



The Advocate of Truth

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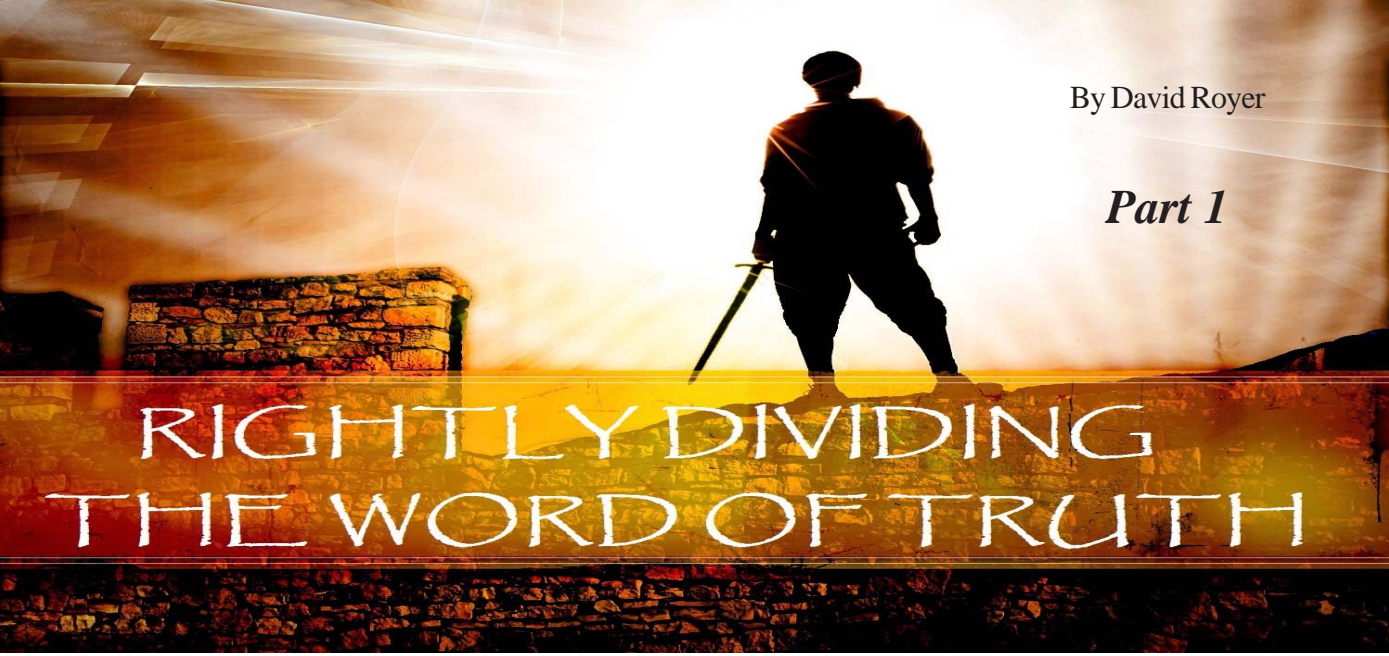
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By David Royer

Part 1

RIGHTLY DIVIDING THE WORD OF TRUTH

This series of articles addresses the meaning of “Rightly Dividing” and how we should read the Bible for a complete understanding. A few critical components are used to understand and comprehend any document we read: Purpose, Context, and Substantiation. Future articles will deal with context and substantiation. Today, we look at **PURPOSE**.

In II Timothy 2:15, Apostle Paul wrote to young Timothy, who was minister to the church at Ephesus. This church had many issues. Paul spoke about church members who were blasphemers, others who were teaching false doctrines, and some were misapplying the Scriptures either knowingly or unknowingly.

Verse 15 says: *"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

I found four definitions of “rightly dividing.”

1. To cut straight with precision, by discrimination and dissection; to divide correctly.
2. As truth is a straight line, so must our handling of the truth be straightforward and honest, without shifts or tricks.

3. Rightly, straightforward handling the Word of truth.
4. To lead or guide straight, to keep straight or direct, as a navigator.

The repeated word in these definitions is Straight. We must be consistent, and we must allow the Scriptures to harmonize with other Scriptures and not deviate from them to suit anyone’s beliefs, even our own.

This leads us to the first component of understanding what we read: **PURPOSE OR INTENT**. If you want to justify your ideas or thoughts, one can take scissors to the Bible and cut out sections throughout the New and Old Testament to making a collage of inconsistent statements that add up to what you want. Unfortunately, the wrong definition of “rightly dividing” has been used by some to mean “carve-up.” This has caused some to believe that we are to take the Word of God and somehow divide or separate passages and or books and determine who or for what audience they are intended. As a result, II Timothy 2:15 has become a springboard for a completely different way of reading and applying Scripture.

For example, if you intend to reinforce apartheid or slavery, pick out verses from Roman 13 and Ephesians 6. Romans 13:1-2 *"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. 2. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."

Ephesians 6:5 *"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;"* Another wrong purpose to read the Bible is used by those who want to disprove its validity. Case in point: Naysayers will point out in Matthew 13:31–32, where Jesus states in His parable of the mustard seed that it is the smallest seed. Because technically it is not, unbelievers argue that Jesus is speaking untruth and the Bible cannot be believed. Little do they care to understand that Jesus was explicitly using the mustard seed to teach a spiritual concept, not a scientific one.

Here are some helpful guidelines to apply the appropriate purpose, perspective, framework, intent, and "state of mind" when reading the Bible:

REMEMBER THE BIBLE IS NOT AN ENCYCLOPEDIA. We believe the Scriptures are holy and divinely inspired by God (2 Tim 3:16). In other words, the Bible is a prophetically written collection of various types of books: history, poetry, biography, letters, futuristic, etc.

It is a library of writings developed and collected over thousands of years but meant to be read as one unit. We can't understand the New Testament without the Old Testament. We can't understand Jesus's life and ministry apart from Genesis, the Psalms, Isaiah, etc. So, while there are many types of books written over a long period of time, they rely on each other and explain each other.

THE BIBLE IS AN AUTHORITY. We accept the truth of Scripture as authoritative by faith and the command of Scripture as authoritative in obedience, and so demonstrates our love for the Lord (John 14:15). Note: There is no right or wrong just because the Bible says it. The character of God is the foundation of right from wrong, and this is revealed through the Scriptures, which is an accurate record of God relating to mankind.

THE SCRIPTURES MUST NOT BE ALTERED. To rightly divide the Word of truth, we must understand that the Scriptures must not be altered. Altering God's Word is a serious mistake. (Galatians 1:8-9 and Revelation 22:18-19).

With permission from The Christian Standard Bible, here are four tips to help you understand any passage of the Bible. Source: <https://csbible.com/4-tips-understanding-bible/#>

1. Pray before you read.

In I Corinthians 2, Paul tells us that we can only understand the things of God through the power of His Spirit. We can read and read the Bible all day long, but only the Spirit can reveal the wisdom and truth that God has for us. We should come to the Bible humbly, first admitting that we need the Spirit of God to help us understand.

2. Read more than a few verses at a time.

Books of the Bible were written to be read in only a few sittings (at most). In fact, it is a rather modern idea to take isolated verses or passages and apply them to our lives; books of the Bible were often read in large chunks. Paul's letters, for example, were read aloud in their entirety to churches. It is always beneficial to read at least the chapter before or after the passage to understand the broader idea.

3. Use a study Bible.

Study Bibles contain tons of notes that help explain each passage of the Bible. Not only that, but they offer cross-references to help you see other passages that relate to or are the foundation for the passage you're reading. You don't have to look at every note and study the Bible like a textbook, but this will help you better understand confusing passages and words. Study Bibles take some of the mystery out of Bible reading and help one search for the truth.

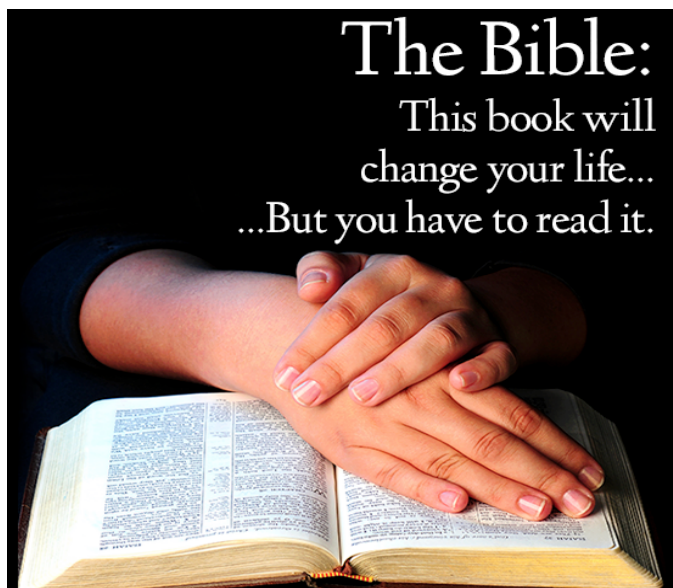
4. Read in community.

The Bible is not meant to be read alone. The original audiences both heard and read the Scriptures in group

settings as communities. God's Word is for us. There is no such thing as solo Christianity, and therefore there is no such thing as solo Bible reading. Yes, we should read alone and in private prayer, but we should also read with others, soaking in the wisdom and encouragement God has given them through the same Word. Reading God's Word with God's people is an opportunity for every part of the body to consider how we should function together on Christ's mission.

Whatever you do, just read the Bible. Try starting in the Psalms or the Gospels, which are relatively straightforward books. The Psalms teach us how to worship God and pray to him, even in the distress of life. The Gospels tell us stories about our Savior. But eventually, don't avoid Leviticus, Revelation, and other more "peculiar" books. They are all meant to transform you by setting your eyes on their ultimate Author.

Part 2 continued in the December 2021 issue



NINE "DO MORES"

- Do more than exist: LIVE.***
- Do more than touch: FEEL.***
- Do more than look: OBSERVE.***
- Do more than read: ABSORB.***
- Do more than hear: LISTEN.***
- Do more than listen: UNDERSTAND.***
- Do more than think: PONDER.***
- Do more than plan: ACT.***
- Do more than talk: SAY SOMETHING!***



The idea to define this word came from a study that I heard a brother give a sermon on and it rang a bell with me that we all have a commission to some degree from God.

Commission by definition is "an instruction, command, or duty given to a person or group of people". We see it used both ways in the Scriptures. Then the receiver of the commission is to act as the informer of his message or actions.

The first one we see is in Ezra 1:1-2 where Cyrus calls it a proclamation. He says that the God of heaven has charged him to build God a house in Jerusalem. Cyrus has the feeling that God had given him a command and it was his duty to see to it that the commission was carried out. Then he charged others of the Israelites with duties to complete this task.

Before the Apostle Paul came to serve God he felt he had a commission from the chief priests to persecute these people that called themselves Christians, Acts 26:12. As Paul was carrying out this commission, a light brighter than the sun struck him down and the Lord Jesus spoke to him and gave him a new commission in verse 17 and tells him that he was to go to the Gentiles to proclaim God's message to them. He even tells the Gentiles that he is "the apostle of the Gentiles" Romans 11:13. He received the instruction from Jesus and now he, being the receiver, had to put the command into action. While Jesus was still on the earth he gave a command to his disciples in Mark 6:8, sending them out to other cities where he would eventually go. He sent them without script, money or food. They were to be a living, speaking witness for the lord preparing the people of that area for him to come to their city, Luke 10:1.

Finally there is the great commission in Matt. 28:18-20 where Jesus commanded his disciples and us today to teach all nations about Him and His doctrines. We are the receivers; therefore, we have to continue to carry out our duties to be the informer of the commission.

**A THANKSGIVING MESSAGE:
GIVING THANKS IN EVERYTHING**

Bond Tennant

“In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you” (I Thessalonians 5:18).

In the United States, Thanksgiving Day is celebrated each year on the fourth Thursday of November. Regardless of the day it is observed, many sincere children of God pause to give thanks to God for the many blessings which He has given them. The psalmist wrote, “It is a good thing to give thanks unto the LORD, and to sing praises unto thy name, O most High” (Psalm 92:1).

Jesus “gave thanks” in prayer throughout His earthly ministry. Before food or drink was served, Jesus gave thanks in prayer to His heavenly Father for these provisions. When performing miracles, Jesus offered thanksgiving to God for guiding Him in the exercise of divine power. When Jesus instituted the Memorial Supper in the Upper Room, He gave thanks for the symbolic “bread” and “cup.” See John 6:11; 11:41; Luke 22:19; Matthew 26:27. We gather from the New Testament that we must develop a deeper attitude of thanksgiving than what might seem sufficient to human thinking. In the opening text, the Apostle Paul emphasizes that we should be thankful “in everything.” The *Weymouth New Testament* reads, “In every circumstance of life be thankful.” When addressing the Ephesian brethren, Paul expressed a similar thought, “Giving thanks always for all things unto God...” (Ephesians 5:20).

In this higher level of thanksgiving, we are to be thankful not only for the good and pleasant experiences which come to us but also for the trials and difficult experiences which He permits in our lives. At first, giving thanks for these is not easy. When we develop a faith based upon God’s promises, we will be able to realize more and more that “...all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose” (Romans 8:28). These “all things” include difficulties, persecutions, financial troubles, health problems, or the

death of a loved one. Being slandered, evil spoken of, or personally misrepresented by others may also be included.

The Apostle Peter spoke about this. Quoting from the *James Moffatt Translation*, he said: “Though for the passing moment you may need to suffer various trials; that is only to prove your faith is sterling (far more precious than gold which is perishable and yet is tested by fire), and it redounds to your praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1:6-7).

Is It Easy To Be Thankful?

By Delwin DeLong

**Is it easy to be thankful
When life deals out its blows?
Is it easy to be thankful
When life is filled with woes?**

**Is it easy to be thankful
When someone gives us pain?
Is it easy to be thankful
If all there is, is rain?**

**Yes! It's easy to be thankful
For all that God has given.
Yes! It's easy to be thankful
For Jesus - He is risen.**

**Yes! It's easy to be thankful
For the good things in our life;
And it's easy to be thankful
For the truth that's in our life.**

**So remember to be thankful
Every day will be a joy -
Because a thankful heart is golden
And a thankful life brings joy.**

Why did God choose the tribe of Levi to serve in the temple?

By: Moises Torres M

This has its beginning since the time that God called Moses to free the Israelites from Egypt. God chose Aaron his brother to be his interpreter (Exodus 4:10-16). Since ancient times, the order of God has been to send “in pairs” His messengers for every special duty; for example Moses and Aaron, Joshua and Zerubbabel, Ezra and Nehemiah, John the Baptist and the Lord Jesus. The apostles were named by two and two, and the seventy were also sent two and two. All of them are like “two sons of oil”, full of the Holy Spirit. Let's remember that in the future God will send another “two witnesses” (Zechariah 4:11-14; Luke 10:1; Matthew 10:1-5; Revelation 11:1-4).

In the days of the deliverance of Israel from the Egyptians, Moses and Aaron were the two witnesses of God. In every case, one was the Priest and the other one the King. One of them represented the religious government and the other one the civilian government. In this case, Aaron was the priest, and Moses was like the king. After the deliverance, it pleased God to ordain Aaron and his children to be priests (Exodus 28:1; Leviticus 8:7-9).

One time, a man of God spoke to the priest Eli and reminded him He had chosen Aaron from the Levi tribe: “And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh's house? And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel to be my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel?” (I Samuel 2:27-28) Also read Hebrews 5:1-4.

When God punished Korah, Dathan and Abiram, God

ratified to the other tribes His wish for choosing the Levi tribe to be His priests; and that was through the “rod that bloomed blossoms.” Read numbers, chapters 16 and 17.

Aaron came to be representative of the religious or priesthood power, and Moses the representative of the civil power or the king, in those days it was nothing but God Himself. This was a figure that will be fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ, that under the order of Melchisedec will come with the character of King and Priest. This will also be fulfilled in all the believers that are saved. They will be kings and priests (Revelation 1:6).

No one in the Old Testament could take upon leadership or ministry, not a king, or prophet, or priest if it was not authorized by God.

Hebrews 5:4-6 says: “And no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron. So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

Just like in our days, no one can take the honor of a ministry if it is not God's will.

Pictured below -

Apostle Moises Torres M from Mexico





Will those who don't know the LORD get a second chance?

This question is on the mind of many believers. What about those who didn't hear the gospel? Or those who perished before they accepted the LORD? A family member? A young child who met with an untimely death.

Some wonder, will there be a time in the future, where those who didn't follow Jesus, could come to know Him? And if this is the case, would the Scriptures be silent? Perhaps they would speak of such an opportunity.

Recently it was suggested to me that Isaiah 66:18 spoke of a time when non Christians would be alive during the

Millennium, a future when Christ would reign on earth for 1,000 years.

Isaiah 66:18 "For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory."

Does this verse actually describe a time when an unbeliever would get a chance to know Jesus? It does speak of "all nations and tongues" being gathered. Do these nations and tongues represent those who were alive during the last 6,000 years? Could this be their second chance?

To put this Scripture in its proper time context let us look at the other verses around it.

Isaiah 66:15 "For, behold, the LORD will come with fire, and with his chariots like a whirlwind, to render his anger with fury, and his rebuke with flames of fire."

This is the warring phase of Jesus' return. This subject is covered in the church tract titled "The Second Coming of Jesus" which can be ordered free from the Church Publishing House.

During the warring phase, Jesus returns to the earth to set up His kingdom for a 1,000 year reign. The nations alive at that time of His coming have leaders and armies that think they can make war with Jesus to prevent His return. Imagine how well the nations are armed with nuclear explosives and other weapons of destruction!

Revelation 17:14 "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful."

The LORD overcomes the armies of the nations. We see this war in Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39.

There are survivors of the great war.

Zechariah 14:3-5 "Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the

mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south. And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah: and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee."

Note when the LORD returns, the saints are with Him. These are the saints who are resurrected towards the end of the gentile age.

I Corinthians 15:50: "Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."

I Corinthians 15:51-52: "Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

We see a small remnant of Israel and a remnant of other nations. The survivors are the nations and tongues referred to in Isaiah 66:18. Therefore this verse does not support the second chance idea.

At this time the New Jerusalem will descend down to hover just above the earth. It will not touch the earth since the earth is still unclean. And nothing which defileth shall enter in (Revelation 21:27). The river shall flow out and heal the nations....so we see they are in the flesh...not resurrected.

At this time, the law of the LORD is not worldwide. It starts in Jerusalem and flows out thru the saints to the heathen who do not know the fame or glory of the LORD...(Isaiah 66:19).

See also Isaiah 2:3...."and he will teach us of his ways...for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem"...continue reading the rest of chapter 2.

We read in Psalm 149:

- 1 "Praise ye the LORD. Sing unto the LORD a new song, and his praise in the congregation of saints."
- 4 "For the LORD taketh pleasure in his people: he will beautify the meek with salvation."
- 5 "Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds."
- 6 "Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand;"
- 7 "To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people;"
- 8 "To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron;"
- 9 "To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD."

Verse 1 speaks of a new song. This is the saints resurrected into the New Jerusalem. Verse 4 says "HE will beautify the meek with salvation." This is the Millennium that will be set up by the Lord. Verse 6 says the saints will carry "a two-edged sword in their hand". The Word of God is the two edged sword and in the millennium it will execute judgment. This judgment is shown in verses 7 thru 9.

So the saints go out from the New Jerusalem and bring the law of GOD to the far reaching Isles of the earth without Satan to distract anyone.

The Word of GOD does not teach that the millennium time will offer a second chance. The nations and tongues referred to in Isaiah 66 are future people.

Remember Jesus warning, John 10:1...."...He that entereth not by the door...but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

This speaks of the entry into the New Jerusalem which can only be entered thru Jesus. John 10:7, "I am the door of the sheep."

This is the sure way the sheep enter into the sheepfold. Sheep don't know the way without the Shepherd leading them with HIS voice, HIS rod and HIS staff.



THE BLESSINGS OF *God*

By Sister Nesta John
Grenada West Indies

Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that he shall also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith" (Galatians 6:7-10). Sowing can be defined as the process of placing seeds in or on the ground for future growth, where reaping is the gathering of the products that were sown. Receiving God's blessings in your life is by practicing the law of sowing and reaping. The more seeds that we plant the greater the harvest. The Lord works great wonders in our lives which we have to be grateful for. The best blessings that we can receive from God are forgiveness of our sins John 3:16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Romans 4:7-8 informs us, saying, "Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin."

Receiving blessings from God can only come by keeping his commandments. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous" (I John 5:3). The Ten commandments should be written on the fleshly table of our heart at all times. Many times God blesses us and we ourselves don't even realize it. I guess we are looking for something great all

the time but indeed and in fact it is the little things that matters with God.

The soil that we will prepare for the seeds should be moist and rich, meaning that the heart should be prepared to receive the good seeds that are about to be planted. Matthew 6:33 informs us that we should seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. The moisture and the richness that the soil should have are seeking the kingdom of God first, and only by doing so can great blessing be added unto you.

Some of the seeds that we can sow for the soil that are well prepared are: firstly, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it" (Malachi 3:10). Giving the Lord what is due to Him is vitally important as a Christian. Avoiding bringing the Lords' tithes to the storehouse, we can be considered as thieves. How can we rob God? In tithes and offerings. Blessing comes with honesty.

Secondly, the fruits of the Spirit. Matthew 7:7-8 informs us to, "Ask, and it shall be given you: seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." That only comes around with the keeping of the Ten Com-

mandments and believing. We must have faith in order for us to receive blessings from God. "But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord" (James 1:6-7).

Thirdly, "Give and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38). We should always be a cheerful giver, never with a heavy heart. Whosoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whosoever sows generously will also reap generously. Reaping the blessings of God is much better than been cursed by God. "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (Proverbs 19:17). The repayment, which is the blessings, will be greater than what you gave.

"Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days...He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap...In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good" (Ecclesiastes 11:1-6). God takes care of all the seeds that we sow and transforms them to our blessings. By sowing such seeds into the soil it must be nurtured and watered in order for the seeds to bring forth the fruits that were sowed. We as Christians should always be honest to ourselves and to God, and we will receive a blessing if we faint not. **GOD BLESS YOU ALL.**



NUTS TO SATAN

By Carlo Rasmussen

During the second world war in Europe a situation arose where U.S. Forces were completely surrounded and appeared to have no hope. The Nazi forces had gained temporary superiority in a last chance effort to stop the Allied offensive in Europe. The battle that ensued became known as the "Battle of the Bulge." In a place called Bastone the surrounded American forces were called upon by the Nazi commander to surrender and end all resistance. The answer to the request for surrender from the American commander came in one word - "NUTS!" The word "nuts" was a slang word expressing a negative reply; thus the word from the American commander was "NO" - not even for a moment! Not for anything would the commander and his men surrender, though the enemy was of greater strength. Soon after this incident the surrounded forces were rejoined with other American units who broke through the Nazi line. We may use this illustration to emphasize a point to all children of God. the Scriptures remind us of a battle within each and every Saint of God. This inner war will continue until death, or Jesus' return.

We need to keep in mind that Satan is always about trying to bring us to surrender, and though he is superior in wit and force than we ourselves, we must never surrender, but rather "press on" to the mark of the high calling in Jesus Christ. The Saints of God have within themselves a counter force to that of the devil. That counter-force is the Holy Spirit of God, which is, "...the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time"(I Peter 1:5). That is the only Power which is superior to the devil, and is available only through the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us never succumb to Satan's tempting requests for a surrender unto him. Should severe temptation arise then go to a season of prayer. In so-doing you will be telling Satan "NUTS - Get thee behind me Satan!" (Matthew 16:23). "...Resist the devil, and he will flee from you"

(James 4:7). If we are faithful in our resistance to Satan, the Lord will soon break through the hold he has upon the earth and will rejoin us unto Him in the holy city, the New Jerusalem. At that time the Lord Jesus and His armies after all of God's Saints will have been rejoined once again together on the sea of glass then for a short season to enjoy the marriage supper of the lamb. While the plagues are being poured out upon the wicked on the earth, then the Lord and His armies will return to destroy all wicked forces upon the earth and establish a truly righteous Kingdom which shall never be put down. What a wonderful thought to consider. What more could anyone ask for? All we need to do is recognize the lord Jesus Christ and follow His footsteps according to the Scriptures. That which is required of us is very small when compared to what waits those who are faithful to follow the Lord and be on His side; Romans 8:18: "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." may God bless you as you "press on"; in Jesus' name.

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

by Betty Whetstone

I love to count all the blessings

It's our Father's great pleasure to give;

He rains down these blessings upon us,

And they're ours, as long as we live.

Do you ever thank Him for the heavens,

Such a beautiful shade of pure blue;

Or behold the sight of a rainbow

That He gave, as a promise, to you.

He gave us the beauty of nature,

And He holds it all close to His heart;

For His love marks the fall of a sparrow,

And He grieves as its life departs.

He provides the food on my table,

And He blesses each bite that I eat;

He smiles at my prayer of Thanksgiving

That I offer, as I kneel at His feet.

My prayers are the same, yet different,

There is so much to give thanks for each day;

His heart fills with love for His children,

And He smiles on us when we pray.

It's His pleasure to give us His kingdom

Where we will never know sorrow or pain;

And there we can thank Him forever

As we bask in the love of His reign.

A City Waiting For You

By David DeLong

Abraham knew of the New Jerusalem that the Lord was preparing for him and all the children of God. We read about Abraham in Hebrews 11:10,16: "For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God...But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God: for he hath prepared for them a city."

Jesus told His disciples in John 14:1-3: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe 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."

God's "house" also contains the throne room where He sits upon His throne. What looks to John like a "sea of glass" stretches out from before the throne. As we shall see later, this sea of glass is actually a part of the holy city, New Jerusalem. It is made up of pure gold which is transparent, like glass. Revelation 4:6 informs us: "And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind."

When Moses, Aaron, Nadab and Abihu and seventy of the elders of Israel went up and saw a silhouette of God, we read: "Then went up Moses, and Aaron, Nadab, and Abihu, and seventy of the elders of Israel: And they saw the God of Israel: and there was under his feet as it were a paved work of a sapphire stone, and as it were the body of heaven in his clearness" (Exodus 24:9-10). Could this be a description of the sea of glass before God's throne?

In Ezekiel 1:21-22 we see a glimpse of the living creatures (cherubims) as Ezekiel described them. We are told: "When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels. And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was

as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above." Could this be a glimpse of the sea of glass that Ezekiel saw in his prophecy?

Isaiah the Prophet makes a prophesy about the children of Israel to comfort them We read in Isaiah 54:11-13: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires. And I will make thy windows of agates, and thy gates of carbuncles, and all thy borders of pleasant stones. And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children." We read in Revelation 21:19 that one of the New Jerusalem's foundations will be of sapphire.

The Apostle Paul calls the New Jerusalem the mother of us all. We read in Galatians 4:25-26: "For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

It is believed that when the Lord comes again, and the seven last plagues are poured out upon the earth, that the New Jerusalem will be hovering in the air above the old city of Jerusalem. It is believed that the shadow of this holy city will be a refuge for the faithful people of Israel during the plagues. We read in Isaiah 4:5-6: "And the LORD will create upon every dwelling place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night: for upon all the glory shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the daytime from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from storm and from rain."

We do know that during the seven last plagues the redeemed saints of God will be upon the sea of glass of the New Jerusalem and will not have to go through the plagues. Revelation 15:1-3 informs us: "And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having the seven last plagues; for in them is filled up the wrath of God. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints."

A beautiful description of the holy city, New Jerusa-

lem, is given to us in Revelation 21:9-27. We will record this passage of Scripture at this time. "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and showed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal; And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel: On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates. And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof. And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal. And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel. And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass. And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst. And the twelve gates were twelve pearls: every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass. And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it. And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life."



Excuses, Excuses, Excuses....or God Understands by Laura Tennant

Nearly everyone -- young and old, has been guilty of making an excuse at one time or another. We have excuses for being late, for failing to complete assignments, for making poor choices, for bad behavior, for any number of situations. The word "excuse" originally meant "to give a defense or reason for something." Today, it suggests, "an unjustified or false reason - a pretext given to cover up the true motive." When we give an "excuse" for our actions we are not taking responsibility for them. We want to blame someone else or something else. How often have we heard these phrases... "If you were in my situation you would do the same thing." "You don't understand." "I have no other choice." "Everyone is doing it." We are only deceiving ourselves when we try to defend our actions, or lack of them, with an "excuse". The enemy of commitment is "excuses". Excuses are so dangerous. We often do not succeed because we "have an excuse." When we let an "excuse" rule our lives we are not in control. For this reason, it is necessary for us to put the responsibility where it belongs -- with ourselves.

Excuse making has existed since the beginning of Creation. There are no new excuses. Many are recorded in the Bible. People often give excuses for not doing the will of God. Let us examine just a few found in Scripture.

It's not my fault. In Genesis 3:9-13 we read, "And the

LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said, Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat. And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done? And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and did eat." Here we see both Adam and Eve were not willing to take responsibility for their actions. Scripture, however, tells us that each person is responsible for his deeds. II Corinthians 5:10 states, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

I was afraid. "Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee. But he denied before them all, saying, I know not what thou sayest. And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth. And again he denied with an oath, I do not know the man. And after a while came unto him they that stood by, and said to Peter, Surely thou also art one of them; for thy speech bewrayeth thee. Then began he to curse and to swear, saying, I know not the man. And immediately the cock crew. And Peter remembered the word of Jesus,

which said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And he went out, and wept bitterly" (Matthew 26:69-75). There are many reasons people use this excuse. These might include being afraid to stand up for the truth for fear we will lose the love of our family, or suffer the loss of our job, or lose our friends. Jesus said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28).

I don't have any talents. "And Moses said unto the LORD, O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant: but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue" (Exodus 4:10). God gives all men certain abilities. Some are inherent and some we must develop on our own. Failing to utilize and develop our talents can result in a missed opportunity to bring others to Christ.

I don't have time. "And he said unto another, Follow me. But he said, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God. And another also said, Lord, I will follow thee; but let me first go bid them farewell, which are at home at my house. And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:59-62). Many use the excuse that they are just too busy. It is important to put God first in our lives, and then everything else will fall into place. In Matthew 6:33 Jesus says, "...seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you." There is never a moment God is too busy to listen to us and to hear our needs. We should never be too busy that there is no time in our lives for God or others. There is no better time to obey the Gospel than today. The Bible says, "...behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (II Corinthians 6:2).

How often do we make excuses? How often have we heard another make an excuse? We as children of God are called to serve the Lord. God is not going to accept excuses for not answering His call. Are you going to go before the judgment seat of Christ with nothing but excuses to offer Him? We all must go forth and be the best that we can be for the Lord. Whatever circumstances we find ourselves in, we must try to refrain from giving ex-

cuses. God expects us to be doers. "But be ye **doers** of the word and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves" (James 1:22). In Matthew 7:21, we read, "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."

Jesus gave a parable to rebuke excuse making. A certain man made a great supper and invited many to come and enjoy the feast. The parable is found in Luke 14:16-24. In verse 18, the first part, we read, "And they all with one consent began to make excuse." God sees right through our excuses and finds them unacceptable. In verse 24 we read, "For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper." Those invited to this banquet were too occupied with other people and activities to see the importance of the invitation. Their priorities involved the cares of this world. They were too busy and satisfied with their current way of life to listen to the invitation. They preferred to miss the banquet rather than have their way of life disrupted.

Let us take a closer look at this parable and the excuses offered. Verse 18, the second part states, "The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused." This person's possessions were more important to him than either the banquet or the host. Do you strive to achieve earthly possessions and neglect the heavenly gifts? In Luke 12 we read of the rich fool: "And he spake a parable unto them, saying, The ground of a certain rich man brought forth plentifully: And he thought within himself, saying, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou has much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God...But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you...For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (verses 16-21;31,34).

Don't Believe A Lie --David DeLong

The second man said, "...I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused" (verse 19). He was too occupied with his way of making a living to give any attention to other matters. Does our job or career keep us from enjoying God's blessings? Do we find ourselves spending more time on making money and getting ahead in this world than spending time with God in His Word and sharing it with others of like faith?

A third excuse was given by a man who had just gotten married, "...I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come" (verse 20). Why not bring his wife to the banquet? Was this man so preoccupied with his relationship that he couldn't enjoy the host and his banquet? Do you become so preoccupied with a relationship that you lose sight of the most important of all relationships?

All these excuses were not wrong in themselves. Buying property, making a living and getting married are God approved activities. But good things can become excuses if we put them above God's Word. Let us not lose out on some of the greatest blessings because of selfish priorities and unjustified excuses.

What is your excuse for failing to obey God? The next time you have a situation, in which you make excuses for, examine your motive. Are you sacrificing for Jesus or sacrificing Jesus? Excuses are used, sometimes, to avoid doing God's will. Will God really understand when you make excuses? "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12).



Many people would probably be offended by the title of this article. *Of course I don't believe lies*, they may think. However, it is more easy to believe a lie than what many people imagine.

Satan is the father of lies. Jesus spoke of this to some of the Jews. He said: "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it" (John 8:44).

Eve, our first mother, was the first one upon earth to believe a lie from Satan. When God told her and Adam that if they ate from the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil they would die, Satan told Eve: "Ye shall not surely die", and Eve believed the lie and ate of the fruit.

A tragic tale is told in I Kings chapter 13. A prophet of God came from Judah and went to Bethel to the altar that was there. King Jeroboam was there, by the altar, apparently wanting to burn incense upon it to false gods. The prophet gave a prophecy that a man named Josiah would be born and would burn the false prophets and their bones upon the altar. He also proclaimed a sign that the altar would be rent and the ashes poured out. Jeroboam became angry at the prophet and tried to grab him. However, Jeroboam's hand withered as a punishment from the Lord. Well, the altar was rent and its ashes poured out. Jeroboam then asked the prophet to pray that his hand would be restored. The prophet did so and the hand was restored. We now pick up the story in verse seven. "And the king said unto the man of God, Come home with me, and refresh thyself, and I will give thee a reward. And the man of God said unto the king, If thou wilt give me half thine house, I will not go in with thee, neither will I eat bread nor drink water in this place: For so was it charged me by the word of the LORD, saying, Eat no bread, nor drink water, nor turn again by the same way that thou camest. So he went another way, and returned not by the way that he came to Bethel. Now there dwelt an old prophet in Bethel; and his sons came and told him all the works that the man of God had done that day in Bethel...And their father said unto them, What way went he? For his sons had seen what way the man of God went, which came from Judah. And he said unto his sons, Saddle me the ass. So they saddled him the ass:

and he rode thereon, And went after the man of God, and found him sitting under an oak: and he said unto him, Art thou the man of God that camest from Judah? And he said, I am. Then he said unto him, Come home with me, and eat bread. And he said, I may not return with thee, nor go in with thee: neither will I eat bread nor drink water with thee in this place: For it was said to me by the word of the LORD, Thou shalt eat no bread nor drink water there, nor turn again to go by the way that thou camest. He said unto him, I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the LORD, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water. But he lied unto him. So he went back with him, and did eat bread in his house, and drank water. And it came to pass, as they sat at the table, that the word of the LORD came unto the prophet that brought him back: And he cried unto the man of God that came from Judah, saying, Thus saith the LORD, Forasmuch as thou hast disobeyed the mouth of the LORD, and hast not kept the commandment which the LORD thy God commanded thee, But camest back, and hast eaten bread and drunk water in the place, of the which the LORD did say to thee, Eat no bread, and drink no water; thy carcase shall not come unto the sepulchre of thy fathers. And it came to pass, after he had eaten bread, and after he had drunk, that he saddled for him the ass, to wit, for the prophet whom he had brought back. And when he was gone, a lion met him by the way, and slew him: and his carcase was cast in the way, and the ass stood by it, the lion also stood by the carcase. And, behold, men passed by, and saw the carcase cast in the way, and the lion standing by the carcase: and they came and told it in the city where the old prophet dwelt."

Because the first prophet did not believe what God had told him to do, but believed a lie, he paid for it with his life. We are much more prone to believe somebody whom we trust. In this case the first prophet trusted the old prophet. But God's Word is always final. No matter what others tell us, if God's Word tells us something differently, we always must accept it. That's why it is dangerous to read Christian books, or listen to preaching on television, that teaches a different doctrine than what the Bible teaches. Someone might think, *I'm mature enough not to believe a lie that someone else is teaching*. But a lie, listened to enough times, may begin to change our minds to the truth. Or, at least, confuse us.

A time is coming when the beast power of Revelation chapter 13 will deceive the unconverted world to wor-

ship him (see verse 8). Another beast, beginning in verse 11, will work with this first beast. "And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed. And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live."

I believe that this situation is related to what the Apostle Paul told the Thessalonians in his second letter to them, chapter 2. Verses 1-12 informs us: "Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness."

Satan is a master of deception. His plan is to present as many lies as possible to deceive as many as possible. He will do it with wrong doctrines, false wonders and miracles, and enticements to compromise with the world. Let us always be on our guard so that we don't begin to doubt God's Word, and so believe a lie.



The Church of God 7th Day Houston, Texas annual Women's Retreat 2021





LESSON I

LESSON II

THE REIGN OF HEZEKIAH

HEZEKIAH CLEANSSES THE TEMPLE

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 29:1-19.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 29:2.

"And he did that which was right in the sight of the LORD, according to all that David his father had done."

NOTE: We learned in our last lesson that king Ahaz was a wicked ruler. After his death, his son Hezekiah begins to reign at the age of twenty-five years. Let us see if he follows his father or if he tries to build up the kingdom again and cleanse the house of God.

1. How long does Hezekiah reign in Jerusalem? II Chronicles 29:1.
2. Did he please the Lord, and what did he do during the first year of his reign? II Chronicles 29:2-3.
3. Hezekiah brought the priests and Levites into the east street. What did he say to them? II Chronicles 29:4-5.
4. How had the fathers trespassed against the Lord, and what had the Lord caused to come upon them? II Chronicles 29:6-9.
5. What desire did Hezekiah have in his heart at this time? What did he advise the priests and Levites to do? II Chronicles 29:10-11.
6. Did they obey Hezekiah? II Chronicles 29:12-15.
7. What did the priests do first in II Chronicles 29:16?
8. How long did it take them to cleanse the house of the Lord? What did they tell Hezekiah they had done? II Chronicles 29:17-19.

Answers to Can You Find? 1. By the Holy Ghost; 2. Forever; 3. Never; 4. Won't sin against God; Make you wise unto salvation; Be approved unto God.

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 29:20-36.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 29:29.

"And when they had made an end of offering, the king and all that were present with him bowed themselves, and worshipped."

NOTE: Hezekiah is now king of Judah. He reigned from 726-697 B.C. He inherited a disorganized realm and began his reign with a great reformation. He broke down the idols and is now ready to cleanse the temple.

1. For what purpose did Hezekiah gather the rulers of the city? II Chronicles 29:20.
2. What was offered for a sin offering on the altar? II Chronicles 29:21.
3. Read II Chronicles 29:22-24, and then tell how the priests made the offering for all Israel.
4. What service did the Levites render in the house of the Lord? II Chronicles 29:25-26.
5. Describe the service in II Chronicles 29:27-30.
6. How many burnt offerings did the congregation bring? II Chronicles 29:31-33.
7. Were there many burnt offerings? Who helped in this service? II Chronicles 29:34-35.
8. The service of the house of the Lord was now still in order. Did all the people rejoice? II Chronicles 29:36.

Answers to Figure This Out:

1. 40 years;
2. Minus one = 39;
3. Divide by three = 13;
4. Add four = 17; 5. Seventeen.

LESSON III

great gladness...."

HEZEKIAH PROCLAMSA PASSOVER
(PART I)

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 30:1-12.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 30:1 (last part).

"... that they should come to the house of the LORD at Jerusalem, to keep the passover unto the LORD God of Israel."

NOTE: Hezekiel is still king of Judah. He has reopened and cleansed the temple of God so that the people may once more worship God. Now we will study about how Hezekiah sends a proclamation to all Israel to keep the Passover.

1. To whom did Hezekiah send a letter, and for what purpose? II Chronicles 30:1.
2. Why were they keeping the Passover in the second month? II Chronicles 30:2-3.
3. Was the decree sent to all Israel in the second month? II Chronicles 30:5.
4. What message did the letters carry to the people of Israel and Judah? II Chronicles 30:6-9.
5. What did some of the messengers do? II Chronicles 30:10.
6. Did any of the people humble themselves and come to Jerusalem for the service? II Chronicles 30:11-12.

LESSON IV

HEZEKIAH PROCLAIMS A PASSOVER
(PART II)

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 30:13-27.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 30:21 (first part).

"And the children of Israel that were present at Jerusalem kept the feast of unleavened bread seven days with

NOTE: We last learned how Hezekiah proclaimed throughout Israel that they should come to Jerusalem to keep the Passover unto the Lord. We will now see if Israel keeps the Passover.

1. Did many assemble in Jerusalem for the feast of unleavened bread in the second month? II Chronicles 30:13.
2. What did they do with the altars that were in Jerusalem? II Chronicles 30:14.
3. They killed the Passover on the 14th day of the second month. Did the priests and Levites sanctify themselves and the people of the congregation? II Chronicles 30:15-18.

NOTE: (A custom for Israel only).

4. Did the children of Israel keep the feast of unleavened bread? II Chronicles 30:21-23.
5. What did King Hezekiah give to the congregation? II Chronicles 30:24.
6. Was there great joy in Jerusalem? II Chronicles 30:25-26.
7. Did the priests and Levites rejoice? II Chronicles 30:27.





FOUND - A PAIR OF SHOES

"Mama, can you buy me a pair of shoes from the store, will you? These are full of holes and I am ashamed to go to school."

Mother looked at the footwear, and shook her head. How glad she would be to see those dear little feet covered. But the list of things she could not do without was a long one, and her purse was small.

"Ah! Willie, I am afraid your old shoes will have to serve for some time yet. Mama has only just enough money to buy flour, and other necessities we need. So, my little man, be good and don't ask me for them."

A subdued sob resounded sadly in the Mother's ears as she bent down to embrace her little boy. And this made her go on her way to the store with her head bowed down. However, she was one of those happy souls who look on the bright side of things. She rejoiced in the faithfulness of Him who would never leave her.

The bus which Mrs. Harvey took that morning was a busy one, but she took less notice than usual, her mind was occupied with going over her list to see if she could manage to include a pair of shoes in it. But she had not made a mistake. She had no money for that. Then she stopped. A verse had just come to her mind: "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you." Then she poured out in the ears of Him who hears in secret all her cares, one after another, not forgetting in her long list the shoes for her boy. From that moment her ride became lighter, and a half an hour later she was at the store of the shopkeeper.

"Have you had success today, Mrs. Harvey? You look so happy," he asked, as he bagged her purchases.

"By no means!" replied the lady, "on the contrary times are very bad. But I find all along the way mercy and faith-

fulness."

"Yes, that is good." The shopkeeper knew his customer well, for her conversation was always refreshing to him. But there are many people who groan on the way of life. What is it that makes you so happy today?"

"Just the knowledge that the Lord cares for me and mine," answered the lady.

Then the conversation changed and Mrs. Harvey prepared to leave.

"While I think of it, I have here a pair of shoes, nearly new, which my Bernard cannot wear, since they are too tight for him, as he is a year older than your Willie; if you will allow me, I shall be pleased to give them to him."

Mrs. Harvey couldn't restrain her feeling when she saw on the counter a splendid pair of shoes. "I told the Lord that Willie needed a pair of shoes, and He sent them to me by you."

I do not know which was the happier of the three; the shopkeeper, when he knew that he was the instrument in God's hands; Mrs. Harvey, when she realized better than ever the care of God for her; or Willie when he proudly put on his new pair of shoes and was told that God had sent them.

"Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you" (I Peter 5:7).

A LOVE CAKE FOR MOTHER - RECIPE

1 can of "Obedience"

Several pounds of "Affection"

1 pint of "Neatness"

Some holiday, birthday and everyday "Surprises"

1 can of "Running Errands" (Willing Brand)

1 box of powdered "Get up when I should"

1 bottle of "Keep sunny all day long"

1 can of pure "Thoughtfulness"

DIRECTIONS -

Mix well, bake in a hearty, warm oven, and serve to "Mother" every day. She ought to have it in "Big Slices."

-- Jean Beadle

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THANKSGIVING

by Delwin DeLong

*For health and strength, for home and friends,
For all that God in mercy sends,
For comfort in the time of need,
For every kindly word and deed,
For happy thoughts and pleasant talk,
For guidance in our daily walk,
For all these things - we give thanks.*

*For beauty in this world of ours,
For verdant grass and lovely flowers,
For song birds and the hum of bees,
For the refreshing summer breeze,
For hill and plain, the streams and woods,
For the great oceans' mighty food,
For all these things - we give thanks.*

*For the sweet sleep that comes with night,
For the returning morning's light,
For the bright sun that shines on high,
For stars that glitter in nighttime sky,
For these and everything we see,
O Lord, our hearts we lift to Thee,
And give Thee - Hearty Thanks.*

