuing fire. Luckily he had insurance coverage, or at least that's what he thought. But he learned of a clause in his policy, a standard phrase most of us pass right over. It's called an "act of God." That's right. The insurance company denied his claim, calling his loss an "act of God." In insurance lingo, that means that when lightning strikes or some other natural calamity hits, insurance does not cover it and the insured is out of luck. In other words, if the disaster is out of our control, God must have caused it.

The man decided to try his case in court. He sued, not the insurance company, but the local churches. His reasoning was simple: If this was an act of God and churches were representatives of God, then they were responsible for his loss. It made sense to him, but not to the courts. It was thrown out. That, however, was not the end of the story. A pastor of one of those churches took time to respond to this issue by publishing a letter in the local paper. His basic argument was grounded in the Bible: These outbursts of destruction ought not to be called "acts of God" but "acts of *Satan*." And to that I say, AMEN!

Consider the words of Christ:

"The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10, NKJV).

The message here is clear: Satan is the thief. He came to steal our very lives. And not just occasionally or even most of the time. This is his "only" purpose, his underlying motive, his continual work. Everything he touches, even when candy-coated as a life of pleasure and ease, leads to death. The devil comes "*only* to steal and kill and destroy" (NAS).

His character is exposed in the book of Job, commonly thought to be the first book of the Bible ever written. Check it out:

"Then the Lord said to Satan, 'Have you considered My servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a blameless and upright man, one who fears God and shuns evil?' So Satan answered the Lord and said, 'Does Job fear God for nothing? Have You not made a hedge around him, around his household, and around all that he has on every side? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his possessions have increased in the land. But now, stretch out Your hand and touch all that he has, and he will surely curse You to Your face!' And the Lord said to Satan, '*Behold, all that he has is in your power; only do not lay a hand on his person.*' So Satan went out from the presence of the Lord" (Job 1:8-12, NKJV, emphasis supplied).

"Who is to blame for all our pain?" you ask. "Who is the author of suffering?" It is Satan and he is a cruel author at that. Consider:

Some of us take for granted, based on God's sovereignty, that He is to blame for this tragedy, and others.

“And there was *a day* when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother’s house” (Job 1:13).

Pause with me here for a moment and consider a sadly interesting insight into the true character of the enemy of souls. Let’s look at what this heavenly angel-turned-devil has become (see Revelation 12:7-9). Having gained access to Job’s life, presenting to the entire universe the idea that God is unfair and therefore seizing an opportunity to prove his point, Satan waited. He did not go after Job immediately but he bided his time, looking to strike when he could bring the greatest pain to his victim. And that time was when Job’s children got together to party. Job had, no

worst fear crept closer, heightening the torment in that father’s heart:

“While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, ‘The fire of God is fallen from heaven, and hath burned up the sheep, and the servants, and consumed them; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.’ While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, ‘The Chaldeans made out three bands, and fell upon the camels, and have carried them away, yea, and slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.’ While he was yet speaking, there came also another, and said, ‘Thy sons and thy daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest

Yes, God does allow suffering, not because He wants to but because He is forced to in His difficult task of unmasking the devil. In His manifold wisdom God permits sin and suffering to help us see what rebellion ultimately offers. Suffering, pain, death and all its sorrow are what Satan offers, not God.

doubt, raised his children to follow God. And he carried a great burden for them. But during these carousing celebrations he was filled with intense concern for them and for their eternal salvation (see Job 1:5). So it follows that Satan would wait for *a day*. A specific day of gathering. A specific window of vulnerability. Whether Satan waited a week or a month, we do not know. All we know is that he waited for *that* day. The deaths of Job’s children would bring Job immense grief at any time, but their deaths in the midst of festivities would bring to his heart and mind the greatest anguish over their eternal fate. That is why the following text chronicles a day when his sons and daughters were assembled together:

“And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, ‘The oxen were plowing, and the asses feeding beside them: And the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee’” (Job 1:14-15).

And so, on *the* day, Satan made his move toward Job’s planned downfall. The assault on Job’s faith was orchestrated, finely tuned to the day and hour most perfect for bringing down God’s perfect man. The oxen were stolen, the farmhands were slain and only one was left to carry the tale. Surely the first news planted an uneasy stirring within Job, just as Satan intended. And with each ensuing calamity, Job’s

brother’s house: And, behold, there came a great wind from the wilderness, and smote the four corners of the house, and it fell upon the young men, and they are dead; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.” (Job 1:16-19).

Job’s children were taken last. Satan had saved them for the end. Each purposeful step had been executed in minute detail to find its mark, down to leaving one lone survivor of each catastrophe to deliver the shocking report. Satan’s finale took Job’s children on that very day, in the very time when Job’s concern for their future, their salvation, their commitment to God was most acute. All of this planned destruction, this calculated calamity, was a product of the mind of the demon who claims sovereignty of this earth. This is the cruel heart of he who would persuade God that this world has chosen him as its prime minister, its sovereign leader, its king. Consider his merciless record and know that his treatment will ultimately never be any different for you.

The mastermind and perpetrator of the above carnage was Satan, not God. Yes, the servant said that “the fire of God” was fallen from heaven but what else would he know but the thinking of the day, Job’s day? In what other terms could he describe such a spectacle? He had the “insurance-clause” mentality, but not the truth about God.

“Okay,” you say, “God is not the cause of our

*Dear Africa:
From My Village to Yours.
Love, Jesus*

by Tobie Ebrecht

Picture a lad trotting along a dusty, rutted road under the hot, African sun. The road then twists and winds beneath a jungle canopy, the air heavy with moist heat and alive with buzzing insects. Birds in brilliant hues dart about, piercing the silence with their screeches and calls. Onward he lopes across open, grassy plains, accustomed to the torrid temperature. His bare feet pad an easy rhythm as he runs. The boy's journey will take him from his home village to a town many miles away on an errand to bring home supplies, and mail.

Mail—a thing we here in America take so for granted that we throw away tons of it annually as “junk.” But the mail this young man is waiting for will not be discarded as junk. You see, months before, he posted a letter to Light Bearers Ministry asking for “something to help me know more about God.” His letter was received and an answer was prepared for him in return. So when he reaches his post office box, he will find the “help” he requested, help to know more about his loving Savior. Or will he?

Light Bearers yearly receives thousands of requests from African citizens: school children seeking school supplies, pens, paper, story books, Bibles; workers and pastors pleading for literature, health tracts, Bibles and Bible Studies; older students searching for monetary help or sponsorship to attend college. The requests flow from a floodgate of need and want.

Light Bearers has not the resources to fill each stated request, but we want to do something. And that “something” is a packet of literature (three magazines and five tracts) in response to every request we receive. But due to postage increases this past January and scheduled commitments, we currently have a backlog of requests to fill.

Containers of literature in support of evangelistic efforts around the world leave our dock monthly. And yet the additional, day-to-day incoming requests from individuals in third-world countries continue to mount, some through these very evangelistic meetings, others through word-of-mouth. A recent week's mailing of 284 Africa packets totaled \$1,405.80 in postage cost. We need help in shipping responses to these many requests.

And that's where you come in. Postage for one of these packets is \$4.95. If you would like to be personally responsible for one individual in Africa receiving the Good News of the gospel, please consider sending a donation earmarked for Africa packet postage. You may donate a single packet or as many as the Lord lays on your heart.

We especially receive many requests from young people. I picture one making his way along a dusty road to an outpost mail drop as you read this. I'd like to see our young friend's face when he opens his mailbox and finds a message from Jesus addressed just to him. Wouldn't you? 

Events Schedule

- ◆ **October 26, 27**
West Park SDA Church, IL
Ty Gibson—☎(630)920-0598
- ◆ **November 2, 3**
Loma Linda, CA
James Rafferty—☎(909)824-5046
- ◆ **November 5–10**
White Salmon SDA Church, WA
Herb Montgomery—☎(509)493-1463
- ◆ **November 16, 17**
Ridgecrest SDA Church, CA
James Rafferty—☎(760)384-4649
- ◆ **November 16, 17**
Edgemere, ID
Herb Montgomery—☎(208)263-2505
- ◆ **November 30–December 2**
CHIP Health Retreat, Hope, British Columbia
Ty Gibson—☎(503)257-4883
- ◆ **December 1**
Cambrian Park SDA Church, CA
James Rafferty—☎(650)967-2324
- ◆ **December 7, 8**
Oildale SDA Church, CA
James Rafferty—☎(661)323-7038
- ◆ **January 2-5**
Camp Kulaqua, FL
Herb Montgomery—☎(407)644-5000
- ◆ **January 4, 5**
Chadron SDA Church, NE
Ty Gibson—☎(308)432-6854
- ◆ **January 11, 12**
Exeter SDA Church, CA
James Rafferty—☎(559)635-7186

LIFT HIM UP

3ABN Schedule

(GE- 4 Satellite; Sky Angel Channel 9710)

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Tuesday	4:30 p.m. (PST)
	10:30 p.m. (PST)
Saturday	3:30 a.m. (PST)
	10:30 a.m. (PST)

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Light Bearers Ministry is a non-profit ministry based in the beautiful northeastern mountains of Washington State. Our purpose is to help proclaim the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ through the spoken and published word.