



Advocate of Truth



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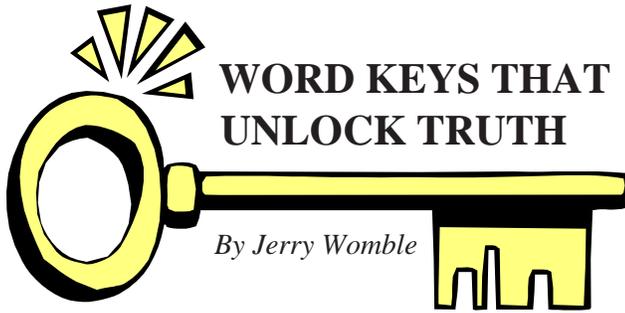
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**Telephone: 304-782-1411
Fax: 304-782-2248
E-Mail: cogsevday@aol.com**

**Del DeLong
Bond Tennant.....Editorial Staff
Gary Mills Managing Editor
Ludina Mills.....Children's Page Editor
Fred Hardman Printer**

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7

Things You May Or May Not Know About

SALVATION

THE STARS

By Warren H. Randall Jr.

Salvation denotes deliverance and preservation. It is used at times in the Bible in the material and temporal sense. We however, want to understand it in the spiritual sense. I find that the state of salvation is referred to as the "common salvation" and also as the "eternal salvation".

In verse 3, Jude tells the brethren that he is writing to them concerning common salvation. This salvation is common to us all as we live on the earth, and we must hold onto it all of our lives. He is writing to these brethren to warn them that ungodly men have invaded their midst to try to turn them from Jesus. This would cost them their salvation. He uses the angels that once lived with God in heaven as an example, who gave that up by following the devil. They are now "reserved in everlasting chains of darkness unto the judgment of the great day".

One place that eternal salvation is spoken of is in Hebrews 5:9. "And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him". Eternal salvation will be upon us at the time of the Resurrection when the Lord comes and catches us up to meet Him in the air, and from that time on, no one can take it from us. The salvation that Christ will bring and give to us at the second coming is eternal, the one that will never end. Read Hebrews 9:28. Jesus himself says, "But that which ye have already hold fast till I come" (Revelation 2:25). Let's use this to remind us that we have the common salvation at this time, and we must hold onto it throughout our life in order to have the eternal salvation when He comes again.

1. They were created on the same day as the Sun and Moon.

"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also" (Genesis 1:14-16).

2. Abraham's seed is to be as the stars in heaven.

"And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be" (Genesis 15:5).

3. Job was asked where he was when the morning stars sang together.

"Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding" (Job 38:4).

4. God knows the number of stars and their names.

"Praise ye the Lord: for it is good to sing praises unto our God; for it is pleasant; and praise is comely. The Lord doth build up Jerusalem: he gathereth together the outcasts of Israel. He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds. He telleth the number of the stars: he calleth them all by their names" (Psalm 147:1-4).

5. Satan said he would seat his throne above the stars of God.

"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north." (Isaiah 14:12-13).

6. Apostate Teachers are warned of their fate.

"Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and

perished in the gainsaying of Core. Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever" (Jude 1:11, 13).

7. The seven stars are the seven angels of the seven churches in Revelation 1.

"The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches" (Revelation 1:20).

Do Not Murmur!



By Bond Tennant

"Do all things without murmurings and disputing" (Philippians 2:14).

Our Lord places a great value upon humility, and He condemns those who are contentious. The Apostle Paul wrote, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men. But avoid foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and striving, about the law; for they are unprofitable and vain" (Titus 3:8-9). In I Timothy 6:6, he writes, "But godliness with contentment is great gain."

Murmuring is a manifestation of a disposition that is discontented and fault finding. Those who indulge in murmuring make trouble for themselves and for others. We

must continually be on guard not to permit roots of bitterness to defile us, therefore defiling others.

In I Corinthians 10:10, Paul cites the murmuring attitude of the Israelites, then he tells us "Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer." We must not "tempt Christ" as some of the Israelites did in the wilderness. Paul writes that their experiences came to them for examples. We must avoid making the same mistakes in our efforts to serve the Lord.

An outstanding incident of Israel's murmurings is recorded in Numbers 16. It is the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, together with those who sympathized with them. There was a murmuring against those whom the Lord had chosen to minister to the people in religious matters. They said to the Lord's servants, "Ye

take too much upon you." What was the result? The Lord quickly demonstrated his displeasure. He destroyed those involved!

Other murmurings are recorded in Numbers 13 and 14. Here, it is in connection with the spies that were sent across Jordan to make an investigation of the strength of the Canaanites. They were to determine whether or not the Israelites should attempt to enter the land. Only two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, brought back favorable reports. The others lacked faith, and they urged that no attempt be made to possess the land. The Israelites sided with the majority report, and murmured against Joshua and Caleb.

God made it plain to the Israelites that they would all die in the wilderness. Only their children, together with Joshua and Caleb, would enter the Promised Land. "Even those men that did bring up the evil report upon the land, died by the plague before the Lord. But Joshua the son of Nun, and Caleb the son of Jephunneh, which were of the men that went to search the land, lived still. And Moses told these sayings unto all the children of Israel: and the

people mourned greatly" ((Numbers 14:37-39). As usually is the case, murmuring was the result of lack of faith in God's promises and in His ability to care for His people. The Lord blessed the two faithful spies, and He will reward us also if we continue to put our faith in Him.

We have another lesson on murmuring in the parable of the Vineyard. All who were hired to work in the vineyard were to be co-laborers. However, some became murmurers, because the ones who were hired later received the same wages as those who were hired first! Are we collaborating with the Lord? Let us not murmur! We are called to be ambassadors for Christ. We are instructed to beseech men to be reconciled to God. Are we doing this in every way we can? We can do it by word of mouth, by the printed page, and helping in every way to put out the message.

Envy and jealousy seemed to be the cause of murmuring in the parable of the vineyard. We should not have been envious of the manner in which the Lord is blessing others in their service for Him. We are all blessed far above that for which we are worthy.



A Wonderful Message By George Carlin:

GEORGE CARLIN POST 9-11 (His wife recently died...) Isn't it amazing that George Carlin - gross and mouthy comedian of the 70's and 80's - could write something so very eloquent...and so very appropriate post 9-11.

The paradox of our time in history is that we have taller buildings but shorter tempers, wider freeways, but narrower viewpoints. We spend more, but have less, we buy more, but enjoy less. We have bigger houses and smaller families, more conveniences, but less time. We have more degrees but less sense, more knowledge, but less judg-

ment, more experts, yet more problems, more medicine, but less wellness.

We drink too much, smoke too much, spend too recklessly, laugh too little, drive too fast, get too angry, stay up too late, get up too tired, read too little, watch TV too much, and pray too seldom. We have multiplied our possessions, but reduced our values. We talk too much, love too seldom, and hate too often.

We've learned how to make a living, but not a life. We've added years to life, not life to years. We've been all the

way to the moon and back, but have trouble crossing the street to meet a new neighbor. We've conquered the atom, but not our prejudice. We write more, but learn less. We plan more, but accomplish less. We've learned to rush, but not to wait. We build more computers to hold more information, to produce more copies than ever, but we communicate less and less.

These are the times of fast foods and slow digestion, big men and small character, steep profits and shallow relationships. These are the days of two incomes but more divorce, fancier houses, but broken homes. These are days of quick trips, disposable diapers, throwaway morality, one night stands, overweight bodies, and pills that do everything from cheer, to quiet, to kill. It is a time when there is much in the showroom window and nothing in the stockroom. A time when technology can bring this

letter to you, and a time when you can choose either to share this insight, or to just hit delete.

Remember, spend some time with your loved ones, because they are not going to be around forever. Remember, say a kind word to someone who looks up to you in awe, because that little person soon will grow up and leave your side. Remember, to give a warm hug to the one next to you, because that is the only treasure you can give with your heart and it doesn't cost a cent. Remember, to say, "I love you" to your partner and your loved ones, but most of all mean it. A kiss and an embrace will mend hurt when it comes from deep inside of you. Remember to hold hands and cherish the moment for someday that person will not be there again. Give time to love, give time to speak, and give time to share the precious thoughts in your mind.



PRAY WITHOUT CEASING

By Moises Torres M.

According to the Webster's Dictionary, prayer is defined as to address God; confession or practice of praying to God (a moment of silent prayer); a supplication or expression addressed to God; an earnest request or wish.

Prayer is communication. In the same manner as there are diverse ways of communicating with our fellows and known world, so prayer is the most excellent way to communicate with God, our Creator.

Prayer is recognition and worshiping: In His model or pattern prayer in Matthew 6:9-13, our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us that prayer is the manner to acknowledge and worship God. The expression, "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name," denotes rec-

ognition and adoration. If we do not pray, we do not worship and do not acknowledge God as our Heavenly Father.

Prayer is a powerful tool. Through prayer many children of God have performed great tasks and miracles. They have stopped mouths of lions, raised up the dead, exercised control over nature, etc (John 11:41-43; James 5:17-18).

Prayer is energy for the believer. The Lord Jesus said: "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak" (Matthew 26:41). This statement denotes that prayer becomes a shield for the believer. It will provide us with energy to

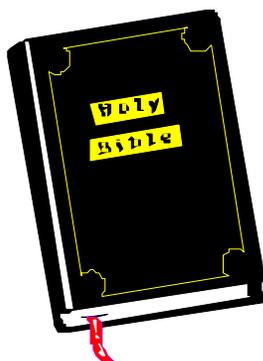
overcome temptation. Today we are living in an "hour" of temptation and trial, in which most people do not respect God. One of our duties as baptized members of the church is to be persistent in prayer, we must pray without ceasing. (I Thessalonians 5:17). Our Lord Jesus experienced a similar time full of hypocrisy and oppression. That is why He said " pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you" (Mathew 5:44).

Prayer is an expression of faith. "And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man..." Read Luke 18:1-8. The widow wanted the evil judge to listen to her and to avenge her cause, and she persisted until she got her purpose. "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speed-

ily. Nevertheless when the Son of man cometh, shall he find faith on the earth?"

The above is a good question for us today. Will the Lord Jesus find people having this expression of faith (Prayer) at this return? (vv7-8) Prayer connects to the "Divine dimension" of God, and only the true children of God will keep it to the end. So, if you do not pray, that means that you do not believe. The adverse conditions in which the first church lived are the same today, and they will become worse as the second coming approaches. It is our duty to pray without ceasing. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud; and he shall hear my voice" (Psalm 55:17). The book of Revelation says that the prayers of the saints are found in vials of gold in the temple of God. See Revelation 5:8. They are a part of our worship to God. Let us insist that our prayers be there.

A COMPARISON BETWEEN SOME OF THE FUNDAMENTAL BELIEFS OF THE CHURCH OF GOD (7TH DAY) AND ISLAM, THE RELIGIOUS FAITH OF MUSLIMS.



By Dell Stout

PART I



The Church of God (7th day), here-in-after referred to as "the Church", believes the Bible is the book through which God has revealed His will to man, and that all contrary teachings are false and spurious. "All scripture is given by inspiration of God" (II Timothy 3:16).

The Church believes in examining everything in the light of the Bible and weighing everything in the balance of the Bible, and if it will not stand the test, reject it; but if it will stand the test, accept it. The Church believes that the

Bible is its own commentary. Other books may be helpful but are not inspired. Tradition is not considered a valued truth. The Church believes in granting liberty of thought and speech, and it stands for an open forum where advanced light can be given, though stimulating a growth in knowledge. I Thessalonians 5:21 tells us, "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." "Grow in grace and knowledge" (II Peter 3:18).

The Church believes in God the Father, the creator

of heaven and earth. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Genesis 1:1).

The Church believes that Christ is the Son of God, that after His death, burial, and resurrection He ascended into heaven and is now on the right hand of God. Reason: "...This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17). "He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God" (Mark 16:19).

The Church believes that the Commandments of God and the faith of Jesus are the standard of righteousness by which the future destiny of man will be determined in the day of judgment. In Revelation 14:9-11, an account of the destruction of the wicked is given, and in verse 12 we are told that the saints (the ones saved) are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. See also Revelation 12:17; John 5:3 and James 2:10-12.

Islam

Islam is the religious faith of Muslims including belief in Allah as the sole deity and in Muhammad (sometimes called Mohammed) as his prophet. It is also the civilization erected upon Islamic faith and the group of modern nations in which Islam is the dominant religion.

Allah is the Islamic or Arabic name for the supreme being of the religion of Islam. Prior to Muhammad, Allah was the supreme but not the sole deity in Arabia. It was Muhammad's mission to proclaim Allah as the sole god, the creator and sustainer of all things, who in the last days will judge all of humanity. Allah is known to human beings through revelation of his will, the Koran or Quran which he delivered piecemeal to his prophet, Muhammad.

Muhammed was born around 570 AD in the Arabian city of Mecca. Muslims believe that in about 610 AD he began receiving revelations from Allah that were transmitted by the angel Gabriel. These revelations took place in the cities of Mecca and Medina over about a 22-year period. They were assembled in a book called the Quran (pronounced ku rahn) sometimes spelled Koran. The Quran is the holy book of the Muslims who believe it contains Allah's (their god's) actual words. The sunna, (pronounced soon uh) is the body of traditions that preserves the words and conduct of Muhammad. Islam has two sources of authority. The first is the word of Allah given in the Quran and the second is the sunna. The ex-

ample of Muhammad's sayings and acts, the sunna, is presented in written collections called the hadith (pronounced hah deeth). Muslim scholars use these sources to understand the principles of the Sharia (pronounced shah ree ah), also spelled Shariah, an Arabic word that means the way that leads to Allah. It refers to the divinely revealed and inspired Islamic law that plays a central role in the lives of Muslims throughout the world. Scholars recognize four main sources for interpreting the Sharia and applying it to daily life. They are (1) The Quran, (2) the sunna, (3) extending the reasoning of previous laws to new situations, and (4) the views of Muslim scholars and jurists. In theory, all Islamic law is divine in origin. In practice, however, most sources of Muslim law are found in the sunna rather than the Quran, particularly in the part of the hadith that reflects Muhammad's interpretation of the Quran's rulings.

The Five Pillars of Islam provide the framework for all aspects of a Muslim's life which if faithfully and diligently followed will ensure their receipt of a reward of eternal life in paradise. They consist of:

1. Shadhada is the first pillar and is considered the basis of all other pillars of the faith. An Arabic word that means "an act of bearing witness" It consists of two statements "I bear witness that there is no God but Allah" and "I bear witness that Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah."

2. Next is prayer. Muslims are required to pray five times a day--just before dawn, at midday, in midafternoon, just after sunset, and at night. A crier called a muezzin (pronounced moo EHZ ihn) makes the call to prayer. Prayer, called Salat (pronounced dsh LAST), is the most important demonstration of a Muslim's devotion to Allah. The physical movements of the Salat symbolize the believers' submission to Allah. When praying, Muslims stand facing their holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. Raising their hands to the ears, they say in Arabic "God is greatest." They then recite the opening passage of the Quran, known as the Fatiha (pronounced fah tee hah), followed by another verse from the Quran. After reciting these verses, they again say "God is Greatest" and bow from the waist, praising God. After returning to an upright position, they say "God is greatest" a third time and fall to their knees, touching the floor with their foreheads. In this facedown position, they again praise Allah. After sitting back on their heels and asking Allah for forgiveness, worshippers kneel with their faces down one more time and

then stand, saying "God is Greatest" before each new position.

Each cycle of the prayer is called a raka (pronounced rahk uh), which means bowing in Arabic. One cycle includes the first Quran recitation, the bow, kneeling face down twice, sitting, and standing up. After the final cycle, worshipers offer a peace greeting. Depending on the time of day, the salat may have four cycles. On Fridays, Muslims gather at midday to pray as a group. Before the prayer, a religious leader called an imam (pronounced ih mahm) recites two short sermons. Typically, men pray at the front of the group and women pray in a separate section behind or beside them.

3. Next is almsgiving. It is required as a way of assisting the poor. The arabic term for almsgiving is zakat, which means purification. Muslims purify their wealth by giving a certain percentage of it to the needy and recognizing that all things ultimately belong to Allah. Zakat is paid once a year, in the form of a tax. Most zakat donations go to mosques, Islamic centers, or welfare organizations. Some Muslims supplement zakat with a voluntary form of giving called sadaqa (pronounced SAH dah kah) which means sincere gift in Arabic.

4. Fasting is next. Every Muslim must fast in the month of Ramadan (pronounced rahm uh dahn), the ninth month of the Islamic calendar. The Islamic calendar is lunar, so each month follows the phases of the moon and lasts 29 or 30 days. As a result Ramadan falls at different seasons of the year. Muslims believe that the first verse of the Quran were revealed to Muhammad during Ramadan about A.D. 610.

The Quran instructs Muslims to fast from dawn to sunset during Ramadan. While fasting, Muslims do not eat any food, drink any beverages, smoke or engage in sexual relations during daylight hours. At night they may eat, drink, and resume other normal activities. Muslims fast to practice spiritual rejection, self-restraint, concern for others and obedience to God. Alms are normally given to the poor at the end of the fast. Because fasting can be physically demanding, some people are excused. Those excused include the sick, injured, elderly, and pregnant or nursing women. They are supposed to provide food for the poor, or if able, fast at a later time instead.

5. Pilgrimage is next. The Quran commands Muslims to make a hajj (pilgrimage) to Mecca at least once in their lifetime if they are physically and financially able to make

the journey. The hajj takes place over the first several days of the 12th month of the Islamic calendar. The rites of the hajj commemorate the trials and sacrifices of the Prophet Abraham, his wife Hagar and their son the Prophet Ishmael. Muslims believe that Abraham and Ishmael built the Kaabas (pronounced KAH bah as the first house of worship to God. The Kaaba is an empty cube-shaped building in the center of the Great Mosque in Mecca. The first requirement of hajj is that men wear two pieces of unseen white cloth, called ihram, which means garment of consecration. Women just wear a long white gown and a headscarf. While wearing these garments, a pilgrim may not kill any animal or insect, remove any hair from his or her body, or engage in any sexual act. The second requirement is that pilgrims walk around the Kaaba seven times in a counter clockwise direction.

Most pilgrims perform three additional rites, though they are not official parts of the hajj. While walking, many pilgrims attempt to kiss or touch the Black Stone, which they believe Abraham and Ishmael placed in one corner of the Kaaba. Pilgrims may also run seven items along a corridor of the Great Mosque to commemorate Hagar's search for water for her infant son, Ishmael. Finally, pilgrims may take water from a well called Zamzam on the grounds of the Great Mosque. The third part of hajj involves standing in at Arafat, a plain outside Mecca, on the ninth day of the pilgrimage month. During the afternoon prayer, pilgrims listen to an imam deliver a sermon from the heights of Mount Arafat at the edge of the plain. This act commemorates the final pilgrimage of Muhammad, who delivered his farewell sermon from this site. To finish the pilgrimage, Muslims next spend the night at Muzdalifah, an encampment near a place called Mina, on the way back to Mecca. The next day they throw stones at three pillars where, according to tradition, Ishmael drove away Satan's temptations. Many pilgrims also sacrifice an animal, usually a sheep or goat, at Mina. These actions commemorate Abraham's vow to sacrifice his son. The hajj pilgrimage is completed after each pilgrim returns to Mecca and walks around the Kaaba seven more times.

The Koran only refers to Jesus as the "son of Mary", not the Son of God and only as a Prophet. The Koran also states that Jesus was not crucified nor slain and was only a servant to God. The Koran states that it (the Koran) could not have been devised by any but Allah and that it confirms what was revealed before it and is a clear-

ing up of the scriptures.

ISAAC AND ISHMAEL

(The start of the enmity between Arab and Jew)

The Church believes that Isaac is the line through which the covenant with God was maintained and not Ishmael. We read in Genesis 16:10-16: "And the angel of the Lord said unto her, (Her, being reference to Hagar.) I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude. And the angel of the Lord said unto her, Behold thou art with child, and shall bear a son, and shall call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affection. And he will be a wild man; his hand will become against every man, and every man's hand against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all this brethren. And she called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me: for she said Have I also looked after him that see me? Wherefore the well was called Beer-lahai-roi; behold, it is between Kadesh and Bered. And Hagar bare Abram a son; and Abram called his son's name, which Hagar bare, Ishmael. And Abram was four score and six years old, when Hagar bare Ishmael to Abram ". In Genesis 17:19-21, we read, "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed: and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful; and will multiply him exceedingly, twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. But my covenant will I establish with Isaac: which Sarah shall bear unto thee at the time in the next year" (Genesis 21:3-5). "And Abraham called than me of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. And Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him." Thus, Ishmael was the first born and was 14 years old when Isaac was born. He would have had the customary line of heirship, but it was through Isaac that the line of the covenant was maintained as ordained by God. In Genesis 15:18-21, God made a covenant with Abraham giving him the land "...from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates," for his seed through Isaac with whom the covenant was established. In Genesis 22:1-18 is the ac-

count of Abraham proving his loyalty to God through his following God's institutions to the letter concerning offering up Isaac as a sacrifice and God intervened, providing a sacrifice. Jewish tradition has it that the rock upon which Isaac was to be offered was the rock on the temple mount, within the temple, where the Ark of the Covenant rested.

In the Koran, a Sura is a chapter which has verses. Thus 19-55 would be verse 55 of Sura 19. There are 114 Suras having many verses.

The Muslims believe that Ishmael was an apostle and a prophet. Sura 19 verse 55 "And commemorate Ismael (Ishmael) in the book (the Koran) for he was true to his promise, and was an apostle, a prophet."

The Muslims believe that Ishmael and Abraham laid the foundation for the Caba (The most sacred place of Islam in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.) Sura 2 verse 121 "And when Abraham, with Ismael, raised the foundations of the House, they said, "Oh our lord! Accept it from us; for thou art the Hearer, the Knower."

The Muslims believe that Ishmael was on a par with Elisha. Sura 38 verse 48 "And remember Ishamel and Elisha and Shoulkefl, for all these were of the just."

Islamic tradition has it that it was Ishmael instead of Isaac that was to be offered up for a sacrifice. It was supposed to have occurred on the rock that Muhammed took off on his flying horse and this is the rock that the Dome of the Rock is built over.

The enmity between Arab and Jew began with the contention that Ishmael was supposed to have had the heirship due to having been the first born.

(to be continued in the May issue)

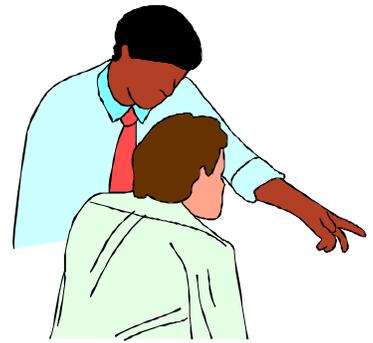
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Repentance

By Dinah Langai



The scriptures tell us about repentance. In Matthew 3:2, we are instructed to "..., Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." This is a command to all of us! God leads us to repentance. Once we find Him, He will help us with the rest of our journey. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" (Romans 2:4). "For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: But the sorrow of the world worketh death" (II Corinthians 7:10).

God is happy when we repent. It is a grand occasion to Him when one of His lost sheep returns to the fold. "And he spake this parable saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me: for I have found my sheep

which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:3-7). God readily forgives us when we repent and expects us to forgive others as well. "And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee, saying, "I repent; thou shalt forgive him" (Luke 17:4).

However, there are stiff consequences when you fail to repent. "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3). We have two options—repent or perish! "Repent therefore of this thy wickedness and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" (Acts 8:22).

None of us can be sure when the time to repent will run out! "For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (I Thessalonians 5:2). We must make our calling and election sure.



Nowadays, many women, both married and single, see abortion as a "normal" practice, just another medical treatment. An example we can mention is the case of a girl in her teens who becomes pregnant from having sex with her boyfriend. Her parents analyze the situation and

ABORTION

By Pascacio Tavizon

conclude that the baby that is developing in the girl's womb must not be born.

If a woman becomes "accidentally" pregnant from her husband, her solution is to get an abortion. A refined lady and her husband have been told that their baby might be

born with some form of disability. They choose to handle this situation with an abortion. As sons of God, we must send a message to those who see abortion as an inconsequential issue, a personal choice, a matter of a person's own morals or a decision for one's consciousness.

From a medical perspective, abortion is considered the termination of pregnancy before the fetus has achieved its own capacity to live independently. A fetus is considered to be viable after 20-28 weeks or when it reaches an approximate weight of two pounds. Some maintain they practice a therapeutic abortion in an attempt to justify such action.

There is no human nor theological justification for abortion, be it therapeutic or not.

When, in 1973, a law regulating abortion was passed in the United States, some 66,000 women aborted their babies in the following six-month period. The main alleged reason was that pregnancy affected their mental health. Is this justifiable?

The right to be born transcends all sociological or psychological values. A fetus is, undoubtedly, a boy or girl, and destroying him/her is murder and, thus, a sin. Killing a fetus is slaying a human being who is in an early stage of development. In the Old Testament, God reprobated murder or homicide and placed a severe punishment on it: "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man" (Genesis 9:6). "He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall be surely put to death" (Exodus 21:12).

Only God holds the right over life and death. The unborn child must be protected. No one has the right to take his/her life. Let's consider the following anecdote about a mother who arrived at a doctor's office, carrying her one-year-old baby in her arms. After greeting the doctor, she told him": "Doctor, I need you to help me out of a problem. My baby is only one year old and I am pregnant again. I do not want to have another baby so soon".

The doctor asked her: "What do you want me to do?" "Anything to rid myself of it", replied the woman. After thinking for a while, the doctor told her: "I have just had an idea. You have your baby on your lap. Why don't we kill that one? That way you would not take the risk resulting from my killing the one that is in your womb". Then, all of a sudden, the doctor took a knife and asked

the woman to bring her baby closer to him and turn her face the other way. "Murderer!" shouted the horrified woman at him. The doctor had just meant to make this woman see that destroying the fetus was just like killing her one-year-old baby, the only difference between them, if anything, was age.

Babies must be seen as a precious gift from God. The fetus that is to be born is the beginning of that divine gift. "Lo, children are an heritage of the Lord: and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hand of mighty man; so are children of the youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: they shall not be ashamed, but they shall speak with the enemies in the gate" (Psalm 127:3-5).

God's hand is present in the formation of the fetus. Although biologically, a man's spermatozoid joins a woman's ovule, God is at work in all that process. The fetus's life stems from God.

"For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was no one of them" (Psalm 139:13-16).

The fetus is not a mass of flesh such as a tumor that must be removed. It is a developing human being. This statement is expressed in many biblical passages. "The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name...the Lord that formed me from the womb to be this servant" (Isaiah 49:1,5). "And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost" (Luke 1:41).

The birth of a child brings a great hope for what that child's mission might be. About two thousand years ago, the birth of a child brought salvation for humankind... for you and for me, named JESUS.



A LESSON STUDY

Finding God's Guidance



"Shew me thy ways, O Lord; teach me thy paths. Lead me in thy truth, and teach me: for thou art the God of my salvation; on thee do wait all the day" (Psalm 25:4-5). Read I Kings 19:9-18.

This lesson is based upon some of the experiences of the Prophet Elijah, whom James refers to as being a man "subject to like passions as we are." He was a man of great faith. He prayed that it might not rain on earth for three and one-half years. This prayer was answered. "..., and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the earth brought forth her fruit" (James 5:17-18).

He was used by the Lord to awaken the son of a widow from the sleep of death. Then, by the direction of the Lord, he challenged the priests of Baal. He was victorious over them, and they were slain. Queen Jezebel, whom the slain priests had served, upon learning of what had occurred, vowed that she would have Elijah slain, and he fled from her.

Though he had shown great faith, and had much evidence of the Lord's protecting care, he also became frustrated and fearful. Perhaps this is why James speaks of him as being a man of like passions as we. When he received the word concerning Jezebel's intentions, "..., he arose, and went for his life, and came to Beersheba, which belongeth to Judah, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's Journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree, and he requested of himself that he might die;..." (I Kings 19:3-4). Here Elijah displays a little uncertainty. He was running to escape Jezebel, for she had threatened to kill him, but at the same time, he was asking the Lord to let him die. In this state of mind, he fell asleep, and when he rested, an angel awakened him and supplied him with enough food to journey to Mt. Horeb.

The desert country in this area was very inhospitable and dangerous. The only means of escape from death was usually a cave. Here we find Elijah! The Lord found

His prophet in the cave and said, "..., What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous (zealous) for the Lord God of hosts: for the children of Israel have forsaken thy covenant, thrown down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away" (I Kings 19:9-10).

The Lord then instructed him to go forth from the cave and to stand on the mount before Him, and when he did, he witnessed three miraculous demonstrations of divine power. "And he said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by, and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after the fire a still small voice" (I Kings 19:11-12).

The implication here is that the Lord did speak to Elijah who had not bowed the knee to Baal through the still small voice. Some scholars explain that this expression translates what the Hebrew literally describes as a "voice of stillness." The thought would be that after the earthquake, the wind, and the fire enter was a great silence. The prophet recognized this as God speaking to him, so he wrapped his face in his mantel to keep from seeing God. Indeed the Bible says that no one can look upon God and live!

Again the Lord asked Elijah what he was doing there, and again he told God how faithful he had been, and that now he was the only one left in the land who served Him. The Lord corrected him by explaining that there were more than seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal.

Then He commissioned Elijah to reenter His service, directed him to go to Damascus and anoint Hazael king over Syria, and to anoint Jehu to be king over Israel. He was also to anoint Elisha to succeed him as prophet.

Contributed



THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

*The following article appeared in the
Houston Chronicle.*

THE MARRIAGE MISERY FACTOR

**Partners have some rate of emotional disorders,
study says**

Associated Press

LONDON - Emotional problems are equally common among husbands and wives, new research shows - a finding that challenges the long-standing feminist belief that marriage makes men much happier but women more miserable.

The results of the largest study to investigate the question were published in the current issue of the Australian journal, *Family Matters*.

Feminist scholar Jessie Bernard was among the first to postulate that men benefited emotionally from marriage while women suffered. Her research, published in a 1972 best seller, "The Future of Marriage", fed into the evolving feminists belief that the institution of marriage oppressed women.

The theory has persisted, despite scientists' subsequent findings that her studies were flawed, and more recent research that has contradicted the 30-year-old results. But the latest research - involving 10,641 people - is the largest, and particularly rigorous.

"This view of the effect of marriage on men and women has been enormously influential and has become part of the 'common knowledge' about marriage," said David DeVaus, a professor of sociology at La Trobe University in Melbourne, who conducted the latest study.

"But the patterns that were suggested by people like Jessie Bernard (are) just not true. The evidence is unequivocal," he said.

"What the early studies did was center largely on typical female disorders - anxiety, depression, phobias," DeVaus said. What they ignored are the types of mental illness more common in men, such as drug and alcohol abuse."

Bernard, who died in 1996, found that married women were more depressed than married men or single women. Married men, by contrast, were less depressed than bachelors.

De Vaus' study involved 10,641 Australian adults who were interviewed personally to establish the stage of their mental health.

The survey classified people as having a mental disorder based on the World Health Organization definition after asking whether certain symptoms and incidents had occurred in the twelve months leading up to the interview.

"What's very clear is that if you look at male typical and female typical disorders and combine them, the men and women in marriage have the same rates of mental disorders. They just have different disorders," De Vaus said.

David Popenoe, co-director of the Family Research Project at Rutgers University, said U.S. Researchers have

reached similar conclusions but the scale of the Australian study was particularly impressive. Popenoe was not involved in the Australian study.

The study found mental illness in 16 percent of the women and 16 percent of the men. Depression and anxiety as more common among women, while drug and alcohol abuse tended to afflict men.

Divorced people fared the worst, with twenty-five percent of both women and the men suffering emotional problems.

Singles fared slightly better, with twenty-two percent of women and twenty-six percent of men afflicted with mental disorders.

Married people were best off, with only thirteen percent of women and thirteen percent of men suffering emotional disorders.

Experts say that while it is now clear that married people are emotionally better off than divorced or single people it remains to be proven that marriage itself reduces the risk of an emotional disorder.

It could be that people with better mental health are more likely to get married, while those with problems shy away from marriage, are not able to attract partners or end up divorced.

"Certainly that's a factor, but it's not just that," said Popenoe, a professor of sociology.

The most likely meaning of the findings is Bernard's findings and her conclusion that marriage emotionally oppresses women were wrong all along, he said.

"When something like that gets stuck in the cultural mind, it doesn't go away easily. There is the small element that marriage has changed since the '50s and '60s, but we also know there were methodological flaws in that study," Popenoe said.

Marriage rates in many developed countries are declining.

"There are going to be many things that, rightly are going to enter into the decision whether or not to marry," DeVaus said. "It would be a pity if women decided not to get married based on information that it damages their mental health, when in fact the evidence shows the opposite."

COMMENT

There is no marriage misery factor in the God fearing marriage. Marriage is not for convenience, and it is life-long, not temporary. It is not man-made but God-given. It is not a tug of war, but a partnership. It is not a solo, but a duet.

Each determines whether his or her marriage is happy or miserable by the way he or she responds to tribulation. Tribulation is inevitable in any marriage. Many people are not willing to sacrifice and yield to assure a successful marriage and a happy home.

There are over a million divorces each year here in the United States. Disillusioned young people with confused minds often emerge from broken homes. One of the greatest threats to our future is the collapse of the home.

EYEBROW RING A RELIGIOUS THING

SPRINGFIELD, MASS/ A woman who was fired from her job at a Costco store for refusing to remove her eyebrow ring has sued the discount retailer, saying the company violated her religious beliefs.

Kimberly Cloutier of West Springfield said she belongs to the Church of Body Modification, and that her piercing, which include several earrings in each ear, are worn as a sign of her faith.

Costco has denied it discriminated against Cloutier and argued that she was dismissed for refusing to comply with the store's dress code barring facial and tongue jewelry.

The Church of Body Modification, based in Oregon, describes itself on its Web site as an interfaith denomination that expresses spirituality through piercing, tattooing and other body modification.

EDMONTON JOURNAL

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: Please explain Isaiah 45:7 which reads, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."

Answer: I assume that the main point of your thinking pertains to God's statement that He creates evil. God created Satan and allowed him to cause havoc and destruction on this earth. Satan turned evil after he was created. God did not create sin. Sin is the transgression of God's law, and that was done by Satan, Satan's angels and man. God also created the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, but it was man that sinned by eating the fruit thereof.

Some confusion occurs when one does not see the difference between evil and sin. A sin is always an evil, but an evil is not always a sin.

But why should God create evil? The text under consideration relates to God's dealings with his people, Israel. It is associated with a prophecy concerning Israel's return from captivity in Babylon under the authority of a decree to be issued by Cyrus, whom the Lord in this chapter declares to be His "anointed," His appointee, that is, for this purpose.

God had promised to bless Israel when obedient and had foretold punishment when the nation was disobedient. One of these punishments was the seventy years' captivity in Babylon. This was an evil, for it contributed to the unhappiness of the Israelites. The Lord brought it upon His people for their punishment and in keeping with His

covenant with them.

A similar thought is expressed in Amos 3:6, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people not be afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?": The first verse of this chapter reads, "Hear this word that the Lord hath spoken against you, O children of Israel,..." Here the context clearly shows that the "evil" mentioned is punishment from the Lord.

God has the just right to use any means He chooses to punish those who disobey Him.

Question: Where does it say in the Bible that the time will come when one will not be able to tell the winter from the summer except by the falling of the leaves.

Answer: No such statement as this appears in the Bible. It is one of the traditional ideas which has come down to us from the past.

Question: I go through the actions of a private devotional life, but nothing seems to be happening by way of my prayers being answered. What am I doing wrong? I am a young lady in my early teens.

Answer: One of the biggest dangers in personal devotions is trying to make the Father in heaven, through Jesus, conform to your petition. You are making your petition a means to the end of your personal awareness and fellow-

ship with God. God answers prayer in His own time and in His own way. Trust Him and keep His commandments. In this way you express your love toward Him.

Take the Lord Jesus as a personal friend. Believe in Him and His Father. The Apostle Paul said, "...for I know whom I have believed,..." (II Timothy 1:12). In all of Paul's writings, the apostle did not neglect stating what he believed. Keep your faith focused and strong.

In your private devotions, you need the presence of the power of God, which is the Holy Spirit. It is very possible to go through the motions of a private devotional life, as you have mentioned, without actually communicating with God. So don't enter into your quiet time, no matter what your problem is, without first asking God and His Son to help you understand them. Through such dependence on the power of God, your expectations, as expressed in your frustration that nothing seems to happen, will be placed in a realistic perspective. For it is also possible that your expectations were unrealistic.

May I suggest also whatever else you do, that you seek the Holy Spirit. Reach out for God, and allow yourself time to meditate and ponder. Humbly let God meet with you in His own way, not according to fixed expectations.

Question: What does the Bible tell us about gambling?

Answer: There is no verse in Scripture which commands, "Thou shalt not gamble." When a person gambles, an addiction can occur. That person uses his or her money, which he or she may not be able to afford, for this gambling. As a result, money needed to support that person's family is wasted. The addiction causes that person to spend even more money to try to recoup his or her losses, thus falling further into debt. It becomes a goal to that individual, and that person puts gambling before his or her family and before God. God tells us, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." By gambling in this manner, that person is breaking one of God's commandments, and is therefore sinning.

Gambling often puts the love of money ahead of the love for God, and it can put the love of one's self ahead of one's neighbor. Gambling is fueled by an excessive and uncontrollable love for money. The Apostle Paul wrote to Timothy, "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows"

(I Timothy 6:10). In the preceding verse, Paul wrote, "But they that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition." Gambling can become such a temptation and a snare. It ruins those who develop an uncontrolled desire for it.

Gambling is a pleasure of the world. The child of God is commanded, "Love not the world neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (I John 2:15-16).

Gambling can become a form of covetousness, which is wanting something that is not one's own. Both greed and selfishness can come from gambling, and the Bible condemns these things. Read Proverbs 1:15-19.

The gambler usually wants something for nothing. With its "get rich quick" motivation, gambling mocks the core values of disciplined work. Gambling mainly takes something and gives nothing.

Question: Some people told us that the name of the church should be Church of Christ-not "Church of God" please comment on this.

Answer: Jesus purchased the church for His Father. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood" (Acts 20:28).

As a Church, the members of the Family took the name of their Father, as Jesus prayed in John 17:11. "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are." Therefore, we read: "*Unto the church of God*" (I Corinthians 1:2; II Corinthians 1:1); "*I persecuted the church of God*" (Galatians 1:13); "*Despise ye the church of God*" (I Corinthians 11:22); "*Give none offence...to the church of God*" (I Corinthians 10:32).

Sixteen times in the Bible we read of "The church of God." Only one time in Romans 16:16 is it called "churches of Christ." The Church of God is also subject to Christ, for the Father hath put all things under His Son. Read Ephesians 5:24 and Colossians 2:9-13.



KENYA

Elder Henry Miroro, our Kenya overseer and member of the 70, sent some pictures of some of the brethren in Kenya. The first photograph is that of members of the Nyaibate Church of God.





LESSON I

JACOB MEETS RACHEL

Scripture Reading: Genesis 29:1-20.

Golden Text: Genesis 29:18.

"And Jacob loved Rachel; and said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel thy younger daughter."

1. Jacob continues on his journey. Where does he arrive? Genesis 29:1-2.
2. While at the well, what did he ask of the men present, and what was their reply? Genesis 29:3-6.
3. Who arrived next at the well? Genesis 29:9.
4. What did Jacob do when he saw Rachel? Genesis 29:10-11.
5. What did Rachel's father, Laban, do when he heard of Jacob's presence? Genesis 29:12-14.
6. What did Laban offer Jacob? Genesis 29:15.
7. What was Jacob's request, and did he agree? Genesis 29:18-20.

1. Where does Jacob send his messengers, and what are they to do and say? Genesis 32:3-5.
2. What did the messengers report back to Jacob? Genesis 32:6.
3. How did Jacob feel, and what did he then do? Genesis 32:7-8.
4. When Jacob first approached Esau, what does he do and why? Genesis 33:1-3.
5. When Esau sees Jacob, what does he do? Genesis 33:4.
6. After Esau meets Jacob's family, what do the two men discuss? Genesis 33:8-11.
7. Where did Esau return, and where did Jacob go? Genesis 33:16-20.
8. What name did God give to Jacob, and what did God promise him? Genesis 32:28; 35:10-12.

NOTE: This was a continuation of God's promise to Abraham as Jacob was Abraham's grandson. Matthew 1:2.

LESSON II

JACOB RETURNS TO SEE ESAU

Scripture Reading: Genesis 32:1-8; 33:1-20.

Golden Text: Genesis 33:4.

"And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on his neck, and kissed him: and they wept."

NOTE: Laban wasn't honest with Jacob and tricked him by giving him the oldest daughter, Leah. Jacob worked another seven years for Rachel. Jacob continues to work hard and has much wealth. He decides it is time to return home to make peace with his brother, Esau.



LESSON III

JOSEPH THE DREAMER

Scripture Reading: Genesis 37:1-11.

Golden Text: Genesis 37:3.

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children, because he was the son of his old age: and he made him a coat of many colours."

1. Who were Jacob's twelve sons? I Chronicles 2:1-2.
2. Why did Joseph's father love him the most? Genesis 37:3 (first part).
3. What did he make for him? Genesis 37:3 (last part).
4. Why did his brothers hate him? Genesis 37:4.
5. What was the dream that made his brothers hate him even more? Genesis 37:5-7.

NOTE: The word "obesance" means to bow down and pay respect to someone.

6. What else did Joseph dream in another dream? Genesis 37:9.
7. What did Joseph's father think the dream meant? Genesis 37:10.

LESSON IV

JOSEPH BEING SOLD

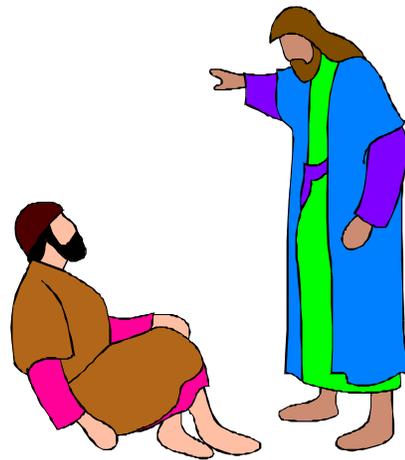
Scripture Reading: Genesis 37:12-28.

Golden Text: Genesis 37:19.

"And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh."

1. Where did Jacob send Joseph? Genesis 37:13-14.
2. Where did Joseph find his brothers? Genesis 37:17.

3. What did his brothers plan to do to him when they saw him coming? Genesis 37:18-20.
4. Who objected to this plan? Genesis 37:21.
5. When Joseph came, what did they do to him? Genesis 37:23-24.
6. What did they decide to do with Joseph when the Ishmaelites came by? Genesis 37:26-27.
7. How many pieces of silver did they get for Joseph? Genesis 37:28.



HOW OLD WAS JOSEPH WHEN HIS BROTHERS SOLD HIM?

Start with the number of years
Moses led the Hebrews in the wilderness.
(Numbers 14:33).

Subtract the number of chapters in the book of Jude.

Divide by the number of crosses
on the hill where Jesus died.

Add the number of chapters in the book of Ruth.

You now know how old Joseph was when
he was sold by his brothers.



RIVER OF LIFE

The sluggish water moved lazily between its dusty banks. It didn't look like much of a river today, but Anthony knew the secret of the Nile River. He knew that as surely as autumn follows summer, the lazy river would soon turn into a river of life, flooding its dry, dusty banks.

Anthony squinted his big, dark eyes against the burning rays of the sun. There had not been a sign of a cloud in the blue sky throughout the winter, spring, and summer. Day after day Anthony had kept the buffaloes moving around and around, pulling the huge waterwheel. That wheel turned another wheel which had earthen pots all around. Each pot dipped into the river as the wheel turned and brought a small amount of water to pour upon the dry earth. Without the waterwheel, the crops would quickly die under the scorching sun.

"An-tho-nee-e-e!" someone called.

Anthony shaded his eyes to see some of his friends waving to him across the fields. "Go with us to the marketplace," they called.

"Father told me to stay with the waterwheel," Anthony explained.

"Anthony, the obedient son," the boys teased him. "Your father is the richest man around. He could hire servants to do this work. Why is he such a grouch?"

"My father is the best man in the world," Anthony answered. "I am thankful to be his son. I would never disobey him."

The boys went on their way laughing and joking. Anthony wanted to chase after them and make them sorry for their teasing, but he knew better. Anthony's father was a Child of God. He had taught Anthony to forgive people.

"Oh, well, it won't be long now," Anthony sighed.

"Soon the river will overflow its banks and flood the land with water and rich soil. Then I won't have to stay with this waterwheel every day."

"Just look at that!" Anthony shouted to his father. "The Nile brings water to our countryside. What would we do without that faithful river?"

"Remember that God is the one who made the river," said Father. "God is the faithful one who cares for us. He is the one you should praise."

"Yes, Father," Anthony agreed, "but I am just so glad to be free from that waterwheel. Now I can play with my friends."

"Anthony, there is still work to be done," said Father. "Already the waters are sinking low. We must sow our grain in the fertile mud that the river has left."

Anthony willingly obeyed his father and helped him sow the grain.

Soon the banks of the Nile were changed into a rich field of golden grain.

"Thank you for helping me." Father said to Anthony. "You have been a good and obedient son."

"But you are the best father in the world," said Anthony. "I would never disobey you."

"I hope you will always obey God who is your Heavenly father," said Father. "God has faithfully cared for us. You can show how thankful you are by obeying Him."

A few years later Anthony's parents died. Then he became the wealthy owner of the huge farm. Anthony missed his parents, but he remembered that God was his Heavenly Father. He began to listen carefully to God's Word, just as he had always listened to the words of his father.

One Sabbath the minister read the Bible story of a rich young man who asked Jesus, "What must I do to live close to God forever?"

Jesus told him, "Go and sell all that you have and give to the poor. Then follow Me."

Anthony felt that the words of Jesus were meant especially of him. "I will obey, for my Heavenly Father sent Jesus to show me what to do." Anthony decided.

Anthony wasted no time. He sold his land and his herds and used his money to help the poor. From that

time on, he obeyed, and God helped him and cared for him.

Sometimes when Anthony had a difficult problem, he sat down beside the river to pray. Then he remembered how faithful the river had always been.

"But God is the faithful one," Anthony would remember. "He will help me with my problems!"

Then a great joy would fill Anthony's heart and overflow in praise just as the waters of the Nile overflowed their banks.

"Great is thy faithfulness!" Anthony praised God. "I used to think that the Nile River brought life, but now know that God is truly the River of life!"

RIVERS OF THE BIBLE

Unscramble the following words to make names of rivers found in the Bible.

Use the list and Bible Text to help you.

Each one is used once.

- PHARPAR (II KINGS 5:12)
- GIHON (GENESIS 2:13)
- CHERITH (I KINGS 17:3)
- PISON (GENESIS 2:11)
- JABBOK (GENESIS 32:22)
- KIDRON (II SAMUEL 15:23)
- HIDDEKEL (GENESIS 2:14)
- EUPHRATES (DEUTERONOMY 11:24)
- JORDAN (MATTHEW 3:13)
- ULAI (DANIEL 8:2)

- RAPHARP
- PINSO
- HSUETPEAR
- ILAU
- DIDHEKEL
- HITCHER
- NO RIDK
- JARNOD
- HOGIN
- BOBJAK

Answer to "How old is Joseph" -
 $40 - 1 = 39$ divided by $3 = 13 + 4 = 17$.

Follow the instructions for each name to find out why Jacob sent his ten sons to Egypt. Put those letters in the blanks below.

- JUDAH Circle the 5th letter
- ASHER Circle the last two letters
- LEVI Circle the 2nd and 4th letters
- ISSACHAR Circle the 2nd and 5th letters
- SIMEON Circle the "O"
- REUBEN Circle the 1st letter
- DAN Circle the last letter
- BENJAMIN Circle the last two letters
- ZEBULUN Circle the 2nd letter
- GAD Circle the first letter
- JOSEPH Circle the fifth letter
- NAPHTALI Circle the "T"

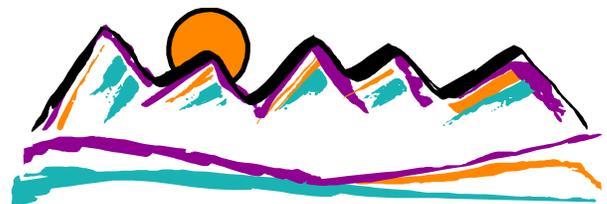
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 _ _ _ _ Y _ _ .

In the Bible, older people would give advice to young people, just as they do today. Look up the Bible Verses below and describe who was handing out advice and what he or she said.

Advice From:

To:

1. Joshua 23:1-2,6
2. I Chronicles 28:20
3. I Timothy 1:1,18-19; 2:1
4. James 1:1,22
5. II Peter 1:1, 5-8





The House You Build



An elderly carpenter was ready to retire. He told his employer-contractor of his plans to leave the house-building business and live a more leisurely life with his wife enjoying his extended family. He would miss the paycheck, but he needed to retire. They could get by. The contractor was sorry to see his good worker go and asked if he could build just one more house as a personal favor. The carpenter said yes, but in time it was easy to see that his heart was not in his work. He resorted to shoddy workmanship and used inferior materials. It was an unfortunate way to end a dedicated career. When the carpenter finished his work the employer came to inspect the house. He handed the front-door key to the carpenter. "This is your house," he said, "my gift to you." The carpenter was shocked! What a shame! If he had only known he was building his own house, he would have done it all so differently.



So it is with us. We build our lives, a day at a time, often putting less than our best into the building. Then with a shock we realize we have to live in the house we have built. If we could do it over, we'd do it much differently. But we cannot go back. You are the carpenter. Each day you hammer a nail, place a board, erect a wall. "Life is a do-it-yourself project," someone has said. Your attitudes and the choices you make today, build the "house" you live in tomorrow.....Build wisely!