

AMAZING

Inside Report **FACTS**

June 2000



Sign of
the Serpent

LETTERS

Blew Me Away

I saw your show, and it was amazing how you preached the Word on the subject about the laws that we are to follow, according to Jesus. I like the way you explain the Word, but the segment "You Are Responsible" really blew me away! Can you please rush me a copy?

ZY
Pennsylvania



Tell It Like It Is

I'm so glad you have that holy boldness to preach God's Word as I believe God would have you to do. Please don't ever wonder if your bold approach should be softened. I thank God that there are men like you in this day and age who are willing to tell it like it is.

KW
Michigan

Searching for a Church

I am a Christian, and right now I'm searching for a church. I don't agree with the things going on in the charismatic churches.

I read *Captured By Tongues*. I used to experience tongue speaking, and I thought this was the only way you can have the Holy Spirit. But recently, I asked the Lord to take it away if it wasn't from Him, and He did. In my heart, I know it's a deception, and I will not be pulled in.

I'm interested in becoming a Sabbathkeeping Christian. I feel that Mr. Batchelor speaks the truth, and I want to be a part of this so I can know my Lord and Savior even better.

JJ
North Carolina



I Look Forward to Monday Mornings

I have been watching Amazing Facts for some time now on Monday mornings at 7:30 a.m. on the Family Channel. I really enjoy and learn a lot from Pastor Doug's teachings. I look forward to Monday mornings and appreciate all the loving work that you do for His kingdom.

EH
via e-mail

Years Off Our Age

My wife and I are a couple of retirees, well advanced in years like Abraham and Sarah, but we are having an exciting time lending the *Millennium of Prophecy* videos. Just yesterday we had the thrill of seeing five people whom we have been visiting come to church for the first time. That really takes a few years off the age, but we do not think it is enough yet to enable either of us to emulate the back flip that we have enjoyed so much.

LT
Australia



Straight From the Bible

Your Bible studies and messages are so clear and convincing. You always use "it is written" or "so says the Lord" regarding Sabbath, health, mortality, and all other subjects.

AK
California

Inclined to Study the Scriptures

Please send me the Study Guide *It's Headed Straight Toward You*. I watch your program whenever I am home during the daytime. Your program gives me a clearer understanding of the Bible, which inclines me to study the Scriptures.

SB
New York



A Great Web Site

I was online today, so I thought I should write. I have visited your "amazing" site. It's really a great Web site, and I have downloaded and printed a few pages. I am simply amazed by the work there, so I marked a number of pages as favorites. I have also subscribed as one of your students in the Bible School.

DM
Lusaka, Zambia

You Got My Attention

Could you please send me your free offer (Study Guide # 7 entitled *Don't Be Fooled*)? I saw your program this morning and found it very interesting. When it comes to God's laws, I'm very concerned. You got my attention.

DS
North Carolina



AMAZING FACTS

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BY EDITOR
DEBRA J. HICKS

I Love My Church!

I love my church because it is a place where a young man who is several notes off key isn't made to feel ashamed for participating in song service along with everyone else. I love studying the lesson each week in a class where someone who has difficulty pronouncing Hebrew names isn't shy about volunteering to read a Bible text aloud. I love worship planners who ask children to lead the congregation in Scripture reading and prayer because they know that involvement is more important than eloquence.

I love belonging to a church family that will allow beginner musicians to offer special music. I love my church because people give freely of their time and talents, not worrying that someone else might be able to do a better job.

Most of all, I love my church because it is a place where imperfect people are welcome to worship. I'm proud to be a member at such a place, but that wasn't always the case.

When I was a very immature Christian, I found it embarrassing to be associated with people who were "misfits." At the church I attended while a college student, there was a 90-year-old gentleman who loved to play the violin during Sabbath School. At the time, I believed that the screeching noises emanating from his instrument were anything but appropriate for worship. I can remember hanging my head in dismay. "This little church is never going to grow with him here," I thought.

At another church, I belonged to a Sabbath School class that had a discussion-type format. Any time the teacher asked a question, a certain man was always the first person to speak up. Trouble is, he rarely had anything sensible to say. Usually he would start talking about an unrelated topic and—if we were lucky—try to work his way toward the subject after his thoughts began to gel. He seemed desperate to contribute to the discussion, even when he really couldn't think of anything to say. I always blamed him whenever visitors didn't come back a second time to our class.

"This is insane," I'd say to myself. "Why doesn't the teacher just tell him to be quiet and put us all out of this misery?" It took awhile for me to realize that the intolerance inside my heart was a far worse problem than his frequent ramblings.

A turning point for me came several years ago while talking with a friend I was visiting. The stress of caring for her dying mother, while holding down her job as a kindergarten teacher, had left her physically and emotionally exhausted.

She told me that one Sabbath while her husband was away on a business trip, she sat trembling and alone in her church pew. "I shouldn't have come today," she thought to herself during the superintendent's opening remarks. "I don't fit in here. Everybody is beautiful and happy and has their act together, but I'm a wreck. I'm ruining an otherwise perfect picture." Overcome with misery, my friend began sobbing uncontrollably during the congregational hymn. Yet nobody seemed to notice.

As she told this story, my face began to flush. At first I was thinking, "What a horrible church you must have. Why didn't anybody rush up and put a


I love my church because it is a place where imperfect people are welcome to worship. I'm proud to be a member at such a place, but that wasn't always the case.

caring arm around you? Don't people understand that a church is a 'hospital for sinners' and that even church leaders need to be able to have a bad day?"

But then the Holy Spirit began whispering words that I'm sure He had long desired to share with me. If I really believed that church should be a safe place for a frazzled friend to cry and receive comfort, then why wasn't I willing to offer that same healing and fellowship to a lonely guy who tends to talk too much?

In His characteristic loving way, God began to help me see my hypocrisy and seek a new and improved attitude.

My church isn't perfect, but that's one of the things I like so much about it. Since the members aren't busy trying to be something they're not, they can be relaxed and friendly and ready to minister to visitors and people in need. When prospective members observe that other people have struggles and challenges, yet find acceptance there, they want to be part of the family.

By the way, the old gentleman from my college days is still alive and playing violin at his church. Not everything has stayed the same, however. Today whenever I worship there, I can hear music in my ears *and* in my heart. 



BY DIRECTOR-SPEAKER
DOUG BATCHELOR

Sign of the Serpent

An Amazing Fact:

It is estimated that between 30,000 and 40,000 people die from snakebites each year, 75 percent of whom live in densely populated India. The most deadly snakes in India are the cobra, Russell's viper, saw-scaled cobra, Indian krait, and Ceylon krait.

Burma has the highest snakebite mortality rate, with 15.4 deaths per 100,000 people per year. Australia has some of the world's most poisonous snakes, but the average death toll there is only six persons per year. In South America about 4,500 people die annually from contact with the Fer-de-lance.

None of the snakes just mentioned are found in the United States, where the chief offenders are coral snakes, copperheads, cottonmouths, and rattlesnakes.



Why Study Snakes?

Four times in one year, John Fretwell's air-conditioning equipment company in Dallas was robbed. Finally Fretwell went up to Oklahoma for a snake hunt and brought back what may be the ultimate in burglar protection: seven diamond-back rattlesnakes. During business hours, he now displays the snakes in the window of his business office, labeled with a sign: DANGER: SNAKES BITE.

Before going home at night, he frees the five-foot rattlers to glide around the premises. In the morning, armed with a hooked stick and a burlap bag, he rounds them up. The seven rattlers seem to be working like a charm to ward off burglars.

The key to his success is that most people find these creatures among the most revolting and terrorizing. My mother was so deathly afraid of snakes that she would jump and scream even if she saw one on TV. My brother and I would sometimes capitalize on her phobia and place a rubber snake in her dresser drawer to enjoy a cruel laugh when she discovered it.

Few people relish the idea of studying snakes. It may not sound like a very appealing subject, but these cold-blooded, legless reptiles are mentioned in Scripture from Genesis to Revelation, so it is therefore profitable for us to compel ourselves to consider

these unusual creatures.

Throughout the Scriptures, the serpent generally represents the devil. It was in the form of a snake that the devil first manifested himself to the human race (Genesis 3:1); hence the symbol stuck all the way to Revelation 20:2, where he is called "the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan."

There can be great benefits to understanding this clever enemy. When I lived in the desert mountains as a young man, rattlesnakes were abundant. A basic knowledge about their habits and behavior helped me to avoid ever being bit, despite several close encounters.

The Bible says that "the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made" (Genesis 3:1). Perhaps this is why Jesus commands us to be "wise as serpents, and harmless as doves" (Matthew 10:16). In order to be as "wise as serpents," we must understand at least a little about them.

Master Counterfeiter

Snakes are the ultimate experts in camouflage and counterfeits. Whether hiding in the grass or entwined in the branches of a tree, they are masters

at blending into the scenery to remain undetected. When threatened, the harmless bull snake will vibrate its tail in the dry leaves to sound like his venomous cousin, the rattler.

Satan too is a clever counterfeiter. In Revelation 12:9 he is called “that old serpent, ... which deceiveth the whole world.” For every truth of God, Satan has a convincing counterfeit. He has counterfeit baptisms, a counterfeit Holy Spirit and tongues, a counterfeit Sabbath, and even a counterfeit for love.

In the Exodus story, the Pharaoh’s magicians were able—to a point—to counterfeit the power and miracles of God (Exodus 7:10-12). Likewise, Satan is most dangerous and effective when he is imitating God’s miracles and messengers. “And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14).

Flying Serpents?

Dozens of cultures have legends and traditions about flying serpents or dragons. These can be seen the world over in their ancient carvings and art.

Fables are often rooted in at least some element of truth. There is a serpent in the tropical rainforests that can spring from the trees, flatten its ribcage, and glide a short distance—something like the flying squirrel. But even beyond this modern example, many Bible commentators believe that before it was cursed, the serpent had wings and the ability to fly. The fossil record is full of examples of other flying reptiles, like the pterodactyl, that lived before the Flood.

The Bible itself alludes to the existence of flying serpents. One prophecy states: “For out of the serpent’s root shall come forth a cockatrice [viper], and his fruit shall be a fiery flying serpent” (Isaiah 14:29).

Genesis 3:14 explains why we do not see flying snakes today. “And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life.”

If the serpent was cursed to go upon his belly after he tempted Eve, it is obvious that before the curse he propelled himself differently. Satan is called “the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Ephesians 2:2). Just as the serpent was grounded by the curse, the fallen angel Lucifer had his wings clipped when he was cast to the earth.

Satan and the Sword

The first question found in Scripture is posed by the serpent, who sought to discredit God’s word. “Hath God said?” (Genesis 3:1), he asked Eve.

From that first insidious query to the present, Satan has been ever casting suspicion on the Word of God to undermine the faith of God’s children. Sin, suffering, and death entered the world after Satan succeeded in leading our first parents to disbelieve God’s word. Planting seeds of doubt regarding the dependability of Scripture remains the devil’s primary war tactic.

However, victory comes to God’s children when they claim and believe the powerful promises in the Word: “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust” (2 Peter 1:4).

When Jesus did combat with the arch villain in the wilderness of temptation, He deflected every assault with Scripture. The serpent trembles when God’s people take hold of the living sword of His Word (Hebrews 4:12)!

The Snake and the Seed

Genesis 3:14-15 is where we find the first prophecy of the ongoing battle that would exist between the woman (the church) and the serpent (Satan). This passage of Scripture also promises the ultimate victory of the woman’s seed (the coming Savior), who would crush the head of the snake.

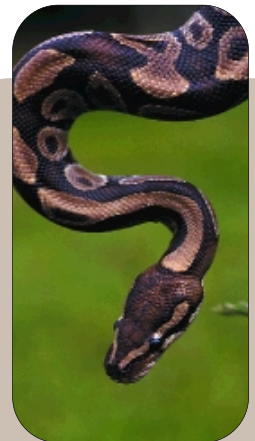
Verse 15 says, “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.”

Notice that the serpent bites the heel of the woman’s seed, not the toe. The heel is the back of the foot, the lowest part of the body. Satan gets us from behind, when we are at our lowest point. Likewise, he came to Jesus when He was weak and tired after 40 days of fasting.

The good news is that Satan only manages to bruise the *heel* of Christ and the church; the church continues to limp along. On the other hand, the serpent receives a mortal wound to the *head*, promising the ultimate victory of Jesus over the devil.

Power Over Serpents

When the Lord commissioned Moses to return to Egypt and lead His people to freedom, He gave Moses a strange sign concerning his rod and a serpent. “And he said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent; and Moses fled from before it. And the LORD said unto Moses, Put forth thine hand, and take it by the tail. And



An Amazing Fact:

Because they do not rely on energy from food to generate body heat, snakes can survive on an extremely meager diet. Some wait for months between successive meals, and a few survive by eating a single, large meal just once or twice a year. Likewise, Satan has perfected the art of waiting patiently for his prey to lower its guard so he can devour it.

he put forth his hand, and caught it, and it became a rod in his hand” (Exodus 4:3-4).

A rod in the Bible is a symbol of power (Revelation 12:5) and protection (Psalm 23:4). When Moses’ rod turned into a serpent, it signaled that God would give him power over and protection from the forces of evil as he ventured into the snake pit of Pharaoh’s palace. This same power is promised to all of God’s children who seek to work with Jesus to liberate others from slavery to Satan.

Luke 10:19 states, “Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.” And Psalm 91:13 declares, “Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder: the young lion and the dragon shalt thou trample under feet.”

Don’t Play With Snakes

This power over evil is what Jesus was talking about when He said, “And these signs shall follow them that believe; . . . they shall take up serpents” (Mark 16:17-18).

Some misguided pastors have interpreted this passage to mean that Christians should double as snake charmers and prove their faith by collecting and handling rattlesnakes or other venomous vipers. For obvious reasons, the membership in these congregations has always remained small.

The New Testament account of Paul’s shipwreck reveals how to correctly understand this passage. “And when they were escaped, then they knew that the island was called Melita. And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire, and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. And when Paul had gathered a bundle of sticks, and laid them on the fire, there came a viper out of the heat, and fastened on his hand. And when the barbarians saw the venomous beast hang on his hand, they said among themselves, No doubt this man is a murderer, whom, though he hath escaped the sea, yet vengeance suffereth not to live. And he shook off the beast into the fire, and felt no harm. Howbeit they looked when he should have swollen, or fallen down dead suddenly: but after they had looked a great while, and saw no harm come to him, they changed their minds, and said that he was a god” (Acts 28:1-6).

Just as God saved Paul from the venom of that serpent, He will save us from the poison of sin. However, we are never to deliberately

seek out snakes to flirt with disaster. That would be tempting the Lord (Matthew 4:7).

A rattlesnake only two minutes old can strike effectively. During a family picnic, a 2-year-old discovered a brood of baby rattlesnakes. The unsuspecting child began to play with what she thought were pretty worms until she had been repeatedly bitten beyond hope.

Likewise, some people feel that little sins are harmless, but they often prove more fatal in the long run than the more obvious transgressions.

Most Famous Verse

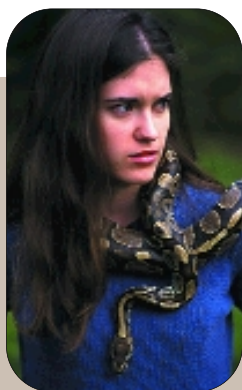
Probably one of the most well-known, beloved, and memorized verses in the Bible is John 3:16. But if you were to ask the average Christian what are the two verses that precede John 3:16, I would venture to guess not one person in 50 could quote them. Yet that immortal verse is actually the continuation of a thought begun in the preceding two verses. Here they are together: “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3:14-16).

These three verses together encapsulate the entire great controversy in the cosmic conflict between the serpent and the Lord. Let’s look at the original story, to which Jesus was alluding.

“And the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water, and our soul loatheth this light bread. And the LORD sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died” (Numbers 21:5-6).

Remember that sin entered the world when the serpent succeeded in tempting our first parents to doubt God’s word. In this story, after the children of Israel rejected God’s bread (a symbol for Jesus and the Word), then the serpents bit them. It is the Word of God that keeps people from sin (Psalm 119:11).

Let’s read on: “Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. And the LORD said unto Moses, Make a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole; and it came to pass that, if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived” (Numbers 21:7-9).



An Amazing Fact:

The longest snake ever actually measured was an anaconda found in South America that was 37 feet long and weighed more than 1,100 pounds! Other long snakes are the reticulated python and the African rock python, both of which measure about 32 feet.

Many snakes inject poison to paralyze their prey, while others depend on stealth and speed. These big constrictors, however, wrap their slithering bodies around a victim and squeeze until it dies of suffocation.



Baron Williams

Snake on a Stick

For this nation of shepherds, the serpent lifted on a pole served as a strong symbol which they all well understood. Snakes are a deadly menace to sheep. A dog might get bit by a rattlesnake and survive without any special treatment, but sheep are much more fragile. This is one of the reasons why shepherds must carry a rod.

When I lived in the desert mountains, my snake stick served a couple of purposes. If I found a venomous intruder in my cave, I would club it to “bruise his head.” But a mortally wounded snake might continue to thrash and writhe for hours. So rather than grab it with my hand, I would lift it up with the rod to move it far away from my premises.

A snake on a stick is a vivid symbol of a defeated serpent. Beyond this, there is a much richer prophetic significance to this symbol. Inspired author E.G. White writes:

“All who have ever lived upon the earth have felt the deadly sting of ‘that old serpent, called the devil, and Satan.’ Revelation 12:9. The fatal effects of sin can be removed only by the provision that God has made. The Israelites saved their lives by looking upon the uplifted serpent. That look implied faith.

They lived because they believed God’s word, and trusted in the means provided for their recovery. So the sinner may look to Christ, and live. He receives pardon through faith in the atoning sacrifice. Unlike the inert and lifeless symbol, Christ has power and virtue in Himself to heal the repenting sinner” (*Patriarchs and Prophets*, p. 431).

“The people well knew that in itself the serpent had no power to help them. It was a symbol of Christ. As the image made in the likeness of the destroying serpents was lifted up for their healing, so One made ‘in the likeness of sinful flesh’ (Romans 8:3) was to be their Redeemer” (*Desire of Ages*, p. 174).

Jesus said, “And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me” (John 12:32). It is by looking to Jesus on the cross that we are drawn by His love for us. By gazing in faith at our Redeemer’s sacrifice, we are saved from the sting of the serpent.

Notice in our story that God did not take away the serpents, but instead He provided a remedy. Likewise, as long as we are in this world, we will have the devil to contend with; however, God has provided an abundance of antivenom in the blood of Jesus to save us from the viper’s bite! When Jesus was on the cross, although His heel was painfully bruised, the serpent’s head was mortally crushed.

Good-Luck Charms

The bronze serpent Moses had forged and elevated on the stick somehow managed to survive all the wanderings and battles of the Israelites for more than 700 years. Most of the surrounding pagan Canaanite nations worshiped serpents as gods of fertility and mystical power. And over time, the Israelites began to imitate their neighbors and to treat this bronze relic of God’s forgiveness as a deity in and of itself (2 Kings 18:3-4).

Like the ancient Israelites, millions around the world today are inadvertently worshiping the serpent while thinking they are worshiping the Lord. They have slowly, unwittingly been sucked into base idolatry.

An Amazing Fact:

All snakes are cold-blooded creatures and depend on outside sources for heat and cooling. They are also “cold-blooded” regarding their offspring. After baby snakes are born or hatched, the parents generally abandon them or in some cases devour them. Satan has the same level of warmth, compassion, and loyalty for those who serve him. He is the heartless, cold-blooded epitome of evil.



An Amazing Fact:

A lizard has movable eyelids that periodically close to protect and lubricate its eyes, but a snake's eyes are always open, protected by immobile, transparent scales. Likewise, Satan is ever watching for unsuspecting prey.



Sadly, many Christians have done the same thing with the symbol of the cross as the ancient Israelites did with the bronze serpent.

In the same way the Israelites were not to worship the serpent on the pole, we are not to bow down or to pray before a cross. Neither are we commanded to make the sign of the cross on our persons. There is no mystical power or virtue in this image of an ancient torture implement!

When Jesus said to His disciples, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me" (Matthew 16:24), He was commanding His followers to *bear* the cross, not to *wear* the cross.

Revelation speaks of being saved not by the cross, but by the blood of Jesus. It was the cross as a demonstration of Jesus' love and sacrifice that Paul and the disciples exalted, not the revolting instrument itself. Hebrews 12:2 says, "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." The redemption of the cross is what should be the focus of Christians.

The Cup of Sin

In the Topkapi Museum in Istanbul, Turkey, there is a very precious goblet. In the center of the inside of that goblet is a gold serpent. It has ruby eyes and diamond fangs; its mouth is open and ready to strike. When the goblet is filled with wine, the red liquid covers the snake. As the wine is drunk, suddenly the serpent with its menacing appearance is revealed.

Jesus, when He came to die for us, shrank from the thought of sin and separation from the Father when He prayed, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39).

Humbling Himself, He drank the cup of sin down to the dregs. At Calvary the serpent, which had been lingering through it all, struck with all of his diabolical vengeance. The intensity of evil! Jesus bore it all.

Defeated Foe

Some have wondered, "If Satan was defeated by Jesus on the cross, then why do we still see and feel so much evidence of his evil activity?"

The devil knows he was defeated at the cross, but he is crazed with pride and anger. In order to inflict as much heartache on God as possible, he continues to fight tenaciously, wanting to take down with him as many as possible.

Revelation 12:12 declares: "Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time." Satan is now thrashing about wildly in his final death throes, striking any and all within his reach.

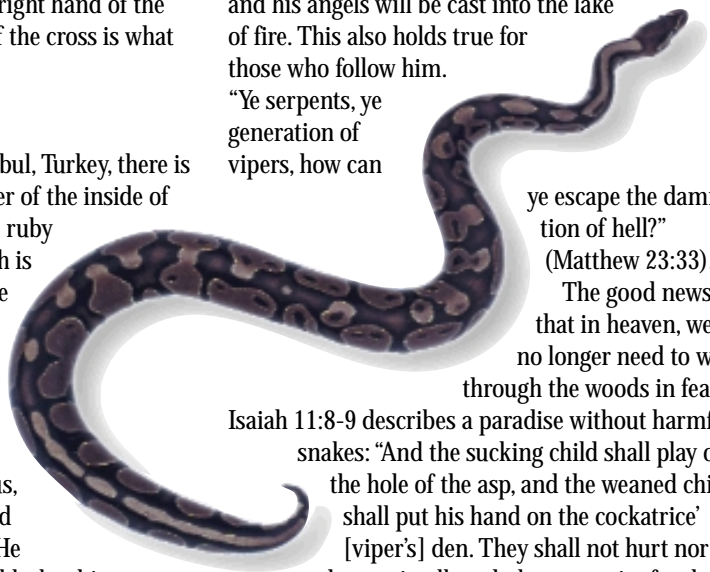
However, the Bible promises that ultimately Satan and his angels will be cast into the lake of fire. This also holds true for those who follow him.

"Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can

ye escape the damnation of hell?" (Matthew 23:33).

The good news is that in heaven, we will no longer need to walk through the woods in fear.

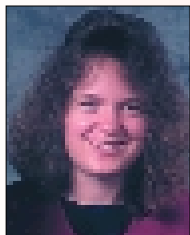
Isaiah 11:8-9 describes a paradise without harmful snakes: "And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' [viper's] den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."



From the Inside

Annie Kjaer Is Assistant Director for Amazing Facts College of Evangelism

Annie Kjaer will begin her new position as assistant director of the Amazing Facts College of



Evangelism on July 1. Already she has been working closely with the acting director of the college, Gary Gibbs, to schedule teachers and to develop the curriculum.

Once the College of Evangelism begins its first session on August 6, Annie will teach a vast array of courses, work closely with students, and coordinate the evangelism classes and outreach ministries.

For the past nine months, she has been in New York City to nurture newly baptized members and to coordinate the follow-up programs for NET New York '99. In Manhattan she organized two follow-up evangelistic seminars, coordinated the work of four Bible workers, and helped plant a new congregation.

A Bible worker for six years, Annie has energized 25 churches with her enthusiasm for soulwinning. She worked extensively in South Dakota, Illinois, California, Kansas, and New York and helped on short-term projects in about 10 other states. For three years she assisted with 20 evangelistic meetings while traveling with her parents, Kim and Judy Kjaer, who have been members of the Amazing Facts evangelistic team since 1993.

Jason Morgan to Coordinate Outreach for the College of Evangelism

As outreach coordinator for the new Amazing Facts College of Evangelism, Jason Morgan will teach several courses and will work personally with students as they put the soulwinning principles learned in class into practice in real-world evangelism.



Since completing his training, Jason has traveled to Texas, California, New York, and

Virginia, helping Amazing Facts evangelists during their crusades.

While doing Bible work in Sacramento last spring, he met Misty Parks, who was attending the Amazing Facts Field School of Evangelism. They were married in August of 1999 and are expecting their first child.

Although he was raised in the church, Jason says

he was not converted until three years ago. He had tried to fill the void in his life with achievements in the Texas State Bodybuilding Championships, but nothing clicked until he saw videotapes of a crusade conducted by Joe Crews, the founder of Amazing Facts. Soon afterward he found his passion and true calling in public evangelism.

This Fall Doug Batchelor Will Hold First Sacramento Seminar in Six Years

On October 6, Pastor Doug Batchelor will launch an area-wide evangelistic seminar—his first live series in six years for the Sacramento area. The meetings are being sponsored by the Sacramento Central Church, where he is senior pastor.

Students attending the Amazing Facts College of Evangelism, a four-month program that begins in August, will be involved in the series from beginning

to end. The meetings will give them a unique opportunity to see how advertising and media programming can work hand-in-hand to promote a series. Churches in cities where Amazing Facts television and/or radio programs are broadcast often report that a number of their guests during an evangelistic series responded favorably to advertising because they recognized the Amazing Facts name.

Pastor Batchelor is seen several times weekly on two Sacramento cable stations and on national broadcasts. He remarked, "When I am in a store, I often notice people looking at me. Some will have the nerve to ask me if I am 'that preacher on TV.' They usually make a positive comment, then I invite them to church."

"Because of the recognition Pastor Doug has in this area, we feel this will be a time of great reaping for Sacramento," said Gary Gibbs, assistant director of Amazing Facts. "People are being convicted of the gospel, and now we will give them the opportunity to respond."

Amazing Facts on Nationwide TV

3ABN, Dish Network, Sky Angel Service
(3ABN available on GE-4 @ 101 degrees west)

- Sundays at 10 a.m. Eastern time
- Tuesdays at 4 a.m. Eastern time
- Wednesdays at 11 p.m. Eastern time
- Fridays at 4 a.m. Eastern time
- Fridays at 5 p.m. Eastern time
- Saturdays at 10 a.m. Eastern time

Black Entertainment Television
• Wednesdays at 8 a.m. Eastern time

CourtTV
• Sundays at 7 a.m. Eastern time

Day Star (available on Spacenet 4, Channel 10)
• Sundays at 12:30 p.m. Eastern time

Fox Family Channel
• Mondays at 6:30 a.m. Eastern time; 5:30 a.m. Central time; 7:30 a.m. Mountain time; 6:30 a.m. Pacific time

Inspirational Network
• Sundays at 1:30 p.m. Eastern time
• Wednesdays at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time

KSBN (Safe TV)
• Sundays at 9:30 a.m. Eastern time
• Saturdays at 4 a.m. Eastern time
• Saturdays at 5 p.m. Eastern time

Programming schedules are subject to change without notice.



BY DEBORAH
SCHANDER

NET New York '99 Update

Bible Workers Establish New Congregation in NYC

Stories continue to pour in of individuals and churches that have experienced dramatic changes in the wake of NET New York '99. Praise God for sending His Spirit to bless those who have heard the gospel through videotapes and satellite rebroadcasts or at one of the more than 5,000 registered downlink sites!

Not far from Manhattan Center Studios, site of the *Millennium of Prophecy* seminar in New York City, Annie Kjaer and her energetic team of Bible workers have been instrumental in planting a new church called Advent Christian Fellowship. This fledgling congregation exists as a direct result of NET New York '99.

More than 60 individuals have been baptized in Manhattan, where the series was taped eight months ago. Some have joined churches in outlying areas, but

most have either become part of this new congregation or have joined one of three English-speaking churches there.

The new church, Advent Christian Fellowship, began holding services in April under the ministry of Dr. John Anderson, a lay pastor. Members meet in a small rented chapel that can seat 50 people.

Dr. Anderson, an evangelistic-minded member from Manhattan's Advent Hope Church, works full-time as a heart surgeon in addition to serving as lay pastor of this new congregation. He truly lives up to his role as a "heart surgeon conquering hearts for God."

Working closely with Dr. Anderson is Annie Kjaer, who has been coordinating Bible work in the Manhattan area since August of 1999. In preparation for the *Millennium of Prophecy* seminar, she trained and coordinated a team of 20 Bible workers who

went from door to door, giving studies and talking to people about the upcoming meetings. More than 300 significant contacts were made during that time, and 80 people attended the series at the host site in Manhattan Center as a result of their work.

Not all of those contacts were made in people's homes, of course. Luis Garcia's story is a perfect example.

Laura Rupsaite, a volunteer Bible worker, stopped by a small store to grab a bite to eat. On this particular day, she saw Luis, who was a few steps ahead of her. Laura felt compelled to talk with him. For a while she fought her impressions, but finally she mustered the courage to speak up. Because Laura invited Luis to the seminar, he attended not just once, but on a regular basis.

Donors wonder, "Did Our Gift Make a Difference?"

Pastor Doug,

We had to write and tell you of a miracle from the NET '99 meetings in New York City. After receiving your letter asking for support, Peter and

I both came to the same dollar amount to give—one-half of our yearly income. That was a sizable sum for us because we have a job for only six months a year. (We are medical missionaries during the other six months.)

After eight months, we were wondering what good our money did—wishing that we could know just one soul who came out to the seminar.

Four weeks ago, upon welcoming a newcomer from the Bronx and eating lunch with him, we found out that he was newly baptized (three months before) and that he came from the NET New York '99 seminar in New York City. God brought him the 80 miles right to our church door—as He knew how much it would mean to us to see the fruit of our labor!

Needless to say, we are thrilled. What a great and loving God who cares about us so deeply! A million thanks to you for the wonderful work you are doing. Your tape ministry is a tremendous influence for good for all who hear it.

May God richly bless you as you carry on. Very soon we'll see the lovely face of Jesus!

All our love, dear brother,

Barb and Peter Pulaski



Peter and Barb Pulaski were among hundreds of people who gave sacrificially to make NET New York '99 a reality. When they asked God if they could know one person who had been blessed by it, He brought Luis Garcia (right) to their church in answer to their prayers.



Standing in St. George's Chapel, where the new congregation meets for church and prayer meeting, is the current Bible work team: Misty and Jason Morgan (front row), Sarah Lewis, Valerie Crosier, Annie Kjaer, and Rosy Molinas (back row).

Near the end of the satellite series, Annie Kjaer visited with Luis on several occasions. He told her of his desire not only to give his life to God, but also to work for Him. Luis wanted to be baptized, but something held him back. "Let me sleep on it," he kept telling her.

Everyone on the team could see this young man's potential. Luis was a dedicated father, a locksmith, and a budding actor. He wanted to exchange a life of lies for a reality with God. He wanted to unlock not only people's physical doors, but also their spiritual prisons. He wanted to go all the way, yet something seemed to hold him captive. The Bible workers turned to the Master Locksmith, the One who alone knew the key to this young man's freedom.

On the last night of NET New York '99, Luis pressed through the crowd of people. "I'm ready," he said.

After carefully reviewing the decision he was about to make, Luis was baptized. He is now attending a small church in Connecticut, where he is also doing Bible work. God has granted the desire of his heart.

The work for NET New York '99 did not end on November 13 with the live seminar series. In some ways, that was just the beginning. Since Doug Batchelor's last presentation in New York City, a team of four Bible workers has held three follow-up seminars in addition to planting the new church, Advent Christian Fellowship.

Their first seminar, held right after NET New York '99, took the new students into more in-depth Bible study than was possible during Doug Batchelor's 24-part satellite series.

In March of this year, a Joy in the Journey seminar began. It focused on issues like self-esteem, stress,

relationships, and drug and alcohol dependency. Students learned how a relationship with the Lord and an understanding of Scripture can affect all of these areas.


The Sharing Scripture seminar, which was the final set of meetings in this trilogy, began on April 22. Jason Morgan, a Bible worker and evangelist, was the speaker. Each follow-up seminar provided opportunities for the Holy Spirit to reap some of the seeds that were sown during NET '99.



A young woman named Belinda Melita attended NET New York '99 and loved it. She didn't want to miss a single night. Her boyfriend, Darryl, believed in the Sabbath. Both Belinda and Darryl were excited about the truths they were learning.

Then, suddenly, Belinda stopped coming. Two Bible workers, John Hill and Andreea Vasilescu, called Belinda and learned that she had been in the hospital with Darryl. He had fallen from some scaffolding and had suffered serious injuries.

The team began to pray earnestly for Darryl. During the next few months, Andreea kept in contact with Belinda. Sometimes they weren't able to do studies, but they always kept in contact. One day in April, Belinda called and said that she wanted to come to the Sharing Scripture seminar. "I really want to go all the way this time," she told the excited Bible workers.

When the seminar began on April 22, both Belinda and Darryl were there. Darryl was doing great, and the Bible team thanked God for the miracle. 



A small church with a family atmosphere in the middle of New York City? If you have a hard time picturing it, then meet some of the members of Advent Christian Fellowship, a new church raised in Manhattan since the close of the *Millennium of Prophecy* seminar. Dr. John Anderson, lay pastor (left), has worked closely with Annie Kjaer (right) to establish the new congregation.



BY DONNA
WILLEY

Faithful Farmers

Evangelist Brian McMahon Reaps a Harvest in Illinois

His eyes were glued to the traffic, but his thoughts were racing. Looking at me with anxiousness, my husband said: "Donna, there must be more that can be done to reach our community. Do you think we could ever do an evangelistic series?"

"Call our conference office and ask," I suggested.

Before I had completed the sentence, Rod was on the phone. Within minutes we were informed that our conference already had a contract with Amazing Facts for a meeting somewhere within our state, but the exact location was not yet certain. Days later we were told to contact Brian McMahon, the Amazing Facts evangelist.



Rod Willey, lay pastor of the Richland Bridge Church near Peoria, Ill., baptizes Tony Prayne one Sabbath during the seminar. Tony's wife, Angela, and their daughters Cailin and Lauren watch from the platform.

Once Rod and Brian connected, my husband explained that he is lay pastor of a young, lay-led church plant with limited abilities but a fervent desire to see work done in our city.

Brian's voice was like soothing medicine. With sensitivity and precision, he began to map out a path for us for follow.

Within days our church body met to make a final decision on whether or not we should do a citywide evangelistic series. The vote was unanimous in favor of the project! Brian would be coming to our city in seven months. We had no idea what God was doing!

Gideon's words began to echo through our minds: "But Lord, my clan is the weakest, and we are the least in the family." Uncertainty was written upon

every face. As a lay-led church consisting primarily of new Christians, we knew the challenge was huge and that we were still small. Our hearts were filled with a mixture of excitement, fear, and inadequacy. Yet as we reflected back on the ways that God had led us in the past, we remembered a principle that He had taught us: "Start where you are, with what you have, with who you have." We divided the task and went to work.

Brian began contacting us weekly. Each call was like a truckload of encouragement—one of the greatest gifts an evangelist can give to lay people. He informed us that he would need a minimum of 40 willing workers in order for this series to happen. We had exactly 40! Some were children, one person was in a wheelchair, a few were not baptized yet, and one would be giving birth in the middle of the series. All were lay people.

Our prayer leader, Joy Moushon, went to work in an unprecedented way. Prayer guards were posted for every possible avenue in which Satan could enter. Guards were appointed for our families, our occupations, unity, the building, weather, finances, and our school. The people had a heart to pray, and they did.

Our sanctuary was large enough to squeeze in about 100. We asked God to enlarge His kingdom through us, and we knew that for God to deliver, we needed to be prepared for Him.

Bringing his small Bobcat® through the front door of our church, Rick Bedford and a crew of men, women, and children began the work of "tearing down the wall." Upon completion, the building's capacity would double.

Our family, along with others, began the day with prayers ascending specifically for those who were in a workplace where witnessing could take place. Before "daddy" left for the dental office, I gathered our two young sons to pray over him for opportunities that day. Between drilling and filling teeth, the opportunities came. Rod personally gave out invitations one after another. Employees were invited, and we mailed 8,000 invitations to his patients.

Our goal was to "leave no stone unturned" in our city. We planned to send out 50,000 brochures and 10,000 personal invitations, plus purchase TV and radio advertising. One day we called the advertising firm to ask if they felt we were advertising adequately. His response was, "It would be good to be on ABC as well as NBC, but it would cost another \$4,000." Our budget was maxed. After we hung up the phone,

another call came in from a friend in Chicago. Our friend asked how the planning was going. Rod shared the previous call with him. The friend said, "I want to contribute \$4,000." God is faithful!

Meanwhile our members were personally inviting their friends and co-workers to the series. Fliers were left in the bathrooms at Steak n Shake, and others did prayer walking through neighborhoods.

Some poured themselves into the music that was needed, others into the sound and video. Still others gave all they had to the hundreds of little details.

From the children's programs to the parking lot, prayer took place as faithful servants spent time on their knees. Every detail had a price tag that was connected with sacrifice. Brian, our evangelist, continued to "pour medicine" upon our sleepless nights and aching muscles. Each time he phoned, he assured us that God was in the midst of every aspect.

On opening night, God sent people. He filled the room to capacity. Brian McMahon and his wife, Heidi, gave and did exactly what God had sent them to do. The lay people gave and did exactly what God asked them to do.

If successful ministry was about numbers, the story would end here. But it isn't. Because once the seed falls and is under the ground, we do not see how it takes root. Much depends upon the farmer who is faithful in small things and continues to work with the planted seed.

We learned many new "amazing facts" throughout the series. One in particular has left us a changed people: Amazing Facts is more than a Christian media ministry that is broadcasting and publishing outstanding biblical truths. They send "helpers" to plant seeds in communities like mine. They train a few farmers to water and nurture them, then leave the growth to God. Brian and Heidi worked with us each night, explaining techniques of soulwinning, praying for the people, and opening our eyes to opportunities.

Several days before our scheduled "baptismal night," Tony Prayne was baptized. He just couldn't wait!


Even though Tony had been familiar with the church before the meetings began, he had not felt ready to make a decision for baptism. Once the Amazing Facts seminar began, Tony was faithful in attending each night. He was there not only to receive, but also to give. He would work at the front door answering questions, collecting tickets, and assisting in any way he could. Then, when Brian began to speak, Tony would sit down to soak in the deep truths being laid before him.

Baptismal night was scheduled for a Thursday. On Saturday morning, Tony came and said, "There's no reason for me to wait; can I be baptized today?"

When he stepped into the water, Tony was a powerful witness to those who were still sitting in their chairs, battling with fears and indecision.

On "baptismal night," another 20 precious people were baptized. A week later, four more. A week later, six more. And so it continues on.

A total of 76 people have asked to be baptized. They, along with an interest list of 600 others, are waiting for faithful farmers to work with them in the soil of their lives. Our "little" church now has 96 people involved with home cell groups, and 40 are attending a Daniel Seminar on Sabbath morning. The question now being asked is "When can we plant another church?"

This magazine is not large enough to contain all the experiences that God gave us during the series. If there were room enough to capture only one thought, it would be this: God is calling lay people to be faithful farmers. He is calling the "Pauls" of this day to do some training. He is longing to see us stand together at the altar of sacrifice, giving all that God has put within us and entrusted to us. 



Church members had prayed for God to fill their newly enlarged sanctuary with souls eager to hear Evangelist Brian McMahon preach from the Bible, and He did!



Of the 76 people who have asked to be baptized, 30 have already sealed their commitments. This "little" church that began out of a dentist's office is now bursting at the seams!



Batchelor



Bradshaw



DeLong



Hargreaves



House



Kjaer



McMahon



Pefley



Priebe



Quade



Silvestri



Snow

Meet Amazing Facts

You are invited to meet the members of our Amazing Facts team at any one of the following locations. This schedule is subject to change without notice, so please call Amazing Facts to confirm appointments or get more information.

Doug Batchelor

June 25-July 8
General Conference Session
Amazing Facts booth #513, level 800
Metro Toronto Convention Centre, South Building
255 Front Street W.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

John Bradshaw

June 4-8 at 7 p.m.
Kentucky-Tennessee Conference Camp Meeting
Highland Academy
211 Highland Circle Drive
Portland, Tennessee

Ray House

June 23-24
Morris Park Church
800 Morris Park
Bronx, New York

Lowell Hargreaves

July 12-16
Cowboy Camp Meeting
Rocky Mountain Conference
in Uncompahgre Forest below Silver Jack Reservoir
Cimarron, Colorado

John Silvestri

June 15-24
Washington Conference Camp Meeting
Auburn Adventist Academy
5000 Auburn Way
Auburn, Washington

Jaime Jorge

June 2-3
Kansas-Nebraska Conference Camp Meeting
College View Church
Lincoln, Nebraska

June 9-10
Iowa-Missouri Conference Camp Meeting
Graceland College
Lamoni, Iowa

June 16-17
Potomac Conference Camp Meeting
Shenandoah Valley Academy
New Market, Virginia

June 24 at 7:30 p.m.
Windsor Church
5350 Haig Avenue
Windsor, Ontario, Canada

July 1 at 6:30 p.m.
General Conference Session
Sky Dome, 1 Blue Jays W.
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Dennis Priebe

June 10
Plymouth-Sorrento Church
2844 Ponkan Road
Apopka, Florida

June 16-17
Apison Church
11421 Bates Road
Apison, Tennessee

June 23-24
Hohenwald Church
210 Hankins Road
Hohenwald, Tennessee

July 7-8
Bristol Church
571 Highway 26
Bristol, Tennessee

Special Recognition

In Loving Memory

Carol Aschbacher by Pierre & Lynda Scales
Russell Babylon by Doris Dunks, his daughter
George Bakibinga by Stephen Isabirye, his son
Marlin Bakke by Martena Bakke
Dorothy Biggar by Doratha & Wilbur Brooks; by Dixie & Arnold Plata, her daughter & son-in-law
Clarence Blake by Idy & John Freeman
Tom Blincoe by Gertrude Romant
Charles Borris by Ann Borris, his mother
Peter Borris by Ann Borris, his wife
Alice Boyd by Mrs. C.S. Williams, her daughter
Helen Boykim by Lucille Bush
Anna & Carl Brockmann by Ethel Simeone, their daughter
Ronnie Bryan by Christine Erickson, his aunt
Sandra Tullock Burgess by Mary Swain
Kitty Burns by Lucille Bush
Bruce Bush by Lucille Bush, his wife
Pastor Ben Butherus by Elsie Butherus, his wife
Ian Marcus Cal by Gertrude Romant
Leanore Carson by Clara & Larry Burtnett
Steve Cepulinski by Roy & Doris Dunks
Derwood Chappell by Jean & Milton Chappell
Keneth Coddington by Viola Coddington, his wife
Bessie Collins by Orville Wedel
Lila Coon by Idy & John Freeman, her sister & brother-in-law
Joe Crews by Lu Ann Crews, his wife; by Edward Harding Jr.; by Mr. & Mrs. Windell Smith
Ronnie Crews by Lu Ann Crews, his mother
Irene Curtis by Edryn Kast, her granddaughter; by Mary Pollack
Judy Davis by Idy & John Freeman
Margaret Detwiler by Gilbert & Mary Goodwin
Marjorie Dickinson by Kent & Dee Dickinson
C.O. Dockery by Mildred Dockery, his wife
Marie Drake by Doris Low
Dorothy H. Duncan by Jack Duncan, her husband; by Richard, Jim, Mike, Shaun, & Douglas Duncan, her sons
Victor Frolich by Dotti Dunlap, his daughter
Robert Graham by Ruth Graham, his wife
Harold Gray by Dorothy Gray, his wife
Mr. & Mrs. Martin Gulka by Olga & Matt Tachenko
Esther Guyat by the Gordon Franklin family
David Haines by Ollie Haines, his wife
Pastor Bill Henry by Weiland Henry Jr., his brother; by Jacob & Joyce Joyner
Joseph Herzberg by Mr. & Mrs. Michael Fechik, his son-in-law & daughter; by Thelma Herzberg, his wife
Dorothy Heystedt by Dorothy Hughes
Naomi Hodde by William & Helen Friedrichs
Howard Van Houten by Naomi Van Houten, his wife
Grey Hunt by Mr. & Mrs. Jess O'Dell
Elva Jacobs by Rubye Wenzel, her sister
John Janzen by Agatha Janzen, his wife
Herbert Jenson by Marvin & Vaughn Krieger
Michael Willi Jkeda by Jutta Jkeda, his mother
Morgan Johnson by the Morgan Johnson Memorial Fund
Norman Jonsson by Viola Coddington, his wife
Glenn Kingery by Don & Helen Dees; by William England; by Nellie Kingery, his wife; by Vernon & Sarah LaVoie
Mr. & Mrs. Fred Krall by Marie Krall
Clarence Kuhnke by Bonnie Lorenz
Elizabeth Leeth by Mr. & Mrs. Edward Wilson
Mae R. Libby by Ralph Libby, her son; by Eleanor Morrison, her daughter
Hubert K. Lindsey by Prudence N. Lindsey, his wife
Lowell Litten by Dr. & Mrs. Harley Anderson

Amazing Facts is happy to recognize contributions to the ministry that are made, in lieu of flowers, as a tribute to the deceased or as a thank offering celebrating significant milestones in the lives of friends or family members. Listings normally appear three to four months after donations are received. Be sure to include first and last names and please type or print legibly to ensure correct spelling. Due to space limitations, a maximum of five names will be printed per donation per issue.

Dorothy Little by the Georgia-Cumberland Conference; by Paula Lamnek; by Tina Markham
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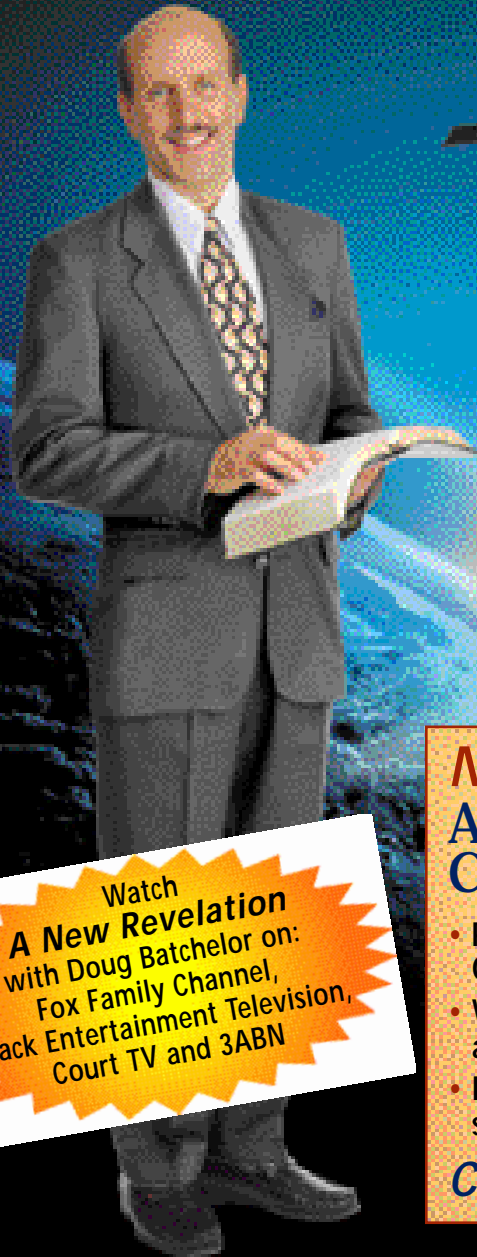
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Lucille Harden (92nd) by Maryetta Fullbright, her sister
Albert F. Johnston's (82nd) by Maryetta Fullbright, his sister

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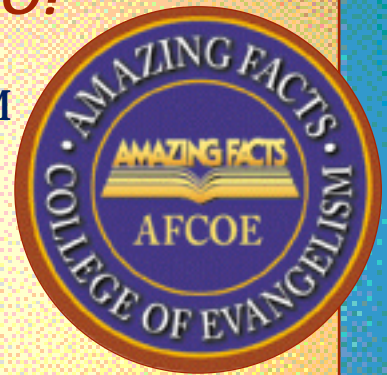
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