



The Advocate of Truth



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NEVER SATISFIED?

By Moises Torres M.



Speaking about His generation, the Lord Jesus once said:

"But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like unto children sitting in the markets, and calling unto their fellows, And saying, we have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented. For John came neither eating nor drinking, and they say, He hath a devil. The son of man came eating and drinking, and they say, Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners. But wisdom is justified of her children;" (Matthew 11:16-19).

The Lord Jesus denotes in these words the sad spiritual state of His generation. They were never satisfied; they criticized and contradicted everything. If their friends wanted to pipe so they could dance and have joy, they refused. If their friends mourned, they refused to lament. They did not accept the asceticism of John the Baptist and accused him of being demon -possessed. The Son of man came eating and drinking in a normal manner and they also refused Him. It is supposed that if John's manners did not suit them, Jesus' more ordinary habits would have pleased them, but **NOTHING PLEASED THEM!**

Our generation presents the same symptomatic signs of that spiritual sickness. There is a countless number of people in all spheres which display the same "never satisfied" attitude in their lives.

Our Lord's generation lacked an emotional stability and a definite purpose in life because they refused the spiritual guidance of the Son of God.

The same happens today. People are never satisfied, no matter what, because they are not interested in divine affairs. They do not want to know anything about God and His moral laws.

The rejection of the principles of God as a base for a good living makes people unhappy and never satisfied. Everything the Word of God commands and teaches helps man to have definite intentions in life. It encourages also to be content and to have definite vision and purpose.

John and Jesus exposed the word of salvation in different aspects and same purpose, but their generations were not interested in accepting either. Then, Jesus concluded saying, "wisdom is justified of her children." Yes, all those who did believe and followed the example of Jesus justified and confirmed in themselves the goodness of that wisdom personified in Himself.

"Never satisfied" is a consequence of a spiritual instability which men would display in the last days: "lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, false accusers, incontinent, despisers of those that are good," are signs of a non- stable character, (II Timothy 3:1-5). It is only through faith based on the moral principle of God that men can set their souls on the right path and be saved.

Let us be reminded that, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction in righteousness. That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Timothy 3:16,17.

Entertaining Guests

Jesus Christ - The Heavenly Guest

By Bond Tennant



"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God" (Ephesians 3:17-19).

To be host to a guest is something that most everyone enjoys. Possibly there is no one who would not like to entertain a guest who is a friend or a member of the family. The disposition of one to entertain guests in the home could depend very much on the attitude or behavior of guests entertained in the past. This is because there are those guests who make themselves unpleasant and undesirable. As in the everyday life, so it is in the spiritual life. In the Bible, we read of three undesirable and unpleasant guests:

1. **SATAN, the DEVIL**-He is tricky and full of wiles. "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Ephesians 6:11). He is a deceiver. "And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him" (Revelation 12:9). He is our adversary. "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Peter 5:8).

Satan is sneaky. He is always rounding about us in an effort to sneak into our lives. But we do not have to entertain him as a guest in our lives. "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).

2. **The WORLD..WORLDLINESS**-It causes us enmity with God. "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye

not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God?" (James 4:4). It is contrary to pure religion. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). We must not conform to it. "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God" (Romans 12:2). We are not to love it. "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" (I John 2:15).

If we, as individuals, entertain the world (worldliness) as a guest in our lives, the church will suffer bad consequences.

3. **The FLESH...EGO**-If we entertain the flesh as a guest in our lives, we cannot please God. "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God" (Romans 8:7-8). Entertaining the flesh in our lives is contrary to the Spirit. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would" (Galatians 5:17). Entertaining the flesh as a guest in our lives will exclude us from the kingdom of God. "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such

things shall not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21).

Jesus Christ is our pleasant heavenly guest. He is the Son of God. "And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:16-17). He is our Savior. "For unto us is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). He is our friend. "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you" (John 15:15).

If you have not yet done so, please invite Him into your life by first repenting and being baptized. "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Then keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they which keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (Revelation 14:12).

Receive Him as a permanent guest. Give Him the best room. He will save you and give you peace!

How Much Faith Does It Take To:

Cross a bridge?

Get married?

Sit on a chair?

Parachute from an airplane?

Ride a rollercoaster?

Jump into a raft?

Become a Christian?

In each of these situations you might feel fear or confidence to some degree. But faith is more than a feeling. Faith is a decision to entrust oneself to something or someone based on available information. This decision includes a knowledge of essential facts, a personal acceptance of those facts as true and necessary, and a commitment to act in accordance with those facts.

The same is true of saving faith. First you need basic Bible information about God, man, sin, and Christ. See Acts 10:34-43 and Romans 10:17. Then, once you realize that these facts are true and that they demand a personal response, you must choose to believe what God has said. You must trust Jesus Christ as your only hope of forgiveness and eternal life. "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture" (John 10:9). "Testifying both to Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21).

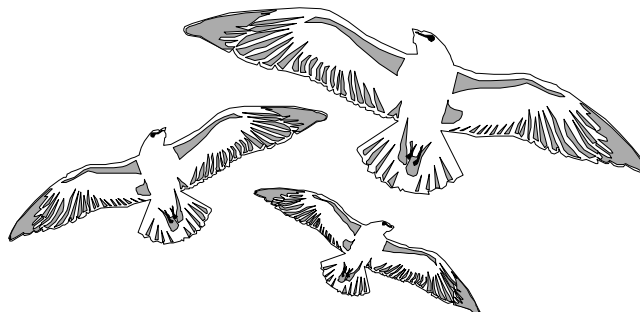
So, how much faith is enough? To answer this, ask yourself the following questions: Do I know the basic information about God, man, sin, and Christ? Have I recognized my hopeless condition without Jesus Christ? Have I accepted His offer of rescue? Have I responded in trust and obedience?

If you can answer yes from your heart to each of these questions, your faith is enough.

Selected

IN FLIGHT

BY LAURA TENNANT



Looking out the window at work or standing in the parking lot of a nearby grocery store, the sight of a flock of birds in flight has always taken my breath away. I never

tire of the beauty they create as they fly towards some predetermined destination. Often, I find myself gazing after them until the last bird is in sight, so overwhelmed am

I by the mystery they create within me. The beauty and wonder of their ability to so gracefully soar through the heavens overcomes me with a sense of greatness. The presence of God floods my soul, and I feel a little bit closer to Him at those moments. At the same time those birds in flight bring a feeling of peace as I stand in quiet awe. Such an ordinary event, yet how unique and special.

Recently I watched this mystery, and questions ran through my mind. It all looks so simple - flying through the endless sky, so natural, without a care in world, yet, I couldn't help but wonder more about those special creatures. I watched as the birds in front set the pace for the rest. Some would lay back and some would pull forward, some would fly with twists and turns, soaring and diving, some would cross over and some would create a group within the flock, separate, yet a part of the whole, but all continuing in flight.

My interest seemed to draw me to the birds at the back of the flock. I began to wonder if these small creatures felt bad about being at the back of the group. Did they aspire to be the leaders, to be the first to arrive? No, I am sure they did not wonder at all. Instinct pushed them to fly - to keep going - to continue onward - to reach their destination.

The same should be true in our lives. Jesus tells us to keep our mind focused on Him. Let us all remember those words so amply put in Philippians, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Our thoughts also should be to finish - to reach our destination, the New Jerusalem. Like the bird in flight, we should not concern ourselves with winning or losing. Our concern is not to be in first place or second or third, but simply to finish. Let us all be able to say as did Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Timothy 4:7-8).

I wondered what would happen if the birds lost sight of their objective. My thoughts then shifted to man as we continue on this path of life. Flying seems so light, so care-free, so problem free, but we know it is not without its hazards. As I continued to think of these small creatures, I decided to explore more of their nature. What wonderfully created beings - so magnificently made. Birds, however, must know what some of their obstacles are, as we are to know. They must be prepared. Some are naturally born with defects. We too are sometimes handicapped but must find the tools to help us through our weak spots.

As I watched these magnificent yet small creatures, I became curious to learn more about them. Everything about a bird is made for flight. They have a minimum weight but a maximum power. To take off and maintain flight, the bird can't be too heavy. Yet, to survive the conditions faced in the air and force of landing, it must be tough so as not to break on impact. These two qualities (lightness and toughness) are exactly how a bird is constructed. To survive the conditions faced in this life we must be both gentle and strong.

The first thing we might notice about a bird is its feathers. Feathers are designed in such perfection. They are light but very strong, and they are flexible but very tough. A bird's wing is the basic structure for flight. It is the shape of the wing that allows a bird to fly. The shape of the wing is made by the feathers.

The tail of the bird plays a big role during flight. The tail acts as the rudder, balancing and steering the bird. The tail also helps the bird in stopping. The tail is turned downward and acts like a brake.

However, flight is much more than feathers and wings. The best way to fly is to be light. The bones that birds have are also made for lightness. Birds have less bones than most animals. The bones they have are hard but thin. In birds, many bones are fused together. In this way, not as many muscles are needed. The biggest muscles a bird

has are its flight muscles. These are very strong because they have to raise the entire body into the air.

The structure of a bird's eye is very special. Birds have three eyelids. The retina of a bird's eyes is two times as thick as man's. Good eyesight is an important prerequisite of flight. Hearing is another sense that is strong in birds. The ears not only hear well but are used for maintaining balance. This is critical during flight. The uniqueness of these creature is endless. God has prepared them in just the precise way to perform their function. It is God who has given them the physical construction to fly. It is God who has given them the instincts to know how to do it. Birds don't study the laws of gravity but they use them. They make it look so easy. Most birds do not fly faster or higher than is needed. This is because it takes too much energy to climb against gravity. Also, there is less oxygen to breathe and support the bird high in the air.

Some birds make sharp turns to top speeds. Others fly mostly in straight lines. The difference is in their tail design. Because the tail is used like a rudder, the feathers are broad and stiff. These tail feathers open and close like a fan and move up and down. They also twist to the left or right.

Birds use their wings and tails in a variety of ways to achieve their expertise. Bird flight is dependent on the shape of the birds' wings and the way they use them.

Birds use flight in different ways. Some are on the wing most of time, while others make only short flights from one perch to another. They live in different habitats which generate different aerodynamic problems. It should therefore not be surprising that birds of different species have different shaped wings. Changing the shape of a wing gives it different aerodynamic properties.

Birds use the wind with great skill, as if they had studied science. Some birds use land drafts to soar and glide, like an eagle using the currents in a canyon. Seabirds are adept at using drafts over water.

As I studied these feathered creatures in flight, they all looked the same. But I know that couldn't be true, just as we are not the same as each other. It is no easy task with all the twists and turns this life can present to finish the course as God intended, but we are not alone. The other birds help one another in flight by their example. So we are to help each other through our course in life. God made special provisions for us, just as He has for His creatures. God has provided us with brethren to listen to our problems and offer us support. He has provided us with His Words and with His Son as our example. An avenue of prayer is open to us so we may communicate with our Heavenly Father. It is up to each and every one of us to take advantage of these provisions to help us finish our course.

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was yet before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:1-2).

The structure of the bird and the miracle of flight are signs from God if we choose to see them. Just as this small creature must keep focused, so must we. Keep focused, don't get sidetracked by the cares of this world. Remember these words in the book of Matthew. "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 10:22). Also revealed in Matthew 24:13, "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."

The next time you see birds in flight, look upward and feel the presence of God. Enjoy the closeness He wants you to have.



Professional Skeptics Tread Dangerous Ground

*The Facts
Clute, Texas*

My heart aches each time I see a TV special suggesting something about the Bible or Jesus might not be true. The programs are done with such professionalism that they can be persuasive. In addition, their underlying theme isn't ugly enough to be detected on radar in the consciences of a lot of people.

Here are example themes: There is beneficial content in the Bible, and it is loved by millions, although it is inaccurate in places and some of its stories are mythological. Believing Jesus rose from the dead is reassuring to a lot of people and very much a part of their meaningful traditions, although some scholars have begun to doubt the authenticity of an actual resurrection. Although Jesus wasn't really born in Bethlehem, the nativity scene is a sweet story.

What seems like scholars musing is actually eternally serious. What's going to happen to the men, women and children in whom they plant doubt? How will the scholars and programming executives fare at the Judgment when Christ confronts them with the naked fact they influenced people away from salvation rather than toward salvation. Before Mother died, while watching TV, she once said to me from her sick chair, "People are so ignorant of the Bible today that they don't even know when they are getting into big trouble." Of course, Mother was right.

What does the Bible say about people who - fancifully or vulgarly - distract from the gospel of Christ? I've done some of the research for you, and it follows.

They had better hope no children were in front of TV sets watching their programs. The Bible says, "Whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea" (Matthew 18:6).

The nay-saying scholars need to realize where they are categorizing themselves outside salvation. Believing in the resurrection, for example, is given as a condition of

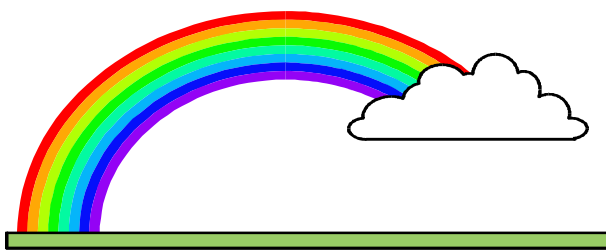
salvation in passages like this one: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Romans 10:9-10).

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus gives a parable about sowing the seeds of the gospel. He said, "A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the wayside; and it was trodden down, and the fowls of the air devoured it. And some fell upon a rock; and as soon as it was sprung up, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. Some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprang up with, and choked it. And other fell on good ground, and sprang up, and bear fruit a hundredfold." Jesus later explained, "Those by the wayside are they that hear; then cometh the devil, and taketh away the word out of their hearts, lest they should believe and be saved."

Besides, for whom then are the scholars and TV programmers working? Only Satan would want the seed removed. Mother was right.

God said in Scripture, "Now the just shall live by faith (in name and all the essentials of my plan of salvation): but if any man draw back (from me and my plan of salvation), my soul shall find no pleasure in him." The Apostle Paul wrote, "But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul" (Hebrews 10:38-39). My readers and I need to be as Paul.

The skeptics and their skepticism are not new. The professionalism of their delivery is. However, they didn't get ahead of the Bible. The Bible provided instruction about them for believers of their day and our day. The Apostle John wrote: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I John 4:1).



THE COMING KINGDOM OF GOD

By Daniel Sanchez

The American Heritage Dictionary defines a kingdom as a country ruled by a king or queen and an area in which one thing is dominant.

While our Lord Jesus Christ was on earth, He taught His disciples how to pray. He taught them plainly and in a simple way. Jesus said, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are; for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut the door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly. But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him. After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen" (Matthew 6:5-13).

Let us focus our attention on the words of Jesus when He said, "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (vs 10). This statement which was made by Jesus is very true! There are many who teach that the Kingdom of God will be in heaven. They teach that the saints will be taken to heaven where they will rule and reign with Christ for a thousand years. After the thousand years, or kingdom period is over, the saints will return to earth. This teaching is accepted by many denominations who claim to be Christian. Jesus said, "and no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (John 3:13).

When the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, which are found in God's Word, are compared to men's assumptions, the truth of God's Word will prevail. Nothing can

be added to it! God's Word tells us that the Kingdom of God will come to earth with the Holy City which is the New Jerusalem. The Apostle Paul said, "I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead, at his appearing and his kingdom" (II Timothy 4:1). Paul admonished Titus to stress the need for righteousness in holy living. Paul said, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

Our Lord Jesus Christ said, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son" (Revelation 21:7). We can be assured that we will enjoy the city and country prepared by God for those mentioned in Hebrews 11. "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God" (Hebrews 11:10). "For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country. And truly, if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city" (vss 14-16).

The Apostle Peter said this about Jesus Christ: "The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled" (Acts 3:13,18). "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began" (vss 19-21). Yes, all must be fulfilled! Jesus said, "... These are the words which I spake unto, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of

Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me" (Luke 24:44).

What do the prophets tell us about the ruling of Christ during His reign of a thousand years? Isaiah said: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:6-7). Jeremiah tells us that judgment and justice will be in the earth during that time. "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).

Christ will judge the nations on earth. In heaven there are no nations to be judged. Those who have never heard the fame and glory of the Lord will be able to do so during the thousand year period. Jesus commanded His disciples to preach the gospel to all nations. "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). This includes all. How can the deaf hear His word? How about the dumb who cannot speak and the dead who never heard of Jesus because they died without a preacher? These people will be able to know and exalt their Maker, Almighty God, during the thousand year period.

Some may say that these people are doomed, and there is no more provision for them to hear the word of God. God is no respecter of persons. The Prophet Isaiah says: "For I know their words and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send those that escape of them unto the nations, to Tarshish, Pul, and Lud, that draw the bow, to Tubal, and Javan, to the isles afar off, that have not heard my fame, neither have seen my glory; and they shall declare my glory among the Gentiles" (Isaiah 66:18-19). Psalm 72 and Psalm 100 tell us of the kingdom period.

Yes, all the nations will be His subjects. They will have work to do. There will be healing for the nations during the kingdom period, and the medicine will be different from that of the present age, and that medicine will be the leaves of the tree of life. "And he shewed me a pure river

of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Revelation 22:1-2). The Prophet Ezekiel tells us: "And it shall come to pass, that everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine" (Ezekiel 47:9,12).

Isaiah 65:17-25 tells us more about the conditions that will be in the earth during the kingdom period: "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy. And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying. There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner being an hundred years old shalt be accursed. And they shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands. They shall not labor in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the Lord, and their offspring with them. And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer: and while they are yet speaking, I will hear. The wolf and the lamb shall feed together, and the lion shall eat straw like the bullock: and dust shall be the serpent's meat. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."

Yes, the Kingdom of God will be on earth, and God's Will will be done in earth as it is in heaven. So come Jesus, our Redeemer, we pray!

Why Me?



By Laura Tennant

A few months ago one of my co-workers was hospitalized and then released home. I called him on the phone to let him know I was thinking of him. During our conversation he asked the question, "Why Me?" I tried to answer him the best I could, but my few words seemed empty and comfortless. I don't know that he really wanted an answer, but rather someone to listen. He recovered from his illness and returned to work, only to find himself with more medical problems. Again he was in the hospital. He called me from his hospital room to get information for short-term disability. Again his question was, "Why me?" I could only answer, "I don't know, Robert." When we ask a question, we expect an answer and we usually expect one immediately. But with God, there sometimes is no answer, immediate or otherwise. With this repeated question, Robert seemed already defeated. My husband and I prayed for Robert that Sabbath. When I returned to work Monday, I was told he had passed away. Since then those words, "Why Me?" have occupied my thoughts.

Every one of us has been confronted with life circumstances that compel us to ask this question, or something similar. There are times when events in our lives seem overwhelming or unfair. Perhaps you have lost a loved one prematurely or a life-altering illness has become a part of your daily life. Your children may have come into harm's way or may have made some wrong decisions and caused you grief or embarrassment. Perhaps your finances have been affected, or you have lost your job. Any number of circumstances may have happened and caused you to feel as if you were being singled out, only for you to ask the question, "Why me"? Be assured you are not alone.

Our feelings of "Why me?" are real. They are based on real events. They reach to the very core of our being. We, however, are quick to judge the event as good or bad. When we choose to believe that ALL the events in our life are good for us, even the ones that seem frustrating and painful for now, we are in agreement with God! Only God knows why we are going through these cir-

cumstances. "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose" (Romans 8:28). Our question might be a fleeting one or one that lingers and gnaws away at our very peace of mind, defeating a victory that is assured every child of God. Or thoughts can turn inward until the only voice we hear is our own, neglecting God's leading.

Our question might be, "Why isn't this happening to someone else?" We read in Matthew 5:45 the second part, "for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." God never promised to help us avoid problems. He promised to help us get through them. "...and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5, last part). The Lord is our help. "Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield" (Psalm 33:20). We read in Psalm 46:1: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble." As I read these two verses in Psalms, I am reminded that I am not alone. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth" (Psalm 121:1-2).

Sometimes circumstances are necessary to draw us closer to Him. Take a few minutes to read Hebrews chapter 11, then ask yourself, "What is the evidence of these people's faith in God?" Is it that God saved them from trouble or that they followed God in spite of their trouble? God's Word can be comforting and inspiring, but only if we allow it to work in our lives. Likewise, "Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:17-20, 26). Sometimes it is

so much easier to consume ourselves in self pity. Are we equipped to handle life's situations?" But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6).

Each of us is confronted with different situations. What may move one individual to question his circumstances or cry out because of them may not compel another. Why is it that some people seem to be able to bear things so much easier than others? Perhaps the answer is, "They are going it alone," or perhaps "They are not doing as well as we think." Don't be afraid to cry out to God. But remember to listen...He will hear your cry. God is not singling us out to punish us or make our life harder, but to allow us to grow and to rest in His perfect peace. We must all learn to rest and not wrestle. "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him" (Psalm 37:7, first part). "Truly my soul waiteth upon God: from him cometh my salvation" (Psalm 62:1).

Our world seems to revolve around us, but God often uses the events in our lives to do a work in the life of someone else. God wants to take our disappointments, problems, losses and weaknesses, along with our victories, and teach us through them. Through our problems, He teaches us to draw closer to Him. Our problems force us to either become closer and more dependent upon God or faint and be separated from Him. The answer to our question should be, "Because He loves me so much, He wants me to know His love is with me no matter what happens in my life." Our relationship with God isn't reflected in a lack of trouble. Instead, it's strengthened through trouble. That is why we can thank God even for our trouble. "But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 15:57).

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire wanting nothing" (James 1:2-4). We must remember we are not victims but victorious if we belong to Him. Remember these words of a well-known song? "Faith is the victory! Faith is the victory! O glorious victory, That overcomes the world." We may not always get an answer...but the victory still can be ours. "For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world,

even our faith" (I John 5:4). Let us remember those who have been victorious, those who have gone before us, so we need not ask that question, "Why me?"

TBC TODAY: Whadaya Expect From A Miraculous Book?

NEW YORK TIMES - By John Noble Wilford - Published: June 13, 2006 - In biblical lore, Edom was the implacable adversary and menacing neighbor of the Israelites. The Edomites lived south of the Dead Sea and east of the desolate rift valley known as Wadi Arabah, and from time to time they had to be dealt with by force, notably by the likes of Kings David and Solomon.

Today, the Edomites are again in the thick of combat of the scholarly kind. The conflict is heated and protracted, as is often the case with issues related to the reliability of the Bible as history.

Chronology is at the crux of the debate. Exactly when did the nomadic tribes of Edom become an organized society with the might to threaten Israel? Were David and Solomon really kings of a site with growing power in the 10th century B.C.? Had writers of the Bible magnified the stature of the two societies at such an early time in history?

An international team of archaeologists has recorded radiocarbon dates that they say show the tribes of Edom may have indeed come together in a cohesive society as early as the 12th century B.C., certainly by the 10th. The evidence was found in the ruins of a large copper-processing center and fortress at Khirbat en-Nahas, in the lowlands of what was Edom and is now part of Jordan.

Thomas E. Levy, a leader of the excavations, said in an interview last week that the findings there and at abandoned mines elsewhere in the region demonstrated that the Edomites had developed a complex state much earlier than previously thought.

Dr. Levy, an archaeologist at the University of California, San Diego, said the research had yielded not only the first high-precision dates in the region, but also such telling artifacts as scarabs, ceramics, metal arrowheads, hammers, grinding stones, and slag heaps. Radiocarbon analysis of charred wood, grain and fruit in several sedi-

ment layers revealed two major phases of copper processing, first in the 12th and 11th centuries. Later in the 10th and 9th.

Khirbat en-Nahas is 30 miles from the Dead Sea and 30 miles north of Petra, Jordan's most famous archaeological site. The name means "ruins of copper" in Arabic. One of the first ancient occupation sites in the Edomite lowlands to be intensively investigated, the ruins of its buildings and grounds spread over 24 acres, and the fortifications enclose an area 240 by 240 feet.

"Only a complex society such as a paramount kingdom or primitive kingdom would have the organizational know-how to produce copper metal on such an industrial scale," Dr. Levy concluded.

The findings, Dr. Levy and Dr. Najjar added, lend credence to biblical accounts of the rivalry between Edom and the Israelites in what was then known as Judah. By extension, they said, this supported the tradition that Judah itself had by the time of David and Solomon, in the early 10th century, emerged as a kingdom with ambition and the means of fighting off the Edomites.

The Hebrew Bible mentioned the Edomites no fewer than 99 times. In Genesis, Esau, Jacob's twin brother, is described as the ancestor of the Edomites, and a reference is made to "the kings who reigned in the land of Edom, before any king reigned over the Israelites." Dr. Levy said this statement showed that the Israelites acknowledged Edom's early political development.

In the context, Dr. Levy and Dr. Najjar wrote, "the biblical references to the Edomites, especially their conflicts with David and subsequent Judahite kings, garner a new plausibility."

- The Berean Call, from the internet

THE COMPANY YOU KEEP

It is better to be alone, than in the wrong company.

Tell me who your best friends are, and I will tell you who you are.

If you run with wolves, you will learn how to howl.

But, if you associate with eagles, you will learn how to soar to great heights.

A mirror reflects a man's face, but what he is really like is shown by the kind of friends he chooses.

The simple but true fact of life is that you become like those with whom you closely associate for the good and the bad.

The less you associate with some people, the more your life will improve.

Any time you tolerate mediocrity in others, it increases your mediocrity.

An important attribute in successful people is their impatience with negative thinking and negative acting people.

As you grow, your associates will change.

Some of your friends will not want you to go on.

They will want you stay where they are.

Friends that don't help you climb will want you to crawl.

Your friends will stretch your vision or choke your dream.

Those that don't increase you will eventually decrease you.

Consider this: Never receive counsel from unproductive people.

Never discuss your problems with someone incapable of contributing to the solution, because those who never succeed themselves are always the first to tell you how.

Not everyone has a right to speak into your life.

You are certain to get the worst of the bargain when you exchange ideas with the wrong person.

Don't follow anyone who's not going anywhere.

With some people you spend an evening: with others you invest it.

Be careful where you stop to inquire for directions along the road of life.

Wise is the person who fortifies his life with the right friendships.

Happy moments, Praise God -- Difficult moments, -
-Seek God -- Quiet moments, Worship God -- Painful moments, --Trust God -- Every moment, thank God.

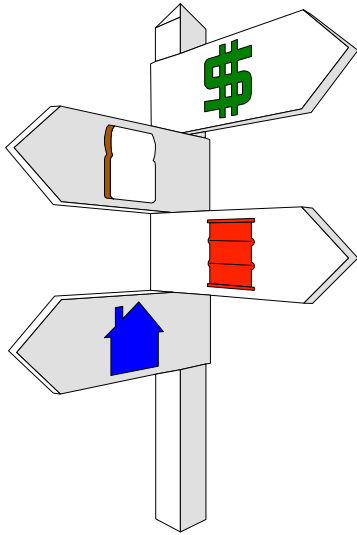
If you see people without a smile today, give them one of yours.

Choose to rise..Don't settle. And go for your dreams!!!

And most of all let God lead you in everything you do...

Success is to be measured not so much by the position that one has reached in life as by the obstacles which he has overcome while trying to succeed.

-Booker T. Washington, from the internet



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

Jewish leaders debate study of New Testament

"For Jews, ignorance of the Gospels is 'self-imposed' handicap," leader says

**by Rachel Zoll
Associated Press**

Of all the texts considered required reading in a thorough Jewish education, one major work with Jewish roots is usually missing from everyone's list: the New Testament.

Most Jews shun Christian Scripture. As a result, they can't answer Christians who ask why Jews don't accept Jesus as the Messiah.

Reform Rabbi Michael J. Cook says this "self-imposed ignorance" is dangerous.

At a time when many Christians are embracing the Jewish origins of their faith, Cook says he has taken on the "Herculean task" of convincing Jews they must learn how the Gospels molded Christian attitudes toward Judaism.

"The New Testament is the greatest single external determinant of Jewish history, and deleteriously so in its causing Jews grievous problems," said Cook, who holds the unusual job of New Testament professor at a Jewish seminary, the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati.

In a book he plans to publish next year, "Modern Jews

Engage the New Testament," he will present an education plan for how Jews can learn enough to answer "why they process it differently from Christians."

Many scholars agree that Jews would benefit from studying the Christian texts. They say it could improve interfaith relations especially on the local level where rabbis are expected to work with fellow clergy from other denominations. It also would help when public debates arise - like the controversy about how Jews were depicted in the Mel Gibson movie "The Passion of the Christ." Many outsiders viewed Jewish objections to the film as an affront to Christianity, damaging relations between the two faiths. Cook said most Jews had no idea how to explain these concerns about the script - even to their own children.

The scholars also say there are too many other pre-siding issues in Jewish education - including the increasing secularization of Jews - to make New Testament learning a priority.

Burton Visotzky, a long time professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary in New York, the flagship institution for Conservative Judaism, (says) many rabbinical students enroll at the seminary without strong backgrounds in their own religion - let alone Christianity and other faiths.

"In an ideal world, of course, we'd train our students to know something about Christianity and also Islam," said Visotzky, who teaches midrash and interreligious studies. "But where is it on the triage list? I'm afraid not very high."

Jewish aversion to the New Testament is rooted in religious law and historical experience.

Some passages in early rabbinic literature bar Jews

from reading the Gospels, Cook said. The Talmud, the compilation of Jewish law, reinforces this point by prohibiting Jews from saving the Gospels from a fire even though the name of God's written in them, said Jacob Neusner, a professor and expert on Judaism and Christianity at Board College north of New York City.

Jewish resentment grew over the centuries as Christians used the New Testament to try to connect Jews - either through evangelism or by force during the Crusades and other violent periods. The belief derived from the New Testament that Jews collectively are responsible for Christ's death has now been rejected by the Roman Catholic church and other denominations, but the idea still persists among some Christians.

"The New Testament historically has been a book that has been thrown in the face of Jews," said Rabbi James Rudin, the interreligious adviser for the American Jewish Committee, who agrees that Jews need to learn about the Gospels.

"As the years have gone by," he said, "it has been seen as the Scripture of the 'other,' and the other has always been perceived, until recently, as a hostile group trying to subvert or replace Jews and Judaism."

The text is now almost completely absent from course work for rabbinical candidates, students at American Jewish colleges and Jewish high schools.

Rabbinical students who study the Hellenistic period learn some history of the New Testament. The Reconstructionist Rabbinical College in Pennsylvania requires a course in Christian history that includes reading the Gospels.

Still, Cook says, he is the only full professor of New Testament at an American Jewish seminary, and that Cincinnati based Hebrew Union, which trains rabbis, cantors, and educators for the Reform movement, is the only seminary requiring technical study of the Gospel for ordination.

The idea of New Testament study faces the greatest resistance in Orthodox schools, which strive to provide a liberal arts education within the bounds of a strict reading of Jewish law.

Rabbi Shalom Carmy, an expert on biblical thought at Yeshiva university in New York, said the New Testament is part of an undergraduate course in medieval and

modern literature, but some students are uncomfortable learning about the Christian text, skipping lectures.

"The highest priority for a believing Jew is a study of Torah and its fulfillment," he said. "The study of other religions and cultures may be the source of psychological insight and may help us better understand others. But these goals are ancillary."

Cook says he understands these arguments, but ultimately rejects them, contending it is illogical for Jews who so heavily emphasize education to ignore such an important text. He called lack of knowledge about the New Testament the Jewish "Achilles heel."

Comment

The study of the New Testament by the Jewish people will do little in bringing them to Christ since they are blinded during this dispensation. The New Testament informs us of this.

OUR FIRM FOUNDATION

Children of God have many times been laughed at because they must walk by faith, not by sight. Nearly all expect a future life. Some speculate that the dying one really becomes more alive, and merely seems to die. Others speculate along evolutionary lines. They tell us that their hope for the future is not for themselves, but for their posterity who may reach such a state of development as will permit them to live forever.

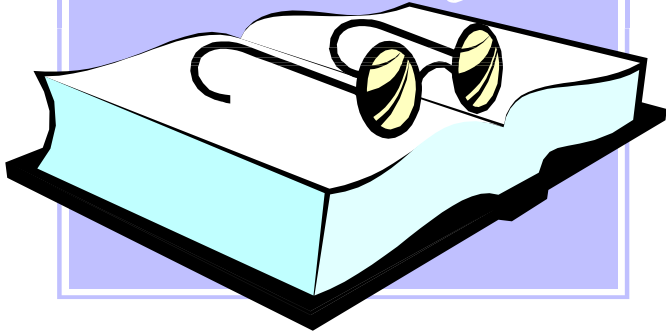
The child of God is informed in the Scriptures that the dead know nothing, and the only hope for a future life lies in a resurrection of the dead.

Does not the child of God have a firm foundation? He not only has God's Word for his faith on the subject of death, but he has a reasonable faith, confirmed by everything known on the subject. The child of God has strong consolation, strong confirmation, strong reasons for believing God's message, and for disregarding not only his imaginations, but the untrustworthy imaginations of others.

- Contributed

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: Should we magnify ourselves?

Answer: It was pride that caused Lucifer to be cast out of heaven. Pride has preceded many before a fall. The Apostle Peter wrote, "Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (II Peter 3:17).

A great and powerful Assyrian king said: "Shall I not, as I have done unto Samaria and her idols, so do to Jerusalem and her idols?" (Isaiah 10:11). This man was magnifying himself above the people of God and God Himself. Unknown to Sennacherib's unregenerate mind, God had planned such activity. "O Assyrian," Isaiah writes, the rod of mine anger...I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people (Israel) of my wrath (for their continued sin) will I give him a charge, to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets" (vss 5-6). But the Assyrian "meaneth not so," "For he saith, By the strength of my hand I have done it, and by my wisdom,; for I am prudent: and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I have put down the inhabitants like a valiant man: And my hand hath found as a nest the riches of the people: and as one gathereth eggs that are left, have I gathered all the earth; and there was none that moved the wing, or opened the mouth, or peeped" (vss 7,13-14).

God, who is sovereign over all peoples and kings, had been using the Assyrian as His "rod of wrath" to punish His chosen people for their sins. Because of Sennacherib's desire to be magnified because of the exploits for which he claimed the credit, God would in turn punish the Assyrians for what they had done. God is the same today and always reserves the "last word" in every episode to Himself.

An interesting word is used in verse fifteen of this same tenth chapter of Isaiah. "Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? as if the rod should shake itself against them that lift it up, or as if the staff should lift up itself, as if it were no wood." God is asking the question the answer to which makes the Assyrian king ridiculous, "shall the saw (Sennacherib) magnify itself against Him (God) that shaketh it?"

There is a principle here for the child of God that should take all the starch out of his ego and make him a willing "bond slave" to the best Master of all. Magnifying self, usually in most subtle ways, is the curse in Christian service.

The devil's greatest strength will prove to be his greatest weakness. In fact, it has already. An individual's (supposed) great strength, getting along without God and being able to outsmart his fellows, proves to be his greatest weakness. When one is magnified in his own mind over his fellows, he is far indeed from the kingdom.

Daniel uses the word in Daniel 11:36-37 when speak-

ing of the Antichrist, "And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. Neither shall he regard the God of his fathers, nor the desire of women, nor regard any god: for he shall magnify himself above all." Note in the passage not only the magnification of self, but how its end is determined. Nevertheless, the child of God being grieved when evil ones are temporarily magnified, will cry unto God with Jeremiah, "...the enemy hath magnified himself.... see, O Lord, and consider..." (Lamentations 1:9,11, last parts). The prophet was lamenting the miserable estate of captive Jerusalem.

In Psalm 126, we have the same word employed in a sequel to Jeremiah's lamentation. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The Lord hath done great things for them. The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad" (vss 1-3). Literally, "Hath done great things" is our word "magnify." To be sure, one day the Church of God will be in her own right, exalted and magnified. But it shall not be self-magnification. God only shall do it. And the heathen shall acknowledge it. When our mouth is filled with laughter and our tongue singing redemption's song, we shall be like Him and shall be magnified to the point of ruling and reigning with Him.

Until that day dawns, the child of God should follow the advice of the Seer, Samuel, "Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart; for consider how great things he hath done for you" (I Samuel 12:24). Here again the same Hebrew word appears which is elsewhere translated magnify. Can we not feel a sanctified and exalted or magnified feeling after serving the Lord in truth with all the heart? In other words, the child of God's attitude toward self-magnifying is wholesome only when things that were formerly counted as personal gain are counted loss for Christ in His service.

Question: How are we to understand the opening words of Psalm 14 and Psalm 53.

Answer: Psalm 14 and Psalm 53 both open with the sentence, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God."

This sentence should not be taken as a comment on the stupidity of atheists. Taken by itself, the sentence seems to state unequivocally that anyone who does not believe in God lacks intelligence or integrity or both. But the two psalms (which are virtually identical) go on to condemn, not intellectual skepticism, but corrupt behavior. The fools described are those who follow their own evil ways while ignoring the fact that God will eventually call them into account. The fools are not questioning God's existence but are simply living as if He didn't exist. Thereby they disregard His wrath and eventual judgment.

The existence of God is simply assumed by the Old Testament writers. They do not arrange proofs of the fact or attempt to refute skeptics. The issue never arises. In times of great deprivation or oppression, their question is not "Does God exist?" but rather "How long, O Lord?" The debate about whether or not God exists is a Greek legacy. It is an issue alien to the Hebrew way of thinking.

Question: Does I Corinthians 8:5 indicate that there are many gods in the universe?

Answer: No, it does not. I Corinthians 8:5 reads, "For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,)" Taken alone, this verse might seem to teach that there are many gods. But the context of I Corinthians 8 is clearly monotheistic. The context is set for us in verse 4, "... we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one." Then, in verse 6, we read: "But to us there is but one God, the Father of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him."

In verse 5, the Apostle Paul is not saying that there actually are many true "gods" and "lords." Rather he refers to false pagan entities who are called "gods" and "lords." There is a world of difference between being called a "god" and actually being God. Just because Paul acknowledges that there are pagan entities called gods, does not mean they actually are gods.

These "gods" were the idols of Greek and Roman mythology. Paul, in this verse, is simply recognizing that in New Testament days many false gods were worshiped-though, in fact, such gods do not really exist. Paul, as a Hebrew of Hebrews, was monotheistic to the core and believed in only one God.



Kenya

The photograph below shows the Church choir, known as the "Black Singers", from Nyaibate, Kenya. The keyboard and guitars were purchased with monies sent to them from the Church.



RDC Congo

The first photograph shows Pastor Henry Miroro from Kenya when he travelled to the Congo to perform some baptisms. The group shown are members of the Church in the Congo. The second photograph shows brethren being baptized in the Congo with Pastor Placide Mithonga Mwambe wiping the face of a newly baptized member.



LESSON I

JOASH FALLS INTO IDOLATRY

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 24:17-27.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 24:18 (first part).

"And they left the house of the Lord God of their fathers and served groves and idols:..."

NOTE: While Jehoiada lived, Joash reigned well. Now we are going to study about his turning to idolatry and how he is slain by his servants.

1. What has happened to the princes of Judah? II Chronicles 24:17-18.
2. Who was sent to bring them again unto the Lord? Did they hear? II Chronicles 24:19.
3. The Spirit of the Lord came upon Zechariah. What did he say to the people? II Chronicles 24:20.
4. What did they do to Zechariah? II Chronicles 24:21.
5. What did Joash do in II Chronicles 24:22?
6. Who came against Judah and Jerusalem? Whom did they destroy and why? II Chronicles 24:23-24.
7. Who slew Joash? II Chronicles 24:25.
8. Who reigned in his stead? II Chronicles 24:27.

LESSON II

UZZIAH'S REIGN

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 26:1-12.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 26:3 (first part).

"Sixteen years old was Uzziah when he began to reign, and he reigned fifty and two years in Jerusalem...."

NOTE: After the death of Joash, Amaziah began to reign at the age of twenty-five years. He reigned well for about fifteen years, but he finally turned from following the Lord. He was slain, and now his son is going to reign in his stead.

1. Whom did the people of Judah make king after the death of Amaziah? II Chronicles 26:1.
2. How long did Uzziah reign, and who was his mother? II Chronicles 26:3.
3. Did he do that which was right in the sight of the Lord? II Chronicles 26:4-5.
4. With whom did Uzziah war against? II Chronicles 26:6.
5. Did God help Uzziah with this war? II Chronicles 26:7.
6. Who gave gifts to Uzziah? Was he exceedingly strong? II Chronicles 26:8.
7. Name some of the things he built in II Chronicles 26:9-10.

LESSON III

UZZIAH'S ARMY AND HIS DEATH

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 26:11-23.

GoldenText: II Chronicles 26:21 (first part).

"And Uzziah the king was a leper unto the day of his death, and dwelt in a several house, being a leper;..."

NOTE: We last learned about Uzziah becoming king at the age of sixteen, and he did that which was right in the sight of the Lord. We will now learn about his army and what he does to transgress against the Lord.

1. Uzziah had a host of fighting men. How many mighty

- men of valor did he have? II Chronicles 26:11-12.
2. How many were in the army under the chiefs? II Chronicles 26:13.
 3. What did he prepare for them to use in battle? II Chronicles 26:14-15.
 4. He was now very strong. Did he still rely on God, or did he transgress against Him? II Chronicles 26:16.
 5. When Uzziah went into the temple to burn incense, who went with him? II Chronicles 26:17.
 6. What did the priests say to him? II Chronicles 26:18.
 7. Uzziah was wroth with the priests. What disease did the Lord bring upon him? II Chronicles 26:19-20.
 8. How long did he have this disease? Who reigned in his place? II Chronicles 26:21-23.

LESSON IV

THE REIGN OF AHAZ

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 28:1-27.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 28:22 (first part).

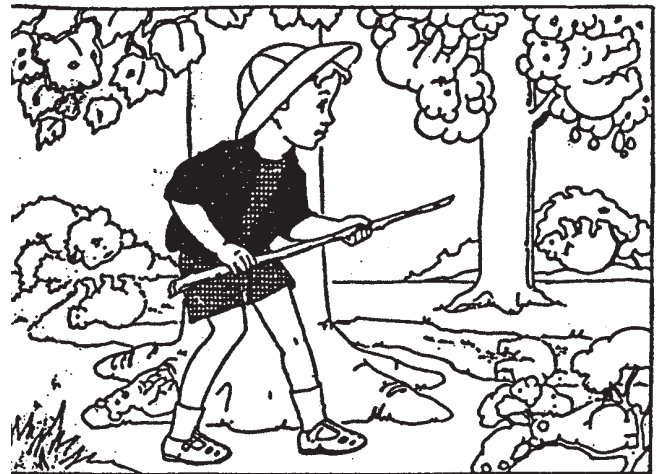
"And in the time of his distress did he trespass yet more against the Lord:..."

NOTE: We have just finished studying about the reign of Uzziah who reigned well during the days of Zechariah. After his death, his son Jotham was a good king, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem. After his death, Ahaz, the son of Jotham, began his reign. We shall study now about his reign to see if he continued in the steps of his father Jotham.

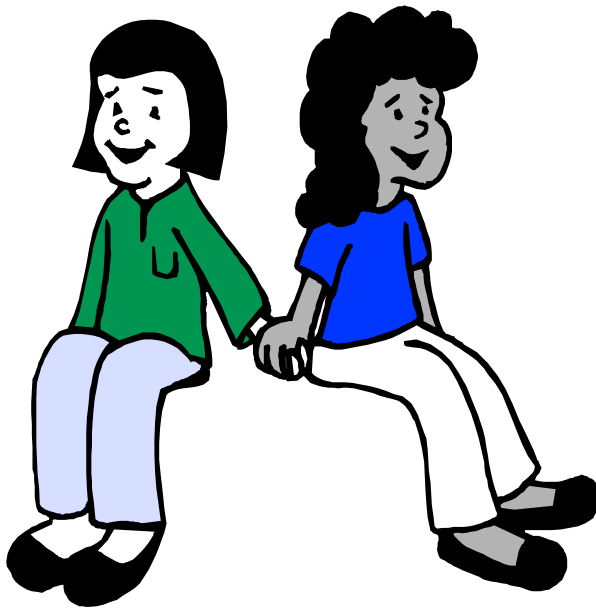
1. How old was Ahaz when he began to reign? Did he do that which was right in the sight of the Lord? II Chronicles 28:1-4.

2. Into whose hands was Ahaz delivered because he had forsaken the Lord? II Chronicles 28:5.
3. How many were slain at this time, and how many were taken captive? II Chronicles 28:6-8.
4. Who was Oded, and what did he tell the host which came to Samaria? II Chronicles 28:9-11.
5. Azariah and others stood up against those who came from the war, and what did they demand them to do? Did they obey? II Chronicles 28:12-15.
6. King Ahaz sent unto the king of Assyria for help. What had happened to Judah that the king needed help? II Chronicles 28:16-19.
7. Did any of the kings of Assyria help Ahaz? What did he give the king to try to get their help? II Chronicles 28:20-22.
8. Read II Chronicles 28:23-25, and then tell some of the things he did which only further provoked the anger of the Lord God.

9. Who reigned in his stead after his death? II Chronicles 28:27.



Harry the Hunter doesn't seem to be able to see any Bears, but I am sure you can find a number of them in this picture. How many can you find?



ASHLEY FINDS A FRIEND

By Janet Craig-James

It was on the way to school that Ashley heard Joan and Margy talking. Ashley did not mean to listen, but she was wearing her running shoes, and the two girls did not hear her walking behind. Margy was talking, and Ashley knew it was Kate Sharpe they were talking about.

"I do not like her at all," Margy was saying. "Just because she is smart in class, she thinks she knows everything. Let us stop talking to her, Joan. If we stop, all the rest of the girls will leave her alone, too. When we are playing out in the yard we will not pick her for any of the games. It will be fun to see what she does."

Ashley walked slowly into school, thinking about what Margy and Joan had been saying. Kate was a very quiet little girl. It was true that she was clever, but she never said anything about it. All she wanted was to be friendly with the other girls. Ashley knew how much it would hurt Kate if the girls did what they were planning. She would never know why they were treating her badly.

At recess, Ashley watched Joan and Margie walk

over to the other side of the playground. They had always been the leaders in the class, and so the rest of the girls followed them. Kate was left standing alone, not knowing what to do.

Ashley felt her heart thump with fear. She knew it would be a difficult thing to do, and that probably the girls would treat her the same way as they were treating Kate, but she threw back her head, and walked over to Kate. Ashley slipped her arm through Kate's and said, "What was the name of that book you were talking about in class, Kate? It sounded so exciting I thought I would get it out of the library."

Ashley saw the girls were watching as she spoke to Kate, but she pretended not to notice.

Kate clutched her arm as if she would never let it go. She could not understand why she was being left alone, and she was grateful to Ashley for helping her.

During recess Kate told Ashley all about the book, and about a lot of other books she had read, too.

When they went back to classes, Kate smiled at her gratefully, but Joan and Margy glared. If even one girl was speaking to Kate it would spoil their plan.

Ashley felt a little uncomfortable, but she was glad she had not ganged up on Kate with the rest of the girls. Because Kate was so quiet, Ashley had never gotten to know her very well, but now she knew what an interesting person she was.

The next day most of the girls were still not speaking to Kate and they were avoiding Ashley as well, but one or two of them seemed sorry for what they had been doing. At recess Ashley and Kate were joined by these girls. One of them brought a new skipping rope and they took turns turning and skipping.

Ashley did everything she could to make the girls see how nice Kate really was - even though she was very clever and did not say much.

Pretty soon everyone, including Margy and Joan, were speaking to Kate again. The plan had not worked because Ashley had made up her mind she was not going to join in doing something she knew was wrong.

Now that Ashley knew Kate so much better, she found out something else. She thought she was being a good friend to Kate by helping her, and so she was. But something else had happened, too. By doing what was right, she also had gained a friend.

TEN MISSING WORDS

Look up each reference and fill in the missing words. These ten words make a sentence worth remembering, but you will have to rearrange them to make sense. The complete message is found in one of the references. If you cannot solve this puzzle, go back and look up the references again until you find the answer. Write the verse.

- O give thanks the Lord. (Psalm 136:1)
- He took the cup and gave (Luke 22:17)
- I will peace in the land. (Leviticus 26:6)
- Your God is a of Kings. (Daniel 2:47)
- Thy silver and thy gold mine. (I Kings 20:3)
- Praise ye Lord. (Psalm 135:1)
- Praise Him, ye servants of the Lord. (Psalm 135:1)
- that trusteth in his riches shall fall. (Proverbs 11:28)
-unto us a child is born. (Isaiah 9:6)
- Hold fast to that which is (I Thessalonians 5:21)

MATCH MAN AND WIFE

- 1. Abraham a. Mary
- 2. Moses b. Zipporah
- 3. Jacob c. Rebekah
- 4. Joseph d. Eve
- 5. Isaac e. Sapphira
- 6. Boaz f. Hannah
- 7. Nabal g. Abigail
- 8. Adam h. Sarah
- 9. Elkanah i. Ruth
- 10. Ananias j. Leah

PLACES OF THE BIBLE

Listed below are twenty-one places of the Bible. You will find these names above either diagonally, vertically, or horizontally. Circle the places you can find.

- GALILEE DECAPOLIS EDOM
- EGYPT HEBRON SELA
- MOAB JUDAH TYRE
- BETHEL SHARON NAZARETH
- SAMARIA UR JOPPA
- JUDEA ROME ANTIOCH
- PEREA GILEAD HESHBON

G	A	L	I	L	E	E	L	A	E	U	R
I	A	H	E	B	R	O	N	S	D	A	B
L	A	I	R	A	M	A	S	R	O	M	E
E	L	N	S	H	A	R	O	N	M	L	T
A	H	I	E	G	Y	P	T	E	A	N	H
D	A	B	E	T	H	E	L	B	E	O	E
P	D	O	R	S	U	N	D	L	D	B	A
E	U	U	Y	E	O	R	V	E	U	H	P
R	J	J	T	L	M	O	A	B	J	S	P
E	N	A	Z	A	R	E	T	H	E	E	O
A	A	N	T	I	O	C	H	L	S	H	J
D	E	C	A	P	O	L	I	S	U	R	A



WHO'S THE GREATEST FOOL?

By Jack Benson

Men, by nature are such fools...the Bible makes this clear.
We prove this by things we love, and by the things we fear.
Only fools will love this world and all the things therein,
As the Savior taught the people such love is carnal sin.

"I played the fool", said Saul the mighty king,
(To David, who oft considered God's will in everything)
But never did this foolish man forsake his foolish way,
Nor gain eternal life up to his dying day.

The fool has mused within his heart, "There is no God" saith he,
"And since there is no God then, from judgment am I free!"
So, in his folly does he live as though this life were all,
And thus he wallows in the mire 'til his name the Judge shall call.

Many folks will feign themselves to love the Saviour dear...
But in their daily walk of life, they prove they have no fear.
The Bible calls them foolish men who have no fear of God,
Whose basic aims in life are to win foolish men's applaud.

Now, the preaching of the cross is foolishness to them
Who perish with the worldly tide, the way of modern men.
But, according to the Bible, the one who shuns the call
To forsake his carnal ways, is the greatest fool of all.

And, they are "fools for Christ' sake" who'll walk the narrow way,
And live the holy Christian life until the Judgment Day,
When every man shall give account for what he says or does...
So, if we are "fools for Christ's sake - we will never lose.

Whose fool are you?