

The Advocate of Truth





TABLE OF CONTENTS

PAGE

Word Keys That Unlock Truth 3
 Our word this month is "obedience".

Jesus Is Coming Again 3-5
 This theme is very important, because we know the time is short.

Satan's Influence 5-7
 We must always be watchful, because Satan often appears as an angel of light.

The Premillennialist Must Believe His Bible 7-8
 Understanding and believing the Scriptures is the only way the true premillennialist can validate his belief.

The Date of The Lord's Supper 8

Let's Make The Right Choice 9-10
 Sooner or later a person must make a choice.

Though Your Sins Be As Scarlet 11
 Jesus is our great cleansing agent.

Who Is Apollyon? 12-13
 Is he an agent of Satan?

The Signs Of The Times 14-15
 Rapping from the pulpit is being done.

Questions And Answers 16-17
 How can the Heavenly Father show vengeance, because He is a God of love?

The Church Around The World 18-19
 This month we look at Dallas, Texas.

The Children's Pages 20-23
Sabbath School Lessons
A Story - "Terry's New Puzzle"
Games and Puzzles

The Advocate of Truth is the official organ of The Church of God (7th Day) with headquarters at Salem, West Virginia.

It is published once a month on the fourth Monday of each month by The Advocate of Truth Press, Inc. PO Box 328, Salem, West Virginia 26426. Entered as Second Class Matter on January 22, 1990 (now periodicals) at the Post Office in Salem, West Virginia under the Postal Act of March 3, 1879. The magazine is mailed under the periodicals rate.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Your subscription is free. It is paid for by people who are concerned about the truth.

Your contributions are sincerely appreciated. You may request this periodical by sending your mailing address to this address.

POSTMASTER:

Please send address changes to:

**THE CHURCH OF GOD
 PUBLISHING HOUSE
 P.O. Box 328
 Salem, WV 26426-0328**

Telephone: 304-782-1411

Fax: 304-782-2248

E-Mail: cogsevday@aol.com

Web site: www.churchofgod-7thday.org

Del DeLong

Bond Tennant.....Editorial Staff

Gary Mills Managing Editor

Ludina Mills.....Children's Page Editor

Fred Hardman Printer

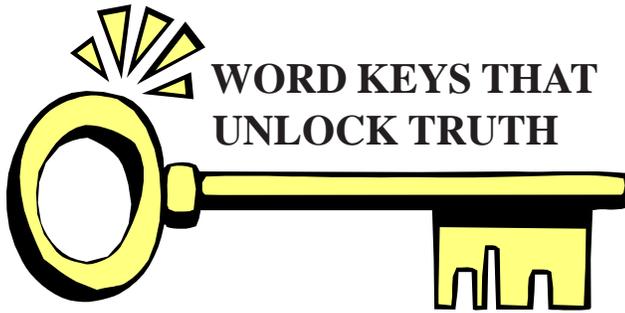
Volume LV

Number 8

February 27, 2006

The Advocate of Truth

USPS 542-940



OBEDIENCE

We can define obedience as the act of conforming to the command of a superior out of due regard for his authority. We conform to the command of our supervisor or boss at work. If we did not, we would not reap the benefits of a paycheck. Children conform to the instructions and directions of their teachers, and their teachers conform to the directives of the principal.

God's word leaves no doubt that we are to be in obedience to Him if we wish to be called His children. "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine" (Exodus 19:5). "Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries" (Exodus 23:21-22). "Then Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men" (Acts 5:29). "But whose looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed"

(James 1:25).

There are blessings for being obedient. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity. Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house: and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock. And everyone that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it" (Matthew 7:21-27). "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).

The most paramount example for obedience is the obedience of Our Lord Jesus Christ to His Father. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (Romans 5:19). "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross" (Philippians 2:8). "Who in the days of his flesh, when he had offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him from death, and was heard in that he feared; Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:7-9).



JESUS IS COMING AGAIN HIS COMING IS PREMILLENNIAL

BY CHRIS W. ROYER (DECEASED)

This theme is very important to us for we feel and know that the coming of the Lord is very near at hand.

The following Scripture texts will definitely prove, without a shadow of a doubt, that Jesus is coming before the millennium. There are many Sabbath keepers today who

believe that the saints are going to be caught up in heaven for one thousand years, and then after the millennium Christ will come and reign on earth for eternity. The Bible will prove this theory to be misleading and will forever show readers that His coming is before the one thousand years,

and His reign will be during the thousand years.

(1) In II Thessalonians 2:8, the Antichrist, who is on all sides confessed to be premillennial, is to be destroyed with the brightness of His coming, (Christ's) or more literally the "epiphany" of His presence. In the Bible, we find the different words used in connection with the return of our Saviour. The Greek Bible dictionary states "Epiphany" - The complete return and coming of the Lord, appearing to all in brightness. "Parousia" - The personal appearance and coming for the saints or coming with the reward for His church. "A'pokalupsis" - The unveiling and revealing of Christ's second coming. The word "Epiphany" means the general and all inclusive return of Christ. It embodies the stages of His return. All three words are used only in a premillennial advent. The Epiphany and Parousia united is the complete coming of the Son of man.

(2) The true Church of God is a persecuted, suffering, cross-bearing group of people, therefore appointed, so that "all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:12). This will continue until Christ comes, which precludes any millennium until after His coming.

(3) We are nowhere in the New Testament directed to look for the millennium before the coming of Christ. But we are expressly taught that the tares and the wheat will grow together until the end (of this age); that even men and seducers will wax worse and worse; that as it was in the days of Noah and Lot, so shall it be in the coming of the Son of man. And such is the character and number of the tares that at their destruction, before the harvest, would endanger the children of God. This absolutely precludes the idea of a thousand years of righteousness in this dispensation. "But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Matthew 13:29-30). "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the day of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot

went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:26-30).

"Knowing this first that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation" (II Peter 3:3-4). The effort by man to establish peace on the earth has been a continual failure. It will be a failure in this sin-cursed earth until the second Adam (Jesus Christ), who has overcome Satan, shall return to purify the earth and establish the Kingdom of God, therefore there will be no millennium until Christ comes. But while we are not told to look for the millennium, we are repeatedly and most solemnly enjoined to look for the return of our Lord. So we again conclude that His return must be premillennial,

(4) The Millennium Kingdom will be a literal reign of Christ on the earth, and not simply a spiritual exaltation of the Church. "Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment" (Isaiah 32:1). "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth" (Jeremiah 23:5). "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matthew 19:28). "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (Revelation 5:10). Speaking of the kingdom of Israel, the Lord God says: "I will overturn, overturn, overturn, it: and it shall be no more, until he comes whose right it is; and I will give it him" (Ezekiel 21:27). The nation of Israel will not become a kingdom with a king at its helm until Jesus returns and takes up the throne of David.

(5) We believe that the resurrection of the dead is a conclusive argument showing the premillennial coming of Christ. All the dead will be raised, but, as Jesus was raised out of the earth first, and the rest of the dead were left, so the dead in Christ that are His at His coming, will be raised out of the earth first, and the rest of the dead will be left until another resurrection. The first resurrection is for the righteous only, and this occurs at the time of the reaping

phase of the second advent. This definitely is before the millennium begins.

We believe that the coming of our Lord is to be personal and premillennial, also, that it is imminent. Let us remember the admonition that we must distinguish between the reaping phase and the warring phase, or rap-

ture and revelation, or parousia and epiphany. His coming in the clouds (rapture) is to receive His saints (I Thessalonians 4:16-17). This may occur at any time. And the revelation of His coming with His saints is to smite the nations, and to rule them with a rod of iron, and to establish His kingdom: to rule with justice and equity for ONE THOUSAND YEARS. Amen.

Adapted from The Advocate of Truth
June 10, 1957



SATAN'S INFLUENCE

BY SIEGFRIED MAYWALD

We as Christians must always be aware that Satan himself appears transformed as an angel of light. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light" (II Corinthians 11:14). He uses the scriptures to deceive us like he deceived Eve in the garden of Eden when he said, "..., Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:4-5). Therefore, we must not be ignorant toward Satan's devices, and we must always be alert and act in a vigilant way or Satan will get the advantage of us "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Corinthians 2:11). Our Lord Jesus Christ warns us in Matthew 24:24, "For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; in so much that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect" (Ephesians 6:12-17) tells us, "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of

faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God."

We must re recognize that Satan's influence on us is based on certain agreements we make. The most common agreements we see made by people in the world can be summarized with the following statements:

1. It is ok to lie. Little white lies do not really hurt anyone. In general, they only cover simple cosmetic deficiencies. However, we must acknowledge that a lie remains a lie no matter what size or how important it may seem.
2. It is ok to steal at times.
3. It is ok to be disrespectful to your parents. You have the right to voice your opinion!
4. It is ok to use foul language because it does not hurt any body. It is my choice to so do so.
5. It is ok to look at pornography because it is only another form of art.
6. It is ok for me to look and lust after other men and women or other people's property.
7. It is ok to eat whatever my heart desires to eat. Nobody died from eating pork!
8. It is ok for me to dress scantily.
9. It is ok for me to gamble because I have the right to do with my money what I want.

10. It is ok for me to drink alcohol. I am in control of my action, and one glass does not hurt anybody. It can even be medicine for my own infirmities. Yet, how many can not restrain themselves and become deceived thereby?

11. It is ok to take drugs to get away from the problems in real life. It is only my body that is affected. I do what I want, not what someone tells me.

12. It is ok for me to compromise. It does not offend and makes everybody happy.

But how far will this go? Where do we draw the line or set the limit? Can we sit on the picket fence and have it both ways? God's word tells us that the friendship of the world is enmity against God's. Can we act in a lukewarm manner toward God's word and expect to be saved? No, absolutely not! Revelation 3:16-18 reads, "So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see."

The Bible is the maintenance manual which God has given us to find and attain a happy and healthful life. Therefore, God also gives us the warning not to neglect His word, but to learn from it and abide by it. We are told to train our ears to hear and our eyes to see that we may understand His word and apply with wisdom the knowledge we have acquired. We either believe and act in obedience to His will or we lose out on His promise of eternal life. It becomes our choice!

Be careful with celebrations or what you promise! To many people, some celebrations are good and harmless, but in fact are in opposition to the word of God. Become not deceived by the flare of the world. Exercise caution when you celebrate your accomplishments, for Satan will only double his efforts to deceive you. Therefore Jesus instructs us in Matthew 5:29-30, "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should

be cast into hell."

In other words, we must separate ourselves from any influence of evil. We must avoid any possible temptation of company that could cause us to be led astray. Do not follow-human reasoning. Trust God! Apply His advice as found in the scriptures, and do not lean unto your own understanding! If we do not apply the principles as outlined in the scriptures, we sooner or later will have to pay for it with fatal consequences.

Our society has a problem. When people have it too good, they start to neglect the word of God and fall into many temptations. People make compromises, agreement for the sake of convenience. They want to act according to humanitarian and political standards. The word of God sets limitation to moral and ethical understanding and therefore is not wanted. The tendency is to please people in their desires and lusts for ungodly activities. The law of God sets too many limitations to which many people in our modern society do not feel obliged. They do not understand that God has set laws in motion which bring forth cause and effect. When these laws are neglected, we in the end will always reap the effect and pay for it with dire consequences. The result of our disobedience is a great increase in immoral and criminal activity in our society especially among the youth.

We should never get discouraged if we feel miserable or wake up with back pain, sore joints, or are still tired. Always remember that God does care. He will not neglect you. You are still His child. He never promised us that all things would only be well for us and that we would never have to face difficulties in our lives. Let us always remember that we as believers do not walk by sight but by faith in the word of our Lord Jesus Christ. We rely on things which can not be seen, yet we know they exist. In Hebrews 11:1 and 3, we are told, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear."

In Ephesians 6:11-12, the Apostle Paul tells us to "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." If this present life is more important to us than the life to come, then you will

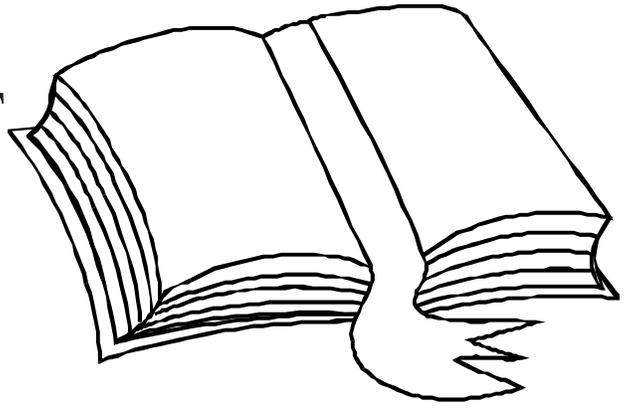
do everything possible to protect your life. However, if you want to follow in Jesus Christ's footsteps, you will have to accept to also walk in unpleasantness, unsafe circumstances and may even have to risk death and not fear it because Jesus promises that He will resurrect you to eternal life at the end. True Christians will stand up for Jesus' words and serve Him. We must willingly deny self, take up our cross and follow Him. "For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed,

when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels" (Luke 9:24-26).

In John 10:10, Jesus said, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Always remember that the thief is Satan who comes to steal, kill and destroy, but Jesus Christ is the door and the way to bring us life abundantly. He is our Lord and Savior, and following Him may be difficult at times, but it will be well worth the pain and effort in the end. May God bless, guide and direct you and give you the strength to follow Him always.

THE PREMILLENNIALIST MUST BELIEVE HIS BIBLE

Reprinted



Can one be a Premillennialist and not believe in the verbal inspiration of the Scripture?

This is a question sometimes put to us and it is immediately apparent that the Premillennialist is at opposite poles of thought from the Biblicists and one would certainly have to hold some very strong belief as to the authority of Scripture on which our belief is so solidly based.

This eschatological belief in a personal visible, literal, verbal and premillennial return of Christ is not a viewpoint that anyone would be likely to devise on rational grounds. For its every detail of the two phases of Christ's return rests on plain statements of the word of God, and those who do believe in the inspiration of the Bible, must exercise to give these many statements figurative meanings.

We teach that man's idea of "getting better" is a wrong premise; man's philosophies and inventions will never be able to redeem society; and that there will never be a

universal peace apart from the next coming of the Prince of Peace when He establishes His kingdom of peace.

There has been tremendous doings by people that are destroying the earth. The diabolical instruments of destruction in our day have shown so clearly that any hope of saving this world will be a waste of work. The more man tries to keep the forests, purify the water, keep waste from building up, wasting the natural resources, causing the ozone layer to be penetrated, all help to destroy the earth. We are told in Ecclesiastes 9:18 that "One sinner destroyeth much good." Revelation 11:18 tells us that the Lord will "Destroy them which destroy the earth." Most thinkers who have so long taught men to expect a gradual perfecting of earth through education processes have begun to express themselves in a somber vein of exasperation. Theologians who a few years ago so confidently declared that the world was getting better, are scarcely vocal today, although some still cling to the idea that even yet mankind will awaken to the foolishness of fighting,

flock to the churches and thus cause the kingdom of God to triumph on earth.

The greatest puzzles to us are those who regard themselves as orthodox and evangelicals, affirming the absolute necessity of divine grace, yet in the realm of society seeming to cling to the competency of individuals to work things out to the point where a kingdom of righteousness will be brought in, the Lord not returning until the end of this golden age of man.

The Premillennialist regards such hopes as out of accord with clear Scripture teachings to the natural state of man under the influence of the "god of this world" who is ever gaining more experience in the spread of evil.

With all the triumphs of divine grace in individual believers, the Premillennialist sees no hope of their becoming a predominating influence in the world to the point of overcoming the unregenerate masses. He also perceives that, according to prophecy as the end of the age approaches, there is to be a great sweep of apostasy throughout the world of Christendom, as well as the rise of hundreds of satanic religious cults parading the very name of Jesus.

This will go on until, "as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matthew 24:37-39). Jesus will come and catch up the saints into the air (I Thessalonians 4:17). The Lord will lift out of the world the true saints, while He permits men the full opportunity, with Satan's help, of working out all their devices to the logical end. Once and for all it will then be demonstrated that neither with the wisest of earth or the cleverest in the ranks of the Devil, is there any wisdom to rule the earth in peace and righteousness.

We, the Children of God, Premillennialists, therefore take the Word of God literally as showing that nothing short of a supernatural intervention of divine power - the personal, visible return of Jesus Christ - accompanied by the first resurrection of the saints and the living translation of believers, will suffice to bring about a purging of the present order and the introduction of a new and happy

one.

All this we have on the most explicit repetition of the Bible. Just as Bible history shows the utter failure of every previous era instituted by men, so the prophetic Word foretells the total failure of all the great political schemes of men in this age, and its culmination in the worst period of tribulation that has ever befallen humanity.

The new order will have to come from above, or the human race will soon be exterminated. It will be instituted, we believe, in connection with the return in power and glory of the Son of man "with all his saints" at the warring phase of the second advent. Because premillennialist hold such a "Blessed Hope," of necessity they believe in the deity of Jesus, His becoming flesh, by being born of a virgin, His atoning blood, and His vital resurrection. Just as we believe in the total destruction of unregenerate individuals, so we believe in the eventual wiping out of the wicked portion of the human race. We continue to believe the literal setting up of a kingdom with Jesus being the KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS (Revelation 19:15-16).

This by no means implies that the Premillennialists assume no responsibilities as citizens. They must be responsible to uphold the good part of government by which they are protected and given benefits of society. Yet we are ever conscious of the fact that we must "OBEY GOD RATHER THAN MEN" (Hebrews 13:17; Acts 5:29). The greatest contribution we can make toward any real betterment of society is to be a faithful witness of the gospel and to help to add souls to the Body of Christ, which is the Church of God. Thus, we are hastening in the glorious day of our Lord's return. "And then shall many be offended, and shall betray one another ...and because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold...and this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; AND THEN SHALL THE END COME" (Matthew 24:10-14).

The Lord's Supper this year will be held the evening of April 12, 2006 (Roman time). This is Wednesday evening after sundown and the beginning of April 13th Bible time.

LET'S MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE

BOND TENNANT



"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision" (Joel 3:14).

Sooner or later a person must make a choice. He must decide the way he will go and the life he will live.

There are two masters, but Matthew 6:24 tells us, "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye can not serve God and mammon."

There are two roads, but Matthew 7:13-14 tells us, "Enter ye in to the strait gate: for wide is the gate and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

There are two ways, but Proverbs 16:25 tells us, "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death."

"But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life" (Romans 6:22). No one can choose for us. We must make the choice. Romans 6:23 tells us, "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." I John 3:4 tells us what sin is, "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." Let us now consider a few Bible characters who made the right choice.

REBEKAH MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE. We read these words in Genesis 24:57-58, And they said,

We will call the damsel, and inquire at her mouth. And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go." Rebekah chose to leave her homeland for a country of new customs and new ways. She chose to leave her family to live with strange people. She was going to marry a man she had never met (Isaac). This can be compared to our love for Jesus. "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him, not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Peter 1:8). Choosing Jesus is incomparable.

JOSHUA MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE. "Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and in truth: and put away the gods which your fathers served on the other side of the flood, and in Egypt: and serve ye the Lord. And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve; whether the gods which your fathers served that were on the other side of the flood, or the gods of the Amorites, in whose land ye dwell: but as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (Joshua 24:14-15). Joshua did not pressure the people. He told them to make their choice. They did so! "And the people answered and said, God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods; For the Lord our God, he it is that brought us up and our fathers out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage, and which did those great signs in our sight, and preserved us in all the way wherein we went, and among all the people through whom we passed" (vss. 16-17). He had a made-up mind. He did not say, "I will go along with the majority, " but" If all others go the other way, we will serve the

Lord."

ELIJAH MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE. "And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? if the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word" (I Kings 18:21). The One who answered by fire was really God. Elijah prayed a short prayer, the fire fell and consumed the sacrifice, the wood, the stones, the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. Then all the people made a choice: and when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God" (vs. 39). The Bible does not try to prove that there is a God. Everywhere proof is evident. "The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament sheweth his handywork" (Psalm 19:1).

MOSES MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE. Hebrews 11:24-27 tells us, "By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: for he endured, as seeing him who is invisible." Egypt is a type of sin. Moses chose to suffer and to give up pleasures of sin. Worldly pleasure is temporary. We must forsake sin to get out of the sinning business. "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of whole world" (I John 2:1-2). "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (I John 3:8-9).

RUTH MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE. "And Ruth said (to Naomi), entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whether thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest,

will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me" (Ruth 1:16-17). Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth "clave unto her." Orpah went back to her people and to obscurity. Ruth saw something in Naomi that none of her people had. Ruth was venturesome and brave, but most of all, she loved Naomi and believed in her. Orpah loved Naomi, but she loved safety and security better.

It is important to make the right choice. God advised the Israelites in Deuteronomy 30:19-20, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live: That thou mayest love the Lord thy God, and thou mayest obey his voice, and that thou mayest cleave unto him: for he is thy life, and the length of thy days: that thou mayest dwell in the land which the Lord swore unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, to give them." Proverbs 1:24-29 describes the consequences of not making the right choice, "Because I have called, and ye refused: I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded; But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I will also laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; When your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you. Then shall they call upon me, but I will not answer; they shall seek me early, but they shall not find me: For that they hated knowledge, and did not choose the fear of the Lord."

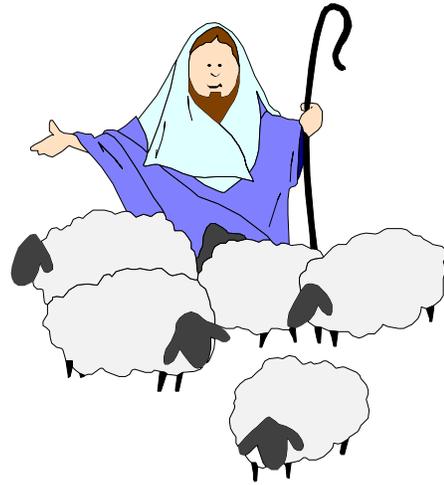
MAKE THE RIGHT CHOICE!

II Peter 3:9-11

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness."

THOUGH YOUR SINS BE AS SCARLET

BY SHANNA WILLIAMS



God's word defines sin as the transgression of the law. "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law" (I John 3:4). If we break the law, we are subject to punishment.

When one sins, it causes him or her to fall from grace and perfect standing with God. Sometimes when things go wrong, we feel like all is lost and life is hopeless. Satan wants us to believe that we are worthless. He may bring past experiences and thoughts back to our minds making us to even start to doubt our relationship with God.

Proverbs 24:16 states, "For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief". I John 2:1-2 states, "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sin: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

Let us consider an account found John 8:1-11. "Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he heard them not. So when they con-

tinued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her. Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more."

Life can throw to us many curve balls. Sometimes we may find ourselves in very sticky circumstances. We must always remember that no matter what the circumstances Jesus loves us and wants us to get back up when we fall.

The Lord wants us to go to Him to confess our sins. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9). We want to serve Him whole heartedly-not partially. "...Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:24).

God wants to purify us and make us whole. It is written in Isaiah 1:18, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."



Who is Apollyon?

By Del DeLong

This article is being reprinted by request. It was originally written in the July Advocate, 1980

Apollyon is mentioned one time in the scripture, so before we go into his identity, let us look at some background information from the Bible.

We are told in Revelation 15:1 that the seven last plagues are filled up with the wrath of God. These plagues will be poured out upon the earth, with the seventh plague culminating in the battle of Armageddon. These plagues are poured out after the saints are caught up to meet the Lord during the first resurrection. We saw where the plagues are filled up with the wrath of God in Revelation 15:1; but, at this time, they have not been poured out. The “pouring” occurs during the 16th chapter of Revelation. The saints of God stand on the sea of glass before these plagues are poured out as we read in Revelation 15:2; “And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.”

The saints are safe on the sea of glass and will not have the plagues come nigh their dwelling, for only with their eyes shall they see the destruction of the wicked. “Only with thine eyes shalt thou behold and see the reward of the wicked. Because thou hast made the Lord, which

is my refuge, even the most High, thy habitation” (Psalms 91:8,9).

One might ask, what do the seven last plagues have to do with Apollyon? Well Apollyon is directly connected with one of those plagues, as we shall soon see. It is important to note that the seven last plagues contain the wrath of God, and that they are from God. Some believe that the seven last plagues come from Satan, but the plagues are directed toward those who follow after Satan. We are told directly that the plagues contain the wrath of God, not the wrath of Satan.

To make the plagues more understandable, they are represented in two different ways in the book of Revelation. The first representation is the seven trumpets. This is found in Revelation 8:2. “And I saw the seven angels which stood before God: and to them were given seven trumpets.” Notice that these were angels which stood before God. Each trumpet plague is then sounded upon earth; the first beginning with Revelation 8:7, and the seventh beginning with Revelation 11:15. The second portrayal of the seven plagues are as vials. “And I heard a great voice out the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth” (Revelation 16:1). The vial plagues all

begin in the sixteenth chapter of Revelation. Notice here that the command to pour out the vials came from the temple of God and not from Satan. It is significant to note that these plagues are from God and contain His wrath and His will toward the wicked.

Let us now turn our attention to the fifth plague, for this is where we find Apollyon. His name appears under the trumpet plagues. The trumpet plagues go into greater detail than do the vial plagues. In examining the fifth vial, we find this plague is directed upon the seat of the beast. "And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, And blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds" (Revelation 16:10, 11). There is a more detailed explanation of this plague, as the fifth trumpet, in Revelation 9:1-12. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit" (Revelation 9:1).

This is the first time the bottomless pit is mentioned in the Scriptures. A thought comes to mind here. Since a star fell to earth upon the sounding of the fifth trumpet, this star may well be the bottomless pit descending to the earth from God. This can only be speculation, but the angel was given the key to the bottomless pit right after the star fell. The word bottomless can be described from the Greek as "an abyss".

When the angel opened the bottomless pit, creatures along with smoke ascended out of that pit. These creatures are described as locust like unto horses prepared for battle. See Revelation 9:7-9. "And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads were as it were crowns like gold, and their faces were as the faces of men. And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle." On their heads were crowns like gold,

and their faces were as the faces of men. These hideous creatures had tails like scorpions with which they were to sting the men of the earth. The stings were as the stings of scorpions, and they were to hurt men five months.

We can think of this bottomless pit as God's prison, because He uses this pit to bind Satan for 1,000 years after the battle of Armageddon. "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years." Revelation 20:1,2 Obviously Satan is not the leader of the bottomless pit. Satan is not the jailor of the bottomless pit, but he is a prisoner of this abyss.

Who is the jailor? Who is king over the locust creatures that do the will of God during the fifth plague? What is this being called? We can find the answers to these questions when we find the identity of Apollyon. The description of the locust creatures ends in Revelation 9:10. Let us continue to read the eleventh verse. "And they had a king over them, which is the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name is in the Hebrew tongue, Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath his name Apollyon."

Apollyon is that angel of the bottomless pit who does the will of God. This angel cannot be Satan for Satan is the prisoner and is chained in that same pit. Apollyon cannot be affiliated with Satan or he would try to loose Satan from that pit. It is the conclusion of the author of this article that Apollyon is an angel of the Lord. He has a dreadful job to do, but so do many other angels of God. Jesus told us in Matthew 12:25, 26 ". . .Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation: and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: And if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself: how shall then his kingdom stand?"

The bottomless pit cannot be from Satan, because he is a prisoner of it. Apollyon cannot be of Satan because Satan's angels are for Satan not against him.



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 articles appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*.

**Rapping from pulpit becomes new joyful noise
Churches use hip-hop in effort to reach teenagers**
by Carolyn Y. Johnson
Boston Globe

QUINCY, MASS. - House lights pulse to a hip-hip beat while the crowd whoops and screams at a stage sprayed with rainbow-colored lights.

The word of God spills out into the church in an electrifying, staccato stream.

"J Christ popping', never stopping', life of God is always rocking'," rap three members of Altar Nation, a religious rap ministry that performs weekly at the Bethel Church of the Nazareen's "Teen Extreme" services, drawing a crowd that rivals Sunday's attendance.

"We move the crowd and get them hyped," said rapper Kinsin Theodoris, 16.

"We're taking the culture of today and putting it out through God rock," he added.

While rap's unholy trinity of profanity, sex and bling seems an unlikely candidate for religious outreach, the medium has gotten a new message in churches over the past few years.

"It's like you're opening the eyes of a blind person," said Robert Connolly - a.k.a. RezaRec - who leads the youth ministry at Mount Moriah Baptist Church in Brockton, Mass. "The kids don't realize that God made everything," including rap," and they're used to seeing it used out of context. They don't realize it can be used in the right form, which is praising."

"Three H," or Holy Hip-Hop, music helps Bethel's

teenage congregation negotiate two worlds that don't quite match up with their life-styles or their beliefs.

In mainstream rap, "they're always talking about building up cash," Theodoris said. "For you to get big, to get to the top, you got to do it at the expense of others."

"Or shot your mama," fellow rapper Gerald Nelson chimed in.

But at the same time, the members of Altar Nation said a traditional church service, with choirs singing prim hymns, wasn't exactly the place for them either.

Theodoris said he would fake an illness, and always felt like he just didn't belong.

Now, the young men are in their element when they are bouncing around the alter, rapping about eternal life, nonstop gospel and the right path.

David Midwood, president of Vision New England, a group of 7,000 churches, said the seemingly unlikely marriage of God's word with Top 40 backbeats is not a surprise.

Christian rap is simply an extension of the black preaching style, and shares a legacy with the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., he said.

"If you follow 'I have A Dream,' you can almost hear that sense of rhythm and timing.. There's such a crossover between rap and Christian communication," he said.

At midwood's church in Lawrence, the youth ministry uses rap that transcends language barriers, slipping between English and Spanish over a booming beat to help youth culture meld with religion.

Behind every pocket of religious rap in the state - which most rappers can count on one hand - is a story of a life transformed by music.

The half-dozen rappers of Altar Nation that hang around after a recent sermon are fresh faced and energetic, vaulting over sets, dancing robotically to their friends' sons.

But their lives in one of Quincy's disadvantaged neighborhoods have changed, too.

"I used to swear every other word," Fidah Salem said, echoed by other members of the group, who said they used to be into "cursing and all that."

But gospel rappers firmly believe that their message will reach beyond their urban environments.

Verbal Witness has performed in Randolph, Newton and Hamilton "Teen extreme" draws teens from Braintree.

Comment

We have commented on the using things of this world to witness for Christ in this column before. Rapping is one of those things that only serves to hype a crowd. It produces a good feeling, but after the feeling gone, there is nothing left. The crowd must come back for more!

Martin Luther King, Jr. would not endorse the using of rap in his services...

A new debate over Transcendental Meditation TM proponents call methods valid educational tools

By Patrick Codnon

Associated Press

FAIRFIELD, IOWA - Here in the American headquarters of Transcendental Meditation, people like to brag that, much as in Grison Keillor's fictional Lake Wobegon, "all the children are above-average."

"The children are so enthusiastic to do 'things or competitions, academies, and so on," said Ashley Deans, headmaster of Maharishi School of the Age of Enlightenment, a private K-12 academy with about 300 students.

"And when they enter it, they win it - time and time again," Deans added.

The secret, school officials say, is Transcendental Meditation - the practice of involving a state of deep realization by mentally repeating a word, or mantra.

Advocates say TM can spread success at other schools, and groups promoting it recently have appeared at public schools in New York, California, Minnesota, Pennsylvania, Kentucky and other places.

But critics, and there are plenty, say Transcendental Meditation in public schools straddles the line between

church and state, and that other forms of meditation could be just as effective for students.

"I would call it a stealth religion," said Barry Markovsky, a University of South Carolina sociologist who researches social networks. "I would ask whether this is a group I would want to have teaching my children stress-reduction techniques."

Transcendental Meditation is a trademarker technique brought to the United States by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi, a Hindu monk who became guru to the Beatles, Mia Farrow and other celebrities in the 1960s.

In the '70s, he bought the bankrupt Parsons College in this southeastern Iowa city of about 10,000 and established Maharishi University of Management.

Followers recently formed the Consciousness-Based Education Association to provide "scientifically validated educational programs, technologies, and consulting service for new schools, existing schools and after-school organizations," according to the group's Web site.

"You have 10 million kids on antidepressants, one in five black kids with hypertension, America not leading the world in test scores," said Bob Rot, who is spokesman for the Consciousness-Based Education Association.

"Transcendental Meditation is not just a way to reduce stress, it's a way to prepare a student to learn," he added.

Roth said his group is not actively approaching schools, but rather providing information when asked.

"A school day can get pretty stressful," Maharishi School sophomore Cooper Rose said during a break from math class. "Being able to meditate every day gives you a change to settle, and to get a nice basis for the day on your mind."

A big stumbling block for widespread use in schools could be cost, with school having to pay about \$625 a year per student for TM training.

Skeptics say any form of meditation could accomplish the same results touted by TM advocates - without the religious undertones.

Comment

Transcendental Meditation is one of those forms of worldly meditation and has been commented on before in this column.

It has nothing to do with the separation of church and state on which subject many are confused.

BIBLE

Study



Question: Romans 12:19 states: "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." How can our Heavenly Father possess vengeance as He is a God of love?

Answer: The Apostle Paul knew these words of promise because they were recorded in the Holy Scriptures of that time. These words came from the pen of Moses as he was inspired to write them in Deuteronomy 32:35 saying, "To me belongeth vengeance and recompense..." The Scriptures further reveal to us that "the Lord is the avenger" in I Thessalonians 4:6. These texts make it very plain that God will avenge and punish all wickedness from off the face of the earth.

The reason for these few words is to inform you that there is a doctrine that teaches that God does not and can not kill or take revenge. Those who teach this doctrine feel that this is a teaching from the Scriptures that has been revealed unto them. We are warned in the Bible to beware of those who claim to be of God when in reality they are wolves in sheep's clothing. This type of doctrine comes from the idea of "do your own thing." It is not a new doctrine. It is the very same idea that Satan himself told Adam and Eve in the garden. He told them not to worry, there would be no punishment for their disobedience. The Nicolaitan doctrine, mentioned in Revelation 2:6, which the Lord hated was also of this same type. The Nicolaitans felt that whatever one did was just fine, and

Questions and Answers

they would receive eternal life. This is not God's way. Those who promote this doctrine are not of God, nor do they follow the Lord Jesus Christ.

There is a thought that just because the Father Himself does not bodily come down and literally destroy the wicked with His own hands that God does not kill. What has happened is that people have become so fascinated with God's method of doing things that they have forgotten it is He-the Lord doing it. Israel, because of their disobedience, were punished by God. God's punishment was sometimes meted out through invading armies from another country. Israel's seventy years of captivity in Babylon came about by their disobedience to the Lord. Many were killed when the armies of Babylon came and captured Jerusalem. This was the working of the Lord. The Lord claimed responsibility for this punishment in Daniel 9:14. "Therefore hath the Lord watched upon the evil, and brought it upon us: for the Lord our God is righteous in all his words which he doeth: for we obeyed not his voice."

Some may say that if the Lord did all these punishments, He could not be a God of love. To say that God would never mete out punishment for wickedness is the same to say that one does not know the Lord. The Lord chastises in many ways. Chastisement is a form of punishment, and is given with the end result of repentance in mind to the one who receives the chastisement. This is one of the ways God shows His true love toward His people. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." If we are to be called children of God, we can expect chastisement when we start to stray from the straight path of Jesus Christ.

There is an example of God's wrath recorded in the

time of Israel's wanderings under the leadership of Moses. In Numbers 16:2, we read of Korah and those with him who "rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown." These men wanted to assure the priesthood and control over the children of Israel. This position was given by God unto Moses earlier. Because of the wicked desire, the wrath of God was stirred greatly as we read when the Lord said, "Separate yourselves from among this congregation, that I may consume them any moment" (vs 21). The Lord did speak these words, and there can be no misunderstanding as to the intent of God at this time. Moses was then instructed to "Speak unto the congregation, saying, Get you up from about the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram" (vs 24). After they moved themselves away as the Lord said, Moses spoke a few words concerning the situation at hand. "And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder the two under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation" (vs. 31-33). "And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense" (vs. 35). Here, we have an example of God's wrath upon transgression! To those who believe that God does not kill, what is the conclusion to these thoughts from God's inspired word? What must we conclude from the destruction of Nadah and Abihu in Leviticus 10:2 where it records: "And there went out fire from the Lord, and devoured them, and they died before the Lord?" Are we then to conclude that a bolt of lightning came from the sky, and they died? Must we believe that an earthquake by itself covered up the transgressors against God in Numbers 16?

Let us not be deceived. When the Scriptures speak so plainly of God's revenge and wrath, let us believe it wholly. These things were written that we may know the reward of the wicked so we do not perish.

Let us consider a future time when God will be a wrathful God upon the wicked inhabitants of the earth. Isaiah foretold of this time. Speaking under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Isaiah wrote: "And I will punish the world for their evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause

the arrogance of the proud to cease, and will lay low the haughtiness of the terrible": (Isaiah 13:11). Again in Isaiah 26:21, we are reminded: "For, behold, the Lord cometh out of his placetto punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity: the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." This punishment will take place in the form of the seven Last Plagues. These plagues will be poured out by the angels of God. Some people may say - it is not God then who does these things. The writer asks these people, who foretold and initiated these plagues? Who under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit wrote that it is God who punishes the wicked? Who inspired the prophets to write these things? It is the Lord God Himself!

Another example of God's destructive force in action is that of Satan's end. We read of it in the 28th chapter of Ezekiel. "Thou hast defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of thine iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffick; therefore will I bring a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee" (vs. 18). This is what the great deceiver has in store for him in the end. Who is it that will bring all of this to pass? The Lord says "I WILL." There can be no dispute that the Lord will consume Satan completely, and he shall not exist anymore.

Yes, our Heavenly Father is truly a loving God to all who will be obedient unto Him according to His Word, the Bible. It is His wish that no man should perish but that all would come to repentance. This does not exclude the fact that the Lord is also a rewarder of the wicked. The end of the wicked will be eternal death, but the righteous will begin eternal life! What shall we say then? Is God unjust because He take a life? God forbid, for in Him is all righteousness. It is for us to study His Word and become obedient unto Him so that we do not lose our lives through disobedience.

To think for a moment that the Lord will not take his revenge for unrighteousness against the wicked is a very dangerous thought. It is this doctrine which allows for a permissive attitude about everything God represents. In these last days, there can be no allowance for an easing of our guard against the opposition. By saying that God does not take a life because of sin, we are detracting from the written Word. Let us not be deceived in this matter. "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."



Dallas, Texas USA

*The following pictures were taken during our conference in Dallas the first week in December.
We had three baptisms on Sabbath.*





LESSON I

THE GIBEONITES AVENGED ON SAUL

Scripture Reading: II Samuel 21:1-22.

Golden Text: II Samuel 21:9 (first part).

"And he delivered them into the hands of the Gibeonites, and they hanged them in the hill before the Lord:..."

NOTE: We have already learned that Absalom tried to steal the throne from David. This must have been one of the most troublesome things in David's reign. It involved the defection of some of David's most trusted advisors and utterly broke his heart. You may read chapters 17-20 of II Samuel to learn how Absalom was killed and how David was restored to his throne.

1. Why had there been a famine in the land for three years? II Samuel 21:1.
2. David called the Gibeonites unto him. Who were the Gibeonites, and what did David want with them? II Samuel 21:2-3.
3. What request did the Gibeonites make of King David? II Samuel 21:4-6.
4. Did the king spare any of Saul's family from death? II Samuel 21:7.
5. Who was delivered into the hands of the Gibeonites? What happened to them? II Samuel 21:8-9.
6. What did Rizpah the daughter of Aiah do? Did David hear of this? II Samuel 21:10-14.
7. David and his servants again fought the Philistines. Read II Samuel 21:15-22, and then tell the story in your own words of the battles with the giants.

LESSON II

DAVID'S SONG OF THANKS FOR DELIVERANCE

Scripture Reading: II Samuel 22:1-51.

Golden Text: II Samuel 22:33.

"God is my strength and power: and he maketh my way perfect."

NOTE: King David is very thankful to God for delivering him from all his enemies. Some of the same thought which we read in this chapter appeared in many of David's Psalms.

1. Why is David speaking to the Lord at this time? II Samuel 22:1.
2. What did he call the Lord in II Samuel 22:2-3?
3. From what had David been delivered? II Samuel 22:4-8.
4. How does David picture God when He is wroth? II Samuel 22:9-16.
5. How had the Lord delivered David? II Samuel 22:17-21.
6. Had David been upright before God? II Samuel 22:22-29.
7. Read II Samuel 22:30-44, and then name the many ways in which the Lord had helped David.
8. Did David realize he could do all things with the help of the Lord? II Samuel 22:45-51.

Answers to Miracles - 1. The fate of Lot's wife (Genesis 19:26). 2. The plagues in Egypt (Exodus 8:5). 3. The brazen serpent (Numbers 21:8-9). 4. The Shunammite's son raised (II Kings 4:35). 5. Elijah taken to heaven (II Kings 2:11). 6. Healing of Naaman's leprosy (II Kings 5:10). 7. Daniel in the lion's den (Daniel 6:16-23).

LESSON III

DAVID'S LAST WORDS

Scripture Reading: II Samuel 23:1-23.

Golden Text: II Samuel 23:2.

"The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue."

NOTE: We have been studying for some time the life of David. We are going to study now about the coming of his glorious but troubled existence. David was a grand character, impulsive, intensely human, generous to a fault; and though he did some things that were very wrong, he was strongly devoted to God and His ways. David stood like a rock for God.

1. What were David's last words? II Samuel 23:1-5.
2. What did he say about the sons of Belial? II Samuel 23:6-7.
3. David's mighty men are all listed in this chapter. Read II Samuel 23:8 and tell what these two men did.
4. Tell how Eleazar smote the Philistines in II Samuel 23:9-10.
5. Who was Shammah, and what did he do for David? II Samuel 23:11-12.
6. What did three of the thirty chiefs do to help David defeat the Philistines? II Samuel 23:13-17.
7. Who was Abishai? How did he help defeat the Philistines? II Samuel 23:18-19.
8. Who was Benaiah? What acts did he perform to help David? II Samuel 23:22-23.

LESSON IV

THE NUMBERING OF ISRAEL AND JUDAH

Scripture Reading: II Samuel 24:1-10.

Golden Text: II Samuel 24:1.

"And again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David against them to say, God, number Israel and Judah."

NOTE: In our last lesson, we studied about the close of David's reign as king. We are going to study now about how David numbered the people and how God regarded the act a sin to be punished.

1. What did the king demand Joab do in II Samuel 24:2?
2. Did Joab believe David was right in taking a national census? II Samuel 24:3.
3. Did Joab finally obey king David in this matter? II Samuel 24:4.
4. Name the cities where they numbered the people? II Samuel 24:5-7.
5. How long did it take them to do this? II Samuel 24:8.
6. How many people were in Israel and Judah? II Samuel 24:9.
7. Did David immediately realize he had sinned? II Samuel 24:10.

MIRACLES

What miracle do you associate with the following words?

1. Salt.
2. Frogs.
3. Hordes of snakes which bit the people.
4. A boy who sneezed seven times.
5. A chariot of fire.
6. Bathing in the Jordan.
7. Lions.
8. A great fish.
9. Removal of shoes.
10. Trumpets and marching men.



TERRY'S NEW PUZZLE

"Mother," Terry called, "I can't find my new puzzle. Have you seen it? I can't remember what I did with it."

"No," Mother answered, "I don't remember seeing it at all."

The puzzle was one that Uncle Jim had given Terry for his birthday, and Terry liked to put it together. It made a beautiful big picture of a ship when it was finished. Terry looked and looked, but he could not find his puzzle.

"Are you sure it isn't in your room?" Mother asked.

"I'm sure," said Terry. "But it was there yesterday. At least I'm quite sure it was. I wonder if Jimmy knows where it is." He went into little brother Jimmy's room. "Have you

seen my puzzle, Jimmy?"

Jimmy was sitting on the floor playing with a wooden train. "Puzzle?" he asked.

"You know," said Terry, "the box with all the little pieces in it that make a big boat when I put them together."

"Boat," said Jimmy. "Jimmy make boat." He went to his closet and opened the door. "Jimmy make boat," he said again.

Terry went to look. Parts of the puzzle were scattered here and there over the floor of the closet.

"Oh, no!" gasped Terry. "It's all over everywhere. I'll never find all of the pieces. Never." He looked down at the floor. The puzzle box was broken at the corners. "You naughty baby," Terry yelled. "Just see what you did to my puzzle. What did you do to the box? Did you sit on it?"

Jimmy began to cry. "Jimmy make boat. Pretty boat for Terry."

Mother heard all the noise and came in the room. Terry showed her the puzzle and the broken box.

"What were you doing with Terry's new puzzle?" she asked Jimmy.

"Jimmy make boat," Jimmy repeated. "Make boat for Terry."

"Were you trying to put it together for me?" Terry asked.

Jimmy nodded. "Terry's boat. Jimmy make." "Oh, mother," said Terry. "Jimmy was trying to help me. And I scolded him and made him cry." He put his arm around Jimmy. "Help brother pick up the puzzle," he said.

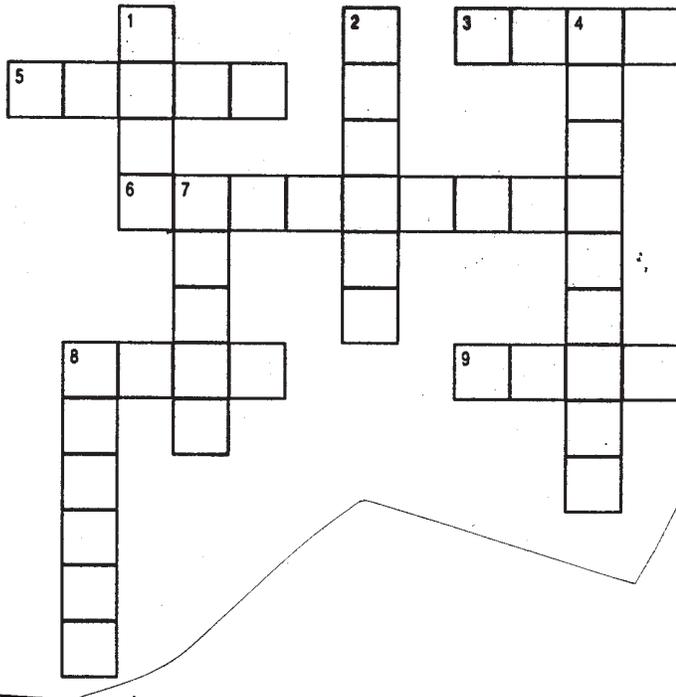
Terry picked up the broken box. Mother said, "We can mend it with mending tape. I'll do that while you and Jimmy pick up the pieces."

Soon the box was mended. Terry and Jimmy picked up the puzzle. Terry put the puzzle together to see if any puzzle pieces were missing. At last he had found all of the pieces. Jimmy clapped his hands when he saw the picture of the beautiful ship. "Pretty boat," he said. "Pretty, pretty boat."

"Do you like the ship?" Terry asked. "We want you to see the picture. I'll put it together for you, but you mustn't get brother's things without asking."

"Jimmy be good," he promised. "Be good for Terry." And he was.

RUTH

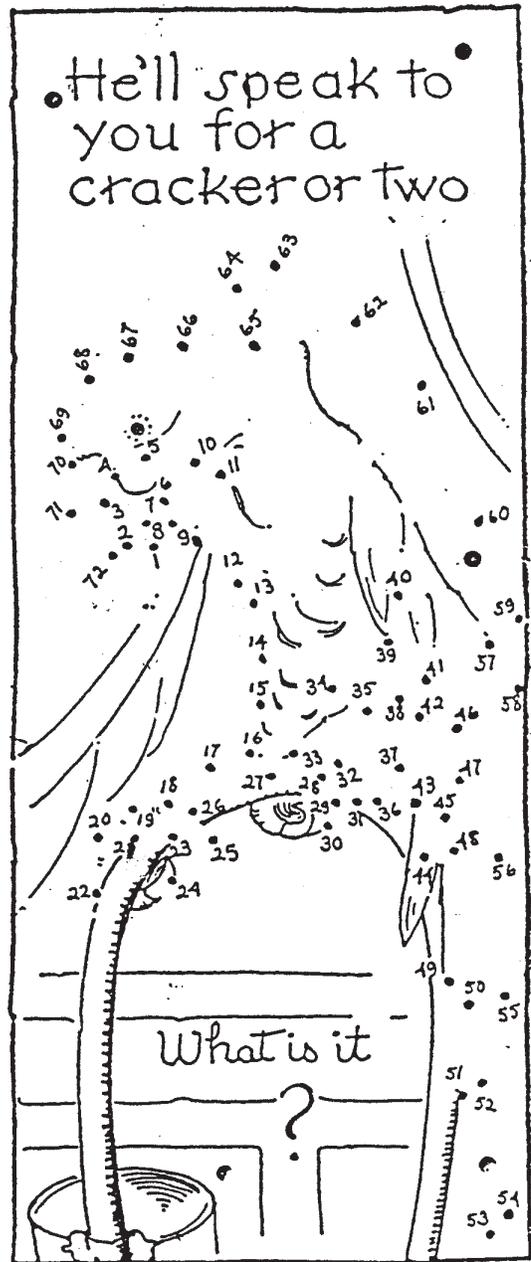


ACROSS

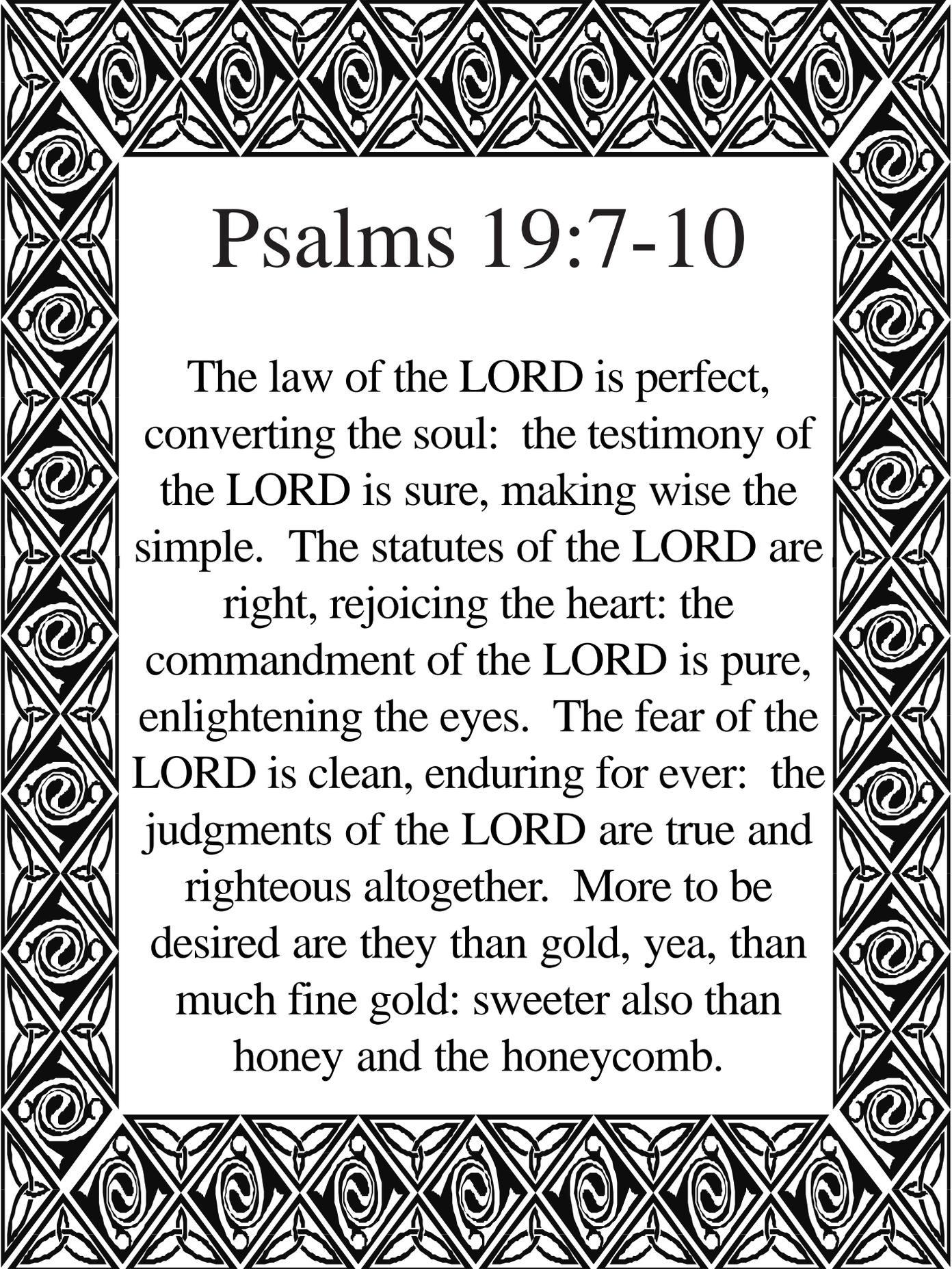
- 3. Ruth's first son's name. (Ruth 4:17)
- 5. Name of Ruth's mother-in-law. (Ruth 1:2)
- 6. City to which Ruth and her mother-in-law traveled. (Ruth 1:19)
- 8. Relative Ruth met in the field. (Ruth 2:4-9)
- 9. When Boaz was sleeping, Ruth went and layed at this location. (Ruth 3:7)

DOWN

- 1. Country which Ruth was from. (Ruth 1:4)
- 2. Ruth's first husband's name. (Ruth 4:10)
- 4. Name of Naomi's husband. (Ruth 1:2)
- 7. Unit of measurement equal to 1.1 bushels. (Ruth 2:17)
- 8. Grain Ruth gathered in the fields. (Ruth 2:17)



Draw from dot to dot



Psalms 19:7-10

The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb.