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THE FIRST RESURRECTION AND THE MILLENNIUM OBEDIENCE IS REQUIRED!

Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:6).

We know that the first resurrection and the millennium (the thousand year period of peace) will come. How can one, after being converted, be sure that he or she will have part in the first resurrection and afterwards reign with Christ during the millennium?

Just to know about the first resurrection and millennium would be of no value to anyone without the proper knowledge of how to experience them.

A few years ago, a minister illustrated this point as follows: suppose someone would come to you and tell you about an immense gold mine, yet would reveal nothing about where the mine was located or what anyone could do to procure the gold. Would you value the information? You would want to know at once about your own prospect of mining the gold, where it is located, and what it might be worth. God has not left it merely to chance as to who will have part in the first resurrection and reign with Christ during the millennium. It is the obedient children of God who will experience these two things!

God operates by a well ordered plan. The teachings of the prophets, Jesus and His apostles, all confirm this. All taught that obedience is necessary to receive God's approval. Reading in the book of I Samuel, "Talk no more so exceeding proudly; let not arrogancy come out of your mouth: for the LORD is a God of knowledge, and by him actions are weighed" (I Samuel 2:3). Obedience

also was demanded in Exodus 19:5, "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine." "And now, Israel, what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul" (Deuteronomy 10:12). Jeremiah 17:10 reads, "I the LORD search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings." The words of Micah 6:8 are, "He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

When Jesus sent His apostles out to preach, He told them, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations..." (Matthew 28:19), "Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world..." (verse 20).

The request of the Apostle Paul in Romans 2:7 was that God will give "To them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life." In Titus 3:8, Paul said, "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." Obedience was always required as a condition of salvation. The Apostle John wrote about those who might expect to be made like Christ, "And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure" (I

John 3:3).

James gives the following advice, "Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls" (James 1:21). The Apostle Peter wrote, "Wherefore laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings, As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby" (I Peter 2:1-2). Jesus said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (John 15:14). To the "good and faithful servant", Jesus will say, "enter thou into the joy of thy lord" (see Matthew 25:23).

UNDERSTANDING THE LORD'S SUPPER

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On the night that God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage, the lamb was slain whose blood saved the first-born of Israel. Its blood was sprinkled on the doorposts, sides and top, in obedience to the command of God who had promised, "...when I see the blood, I will pass over you..." (Exodus 12:13). The slain lamb was then roasted and eaten, its flesh providing strength for the journey out of Egyptian bondage.

There followed seven days of "unleavened bread"--commemorating the fact that they had no time to leaven their bread, so it was free from the leaven of Egypt, a type of evil. This reminded them that a people redeemed by the Lord God must live clean lives. All of this, of course, is typical and prophetic of Calvary, where "...Christ our passover..." (I Corinthians 5:7) was slain for us. We are

Those who are obedient to God's laws can look forward to Jesus' promise, "And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be" (Revelation 22:12).

It is only by living a life committed to His principles and obedience to His laws that any may have part in the first resurrection and reign with Christ during the millennium. "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city" (Revelation 22:14).



saved through the shedding of Jesus' blood. And just as the children of Israel partook of the slain lamb, so we, having been saved by the blood of Jesus, are saved and spiritually strengthened.

On the night of the last supper, Jesus, and His disciples, were taught a new thought about the love of Christ. Jesus demonstrated that He was about to fulfill the type of the Passover Supper through the New Testament Lord's Supper. We now center our attention upon the words that came from Jesus at this Lord's Supper table.

"Take, eat; this is my body" are the words of Jesus. In the Passover ceremony, the breaking of the unleavened bread spoke of the sufferings of the children of Israel. In the Lord's Supper, the service symbolizes the suffering and breaking of the Lord's body and His death.

Jesus said, "...I am the bread of life..." (John 6:35). And again, "...Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53).

How do we partake of the body and blood of Jesus? We do it by having fellowship and obedience with Him through the Word of God and through the Holy Spirit. As simply as we take bread and eat it, so simply do we draw spiritual life and strength from Jesus Christ.

"...Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:27-28). The word testament means "covenant." At Mt. Sinai God entered into a covenant with the children of Israel. It was a covenant of works which was broken by Israel. That covenant was sealed by the shedding of sacrificial blood (Exodus 24:4-8). The Father in Heaven knew that Israel would break this covenant, and promised He would make a new covenant with mankind (Jeremiah 31:31-34) which would solve the problem of sin and human weakness.

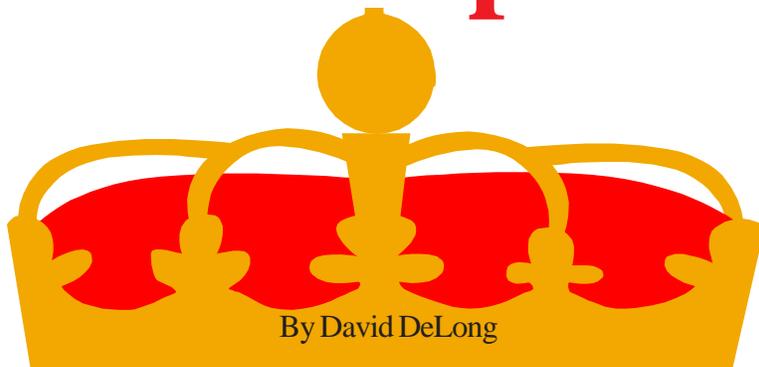
Moses was the mediator of the old covenant. But Jesus announced Himself as the Mediator of the new covenant, an agreement with His Father whereby He would shed His blood, pour out His life as man's substitute, taking man's sins so that all who would "drink His blood" and receive Christ as their Saviour and appropriate the benefits of His death, would have their sins removed and forgiven.

"This do in remembrance of me." Luke and Paul both add these words. What is it we are to remember particularly? We are to remember Jesus Christ Himself. He came so that we could remember Him. We are to recollect His Person, His love for us, the nature and meaning of His suffering and death!

"...I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom" (Matthew 26:29). Thus every time we participate in the Lord's Supper, we are anticipating His return. We are looking for the marriage supper of the Lamb when we shall see Him and have fellowship with Him face-to-face!

In summary, we may say that this memorial service is: (1) reminding us of Christ's love and atoning death for us. (2) A symbolic service. It was to remind us of His great sacrifice in shedding His pure blood and breaking of His body. (3) It was an experimental service. In this we recognize Christ's presence and receive from Him the forgiveness of sins, healing of our bodies, and His life and strength for our day. (4) It illustrates service in that the partaking of the emblems illustrates that which we are to do. "The same night in which he was betrayed" we are to partake of these precious emblems. (5) It is a prophetic service. It reminds us that we will be partaking of this feast when He returns again!

The Lordship of Christ



In Romans 10:8,9, we read: "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; That 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." According to these verses,

one requirement for salvation is that we confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus. In other words, we need to say that Jesus is Lord! Have we been telling others that Jesus is our Lord? We must. But just what does it mean for Jesus to be Lord?

Christ makes it plain that merely calling Him Lord (just

giving lip service) is not enough. We find in Luke 6:46 these sobering words: "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" So, it is clear that total obedience to the Lord must accompany our confession of Him as Lord. Furthermore, we read in Matthew 7:21-23: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." The word iniquity here means lawlessness. Therefore, working iniquity means the same as transgressing the law of God. Many, according to the testimony of

When we confess that Jesus is our Lord, we are also confessing that we are willing to live for Him, serve Him, trust and obey Him, and to quit sinning.

Jesus, want to do good works for Him, but they are not willing to obey the Father in Heaven. The Apostle Paul puts it this way: "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity" (II Timothy 2:19). When we confess that Jesus is our Lord, we are also confessing that we are willing to live for Him, serve Him, trust and obey Him, and to quit sinning.

If Jesus is our Lord, He is also our Commander. An interesting account is given in the Book of Joshua, chapter five, where Joshua and the children of Israel are near the city of Jericho. The Lord makes a surprising visit to Joshua in verses 13-15. We read: "And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, behold, there stood a man over against him with his sword drawn in his hand: and Joshua went

unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as captain of the host of the LORD am I now come. And Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did worship, and said unto him, What saith my lord unto his servant? And the captain of the LORD'S host said unto Joshua, Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy. And Joshua did so."

That this is an appearance of Jesus in one of His theophanies is testified to by at least two facts. One is that He receives worship from Joshua. An angel does not receive worship. In Revelation 22:8,9, after the Apostle John falls down to worship the angel sent to him, the angel says, "...See thou do it not..." The other fact is that Joshua is told to remove his shoe because the place he is standing on is holy.

The help that the Israelites were given from the "captain of the host of the LORD" came after faithful obedience by them to God's commands. Joshua had been instructed in chapter one, verses 5-7: "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee all the days of thy life: as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee: I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee. Be strong and of a good courage: for unto this people shalt thou divide for an inheritance the land, which I swear unto their fathers to give them. Only be thou strong and very courageous, that thou mayest observe to do according to all the law, which Moses my servant commanded thee: turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that thou mayest prosper whithersoever thou goest." Joshua and his people yielded to their Commander.

As a result of this faithfulness to the Lord, a number of exciting things happened. We are told in Joshua 5:1 that when the kings of the Amorites and the kings of the Canaanites heard that the Lord had dried up the Jordan River for the Israelites to pass over, "...that their heart melted..." The same outcome will happen for us as well. When we are faithfully obedient to the Lord, our enemies cannot stand before us. They will melt away. For instance, we find these words in James 4:7: "Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Next, we are informed in Joshua 5:2-8 that the Israelites who had not been circumcised while they were in the wilderness then became circumcised. This allowed them to become sanctified, and thus they could partake in the Passover service. We read in verses 9 and 10, after

the people had been circumcised, “And the LORD said unto Joshua, This day have I rolled away the reproach of Egypt from off you...And the children of Israel encamped in Gilgal, and kept the passover on the fourteenth day of the month at even in the plains of Jericho.” When we make a commitment to live in obedience to God’s Word, The Lord will then circumcise our hearts so that we, in sanctification, can have fellowship with Him, including at the time of the Lord’s Supper.

The Lord always has provided, and always will provide for His children ...

In verses 11 and 12, the Word tells us: “And they did eat of the old corn of the land on the morrow after the passover, unleavened cakes, and parched corn in the self-same day. And the manna ceased on the morrow after they had eaten of the old corn of the land; neither had the children of Israel manna any more; but they did eat of the fruit of the land of Canaan that year.” This is a wonderful example of how the Lord supplies all of our need when we live for Him. (See Philippians 4:19.)

The Lord always has provided, and always will provide for His children, especially when they have no means to provide for themselves. We see this when Elijah was miraculously fed by ravens (I Kings 17:1-6); when the widow woman’s meal and oil did not fail (I Kings 17:8-16); when Jesus made provision for His disciples on a missionary tour (Matthew 10:1-11); and here in the Book of Joshua when the Israelites have just entered the land of Canaan.

Actually, the Lord had sustained His people in the wilderness for forty years on manna before ending it and giving them “the old corn of the land” in Canaan. What precious types we may see in this. Christ, as the bread from heaven, provides for us as we walk through the wilderness today. Then, in the earth made new, it will be Christ Who provides eternal life for us as the “old corn.”

It is at this point in the Scripture narrative that the “captain of the host of the LORD” makes an appearance to Joshua. The timing is perfect as it always is with the Lord. Joshua and company need the encouragement that they

receive for the great task that lies before them. All of us also need the Lord’s encouragement for the work that He has given us to do. Even the Lord Jesus needed strengthening from an angel on the eve of His crucifixion (Luke 22:43).

The Lord gives us the encouragement and strength necessary to do His will. However, we must do that will. For us to claim Christ as our Lord, we must strive to obey every command of our Captain, yielding to Him our total allegiance. The Apostle Paul said it this way: “Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (II Corinthians 10:5).

Joshua and the children of Israel were successful in their conquest of Jericho. But this conquest and the further conquests they obtained were only possible because of the faithful obedience they gave to the Lord. In fact, by their obeying the laws of God, the Lord encouraged them to further obedience in taking the city of Jericho. So it can be with us, as well. It is like what the Psalmist wrote in Psalm 84:7, “They go from strength to strength...”

In conclusion we can sum up the Lordship of Christ under four headings: perceive, believe, receive, and achieve.

First, as with Joshua and the Israelites, we must perceive what it is that the Lord requires of us. We read in Romans 6:13, “Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God.”

Next, we must believe to the point of action: “Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone” (James 2:17). All disciples of the Lord will, as the hymn says, “trust and obey.”

Also, we must receive from the Lord the encouragement and strength that we need for His service. Acts 5:32 tells us: “And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him.”

Finally, with God’s help, we can achieve great things for Him. Let’s read from Titus 2:14: “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” Christ must be Lord of all, or He is not Lord at all!

JESUS WAS NOT A REVOLUTIONARY



The world which our grandparents knew has vanished. Even the world in which our parents grew up has practically disappeared, a fact of which the generation gap painfully reminds us. And before our eyes we see our own world changing and being remade in a strange new pattern.

The emerging pattern of the world of today is humanistic, man-centered. Man dominates the thinking and the aspirations of the masses. Man has shoved the God of Heaven out of the way and now presents himself as the sole actor and hope of the world. The problems confronting him are formidable, but he is undaunted. Changes that fairly shout moral collapse and judgment to come, man in his blindness deems inevitable progress.

He is convinced that a new social order rather than an outmoded individual regeneration will cure the ills of humanity. Where social improvement moves too slowly, some are advocating--even in the name of Christianity!--radical measures which go so far as to support revolution and violence if necessary. Thus does the fantasy of the social gospel lure its adherents farther and farther away from reality.

The whole trouble with the humanistic determination to rid the world of its wrongs, whether social or economic or political, lies in one essential reality: the project is not God's program for the world. Where its proponents have sought biblical support, they have been obliged to twist Scripture to make it conform to their own biased views. They make the Bible say what it was never intended to say.

The more we study the preaching of Jesus when He

walked on earth, the more clearly we see that His whole life and ministry conformed implicitly to the program of God. Jesus was not a revolutionary. Yet society in His day exhibited glaring wrongs. Its politics were corrupt. Slavery was common. Many existed in poverty while some enjoyed vast wealth. Beyond the borders of highly civilized but pagan Rome millions lived in the gross superstitions and barbarities of heathenism.

Jesus kept His eyes fixed upon the course which God had planned for Him. Clearly He perceived the wrongs perpetrated by man upon his fellows. Yet He refused to devote His time to righting the world's injustices, because the Father's program led Him in another direction altogether. "But that the world may know that I love the Father; and as the Father gave me commandment, even so I do..." (John 14:31).

Jesus accordingly taught submission to the authority of Rome. He said: "... Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's" (Matthew 22:21).

He taught submission to the law of Moses, saying: "... The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat: All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not" (Matthew 23:2-3).

Requested to judge in a purely secular matter He replied: "...Man, who made me a judge or a divider over you?" Then He emphasized a spiritual principle: "... Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth" (Luke 12:14-15).

In all His teaching, He stressed faith in God as a basic element of human life. Not revolution to overthrow the economic, or the political, or the religious establishment, but faith was the path He appointed for His followers. It was the path He Himself trod. "Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?... But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you" (Matthew 6:30,33).

How radically different is the humble walk of faith, which brings contentment with the will of God

How radically different is the humble walk of faith, which brings contentment with the will of God, from the turbulent strife we see and hear advocated in our day! This trustful confidence seeks the will of God and does it. Certainly some problems would not arise if faith, prayer, and reliance upon God's Word were given preeminence at the grass roots, which of course is home.

The same faith appears in the epistles. The apostles wrote thus:

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves judgement" (Romans 13:1-2, ASV).

"Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well" (I Peter 2:13-14).

Only faith can see the fulfillment of these predictions: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever" (I John 2:17). "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the

things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal" (II Corinthians 4:17-18).

The faith in which Jesus accepted the Father's plan for Him went further than a trust for daily experiences. Always before Him He saw the Cross. Beyond the Cross He saw the ultimate blessedness which the God of love had designed for mankind. The impact of His death was to be both universal and eternal. He could declare with implicit faith: "All things are delivered unto me of my Father..." (Matthew 11:27).

In obedience and trust, Jesus came to the Cross and settled the issue once for all. "...Now once at the end of the ages hath he been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:26, ASV).

The plan of God for this age is advancing steadily; day by day He builds His church throughout the world. It will move forward when the Lord Jesus returns to judge and rule the world. That will be God's time to right earth's wrongs. He is not blind to the crying injustices and sorrows prevailing in the human race. He will deal righteously with every problem and every wrong--but in His own time and in His own way.

When He does so, His arrangements will be permanent. Sin will not arise again to plague mankind. God is the only One who is able to abolish the tyranny of sin and death in the earth. The most determined efforts of well-meaning men shrink to absolute futility when compared with the redemption which God will plant in the earth for His glory.

Jesus came to earth knowing that God had promised Him world dominion. Satan offered Him such dominion on his own terms. Refusing the devilish offer, Jesus clung to the divine and only course which would lead Him into the fulfillment of God's promise. We can do nothing better in our own day. Our love, our strength, our time belong to God that He may use us in completing the church.

Our dedication to Him in prayer, witnessing, giving, and life service brings closer every day the blessed time when the Lord Jesus Christ will reign upon the earth. "In his days shall the righteous flourish; and abundance of peace so long as the moon endureth" (Psalm 72:7).

-FROM THE PRAIRIE OVERCOMER

BLESSING OF THE MILLENNIUM



As we read the divine record of ages past, as well as delve within the future by the pages of Holy Scripture, we readily perceive that in the beginning all was good. The Father had created the world and all therein, and He placed Adam and Eve over it, admonishing them to replenish and subdue the earth. All was perfect then. This blessed state of perfection did not last long, however, for Satan soon caused the perfect man and woman to sin, and brought upon them the penalty of death, with its accompanying sorrows, and then was the earth cursed for the sake of man. From that day until the present, "Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble" (Job 14:1). In sorrow doth the woman bring forth her children, and from an earth cursed, bringing forth thorns and thistles, doth man wrest a living, at last, he returns to the dust from whence he was taken.

However, as we read the Divine Plan of the Ages, we learn that the course of the centuries shall not always continue as it does today and has done in ages past. The Lord God has promised that a change shall come, in a time of blessing, known as the restitution age, which was spoken of by our Lord Jesus Himself (Matthew 19:28), as well as the Apostle Peter, in these words: "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" (Acts 3:19-21).

That we may understand some of the things God has planned to accomplish during the times of restitution, we

must take heed unto the words spoken in the prophecies, for Peter said that all things which are to be restored are spoken of by the mouth of God's holy prophets. The future then is outlined for us if we will but seek out of the Book of the Lord and read. We will only consider a few of these prophecies, as space prohibits an exhaustive study.

In the book of Revelation, a vision was given unto the Apostle John of the thousand year reign of Christ and His saints upon the earth during this time of "restitution." Inasmuch as the sorrow, pain, anguish, sickness, death, and all the curses and imperfections of this world are due to the influence of Satan, it would be expected that God would destroy his influence during this time of restitution, lest the devil would continue to work in opposition to the plans of the Almighty. And this we understand shall happen, for the record states that Satan is bound during this millennium reign of Christ. The record states: "And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years, And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season" (Revelation 20:1-3).

Then, after the binding of Satan for the thousand years, the apostle in vision saw thrones, upon which persons were sitting, unto whom judgment was given, and it reads that at this time the saints "...lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years...they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years" (Revelation 20:4-6).

In this kingdom of Christ then, set up in the days of the Gentile kingdoms (Daniel 2:44), in which the saints shall reign on the earth as kings and priests (Revelation 5:10), shall come to pass the blessings spoken of by all the holy prophets since the world began: "...the meek... shall inherit the earth" (Matthew 5:5), and "Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed in the earth: much more the wicked and the sinner" (Proverbs 11:31). "The righteous shall never be removed: but the wicked shall not inhabit the earth" (Proverbs 10:30). The righteous shall remain to enjoy the wonderful blessings which come to pass under the blessed rule of Christ.

With a righteous king over the earth (Zechariah 14:9), and an upright and impartial government in power, conditions shall be reversed from today. Now the avaricious and the ruthless, the sinner and the worldly rule; but then the meek, the pure in heart, the saints, shall be the governing class, and the blessings that shall attend the reign shall be many. Those who are sinners and refuse to heed the divine laws of the righteous king, Jesus, shall be removed from the kingdom, as the apostle has spoken, saying, "And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts 3:23).

In that day no child shall die in infancy, but all shall grow to manhood and have an opportunity of enjoying the blessings of the kingdom of the Messiah. However, if anyone shall refuse to obey the righteous laws of the Holy King, then shall he be cut off as a transgressor, and destroyed from out of the kingdom, as the prophet has spoken, saying: "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 shall be accursed" (Isaiah 65:20).

Now on every hand, we gaze upon the ravages of sin: the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the lame bear witness to the awfulness of the sin of the world; but, praise God, the time is coming when every evidence of sin shall be erased from the earth. To those now afflicted, the Lord has spoken these gracious words saying, "Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold, your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence: he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the

tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert" (Isaiah 35:3-6). "And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity" (Isaiah 33:24).

Today, the earth is divided into two great wastes of barrenness, of great ice regions around the poles, with arid deserts on every continent and great stretches of waste swamp land; but under the government of the Messiah all this shall be transformed into usable land. The land shall be made to become as the garden of Eden in all its beauty, as the Lord places His blessings upon it. Listen to the description of these wonderful changes: "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the LORD, and the excellency of our God" (Isaiah 35:1-2). "And the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land springs of water: in the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes" (verse 7). Now the earth is under the curse, and, if the ground does yield, it is but partial; but "Then shall the earth yield her increase; and God, even our own God, shall bless us" (Psalm 67:6).

In our day, we labor and build homes. Then we lose them in recession, and others live in them. We plant orchards and vineyards; but, before they bear, often they have passed from our hands, and others eat the fruits of our labor. "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 labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble; for they are the seed of the blessed of the LORD, and their offspring with them" (Isaiah 65:21-23).

Our generation, as in ages past, is bearing the burden of armaments. Nations are feverishly preparing for destruction or preservation. Yet, in the Scriptures we are promised a release from all this. In that day, we shall not be taxed for death-dealing instruments, nor look forward with dread to a day when loved ones shall be taken away to die upon a battlefield. The Lord hath said: "And he shall judge among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plow-

shares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more" (Micah 4:3). What a wonderful time that will be when "...they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree; and none shall make them afraid: for the mouth of the LORD of hosts hath spoken it" (verse 4).

After the tower of Babel, the confusion of tongues has prevailed unto this day. Nations and tribes have their own languages or dialects, and the people of different nations can not understand one another because of this condition. In Christ's kingdom, one form of speech will be restored, as at the beginning, and harmony will prevail as the prophet has declared, saying: "For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent" (Zephaniah 3:9).

Today wrangling sects are upon every hand, each with its own particular doctrine, all differing; but, in the millen-

nium, it shall not be so. When the government of the Lord is in sway, and the ways of the Lord are made known, "And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more" (Jeremiah 31:34).

"And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles" (Zechariah 14:16).

"All the ends of the world shall remember and turn unto the LORD: and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee. For the kingdom is the LORD'S: and he is the governor among the nations" (Psalm 22:27-28).

-ADAPTED FROM AN OLD TRACT

ZECHARIAH - A PROPHET OF WORDS OF COMFORT

By **Timoteo Mendoza J.**

Chapter 1

Many Jews responded to the name of Zechariah in the Old Testament. Zechariah means "the Lord recalls". Like Jeremiah and Ezekiel, Zechariah was a prophet and a priest. He was born into a family of priests and Iddo (one of the priests who returned from Babylon) was his grandfather. Zechariah was the head of the family in the days of Joiakim (Nehemiah 12:12,16).

Zechariah was a prophet during the days of restoration after the Babylonian exile. He was a contemporary to the prophets Haggai and Malachi. The book of



Zechariah provides us with a wide prophetic panorama contained in visions and information about the reconstruction of Jerusalem and its finish (Ezra 6:14-15).

First Prophetic Message (Chapter 1 verses 1-6)

At the beginning of the prophetic message (Zechariah 1:1-6), the Lord sends Zechariah to make a strong exhortation to His people to turn from their evil ways and not to neglect the voice of the prophet. He speaks of how their fathers neglected the voice of the prophets which

provoked the Lord to display His wrath. As a consequence, the Lord allowed the destruction of the city and the captivity of the people during seventy years in Babylon.. The spiritual state of Israel when they returned from exile in Babylon was not good. Zechariah then began his work of admonishing his people to turn to God with confidence so that the blessings from the Lord would return.

*The Man Among The Myrtle Trees
(Chapter 1 verses 7-17)*

After his first message, Zechariah receives by night a vision about "...a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom..." (verse 8). The myrtle trees are leafy trees of medium height that grow nearby Jerusalem, representing reconciliation and the blessing from God to His people, "...and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree" (Isaiah 55:13). Also, please read Isaiah 41:19.

At the time Ezra brought the book of Moses' law before the people, and after understanding everything written down there, they proclaimed in all the cities and in Jerusalem saying: "...Go forth unto the mount, and fetch olive branches, and pine branches, and myrtle branches, and palm branches, and branches of thick trees, to make booths, as it is written" (Nehemiah 8:15). So began the reconciliation with God. "*I saw by night, and behold a man riding upon a red horse, and he stood among the myrtle trees that were in the bottom; and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white*" (Zechariah 1:8).

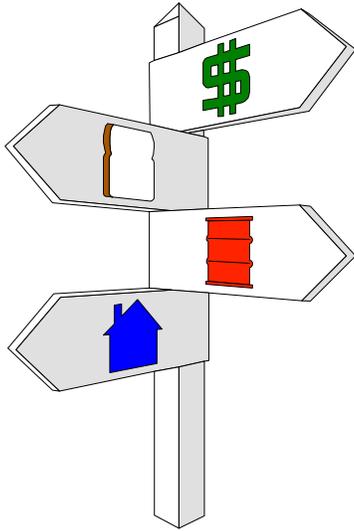
This vision of the myrtle trees remaining in a deep part, reflecting the spiritual decay of the people, is typical of the people after being seventy years in Babylon. The identity of the man who was among the myrtle trees is discovered in verses eleven and twelve as the angel of the Lord rides upon a red horse. The color red usually represents blood and war. Therefore, God represents in this vision the vengeance that He plans to carry out.

"...and behind him were there red horses, speckled, and white" (verse 8, last part). These horses were sent by the Lord to walk to and fro through the earth. When they did, they confirmed to the angel of the Lord that the land

was quiet and still. The angel of the Lord's question, "...how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?" (verse 12) says much about God's indignation. The fact that God allowed Israel to be led captive by the nations was part of their punishment. However, these nations were merciless to His people. "I was wroth with my people, I have polluted mine inheritance, and given them into thine hand: thou didst shew them no mercy; upon the ancient hast thou very heavily laid thy yoke" (Isaiah 47:6). Now these nations were resting quietly, and the chosen people of God suffered, "And I am very sore displeased with the heathen that are at ease: for I was but a little displeased, and they helped forward the affliction" (Zechariah 1:15). This abuse against His people moved the Lord to mercy, "Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies..." (verse 16). These were really good words of comfort to the people hurt by the Gentiles and great indignation for the oppressors.

Four Horns And Four Carpenters (verses 18-21)

"Then lifted I up mine eyes, and saw, and behold four horns" (verse 18). The horns represent kings, kingdoms and powers. Four kingdoms are represented here by horns that scattered Judah "...so that no man did lift up his head..." (verse 21). In other words, these kingdoms took over the Jews with such power that no one resisted. Without a doubt, the angel was making an allusion to the power of the Gentile kingdoms of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. Let us remember that the captivity in Babylon had ended, and the oppression of the second kingdom (Medo-Persia) was taking its course. There still were two more kingdoms to come. After that, Zechariah observes four carpenters (*from the Hebrew charad*), which means sculptors, tillers, engravers who came to throw down the horns. These were sent by God to carve or diminish the power of the four nations (horns) so that His people would not be eliminated. This shows the mercy of God toward His people. These carpenters have done their work throughout the history of Israel, and they will keep on doing so until the coming of the Son of God.



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.

A LESSON LEARNED: NEVER DO NOTHING

HEALTHY OR ILL, VISITS HEALING
TO THE SOUL

By Beverly Beckham
Boston Globe

I used to visit her. In the beginning, when her illness was new and life-threatening, I showed up. I stood in the hospital with her family. I supported her.

Even later, after her illness plateaued and she was transferred to a nursing home, I stopped by once in a while. It made her feel good, and it made me feel good.

This was years ago.

I never made a decision to stop visiting. I just got lazy. I'd be in the neighborhood and think, "I don't have time." And then I'd have time and think, "It's not a good time."

And time went by.

Now when I check the obituary page, I look for her name. I think she's still alive, though I'm not positive. We're not family. She's the mother of a distant friend. I could call the place where I last visited and ask for her. I could call her daughter.

But I'm embarrassed and ashamed and ambivalent,

too, because if she's still in that little room and I call, isn't this a "commitment to visiting not once but regularly?" And if she's not there,...what then?

And so I do nothing.

You learn things in life. Like to never do nothing. I learned this when my mother was sick and her friends stopped calling and coming by. I learned how important it is to pick up a phone or knock on a door or send a card or get in the car and go see someone no matter your reluctance, no matter how long you've been absent.

In the beginning, my mother's friends did what I did. They kept in touch. But my mother, like my friend's mother, didn't get better.

And, one by one, her friends vanished.

Of course they did. They had their own lives. Many of them moved to warmer climates. Many more of them simply moved on. Maybe they thought there was nothing they could do. Maybe they thought a random visit now and then would be an intrusion.

They were wrong. It would have been a distraction.

Teresa, my mother's childhood friend, remained close. She lived 65 miles away and visited not every year, not even every other year. But how often didn't matter. She phoned. She sent birthday...cards. And on the special days when she did arrive, she and her husband would sit at the kitchen table with my mother and father, and drink coffee and eat the sweets they brought, and talk about good times, keeping the conversation light.

Teresa would cry on the drive home. She told me this

after my mother died. She and my mother had been girls together. It broke her heart to look for pieces of that girl and see every remnant gone. It's hard to see people in-firm.

An artist from Gloucester ended up in a long-term-care facility in Stoughton, and lived for 10 years, confined to a bed and dependent on a ventilator.

It was a long hike for his friends to come to visit and many stopped coming, not because of the drive but because it was too hard for them to see their friend unable to speak, unable to move, unable to do anything.

But sometimes after months, after years, an old friend would show up and how long he'd been away didn't matter. A person from Sal's past would walk into his room and Sal would smile.

"Do you think she'll remember me?" My friend, Janet, asked before walking into my mother's house not long before she died. Janet lived in California then and hadn't seen my mother in 15 years. Her visit didn't change anything. But it made my mother happy. Janet stayed 10 minutes. But my mother talked about it for weeks.

Maybe the story of the prodigal son isn't just about a son going off and squandering his fortune. Maybe the bigger lesson is the joy he brings with his return. A person leaves--it seems forever--and then he comes back and maybe there's no fatted calf killed for the celebration. But there are smiles and coffee at the kitchen table, and old stories resurrected and good times remembered.

ABOUT FRIENDS

In the Signs of Times of the August of 2007 issue of *The Advocate of Truth*, there appeared an article entitled "Feeling Alone? You're Not The Only One" which appeared in the *Houston Chronicle* which stated that a poll found that most Americans are close to only two people.

Let us share with you the above commentary which also appeared in the *Houston Chronicle*. It tells of how precious a visit from a friend, even if not seen for years, can be.



PA/PLO ISRAEL? OK. JEWISH ISRAEL? NO WAY (EXCERPTS)

Weeks before the Bush administration (convened) its conference on the creation of Palestine, one of the PLO/PA's most senior spokesman declared that the "Palestinians" will never recognize Israel as a Jewish state.

Saeb Erekat was speaking on Palestine Radio when he gave the rationale for the "Palestinian" position. "There is no country in the world where religious and national identities are intertwined," he said.

The words thus spelled out by PLO chairman Mahmoud Abbas' right hand man shone light on a central component of the deceptive, and usually hidden, PLO strategy whose end goal has always been the eradication of a sovereign Jewish state from the Muslim Middle East.

Since US President George H.W. Bush and Secretary of State James Baker began the land-for-peace process in 1991, a demand made on the PLO and other elements in the anti-Israel terrorist front has consistently been that they recognize the State of Israel.

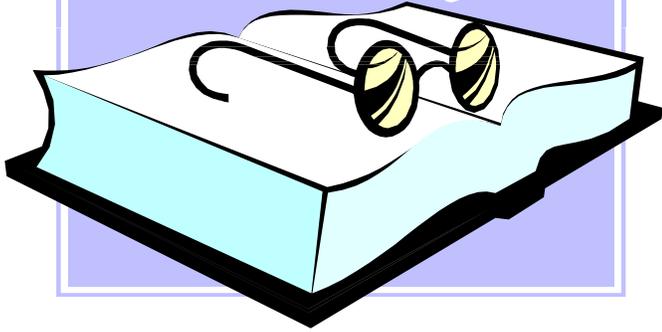
After ducking and driving their way around this demand, the Arab side finally found the key:

They would recognize Israel as "a state" but not as a "Jewish state."

-THE BEREAN CALL, FROM THE INTERNET

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: In what ways are the Lord's Supper and the Marriage Supper Of the Lamb similar?

Answer: The same night in which Jesus was betrayed is a special evening to every child of God. On this particular evening the body of Christ assembles itself to partake of the emblems of our Lord and Savior, Jesus. Every member must come and dine in the evening of the 14th day of the first Bible month that they may receive eternal life. Jesus said, "...Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53). This service is the Lord's Supper.

For a few moments, let us consider two suppers which are mentioned in the Word of God. Many will automatically think of the old Passover supper eaten by Jesus and his disciples in the upper room before He instituted the Lord's Supper. Let us look ahead rather than back and think about a future supper.

We speak of the Marriage Supper Of The Lamb to be eaten on the sea of glass after His saints have been caught up to meet Jesus when He returns for them. "And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God" (Revelation 19:9). This miraculous event will be the fulfillment of Jesus' words in John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye be-

lieve in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also."

FOR GOD'S SAINTS

These two suppers are for God's saints throughout the earth. The Lord's Supper provides that spiritual nourishment today that the partaker thereof may have a more abundant life in this age. By continuing to feed on this spiritual sustenance, the child of God receives that which is vital for spiritual health and growth.

The Marriage Supper will be a kind of victory supper for the saints. Only those who have endured during their present lifetime and been found faithful will receive the privilege to be a part of the supper to be enjoyed in the New Jerusalem. The saints will receive that food which will nourish them during the millennial reign of our Lord upon this earth.

BOTH ARE CALLED SUPPERS

The Marriage Supper and the Lord's Supper both are called "Supper." The Greek word used in the New Testament for supper means: "an evening meal." During

the time of Jesus, the supper which was always at or near evening, was the most complete and well-balanced meal of the day.

A MARKING OF TIME

Another similarity between the two suppers is the ending of one period of time and the beginning of another.

Each year the 14th of the month Abib, at even, is the time God chose to mark with the special Holy Communion of Jesus Christ. An old year has passed, and a new Bible year commences. It is the time to look forward with a deeper resolve to make the coming months better by a closer walk with God.

The Marriage Supper will surely be the mark in periods of time. That event will mark the end of the age as we know it today. On this side of the Marriage Supper, is the present age spoken of by the prophets and outlined to some detail through Daniel. On the other side of the Marriage Supper will be the 1,000 year reign of Jesus Christ upon this earth. The "Feast" itself will take place while the wicked will think it to be the end of the world, when in reality it is the end of an age in God's plan.

As we partake of the Lord's Supper each year, we forgive and forget the past and prepare for a new year. When we partake of the Marriage Supper, we will have been blinded to the past that we may prepare to live and reign with Jesus Christ in a new age.

JESUS SERVES

We read in Matthew that "...Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it" (Matthew 26:26-27). In all the accounts of the Gospels, we read that Jesus presented the emblems to the disciples Himself.

Just as Jesus served that first supper in the upper room the same night in which He was betrayed, the saints through the centuries have also been served under the direction of the Comforter until the time when Christ will serve again in the New Jerusalem. "They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the

throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes" (Revelation 7:16-17).

What a blessed time to look forward to. Any difficulties or sufferings we may have cannot be compared to such a beautiful event as the Marriage Supper Of The Lamb. "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18).

Dear Reader, we have just read of some similarities between the Lord's Supper and the Marriage Supper Of The Lamb. As you consider these thoughts, you may think of other ways in which they are similar. Let us all examine ourselves properly that we may be ready to partake of the Victory Feast when He comes for His saints.

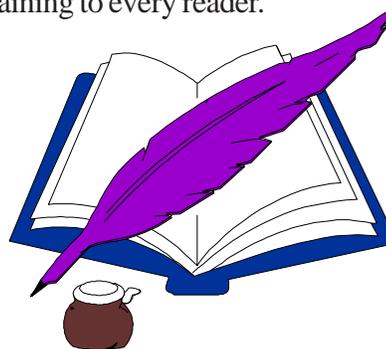
"Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord" (I Corinthians 11:27).

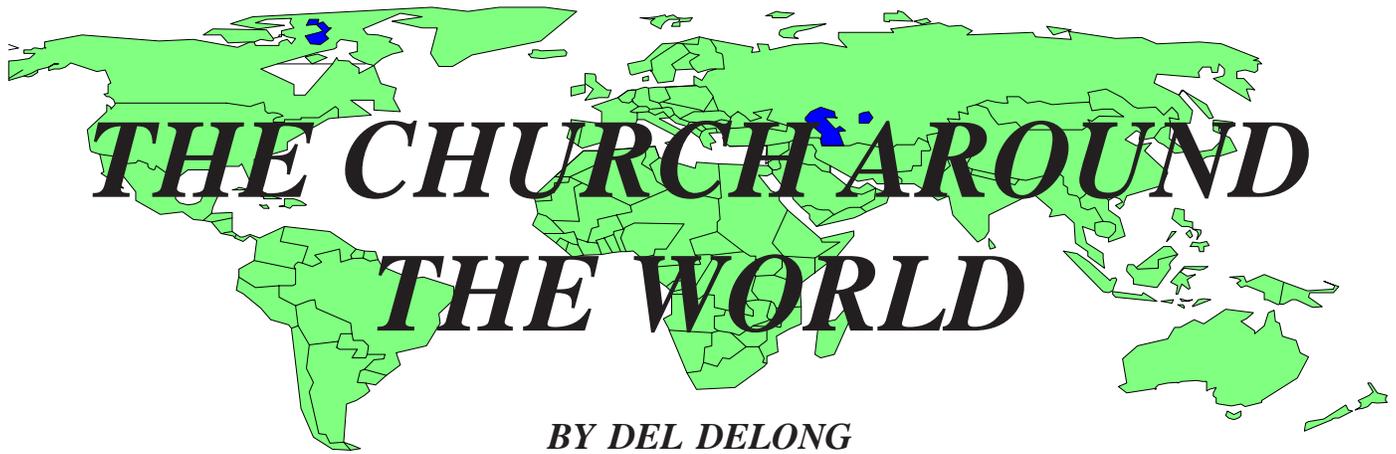
May God bless you as you think on these things.

Question: Why is the Book of Proverbs considered to be an inspiration of God?

Answer: The Book of Proverbs definitely is written by different men as they were moved by the Holy Spirit to write. While the Book of Proverbs was written under inspiration, the Lord permitted the personal experiences and backgrounds of the writers to speak of their own experiences as a child in order to impress the importance of the instructions.

To the children of God, the Father in Heaven has indeed given "Good Doctrines," meaning the best teachings from God. In this Book of Proverbs are many various features of the Divine Plan of the ages, and the will of God pertaining to every reader.





Garikapadu, India

Elder M. Yehoshuva is our Apostle in India and his home church is in Garikapadu. They have been working very hard on their new church, and you can see, from the following photographs, the good work they are doing. They have recently purchased a computer for the church as well.





LESSON I**CHRIST TRANSFIGURED****Scripture Reading: Mark 9:1-10.****Golden Text: Mark 9:7.**

"And there was a cloud that overshadowed them; and a voice came out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloved Son: hear him."

1. Whom did Jesus take with Him up into a high mountain? Mark 9:2 (first part).
2. What happened to Jesus at this time? Mark 9:2-3.
3. Who appeared talking with Jesus? Mark 9:4.
4. What suggestion did Peter make? Mark 9:5.
5. Why did Peter make this suggestion? Mark 9:6.
6. What did a voice from heaven say? Mark 9:7.
7. When the disciples looked around, Whom did they see? Mark 9:8.
8. With what did Jesus charge them? Mark 9:9.

LESSON II**THE DEAF AND DUMB SPIRIT****Scripture Reading: Mark 9:14-29.****Golden Text: Mark 9:29.**

"And he said unto them, This kind can come forth by nothing, but by prayer and fasting."

1. Whom did Jesus see around about the disciples at this time? Mark 9:14.
2. How did the multitude receive Jesus? Mark 9:15.
3. What did He ask the scribes? Mark 9:16.

4. How did one of the multitude answer? Mark 9:17-18.

5. What did Jesus say, and what happened? Mark 9:19-20.

6. What question did Jesus ask the boy's father, and what was his answer? Mark 9:21-22.

7. How did the father show his belief in Jesus? Mark 9:24.

8. Describe the casting out of the spirit. Mark 9:25,27.

9. What question did the disciples ask Jesus, and what was His answer? Mark 9:28-29.

LESSON III**JESUS RIDES INTO JERUSALEM****Scripture Reading: Mark 11:1-19.****Golden Text: Mark 11:9 (last part).**

"...Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

1. When Jesus came close to Jerusalem, why did He send two of His disciples into the village? Mark 11:1-3.

2. Did the two disciples do as Jesus told them? Mark 11:4-6.

3. How did Jesus enter Jerusalem? Mark 11:7-8.

4. What did the people say? Mark 11:9-10.

5. What did He do in the temple after He entered Jerusalem? Mark 11:15-17.

6. When the scribes and chief priests heard what Jesus said in the temple, what did they plan to do and why? Mark 11:18.

7. What did Jesus do in the evening? Mark 11:19.

NOTE: Please read also Matthew 21:1-16 where you can find this same story.

LESSON IV

THE LESSON OF FORGIVENESS

Scripture Reading: Matthew 18:23-35.

Golden Text: Matthew 18:27.

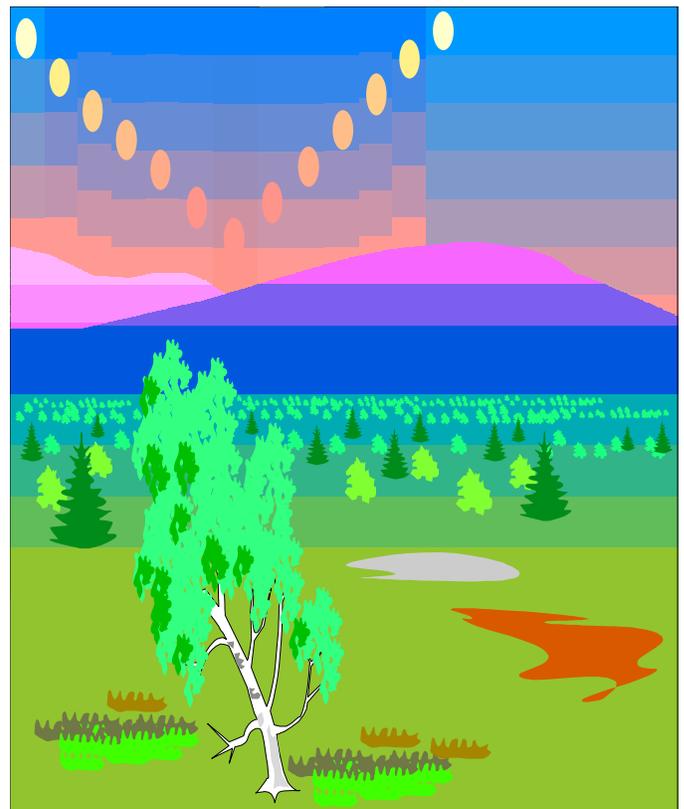
"Then the lord of that servant was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt."

1. What is this parable about in Matthew 18:23?
2. What was the amount of the man's debt? Matthew 18:24.
3. When the man could not pay, what penalty was assigned him? Matthew 18:25.
4. Upon the servant's promise to pay, what did his lord do? Matthew 18:26-27.
5. How much appreciation did this servant show for the compassion shown him when he had the chance to do good also? Matthew 18:28-30.
6. How did word reach his lord of what he had done? Matthew 18:31.
7. After his lord had called him, what did he ask him? Matthew 18:32-33.
8. Will the Heavenly Father also punish those who do not forgive others? Matthew 18:35.

NOTE: Are we sure that we are always as ready to forgive our fellowman as our Lord is to forgive us?

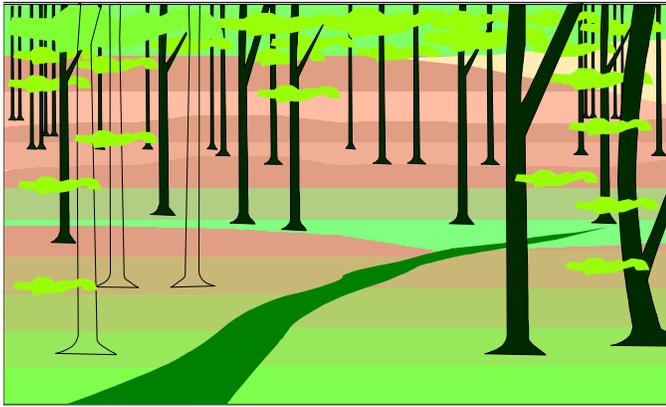
TREE QUIZ

1. What kind of tree did Zacchaeus climb to see Jesus?
2. What trees gave the name to a famous hill overlooking Jerusalem?
3. Absalom was caught by the hair in this tree.
4. Under what tree did Elijah sit?
5. The ark was made of this wood.
6. Christ caused this tree to wither away.
7. The exiled Jews hung their harps on this tree.
8. Branches of this tree were carried in a triumphal procession.
9. This tree became king of the trees in the story in Judges.
10. What trees were in the midst of the Garden of Eden?



Answers to A Bird Walk -

- 1.Raven 2.Eagle 3.Dove 4.Sparrow 5.Hen 6.Dove
- 7.Swallow 8.Peacock 9.Owl 10.Vulture 11.Pigeons,
- Turtledoves 12.Partridge 13.Ostrich 14.Pelican
- 15.Stork



LOST IN THE WOODS

By Enoia Chamberlin

Walter and his mother were visiting Uncle Pete on his big farm out in the country. Walter liked to go to the farm because there were so many things to see and interesting places to play. Down behind Uncle Pete's barn was a bright meadow where bright flowers and green grass grew. On the other side of the fence back of the meadow was a woods full of big trees.

One day Walter asked his mother, "May I go to the meadow to pick some flowers?"

Mother smiled at him. "Yes, I think you may," she said. "I'll find a pretty bowl to put them in when you get back."

Walter hurried out the door and ran down behind the barn. He went through the gate into the meadow. The grass was green and there were lots of flowers. Walter began to pick some of the flowers for his mother. As he picked, - he went here and there across the meadow. Soon he was at the fence. Beyond it he could see the pretty trees in the woods. How nice and cool the shade looked! Once Walter had been in the woods with his Uncle Pete. There were many birds in the woods, and there were trees with pretty bright leaves. There were squirrels, too.

Walter laid down the flowers he had picked, and he crawled under the fence. Then he stopped. Somehow he felt that he shouldn't go into the woods alone. But no one had told him not to, and he did want to go. He wanted to find a tree with pretty leaves so he could take some of them home to mother. Quickly he ran down the path among the trees.

Everything smelled fresh and clean and cool. A butterfly floated by. Up high in a tree was a red bird. Walter heard a blue jay scold. He ran toward the sound. After he found the blue jay, he tried to catch a squirrel. The squirrel scampered up a tree and barked at him. Then suddenly right before Walter was a tree with pretty leaves.

Walter stopped playing and began to pick some of the leaves. When he had enough, he turned to go home. He must hurry. Mother might worry. He took a step or two and stopped. He looked all around. The trees all looked alike to him. He did not know which way to go to get home. He was lost.

A lump came into Walter's throat. But he could not cry--he was a big boy. Besides, crying would not help. But he couldn't just stand there. He had to try to find his way home. It would be dark in the woods before long.

Walter began to be afraid. He started to run. Then he thought about Someone who could help him. He stopped running and bowed his head. "Dear God," he prayed, "please help me to find my way out of these woods."

Then, as he had been taught, he stood very still. He kept still so he could hear any message God might give to him. In the stillness he heard Uncle Pete's dog bark.

"Rover," Walter called, "Rover." He ran toward the sound of the barking.

When he found Rover, Walter was so glad to see the dog that he hugged him. Rover licked Walter's cheek. Then Rover ran ahead of Walter, and in a short time they were at the meadow fence.

Before Walter even picked up his flowers, he thanked God for helping him. Mother was coming across the meadow. Walter ran to her.

"I shouldn't have gone into the woods even though you didn't tell me not to," he said. "But I remembered how you taught me to pray and to listen. If I hadn't listened I wouldn't have heard Rover bark."

"I'm glad you remembered to pray and to listen," Mother said. "Did you thank God for helping you find your way out of the woods?"

"Yes," Walter said, "but let's thank Him again."

So there in the pretty meadow Walter and his mother thanked God for helping him when he was lost. Walter was safe, but he never went into the woods again unless someone was with him.

The redwood trees of California are the tallest living things in the world, reaching heights of 368 feet. They often have trunks that are 8 to 12 feet in diameter with bark that is 12 inches thick. Try working your way through the redwood maze below.



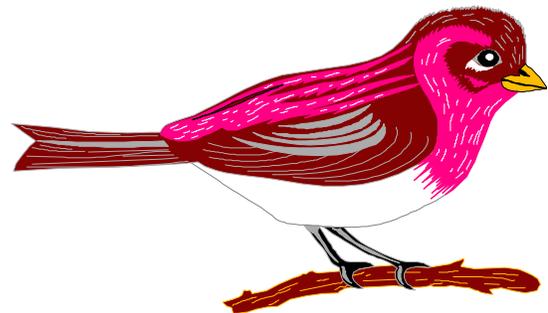
A BIRD WALK

Perhaps you have taken a stroll through the woods with Mother or Dad and tried to name the birds you saw. You could spot some by their feathers and others by their song.

Let's take a bird walk through the pages of the Bible. How many birds can you find? The references will tell you where to look for them.

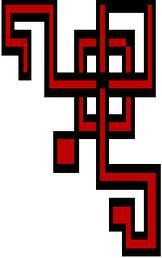
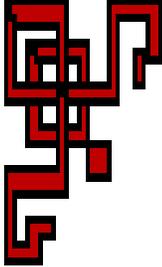
1. I Kings 17:6
2. Isaiah 40:31
3. Genesis 8:7-8
4. Matthew 10:29
5. Luke 13:34
6. Matthew 3:16
7. Psalm 84:3
8. II Chronicles 9:21
9. Isaiah 34:14
10. Isaiah 34:15
11. Luke 2:24
12. I Samuel 26:20
13. Job 39:13
14. Psalm 102:6
15. Psalm 104:17

You will find a whole flock of birds in Leviticus 11:13-19.



Answers to Tree Quiz -

- 1.Sycamore (Luke 19:4)
- 2.Olive (Acts 1:12)
- 3.Oak (II Samuel 18:9)
- 4.Juniper (I Kings 19:4)
- 5.Gopher (Genesis 6:14)
- 6.Fig (Matthew 21:19)
- 7.Willow (Psalm 137:1-2)
- 8.Palm (John 12:13)
- 9.Bramble (Judges 9:14)
- 10.The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil and the Tree of Life (Genesis 2:9).



A POSITIVE THOUGHT

If God had a refrigerator,
your picture would be on it.
If He had a wallet,
your photo would be in it.
He sends you flowers every Spring,
and a sunrise every morning.
Whenever you want to talk, He'll listen.
He could live anywhere in the universe,
and He chose your heart.
What about the wonderful gift
He sent you in Bethlehem;
and don't forget that day at Calvary.
Face it, He loves you!

- Selected

