

The Advocate of Truth

Debt to Our Fathers

Graduates

*Government of God's
Kingdom*

Power of God

Giving Thanks

The Flood



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About the cover: This photo was sent in by Denise Gonzales.

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

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Volume LX Number 12
 June 27, 2011
 The Advocate of Truth
 USPS 542-940



We Owe A Debt To Our Fathers

Bond Tennant

NOTE: These thoughts are directed to God-fearing families.

Let us give honor to whom honor is due. Romans 13:7 puts it this way: "Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour." Let us render honor to our fathers. We owe them more than any other person. What do we owe our fathers?

We owe them our very lives. Without our fathers, we could have not been brought into the world. Our fathers sustained our earthly lives by the labor of their hands. Our fathers taught us how to conduct ourselves during the early years of our lives. We learned obedience from our fathers. Our fathers also taught us how to pray. We learned unselfishness and consideration for others from our fathers.

A child's greatest source of security is in the home. In the home of a God-honoring family, the father contributes

much to the atmosphere and the upkeep of the home. The father's consistent giving of himself results in a happy home-life.

Our fathers have taught us many lessons about loving. Love is the deepest well from which children can draw. May we let our love be a reflection of the love which we have experienced in the home.

Our fathers can never be fully repaid for what they have done for us. However, in our lives, we can be the kind of men and women our fathers would want us to be.

If your father is still living, you can show him that you love him and are proud of him by your actions toward others.

These thoughts are not meant to minimize the important roles of other members of the family. Last month you read about the ideal mother.

For The High School Graduates

Bond Tennant



I think you high school graduates, especially if you are planning on going to college, might enjoy the following commentary which appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*.

It was written by a senior in Clear Lake High School located in Clear Lake, Texas. It contains some good advice.

Graduates, go out and make life happen

By MEREDITH BAKER

Four short years ago we entered the big, scary high school world as innocent and in-over-our-head freshmen, unsure of who we were supposed to be and unsure of who we wanted to be.

Through countless exams, breakups, parties and high-school crushes, to the coming and going of a president, the war in Iraq and the economic collapse, we have been forced to figure out who we are through decisions we made and friends we chose.

While a few inherent qualities from freshmen year remain, I am no longer the teachers' pet, cheerleader, and occasionally boy-crazed girl I once was.

My accomplishments in high school have come with hard work, sacrifice and dedication. My mistakes have come with nights of remorse and regret, but ultimately new wisdom of hard lessons learned and relearned. I hope the wisdom I have acquired will carry over into the next chapter of my life – college.

It is our responsibilities – not ourselves – that we should take seriously. High school is notorious for gossip and drama. I have witnessed friendships dissipate and rivalries form because of trivial disputes that soon will be forgotten. I have learned not to take myself too seriously and that being able to laugh at myself is necessary. In college, if you are going to get worked up about something, let it be a cause you are passionate about.

Make like a tree and branch out. High school is filled with cliques, and people are reluctant to move from

their social circle to another. Later in life, we will be surrounded by many different people, and it will be up to us to move out of our comfort zones in order to make friends. Being surrounded by people who don't think like me has helped me learn more about myself and given me the desire to pursue different interests.

Have no expectations of others – only of yourself. We have all heard the expression "in order to have a good friend, you have to be a good friend." For the longest time in high school, I was a fiercely loyal friend to many people but found that I could only rely on one or two of them.

I finally realized that I should have expectations only of myself – not others. If I do something for somebody, it should be because I want to, not because I expect something in return. This mentality has helped me set high standards for myself and constantly given me something to strive for.

Who you are begins with what you do. We are accustomed to being defined by our social circle and extracurricular activities. After four years of incessant chatter, I realize that it doesn't matter who I say I am or what I say I am going to do. What really matters is my actions.

It finally dawned on me that my life is a cumulative experience. I no longer wanted to be just anybody. I wanted to be someone who could make a difference.

Don't dwell on the past – learn from it and move on. I have spent countless nights in the past four years analyzing how I could have done things differently. The only thing any of us can change is the future. Blunders are only mistakes if you don't learn from them.

Some people say that life begins after high school. Others say that life begins after college.

I believe that life starts again every day.

If high school didn't treat you well, use your adolescent past to serve as a stepping stone to greater things in the future.

If you think high school was the best time of your life, know that there are even better things in store.

So take college by the horns (not just you UT people!). Don't wait for people to introduce themselves. Introduce yourself first. Don't wait for opportunities to be handed to you; seek or create your own opportunities.

The rest of your life is what you make it. Become the person you always wanted to be.

The Government Of The Kingdom Of God

Bond Tennant



In the kingdom of God (the thousand year reign of Christ), the government will be in the hands of secure and competent hands! God's Word assures us of this. Many political analysts have held the view that one-man governments can produce greater efficiency when they are contrasted to many democracies with their debating societies. However, all too often the heads of these one-man governments are ruthless and have little interest and no thought for the citizens or the common people.

Yes, the government of the kingdom of God will be a dictatorship. However, Christ will be a very different kind of dictator! Our Lord Jesus learned to rule Himself through obedience to His Father. Therefore, He is qualified to be the ruler in the kingdom. II Samuel 23:3 reads, "The God of Israel said, the Rock of Israel spake to me, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." From this verse, we see that God will not permit any man to rule others who has not first learned to rule himself.

In Psalm 72, we read of Christ, "He shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth. . . Yea, all kings shall fall down before him: all nations shall serve him. . . His name shall endure for ever: his name shall be continued as long as the sun: and men shall be blessed in him: all nations shall call him blessed." Read verses 7-8, 11-12, 17.

Yes, God's Word leaves no doubt as to who will be the supreme ruler of God's Kingdom. It tells us of His supreme qualifications and the extent and duration of His rule. In announcing the birth of Christ to Mary, the angel Gabriel said, "And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end" (Luke 1:31-33).

Christ will not reign alone. Revelation 19:16 tells us that then He is "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." The saints will be rulers under Christ. In the book of Revelation, we find a number of allusions to these saints. "And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations" (Revelation 2:26). "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (chapter 3, verse 21). We also read in Revelation 5:10: "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." Daniel 7:27 tells us, "And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting

kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.”

The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 8:17, “And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.” In I Corinthians 6:2, he tells us: “Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world...” In speaking of those who receive the kingdom, Hebrews 12:28 employs the term “we”. “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace,

whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”

Jesus likened Himself to a nobleman going into a far country, “...to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return” in the parable of the Pounds found in Luke 19:12-27. We can think of this as Jesus now being in a far country-heaven. At His Father’s right hand, He awaits the day when His Father tells Him to return with authority to rule as “KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.”



THE MAGNIFICENT POWER OF ALMIGHTY GOD

BY BIBI S. ALLICOCK
GUYANA, SOUTH AMERICA

“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof...” (Psalm 46:1-3) “He maketh wars to cease unto the end of the earth; he breaketh the bow, and cutteth the spear in sunder; he burneth the chariot in the fire” (verse 9).

As we depend upon the Lord to be our refuge and strength, let us do what is required of us, and He will definitely look down upon us. “For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion” (Romans 9:15).

We know that Sarai was Abram’s wife, but to save his life in Egypt he told Pharaoh that she was his sister. Although Pharaoh was a king, he only took the woman

into his house, and he did not as much as touch her. Yet the Lord was angry with him. “And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh’s house” (Genesis 12:14-15). “And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram’s wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife?” (verses 17-18). Because God called Abram to serve Him, He had to protect him through His magnificent power. “Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that

curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed” (Genesis 12:1-3). Thus, God could not allow Pharaoh to take Abram’s wife. He had to intervene in order for His promise to Abram to be fulfilled.

In Gerar, Almighty God also saved Sarah from Abimelech, the king who sent and took Sarah. “But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man’s wife. But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her. Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine” (Genesis 20:3-7). “So Abraham prayed unto God: and God healed Abimelech, and his wife, and his maidservants; and they bare children. For the LORD had fast closed up all the wombs of the house of Abimelech, because of Sarah Abraham’s wife” (verses 17-18).

The essence of the matter, here, is that when God is for you no man can be against you. And we can also see that the king was covetous in that he already had a wife. Because he saw Sarah's beauty, he lusted after her. We should take heed of our Lord’s admonishment: “Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery: But I say unto you, That whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart” (Matthew 5:27-28).

When we accept the true and living God into our lives, He will always be there to lead and guide us when we are living according to His commands. As we continue to read the book of Genesis, we see the magnificent power of God whereby He caused Sarah to bring forth a child when she was past the flowering stage. “Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying,

Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son” (Genesis 18:11-14). “And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him” (Genesis 21:1-2). "And Abraham was an hundred years old when his son Isaac was born unto him. And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me. And she said, Who would have said unto Abraham, that Sarah should have given children suck? for I have born him a son in his old age" (verses 5-7).

As the magnificent power of Almighty God continues, Abraham made his eldest servant swear that he would not take a wife unto his son from the Canaanites. “And Abraham was old, and well stricken in age: and the LORD had blessed Abraham in all things. And Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, that ruled over all that he had, Put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh: And I will make thee swear by the LORD, the God of heaven, and the God of the earth, that thou shalt not take a wife unto my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, among whom I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac. And the servant said unto him, Peradventure the woman will not be willing to follow me unto this land: must I needs bring thy son again unto the land from whence thou camest? And Abraham said unto him, Beware thou that thou bring not my son thither again. The LORD God of heaven, which took me from my father’s house, and from the land of my kindred, and which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land; he shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence” (Genesis 24:1-7). “And the servant took ten camels of the camels of his master, and departed; for all the goods of his master were in his hand: and he arose, and went to Mesopotamia, unto the city of Nahor. And he made his camels to kneel down without the city by a well of water at the time of the evening, even the time that women go out to draw water. And he said, O LORD God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw

water: And let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also: let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast shewed kindness unto my master. And it came to pass, before he had done speaking, that, behold, Rebekah came out, who was born to Bethuel, son of Milcah, the wife of Nahor, Abraham's brother, with her pitcher upon her shoulder. And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her: and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, and came up. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher. And she said, Drink, my lord: and she hastened, and let down her pitcher upon her hand, and gave him drink. And when she had done giving him drink, she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, until they have done drinking" (verses 10-19).

Here we see a very beautiful, young girl who willingly gave water to Abraham's servant and his beasts also. She even called him lord which showed deep respect unto elders whether they were in authority or not because the man was a servant of Abraham. It is something of which we should take note, and be respectful. Also we should take note that the man made even the camels to kneel down while he prayed that God would grant him his petition. Thus it was granted. "And it came to pass, as the camels had done drinking, that the man took a golden earring of half a shekel weight, and two bracelets for her hands of ten shekels weight of gold; And said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee: is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in? And she said unto him, I am the daughter of Bethuel..." (verses 22-24). "And the man bowed down his head, and worshipped the LORD" (verse 26). "And the man came into the house" (verse 32, first part). "And there was set meat before him to eat: but he said, I will not eat, until I have told mine errand. And he said, Speak on. And he said, I am Abraham's servant" (verses 33-34). "And my master made me swear, saying, Thou shalt not take a wife to my son of the daughters of the Canaanites, in whose land I dwell: But thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son" (verses 37-38). "And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me: and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left. Then Laban and Bethuel answered and said, The

thing proceedeth from the LORD: we cannot speak unto thee bad or good" (verses 49-50). "And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go. And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men" (verses 58-59).

Today, we are instructing our children just as in the olden days, but instead of adhering to us, they sometimes want their own way. Thus we hear them saying that their parents should not choose their mates. Therefore, they socialize with all manner of people. Before they know it, they end up with an unwanted pregnancy or they turn to drugs. In the book of Ecclesiastes, we see an instruction to our young people: "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them" (Ecclesiastes 12:1). Also we are instructed to wait upon the Lord. "Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD" (Psalm 27:14). Isaac was forty years old when he took Rebekah to be his wife (see Genesis 25:20). Also, we saw that Rebekah was a virgin. "And the damsel was very fair to look upon, a virgin, neither had any man known her" (Genesis 24:16, first part).

As children of God, let us be an example to the world and keep ourselves unspotted. Through the magnificent power of Almighty God, nothing is impossible with Him. All we have to do is trust Him where we cannot trace Him. He will provide talented husbands and wives for us when we ask Him. "Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee. So that we may boldly say, The Lord is my helper, and I will not fear what man shall do unto me. Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:4-8). "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen" (verses 20-21).



Giving Thanks To God

By Sister Nesta John
Grenada, West Indies

“It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High: To shew forth thy lovingkindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night” (Psalm 92:1-2). Let us give the Lord thanks for He is good, and His mercy endureth forever. The greatest thanks that anyone can give to God is for His Son Jesus. God sent His only begotten Son into the world so that He could die in our place. The Lord has done so much for us, and He will do so much more on our behalf. Thanksgiving should flow in the heart of every Christian. We must always give thanks when things are good and also when they are bad.

Whenever we get on our knees, we must always thank the Lord for all the things that He has done for us. This should be mentioned first when we pray. He has control over the breath that we breathe. There are times that we forget this fact. We must always give Him thanks for allowing us to live another day upon the face of the earth. We don't show our thanks by praying only, but also by singing a melody unto the Lord. “O sing unto the LORD a new song; for he hath done marvellous things: his right hand, and his holy arm, hath gotten him the victory” (Psalm 98:1).

The comfort of food, clothing and shelter that we have is given by the Lord. Once again, we must give Him thanks. He strengthens our mortal bodies so that we may continue to give thanks and praise unto His holy name.

The mercies of God brought us out from the world of darkness unto His marvelous light. We should shine that light out into the world to guide other people unto it. “O give thanks unto the LORD; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Sing unto him, sing psalms unto him: talk ye of all his wondrous works” (Psalm 105:1:2).

“Who laid the foundations of the earth, that it should not be removed for ever. Thou coverest it with the deep as with a garment: the waters stood above the mountains” (Psalm 104:5-6). We thank the Lord for the trees that sway, the birds that sing, the fish that swim, rivers that peaceably flow between the banks and so much more. “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth” (Genesis 1:1) The earth is wonderfully made so we can dwell therein. How sweet are the sights of nature! Let us give Him thanks and praise.

As our example, Jesus gave thanks to His Father over the fishes and loaves of bread. “And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude” (Matthew 15:36). As Christians, we should be like Christ at all times. Paul and Silas were beaten and placed into prison. But at midnight, they prayed and sang praises to the Lord. Jonah, who had been in the belly of the great fish, still gave God thanks. “But I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have

vowed, Salvation is of the LORD” (Jonah 2:9). As Christians, we must give Him thanks for the gospel message. He has chosen us to spread it. "And whatsoever

ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him" (Colossians 3:17).



The Flood

By David DeLong

"And it came to pass, when men began to multiply on the face of the earth, and daughters were born unto them, That the sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose. And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years. There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown" (Genesis 6:1-4).

A question is sometimes raised whether it was possible for the whole earth to have been inhabited by mankind at the time of the Flood. Not only was it possible, but it was probable that this was the case. Let us examine some evidence to see why. The word "multiply" in Genesis 6:1 is "rabab", and means to "increase, especially in number; also to multiply by the myriad..." (see Strong's Concordance). The thought here seems to imply a population explosion upon the earth.

There are 10 generations listed from Adam to Noah in the previous chapter of Genesis. When the years of these generations are added up, one arrives at the number 1,556

years. Noah was 500 years old when he had Shem, Ham, and Japheth. However, the Flood wasn't for another 100 years, as we learn from Genesis 7:6, when Noah was 600 years old. Therefore, the number of years from the beginning of Creation until the Flood appears to be 1,656. This is a very long time, being almost one-third of earth's history, with the earth being about 6,000 years old as is traditionally accepted.

Now, just a couple of hundred years ago it was fairly common for families to have 10 or 12 children. This was so even when the parents didn't live to the age of 60 years. Since people before the Flood were living many hundreds of years (even over 900), the number of children that families produced was probably much more than 10 or 12. Let us be conservative and say that families before the Flood had just 20 children. Based upon this figure, in 10 generations, it has been estimated that the earth's population would have been 2 billion. It is quite possible that the earth's population back then was much higher, maybe even being similar to that of the earth's population today. So then, it is easy to see that the whole earth could well have been inhabited by mankind before the Flood. (We will examine other possible evidence for this.)

Genesis 6:2 informs us that "the sons of God" took wives from "the daughters of men". Who were these sons of God and daughters of men? This wording is, apparently, the way that the Scriptures differentiated the godly line of Seth (sons of God) from the ungodly line of Cain (daughters of men). The Lord designates His children as being sons (or daughters) of God (see Isaiah 43:6; I John 3:1-2). It appears that the believers were yoking themselves with the unbelievers (see II Corinthians 6:14-18). In Genesis 4:26 we read that men began "...to call upon the name of the LORD". This righteous condition among men was now being compromised by the unequal marriages of the two lines.

Children produced from these unions of the sons of God with the daughters of men were termed "...mighty men which were of old, men of renown" (Genesis 6:4). The first part of this verse informs us that, "There were giants in the earth in those days". The word "giants" is "nephilim" in the Hebrew, and can be translated as "fallen ones". Experience teaches us that, in many cases, the evil influence of one parent can outweigh the good influence of the other parent. This may have been the situation in Genesis 6. The ungodly mothers (daughters of men) were likely influencing their children for evil pursuits more than the fathers (sons of God) were influencing them for good. When grown, these children became "mighty men" (probably warriors engaging in warfare and violence).

"And the LORD said, My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years" (verse 3). This warning from the Lord seems to be the time allotted for mankind to come to repentance before the Flood would destroy them. Noah was a messenger of God to warn these wicked people of the coming of His judgment. We read in II Peter 2:5 that God "...spared not the old world, but saved Noah the eighth person, a preacher of righteousness, bringing in the flood upon the world of the ungodly". The Lord Jesus Christ was preaching to these sinners through the Spirit-inspired words of Noah. This is possibly what is meant in the following verses, referring to Christ and His mission to these pre-Flood persons, through the Holy Spirit. "By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls

were saved by water" (I Peter 3:19,20).

"The spirits in prison" could be referring to the unconverted people to whom Noah was preaching Christ's message. These people's spirits--with the thoughts and intents of their hearts; (see Hebrews 4:12)--being locked in the bonds of iniquity, would truly have been in the prison of sin and death. One hundred twenty years were given to the disobedient people, during which time Noah was building the ark and preaching to them. What a longsuffering God we serve! However, only Noah, his three sons, and all their wives--"eight souls"--were saved out of the myriads of people upon the earth.

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD" (Genesis 6:5-8).

Imagine a world in which only eight people are believers, and one of them--Ham--is questionable (see Genesis 9:20-27). God was so grieved that His resolve was to destroy all mankind, as well as the land animals, except for Noah and his family and the animals that went into the ark. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house; by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith" (Hebrews 11:7).

The ark was made of "gopher wood" (see Genesis 6, verse 14. This was probably cypress--Strong's Concordance), and it was sealed with "pitch" (possibly bitumen), inside and outside. "And this is the fashion which thou shalt make it of: The length of the ark shall be three hundred cubits, the breadth of it fifty cubits, and the height of it thirty cubits. A window shalt thou make to the ark, and in a cubit shalt thou finish it above; and the door of the ark shalt thou set in the side thereof; with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it" (verses 15-16).

If a cubit is about 18 inches long, then the ark's dimensions were 450 feet long, by 75 feet wide, by 45 feet high. A window was built in the ark, apparently being

a cubit lower than the ark's top. It has been imagined that this window went clear around the top of the ark for light and ventilation. This vessel was divided up into three deck levels containing "rooms" (see verse 14), and a door was made in the "side" of the ark. According to calculations, the volume of the ark would have been over 1.5 million cubic feet, at a minimum.

Some scoffers say that the ark wasn't big enough to hold all the animals and food which God commanded to be in the ark with Noah and his family. Let us always remember this fact: God can do what seems impossible. Probably every bit, of the more than 1.5 million cubic feet, of space was utilized on the ark for Noah, his family, the animals, and the food which was stored on board. The rooms on the ark could have been stacked from floor to ceiling with various sized cages, pens, and stalls for the animals.

Not every animal was taken into the ark, of course. The Bible, in verses 19-20, tells us that the animals were by "sort" or "kind". This means that for the unclean animals, two ("the male and his female") of every kind was taken into the ark. Representatives from the cat kind, the dog kind, the horse kind, etc. were placed on board the ark. Selective breeding could afterwards have brought forth the many varieties of these animals that we have today. The same was true of the clean animals except that they were taken into the ark by sevens ("the male and his female". See chapter 7:2-3). This text proves to us that God had separated clean animals from unclean ones from the beginning.

"And Noah went in, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him, into the ark, because of the waters of the flood. Of clean beasts, and of beasts that are not clean, and of fowls, and of every thing that creepeth upon the earth, There went in two and two unto Noah into the ark, the male and the female, as God had commanded Noah. And it came to pass after seven days, that the waters of the flood were upon the earth" (Genesis 7:7-10).

Verses 11-12 inform us that, "...all the fountains of the great deep (were) broken up, and the windows of heaven

were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights." Two sources for the Flood are given in these verses: "all the fountains of the great deep (were) broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." The Apostle Peter observed in his second epistle: "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. For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished" (II Peter 3:3-6).

Before (or at the time of) the Flood, "the earth (was) standing out of the water and in the water..." What did Peter mean by this? Let us go back to the book of Genesis for a possible explanation. In chapter one, verses 1-2 we read, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." This description includes "the face of the deep" and "the face of the waters". Both of these phrases appear to be including the same thing--the ocean (or oceans). From this it is possible to infer that the earth was standing in the water. But how was it standing out of the water?

Until the Flood, the Bible does not inform us that the earth received rain, but we read, "...the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth..." A "mist" came up from the earth, "...and watered the whole face of the ground" (Genesis 2:5,6). How then did the "windows of heaven" open up for it to rain upon the earth 40 days and 40 nights? A source of water, above the earth's atmosphere, could answer this question, as well as the one about the earth standing out of the water. Did such a source of water exist? Absolutely!

Notice what Genesis 1:6-8--the description of what God created on the second day--tells us. "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. And God made

the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day" (see also Psalm 148:4).

These "waters which were above the firmament", therefore, are believed to have rained down upon the earth while "the fountains of the great deep" were broken up. The fountains mentioned here may have consisted of ground water as well as ocean water spreading out over the earth. What caused the fountains of the great deep to be broken up? Did the Lord send earthquakes, asteroids to hit the planet, or was the break up by His direct word? The Scriptures do not tell us.

History, however, may indicate that there was a great catastrophe upon the earth around the year 2,300 B.C. Historians are baffled about what caused it. This date, though, is interesting since the Flood likely happened about that time. It is also believed that seven asteroids or comets hit the earth between 3,000 and 2,000 B.C. (See "Global History and Geography"; by Brun, Forman, and Brodsky.)

"And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth; and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth; and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail; and the mountains were covered" (Genesis 7:18-20). Water always seeks the lowest level. Therefore, when the waters covered all the mountains on earth to a height of 15 cubits "upward" (over 22 feet above the tallest mountains) we can know for sure that the Flood was worldwide.

"And all flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth, and every man: All in whose nostrils was the breath of life, of all that was in the dry land, died...And the waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days" (verses 21-22,24).

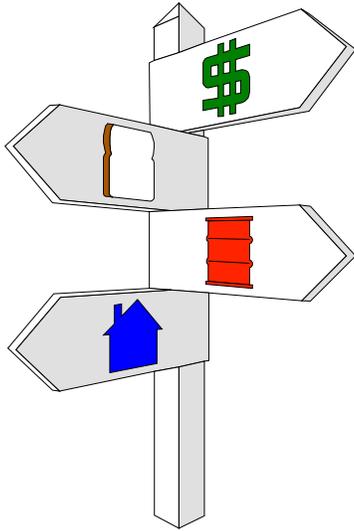
The Hebrew word for the Flood is "mabbuwl", meaning a "deluge". This Hebrew word appears to be only used for the Flood of Noah's day. Jesus may have used the

Greek term, "kataklusmos" in Matthew 24 and Luke 17, when referring to this great event. We read in Matthew 24:37-39: "But 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" (see also Luke 17:26-27).

The emphasis of Jesus' teaching here is that the people of Noah's day were being careless for the things of the Lord, as will people be before the Lord's return. Before the Flood they were going about their daily routines, unconcerned about their spiritual lives. Jesus said they were "...eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage..." This could well be a reference to the "sons of God" marrying the "daughters of men" that we read about in Genesis 6. Our Lord continued, "...until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away..."

After Noah and his family had entered the ark, we are told in Genesis 7:16, "...and the LORD shut him in." There is a finality about that statement. After the Lord's many years of mercy, after His pleadings with earth's peoples through the preaching of Noah, His mercy and pleadings both were exhausted. Everyone not in the ark perished. Jesus said things would be similar to this situation at the time of His second coming. The questions we must ask ourselves now are: *am I in the ark of safety? Am I baptized into Christ and am I following His way?* (See I Peter 3:18-22).

Because of the faithfulness of one man--Noah--who also influenced his family to be saved, all of us are here, today. Through the Lord, the influence of one person is enormous. Though the earth is yet to experience God's fiery judgment, we have His promise that it will never again go through a total judgment by water. "While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease" (Genesis 8:22).



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.

Debate rages on definition of family

Report shows
More recognizing
couples who are unmarried
By David Crary
ASSOCIATED PRESS

New York – As much as Americans revere the family, they differ sharply on how to define it.

New research being released today shows steadily increasing recognition of unmarried couples – gay and straight – as families. But there’s a solid core resisting this trend who are more willing to include pets in their definition than same-sex partners.

How “family” is defined is a crucial question on many levels. Beyond the debate over same-sex marriage, it affects income tax filings, adoption and foster care practices, employee benefits, inheritance rights and countless other matters.

Growing shift

The new research on the topic is contained in a book-length study, *Counted Out: Same-Sex Relations and Americans’ Definition of Family* and in a separate 2010 survey overseen by the book’s lead author, Indiana University sociologist Brian Powell.

Between 2003 and 2010, three surveys conducted by Powell’s team showed a significant shift toward counting same-sex couples with children as family – from 54 percent of respondents in 2003 to 68 percent in 2010. In all,

more than 2,300 people were surveyed.

“This indicates a more open social environment in which individuals now feel more comfortable discussing and acknowledging sexuality,” Powell said.

Only about one-third of those surveyed said they considered same-sex couples without children to be a family. And in 2006, when asked if gay couples and pets count as family, 30 percent said pets count but not gay couples.

“The sheer idea that gay couples are given less status than pets should give us pause,” Powell said in an interview.

Even though five states and the District of Columbia now allow same-sex marriages, the federal government doesn’t recognize them. The Census Bureau definition of “family” remains traditional: “A family is a group of two people or more (one of whom is the householder) related by birth, marriage, or adoption and residing together.”

Many religious conservatives hope the government sticks by that definition, despite shifts in public opinion.

“Same-sex marriage is a dangerous social experiment,” said Glenn Stanton, director of family formation studies for Focus on the Family. “A lesbian couple who legally married in Massachusetts – are they family? We would say, ‘Absolutely not.’”

THE HOUSTON CHRONICLE

Comment

The debate on the definition of family is blaspheming

against a sacred institution ordained by God. The basic components that are at the heart of a God-ordained family are a man and woman, not two men or two women. Genesis 2:23-24 says, “And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.”

Any kind of union between two people of the same sex is definitely forbidden by God, but man continues to go his own way which leads to death. “There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death” (Proverbs 16:25).

Strong Reasons For Anxiety

That the coming years will reveal strong reasons for the present anxiety we have no doubt. We have reached the most critical years of history, the very climax of the ages, and we must expect to witness events that may well strike fear to many hearts. Did not our Lord, Himself, referring to this very time, draw a dramatic picture of “Men’s hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken” (Luke 21:26).

Yet, for the child of God there is no need to fear. His is the precious promise: “Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee” (Isaiah 26:3). Political upheavals, therefore, will not destroy his confidence in God. Always he will reflect that his heavenly Father is still at the helm, guiding the destinies of the nations, working out His own eternal purpose. Even amid the very break-up of things that seemed permanent, the collapse of his own little world, he will say with confidence: “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea” (Psalm 46:1-2).

Comment

The short article above appeared in the July 22, 1991 issue of *The Advocate of Truth*.

It is just as timely today, even more so. The years continue to reveal strong reasons for anxiety. Political upheavals continue to plague the mind of man and things

which man thought to be permanent, such as certain financial firms, have collapsed. There was also an almost meltdown of the world economy which would have resulted in a world-wide depression.

Let each child of God memorize and believe Psalm 46:1-2.

Top ten predictions for the remaining part of 2011 and beyond

With all the problems the world is facing, it can be unsettling to the mind. Today, I will share with you ten predictions that are true!

1. The Bible will still have all the answers.
2. Prayer will still be the most powerful thing on earth.
3. The Holy Spirit will still move.
4. God will honor the praises of His people.
5. There will still be God-anointed preaching.
6. There will still be singing of praises to God.
7. God will pour out blessing upon His people.
8. God's people will still be keeping His commandments.
9. Jesus will still love His children.
10. Jesus will still save the lost when they come to Him.

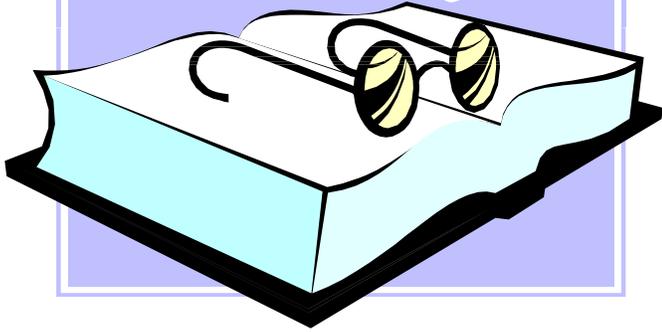
Isn't it great to remember WHO is really in control? And that “...the word of the Lord endureth for ever...” (I Peter 1:25).

I hope you found this encouraging! I sure did. Sometimes we need the reminder of just WHO is really in control.

Till the nets are full, keep on fishing (see Matthew 4:19).

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Is the doctrine of the laying on of hands necessary today?

ANSWER: The “laying on of hands” is a doctrine of the Bible and is maintained continuously by the Church of God (7th day) with headquarters at Salem, West Virginia. The teaching of this doctrine and its practice as found in the Holy Scriptures is essential to the individual for his salvation.

There are those who feel that the laying on of hands is not essential for salvation. Beware of those who would lead others astray through such lukewarm attitudes about the Word of God.

It is the intent of these few words to awaken the reader to the fact that the “laying on of hands” is a Bible teaching and is very necessary for individual salvation. Please read Hebrews 6:2.

In the Old Testament writings, we understand that when the Levites were taken to fill their offices, in Numbers 8:5-11, the Lord instructed Moses to have the children of Israel lay their hands upon the Levites. The laying on of hands was part of the process before the Levites could perform the services of the Lord. In these texts, Leviticus 4:15; 8:14,18 and 16:21, we read where the laying on of hands was accomplished upon a sacrifice about to be made. Before a person was about to be executed by the

congregation, hands were laid upon that person about to die. “Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let all that heard him lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him” (Leviticus 24:14). When Joshua was to receive the “charge” from Moses so he could lead the children of Israel, we read where Moses “...laid his hands upon him, and gave him a charge, as the LORD commanded by the hand of Moses” (see Numbers 27:18-23). Because of following this procedure according to the Lord, we find where Joshua “... was full of the spirit of wisdom; for Moses had laid his hands upon him...and did as the LORD commanded Moses” (Deuteronomy 34:9).

In the New Testament, we read in the accounts of Jesus’ baptism and how the Heavenly Father “laid hands upon” His Son in the form of a dove. Jesus was set apart and designated for the most important mission ever given, the fulfilling of the plan of salvation for all mankind. Part of the procedure for this most high office was the “laying on of hands.” As the heavenly Father “laid hands” upon Jesus, He spoke saying, “...This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” (see Matthew 3:16-17). When the Lord Jesus Christ gave His commission to His disciples, He stated that “...they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover” (Mark 16:18). Here we understand that the practice of the laying on of hands is accomplished

also when praying for the sick.

The early church observed the laying on of hands as we read in Acts 6:6. The first Seven Financial Stewards of the church had hands laid on them when they were placed into their offices for the purpose of handling the church's money. "Whom they set before the apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them" (Acts 6:6). Because this was accomplished, we read of how the church grew in numbers. In Acts 8:17, we read where Peter and John were sent to Samaria where it was reported some disciples were located. It was found that these brethren in Samaria were only baptized "...in the name of the Lord Jesus" (verse 16). Then the two apostles "...laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost" (verse 17). The receiving of the Holy Spirit of God came through the laying on of hands. We would do well to note here that a bystander, named Simon, offered money to the apostles that he too might receive the Holy Spirit. Because of the laying on of hands, there must have been a noticeable difference in these disciples, otherwise Simon would have not made his offer. This should further emphasize the need for this Bible practice by the church continually. Another noteworthy part of these verses in Acts 8 is that the word hands represents an instrument for an "outpouring." The Greek Dictionary in the back of Strong's Exhaustive Concordance reveals this important truth to us.

In Acts 13:3, we read where hands were laid upon Paul and Barnabas for their special mission on which they were to embark. In Acts 19:6, we read how the Holy Spirit was received by the Corinthian Church after the laying on of Paul's hands. Timothy, an apostle in the early church, had hands laid upon him for the receiving of spiritual gifts (see I Timothy 4:14). In Paul's second letter to Timothy, Paul reminds him of his gift through the laying on of Paul's hands.

In conclusion, we quote Hebrews 6:1-2. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of LAYING ON OF HANDS, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment." These verses inform us of "...THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST ..."

Part of these "principles" is the "laying on of hands."

Please consider these thoughts which have just been expressed. Be sure you continue grounded to the Rock which is our Lord Jesus Christ. Remain steadfast in the principles of the doctrine of Christ. The laying on of hands is most certainly an important part for every child of God to have accomplished after he is baptized. It is for all Pastors and Elders in the Body of Christ to be sure these things are maintained so the Body of Christ can continue steadfast and sure according to the Scriptures.

May God bless you to understand these thoughts.

QUESTION: Sometimes I have a problem with pride. How can I deal with it?

ANSWER: Every sin is serious in God's eyes, but pride is among the most serious because it is at the heart of many other sins such as jealousy, hatred, greed, envy, lust, selfishness. These all come from a prideful spirit which is a desire to lift up ourselves at the expense of others.

The Bible urges us to be humble and avoid the dangers of pride. The Bible says, "Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:10). Being humble does not mean that we tear ourselves down, or refuse to use the abilities and gifts God has given us. Instead it means that we don't look down on others or act in a prideful way toward those who may not be as gifted as we are. The Bible says, "For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith" (Romans 12:3).

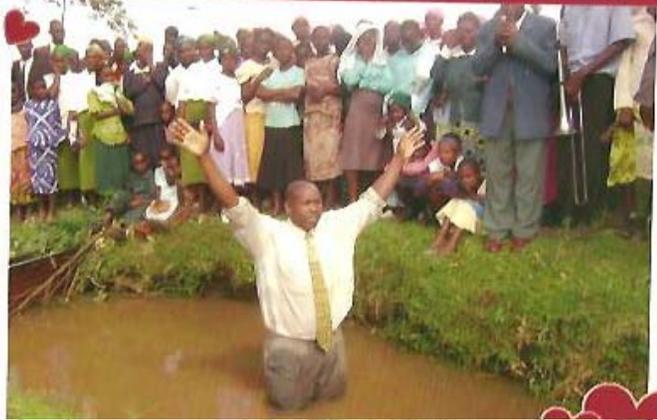
How may you gain a humble spirit? The key is to compare yourself with God, not other people. A person can always find someone who is less gifted and has more of this world's goods than he. However, when he compares himself to God, he will discover true humility. Isaiah 57:15 reads, "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones."

THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

BY DEL DELONG

Kenya





LESSON I

MEMORIAL OF THE PASSOVER

Scripture Reading: Exodus 12:37-47.

Golden Text: Exodus 12:42 (first part).

“It is a night to be much observed unto the LORD for bringing them out from the land of Egypt.”

1. When the children of Israel left Egypt, into what land did they go? How many were there on this journey? Exodus 12:37.
2. Did they also have flocks and cattle? Exodus 12:38.
3. Had they prepared food to take with them? Exodus 12:39.
4. For how many years had they sojourned in the land of Egypt? Exodus 12:41.
5. What night was to be much observed by the children of Israel and why? Exodus 12:42.
6. What did the Lord call the Passover in Exodus 12:43?
7. Was a bone of the lamb to be broken? Exodus 12:46.
8. Was the whole congregation of Israel to keep the Lord's Passover? Exodus 12:47.

LESSON II

THE PASSOVER TO BE OBSERVED YEARLY

Scripture Reading: Exodus 13:1-10; 17-22.

Golden Text: Exodus 13:10.

“Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year.”

1. What did the Lord say were to be His? Exodus 13:1-2.

2. What did Moses tell the people they must remember? Exodus 13:3.

3. In what month did they come out of Egypt? Exodus 13:4.

4. Where would the Lord bring the children of Israel, and were they to keep the Passover at the appointed time? Exodus 13:5.

5. What were they to eat for seven days before the Passover? Exodus 13:6-7.

6. What was it to be unto them, and how often were they to keep this ordinance? Exodus 13:9-10.

7. Why did God not lead His people through the land of the Philistines? Through what way did He lead them? Exodus 13:17-18.

8. Where did they first camp? Exodus 13:20.

9. What followed them by day and night? Exodus 13:21-22.

LESSON III

THE LORD LEADS ISRAEL

Scripture Reading: Exodus 14:1-14.

Golden Text: Exodus 14:14.

“The LORD shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace.”

1. Where did the Lord tell Moses to have the children of Israel camp? Exodus 14:2.

2. What did Pharaoh say about them? Was Pharaoh's heart again hardened and why? Exodus 14:3-4.

3. Did Pharaoh follow the children of Israel? How many chariots and captains did he take with him? Exodus 14:5-8.

4. Where did the Egyptians find the Israelites? Exodus 14:9.
5. Were the children of Israel afraid? Did they seek the Lord? Exodus 14:10.
6. What did they say unto Moses in Exodus 14:11-12?
7. What did Moses promise the people that the Lord would do for them? Exodus 14:13-14.

LESSON IV

ISRAELITES PASS THROUGH THE RED SEA

Scripture Reading: Exodus 14:15-31.

Golden Text: Exodus 14:22 (first part).

“And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground:...”

1. What did the Lord say to Moses and tell him to do in Exodus 14:15,18?
 2. Where did the angel of the Lord move, and what did it cause to happen? Exodus 14:19-20.
- NOTE: This cloud kept the Egyptians from attacking the children of Israel during the night. The Egyptians saw darkness and the Israelites saw light.
3. What did the Lord cause to happen when Moses stretched out his hand over the sea? Exodus 14:21.
 4. Did the children of Israel go through on dry ground? Who followed them? Exodus 14:22-23.
 5. What did the Lord cause to trouble the Egyptians? Exodus 14:24-25.
 6. When Moses again stretched forth his hand, what happened to the water? Exodus 14:26-27.
 7. Did any of the Egyptians survive? Exodus 14:28.

8. The Lord saved Israel that day from the Egyptians. Did this cause the Israelites to fear and believe the Lord and his servant, Moses? Exodus 14:29-31.

WHO SAID IT?

Choose who said each statement from the list of choices below. Then put that number in the blank beside the statement. Some may have been said by more than one person. The answers are found in Genesis 24.

1. _____ "Take a wife unto my son Isaac" (verse 4).
2. _____ "Behold, I stand by the well of water" (verse 43).
3. _____ "I will give thy camels drink also" (verse 46).
4. _____ "Tell me: and if not, tell me" (verse 49).
5. _____ "The thing proceedeth from the LORD" (verse 50).
6. _____ "Send me away unto my master" (verse 54).
7. _____ "Let the damsel abide with us a few days" (verse 55).
8. _____ "I will go" (verse 58).
9. _____ "What man is this that walketh in the field to meet us?" (verse 65).
10. _____ "It is my master" (verse 65).

- A. SERVANT
- B. ABRAHAM
- C. LABAN
- D. BETHUEL
- E. REBEKAH
- F. MOTHER
- G. BROTHER

CAMPING IN THE BACK YARD

By Geraldine Boundey

“What a beautiful summer day!” thought Mother as she worked in the kitchen. She was putting the last of the breakfast dishes into the cupboard when George hurried into the house.

“Mother, come and see what the boys and I have made!” called George. He had been playing in the back yard with his two friends, Terry and Robert, who lived next door. Mother followed George outside. She smiled when she saw what George and the other boys had made. It was a tent. They had tied a string from the clothesline pole to a small tree nearby. They had hung an old blanket across the string and had placed small rocks on the corners to keep the blanket tight.

“Isn't it a nice tent, Mother?” spoke up George. “We are pretending that we are on a camping trip in the woods. It is only big enough for one of us to get inside, so we are taking turns playing in the tent.”

Mother watched the fun for a few minutes, but she could see that the tent was not working out too well. The string would slide down the smooth clothesline pole, and that made the tent sag in the middle. Besides, it really was not big enough.

Mother thought for a minute. “I believe I have an idea that will work,” she said. She hurried to the garage and was soon back with a large folded bundle. “I remembered we had this large piece of canvas in our garage. Our clothes lines are good and strong. Let's try hanging this canvas across two of the lines. Then we will fasten the sides and corners with small wooden stakes.”

George and his friends soon had a fine, strong tent

that was big enough for all three of them to get inside at one time. How pleased they were! Now they could really have a nice time.

The boys played in the tent for hours. Finally Terry said. “Wouldn't it be fun if we really were on a camping trip in the woods!”

“Oh, yes!” agreed Robert. “It would be real fun! Well, we can't take this tent to the woods, but maybe our mothers would let us sleep in it overnight right here in George's back yard.”

“That is a good idea,” said George. “Let's ask our mothers right now!”

The boys were happy when their mothers said they could sleep in their tent that night! They spent the rest of the day fixing up their beds and talking about it. They could hardly wait for evening to come. It almost seemed like a real camping trip to be able to sleep all night in their own tent!

Usually George liked to stay up as long as he could at night. Sometimes he would even beg to stay up a few minutes longer than usual, but it was not that way this evening. The boys were ready for bed before it even got dark.

Before George went out to his tent, he and Mother had their usual evening worship. Mother studied the Sabbath school lesson with George and read several stories out of the Primary Treasure. Then George and Mother prayed. Mother asked Jesus to be with George as he slept out in his tent, to help him have a good rest, and to keep him safe through all the night.

Soon George and his friends were settled down in their tent for the night. They were so excited about it that at first they could not go to sleep. Also, it was still quite light outdoors. Finally, it began to get darker and darker, but then the lights from the house nearby gave them some light.

After a while they heard someone walking toward the tent. Who could it be? They were relieved when they saw it was George's Mother. When she saw they were still awake, she said. “I thought I would come out to see how you boys were before I went to bed.”

“Oh, we are fine,” chorused the boys. “This is the most fun we have had for a long time. We will probably want to do this again sometime soon!”

Mother laughed and turned back toward the house. Soon the lights in the house went off, and everything was still and dark.

It seemed a lot different in the tent now. There were strange little night noises that began to worry the boys. Robert said, "I wish I were home in my own bed."

"I wish I were, too. I didn't know it would be this scary," Terry added.

George laughed. "There is nothing to be afraid of," he said. "You know our mothers wouldn't let us sleep out here if it were dangerous; but most of all, I know that Jesus will keep us safe. We don't need to be afraid."

The boys settled down again for a few minutes. In the distance a dog began to bark, and suddenly, in the grass nearby a cricket began to chirp. Robert and Terry sat up quickly. "I don't care what you say," blurted out Terry. "I am going home to my own bed right now."

"So am I," agreed Robert. "My own bed seems nicest right now." With that, the two boys wrapped blankets around themselves and ran for their house.

George sighed and pulled his blanket up closer around his head. It was not quite so much fun now. He hadn't planned to sleep out here alone, but he was a big eight-year-old boy. He knew there was nothing to be afraid of, especially with Jesus and the angels keeping watch over him. He pulled his pillow into a more comfortable position and soon drifted off into a sound sleep.

The next morning Mother thought of the boys as soon as she woke up. "I haven't heard any noise out there. I wonder how they got along last night," she thought to herself. "If George had come in I am quite sure I would have heard him. I'll get up and go out to see how they are."

Mother quickly dressed and hurried out to the tent. She was surprised to see only one boy sound asleep in the tent. She went back in the house and waited for him to wake up and tell her what had happened.

At last George woke up and came into the house. He told her the story. How happy Mother was to know that Jesus had helped him to be brave.

"I hope I can help Robert and Terry to learn to love Jesus. It is so nice to know that Jesus is always near to help us," said George.

TRUE OR FALSE?

I doubt if you can do these without looking up the references, and some of the answers may surprise you. On the dotted line, write either True or False.

1. The city of Philadelphia is mentioned in the Bible. Revelation 1:11 _____
2. This is our modern city in Pennsylvania. _____
3. In the Jewish church, a lame man could not be a priest. Leviticus 21:18 _____
4. Jesus could not write, John 8:6-8. _____
5. The three men in the fiery furnace wore hats. Daniel 3:21 _____
6. A carbuncle is a red stone. Exodus 28:17 _____
7. St. Paul told women to keep still in church. I Corinthians 14:34-35 _____
8. Jacob had twelve sons and no daughters. Genesis 30:21 _____
9. Noah took only two of each kind of animal into the ark. Genesis 7:2-3 _____
10. Huz and Buz were twin sisters. Genesis 22:21 _____
11. Noah was a woman of the Old Testament. Numbers 26:33 _____
12. The Bible says that money is the root of all evil. I Timothy 6:10 _____
13. The Bible says there were three Wise Men. Read Matthew 2:1-12 carefully _____
14. Jesus performed his first miracle at a wedding. John 2:1-11 _____
15. Moses married an Ethiopian woman. Numbers 12:1 _____

A WHISPER SONG

I want to send a whisper song
 Across the waters blue,
 and say to all the children there,
 "Jesus loves you! Jesus loves you!"
 If they should not quite understand
 They'll wonder if it's true;
 But I will keep on whispering still,
 "Jesus loves you! Jesus loves you!"

"If you want your friends and family to know what God is like, let them see what He can make you like."

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The Twelve

When Jesus started out to preach, He called twelve special men.
And when He said, "Come follow Me," they did so there and then.
Invited first to join the group, one Simon Peter came.
With Peter came his brother, too--Andrew was his name.
Yet more were called by Jesus near the Galilean lake.
Both James and John gave up their nets--their all--for Jesus' sake.
Then Philip heard the Master's call; and Thomas heard it, too.
Thomas was the one who doubted, much like me and you.
Nathanael, whom Jesus named "An Israelite indeed"
Was also called--and Judas too, tho' he would traitor be.
Would Jesus take a Publican, a tax collector bold?
He did! And Matthew wrote of Christ--He said, "Twas writ of old."
So pleased to be a follower, James Alphaeus joined the throng.
Soon Lebbaeus-Thaddaeus followed too, and Simon came along.
And now I ask, what would you do, if Jesus came your way
And called your name and said, "Leave all and follow Me today?"
For still He calls to each of us. Will we be loyal, too?
Will we take up our cross and go when He says, "I mean you"?

Author Unknown--Selected

