A scenic view of a river flowing through a lush forest. The river is surrounded by large, smooth rocks and dense green trees. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds. The text "THE ADVOCATE OF TRUTH" is overlaid in the center of the image.

THE ADVOCATE OF TRUTH



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The Lord's Supper





by David Royer

In Economics class, we learned to balance or reconcile our checking account or checkbook against the bank's statement. This process gives us reasons for differences between what the bank says is in our account and what cash we believe is available; or our Cash Flow and tracking of expenses in the case of a business.

Consider our country's past wars. There was no shortcut or simple solution for healing the wounds and divisions of a society produced by the violence of war. Creating trust and understanding between former enemies is undoubtedly a difficult challenge. However, it is critical to address them in building lasting peace by thoroughly examining and recognizing the painful past. Countries transcend or rise above past conflict—creating true reconciliation.

So, reconciliation is the process of two people or groups in a conflict agreeing to make amends or come to a truce. Source: <https://www.dictionary.com>

How does reconciliation apply to us, and why does it matter? It goes back to the Garden of Eden, where Adam and Eve walked in perfect harmony with God. Adam and Eve disobeyed God, and this action disappointed and angered God to banish them from the garden. Ten generations after Adam's first sin, God saw that the earth had become entirely corrupt and filled with violence, and He decided to destroy His creation. His wrath needs no apology. Divine wrath is a necessary part of His holiness because, without wrath, there is no holiness. God's wrath

is a reminder of His righteous punishment and a measure of His hatred of sin.

It appears that God had some options after sin entered the world and resulted in the estrangement or a gap caused by sin between God and humanity:

OPTION A. Like an indulgent grandmother/grandfather, God could have just overlooked sin and continued giving humankind access to Him, hoping for the best. After all, God is full of love and forgiveness. If you love someone, aren't you going to forgive them even if they don't deserve it. So, in the end, God will forgive us, right? **WRONG.**

OPTION B. Let all people pay their wages for sin. Since we are sinners by nature, there is nothing to stop our spiritual death. Even doing good works or religious things cannot save us. **BUT WHERE IS THE LOVE?** Remember, the Bible clarifies that one of the characteristics of God's nature is that He is love. When we are disobedient to God, we must endure the redirecting discipline brought about by God's love for us and repent of our independent nature. When we're rebellious, we should expect punishment, and we should not be angered or frustrated when it arrives.

OPTION C. As His holy justice demanded and His nature of love, God could allow the death of another to substitute for the payment of sin for the sinner

who wanted access to Him and met the conditions. Eventually, this was God's choice. A SACRIFICE.

As early as Cain and Abel, offerings were being made to bridge this gap (Genesis 4:3–5). And Job offered burnt offerings on behalf of his children if they needed to be forgiven for some unknown infraction. (Job 1:5). Through a system of sacrifices, the Israelites received temporary forgiveness of sin, but the lost relationship with God was never fully restored.

No human is good enough to earn God's attention and forgiveness. But while humankind was in rebellion against the Creator, He was crafting His own plan to bring us back into a relationship with Him — at His own expense.

Enter Jesus, the Son of God.

Jesus said: *“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. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved. He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God”* (John 3:16-18).

Animal sacrifices stopped with Jesus Christ because His crucifixion became the ultimate sacrificial substitute once for all time (Hebrews 9:28) and is now the only mediator between God and humanity (1 Timothy 2:5)

Christ's sacrifice replaced our penalty of sin. His death at Calvary provides a means of completely changing a sinner's relationship with God. *“For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous”* (Romans 5:19). This righteousness that Paul is referring to, provides us with that same close relationship that was first started in the Garden of Eden.

Paul declares in Romans 5:10, *“For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled, we*

shall be saved by His life.”

So, the answer to the original questions: How does reconciliation apply to us? Reconciliation is the end of the estrangement caused by original sin between God and us. Why? Through the crucifixion of Jesus, God provides a path for reconciliation and forgiveness from sin so that we can live a life of faith and be free of the second death. Paul put it this way: *“For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life”* (Romans 5:10).

There are many subjects (like reconciliation) in the broader discussion of Salvation, and this article only touched on some. Other topics worthy of further Bible study and articles include judgment, the gift of salvation, animal and other sacrifices, the day of wrath, vengeance vs. revenge, bread & manna, Passover, Noah and the Flood, original sin, types of death, faith, creation, sin and Satan, cleansing blood, sanctification, redemption, the forgiveness of sins, atonement and the Lord's Supper.

In closing, I have added Pastor Bud Randall's thoughts and inspiration:

*“Sin is what separated us from God. Without reconciliation, we would continue to be separated or lost with no opportunity for eternal life. Jesus' shed blood covered our sins making this all possible. I believe that recognizing this fact is most important, and giving Jesus the credit is close to top of the list. God being the top. When God stated, *“This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased:*, I think He expects us to believe the same. **Source: Brother Warren (Bud) Randall, April 2022.***

Learning that God allowed or made possible a way for mankind to get back into His good graces (reconciliation) is an amazing characteristic of God and realizing that Jesus carried it out shows us the outstanding quality of the Beings who created us.

God could have left us in our sins and abandoned us, but He didn't. He provided a way back. Thank you, Father.”

Covenant Commitment

By David DeLong

When we give our lives to the Lord, we enter into a covenant commitment relationship with Him and, secondarily, with some other people. This was the case with Abraham when the smoking furnace and the burning lamp (God's part in the covenant) passed between the sacrificial animal parts (see Genesis 15:9-21). Every time we partake of the Lord's Supper after we have been baptized, we confirm that covenant commitment. We are pledging to walk in the steps of the Lord.

When approached by some who would follow Him, Jesus was very frank. "And a certain scribe came, and said unto him, Master, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest. And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head. And another of his disciples said unto him, Lord, suffer me first to go and bury my father. But Jesus said unto him, Follow me; and let the dead bury their dead" (Matthew 8:19-22).

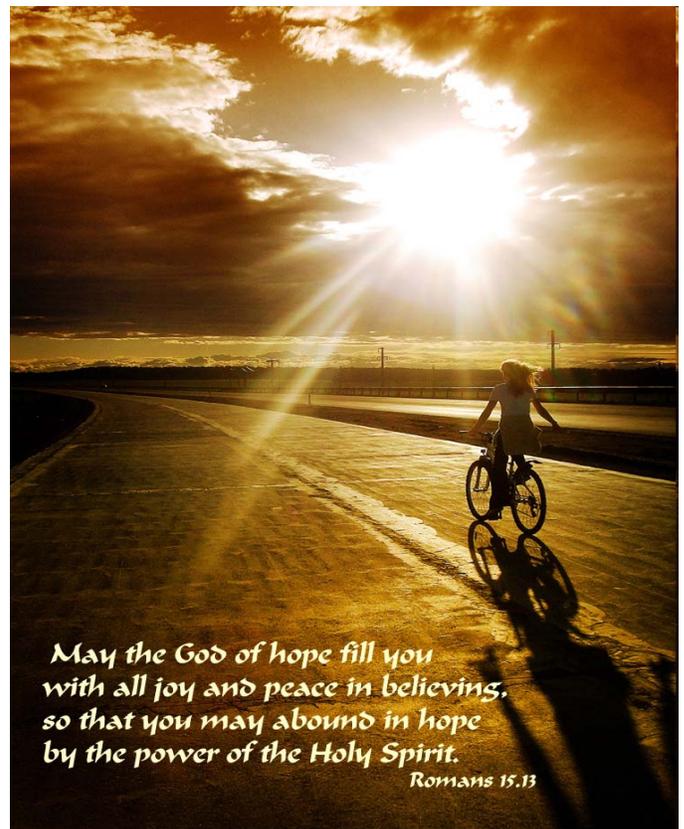
Jesus was not being uncaring or rude to these individuals. He was being frank with them. If a person is going to follow Jesus, there will be a number of inconveniences for him or her. Jesus was making that plain. If even He had not a place to lay His head, then the same condition may be ours when we decide to follow Jesus. Or, if we let anything else be first in our lives, even to the burying of our father, then we will not be willing to truly follow the Lord.

It all comes down to commitment, or counting the cost. Ask yourself these questions: am I willing to follow the Lord even if He tells me to give up my job, my home, my possessions, and even my family to go to a place totally foreign to me to witness to new people? Am I willing to follow Him if He leads me through great suffering for His sake? Am I willing to follow Him even to the point of receiving persecution, ridicule, or even death? If you are not willing to do these things, then you are not really willing to follow the Lord. You are not willing to be in His

covenant.

Commitment is a word that many, today, do not want to use in their vocabulary. Commitment to the Lord always comes first. Then, commitment to your family comes second, including commitment to your wife/husband, and children. Next, comes commitment to others, including commitment to your boss and your work, commitment to the Church, and commitment to your extended family. After I was married, I learned the hard way that commitment to my wife came before commitment to my parents. Sometimes, after work, I would stop in to see my parents before I would go home and see my wife. This caused resentment.

Each time you partake of the Lord's Supper, remember your covenant commitment to Him and others.

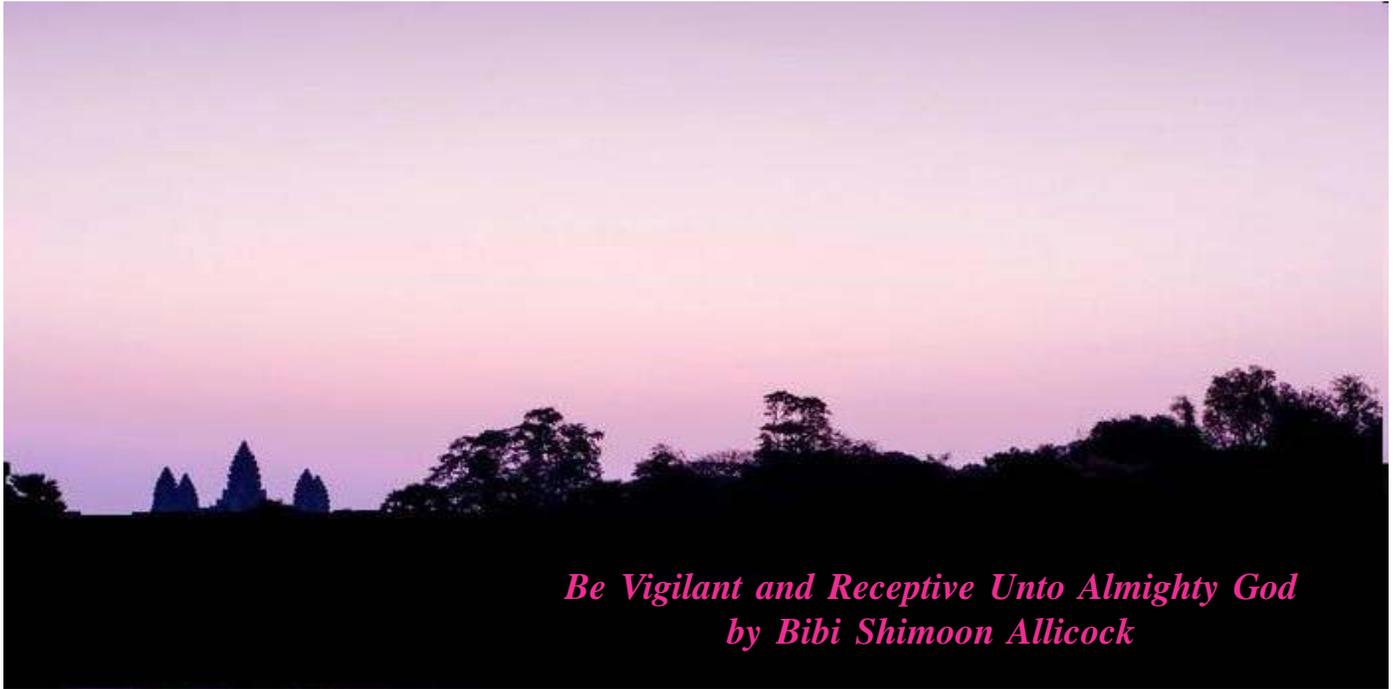


BIBLE TRIVIA

"Multiple choice, choose the best answer for each question"

Answers on page 13

- 1. The plant used in observance of the Passover was (fern; mustard; hyssop). Exodus 12:22*
- 2. Matthew was called to be an apostle while he was (fishing; collecting taxes; praying in the Temple). Matthew 9:9*
- 3. When Jesus was taken to trial, Peter (warmed himself at a fire in the hall; stayed with Jesus; stayed in Gethsemane). Luke 22:55*
- 4. (Saul; Ahasuerus; Hezekiah) was king when David slew the giant. I Samuel 17:32-58*
- 5. Paul said he would not eat (bread; fish; meat) if it caused others to be offended. I Corinthians 8:13*
- 6. The priests carried the (law; ark; food) when the Jordan waters divided. Joshua 3:6*
- 7. Solomon said that red wine stingeth like (an adder; a bee; a wasp). Proverbs 23:32*
- 8. The first man who had two wives is (David; Abraham; Lamech). Genesis 4:19*
- 9. Jesus read aloud in the synagogue of (Jerusalem; Nazareth; Jericho). Luke 4:16*
- 10. A book in the Bible which does not mention God is (Esther; Jonah; Micah).*
- 11. The Lord chose (Peter; Paul; John the Baptist) to bear His Name before the Gentiles. Acts 9:13-15, 17-18; Acts 13:9*
- 12. Paul was struck (deaf; dumb; blind) on the way to Damascus. Acts 9:8-9*
- 13. (Aaron; Eli; Solomon) was punished because he did not restrain his vile sons. I Samuel 3:12-13*



*Be Vigilant and Receptive Unto Almighty God
by Bibi Shimon Allicock*

"Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand" (Revelation 1:3). John the Baptist also preached, saying, "...Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 3:2). Also our Lord Jesus, when He had heard that John was cast into prison: "From that time Jesus began to preach (the same message), and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17). The first book of John also declares unto us: "That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ...This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness (I John 1:3, 5-9).

We must understand what the Scriptures are telling us about the time being at hand. Time being at hand means that it is now that mankind should seek their salvation, NOW! for tomorrow may be TOO LATE. "Seek

ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon...Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation; To wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation" (Isaiah 55: 6-7; II Corinthians 5:17-19).

"Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. And that, know-

ing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Romans 13: 5-14).

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)" (II Corinthians 5:20-21; 6:1-2).

Jesus is coming in His second advent; meaning He will be venturing upon earth for a second time. Note: In this time He is not coming as a savior again, but as a wrathful judge: whereby He will judge all mankind and give them their various rewards accordingly. "Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book...I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last...And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be...He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still...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. For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie" (Revelation 22:7, 13, 12, 11, 14-15).

We must understand that we must "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: Whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle

you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen...Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time...for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble...Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you. (I Peter 5:8-11, 6, 5 last part, 7).

As we live day by day and look around us, we can clearly see the works of the devil being manifested as II Timothy 3:1-5 declares: "This know also, that in the last days (which is here already) perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof..." This is the reason why we do have to, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints" (Ephesians 6:11-18).

Because we must understand that the devil is subtil, and as he had deceived Eve in the Garden of Eden, whereby he just put in one little word, which is NOT, as he told Eve, "Ye shall not surely die." "Now the serpent was more subtil (or more cunning) than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die" (meaning a spiritual death.) But

the cunning and craftiness of the devil was just jealousy of Almighty God, and he wanted mankind to follow him, because he does not want to go into hell fire alone; he wants company, but mankind is so foolish, they are accepting wrong teachings which the devil had instigated and instilled in mankind from the beginning. "And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil" (Genesis 3:1-5).

And so the woman wanted to know good and evil: "And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons" (Genesis 3:6-7). We can also be deceived if we are not careful. "And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light...For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ...Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works" (II Corinthians 11:14, 13, 15).

But although mankind knows good and evil today, they would most of the times choose evil rather than good or obey the devil rather than Almighty God. Let us see what Jesus declared about that: "And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved" (John 3:19-20).

As time goes by, we can see that mankind does not love themselves, because they are doing all kinds of abuse unto themselves, for example, drugs, alcohol, piercings, tatoos, killing each other, killing themselves, etc. But when you look at some animals, they are so caring and look out for each other. I had a personal experience when I was rearing sheep, whereby one fell into a ditch, and some of the others stood by looking on, as if to help, others made noise, as to get attention. So I got up and went to see what was the commotion, and to my surprise, one of the sheep was actually drowning before my eyes.

At first I panicked, then I prayed. I then just held onto the sheep, making sure its head was being kept up. I shouted for help, because it was too heavy for me to lift it out. It was agonizing to keep its head up, but I did by the help of the Almighty until help finally came. If animals can show forth such love and care for each other, why can't some of mankind do such things? But, NO! Some of them will leave you to die, while some will push you more to be drowned. If you get someone to help you these days, ALL THANKS AND PRAISES UNTO ALMIGHTY GOD. "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider. Ah sinful nation, a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evildoers, children that are corrupters: they have forsaken the LORD, they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto anger, they are gone away backward...For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Isaiah 1:3-4; Romans 5:7-8).

As we do have to be vigilant and receptive unto Almighty God, we would know that some things are enmity with Him. "Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God...Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble...Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts (or minds), ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness...Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you...Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up" (James 4:2-4, 6 last part, 8-9, 7, 10).

When Almighty God made Adam and Eve and put them in the garden of Eden, He gave them all manner of fruits for food; He only kept back from them the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He kept them without knowledge as we have today because they did not know that they were both naked, desiring them to live differ-

ently, meaning loving and caring and to treat one another with respect. Can you fathom living in a garden well decorated with all manner of fruits, and even you don't have to work hard and to be in all the daily hassle and stress of today, whereby you have to find all the finances for all the bills and the different things, etc.? But mankind is not content with that; and since knowledge is on the increase, mankind is only running to and fro and doing all kinds of things to their own detriment. "...many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased...And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt" (Daniel 12:4 last part, 2).

When God made these two people, He put them in the garden to keep it; they did not even have to water plants. Almighty God had designed a mist for that purpose. "...and there was not a man to till the ground. But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground." Yet still mankind wanted knowledge: so instead of eating from the trees which He commanded them to eat, they followed the devil and ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil; thus their eyes were opened. But we all know that mankind always wants to venture where they do not belong, as the wise man declared: "Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Genesis 2:5 last part, 6; Ecclesiastes 7:29).

As mankind seeks out their inventions, they are making all kinds of weapons to destroy each other, which ought not to be. "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you (Matthew 5:43-44)...Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality. Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Pro-

vide things honest in the sight of all men. If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good" (Romans 12:9-21). We see here the Scriptures declared that vengeance belongeth unto Almighty God, so we should not fret ourselves. "Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb. Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart. Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday. Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass. Cease from anger, and forsake wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil. For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth. For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace...Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace... Depart from evil, and do good; and dwell for evermore" (Psalm 37:1-11, 37, 27).

We saw that Almighty God designed mankind to live in total subjection unto Him, whereby life could have been so different. Can you fathom a life not working hard, worshipping and obeying Almighty God's every command? But mankind is so stiff-necked, they want to listen to the devil and do his commands, but they don't understand, it is to their own detriment. Because, since mankind is knowledgeable of good and evil, their choices should have been good at all times, but most of the world's population is choosing evil and wickedness. But we should not be deceived; because, "...God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he 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" (Galatians 6:7-8). Amen.

Seducing Spirits

OLD SEDUCING SPIRITS WORKING IN THE WORLD TODAY

By Moises Torres M.

"NOW THE Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils" (I Timothy 4:1).

Seducing spirits that were already working in the Old Testament times are getting the minds of many people in the world today. Let us mention some of them:

1. The spirit of Sodom and Gomorrah. The same old spirit of lesbianism and homosexuality that provoked the destruction of these cities in the past is still working in the minds of a great number of people in the world today. Probably there is not a single city in the world where we do not find these kinds of persons. Remember that the Lord destroyed these cities with fire: "And that the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein, like the overthrow of Sodom, and Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboim, which the LORD overthrew in his anger, and in his wrath" (Deuteronomy 29:23). Brimstone and salt are destruction and malediction.

Today, new laws have been conceived in the corrupted minds of men to legalize forbidden union of couples of the same gender and permitting them to adopt children. This sex seducing spirit is as strong as cocaine that once a person falls under its influence it is not easy to get rid of it. The influence of this seducing spirit will become stronger in the last days. The Lord Jesus mentions the influence of the spirit working in the days prior to His coming: "Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted,

they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all. Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed" (Luke 17:28-30).

2. The spirit of Edom. Edom was the name given to Esau after he sold his birthright to his brother Jacob. Edom means "red or scarlet" as the red pottage that he received in exchange for his birthright and as the blood that he and his descendants shed from other people. Esau became the worst enemy of Israel and persecuted him for a long time. He went against his brother and even joined to Israel's enemies to destroy him. Esau's descendants were called Edomites or Idumeans from where Herod and his sanguinary family came. Honoring the meaning of his ancestor Edom, (scarlet, the color of blood), Herod ordered to kill the babies of Israel in his attempt to kill the baby Jesus, the Son of God.

A spirit of indifference and carelessness for the blessings of God worked in Esau, and he despised his birthright. He also had a spirit of materialism, and of a sanguinary violence.

This same spirit of Edom is working in humankind today! Minds of men are immersed in materialism and violence. A great indifference toward God is also seen everywhere. The Prophet Isaiah mentions the nations gathered in Armageddon as Edom because it is the same spirit

of Edom which will cause them meet their destiny before the Lord Jesus comes at the warring phase of His second coming.

In chapter 63, the prophet describes a picture of the Lord Jesus coming from Edom, from Bozrah, in a red apparel and like him that treadeth in a winepress.

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I THAT SPEAK IN RIGHTEOUSNESS, MIGHTY TO SAVE. Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the winefat? I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: **for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury;** and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come" (Isaiah 63:1-4. Compare to Revelation 14:18-20 and 19:11-21).

It is really amazing how these prophecies of the Bible describe exactly the spiritual conditions of the world today. The Lord Jesus will destroy in Armageddon all people who were indifferent and careless to the blessings of His Father. Yes, the spirit of Edom is still working in the world today!

3. The spirit of Balaam and Jezebel. "But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication....because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols" (Revelation 2:14, 20).

This old spirit of Balaam and Jezebel is also active in our day. Eating things sacrificed to idols and fornication are two of the marks which identify this seducing spirit. These messages to the churches in Pergamos and Thyatira were given to prevent them from fornication. We know that Balaam and Jezebel lived many centuries before these churches were established in Asia, but their same seducing spirit was already perturbing the churches of God in the first century A.D.

The admonition of the Lord Jesus to these churches in Asia was to prevent them from the spirit of fornication.

Different thoughts and beliefs had arisen in those days and false teachings had come into the church such as the teaching of Balaam, Jezebel, and the Nicolaitans, which things the Lord hated (Revelation 2:15).

Today, the world is drunk on spiritual fornication. Men are worshipping idols, doctrines, and teachings that God never taught. The number of idols in the world is countless, because man himself has become an idol of himself! New doctrines, as "transcendental meditation" which teaches that man is able to program his mind to forgive himself and get free from any guilty conscience, have caused people to believe that they do not need the intercession of a Saviour. They say that God is everything, that everything is God. The final aim of the seducing spirits is to make man to forget the existence of the one True God.

Today, man is eating of things sacrificed to idols everyday. Most people in big cities have their agenda full of dates to celebrate the sacrifice to different idols. Apostle Paul said: "But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils" (I Corinthians 10:20).

4. The spirit of Noah's day. What kind of spirit was working in the days of Noah? The record in the book of Genesis tells us that the earth was filled with malice and violence. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually...The earth also was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence. And God looked upon the earth, and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth" (Genesis 6:5, 11-12).

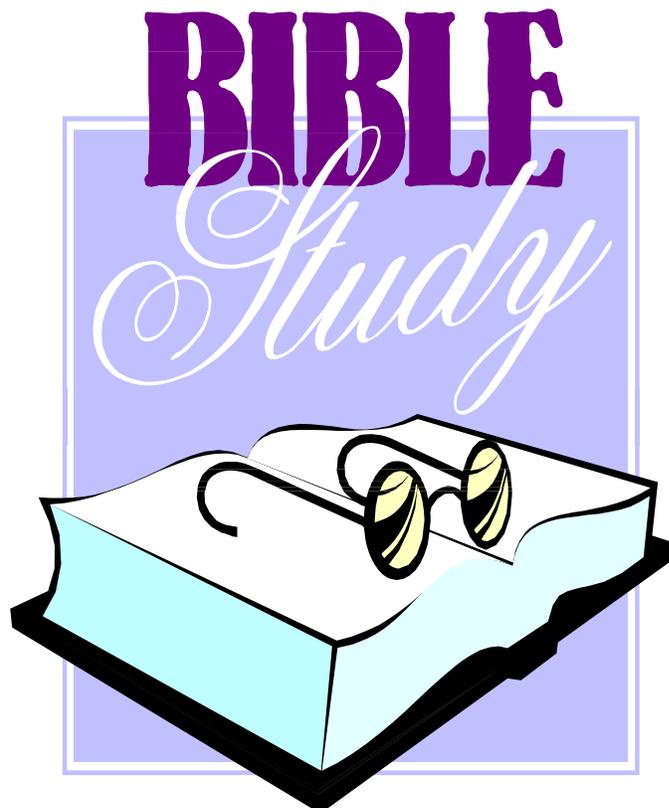
Are not these the same conditions which prevail on earth today? Yes, that same old spirit is working on earth today. Nations and governments are filled with violence and corruption. Wars, terrorism, kidnapping, drugs, and eroticism is all the news that shows everyday. The earth itself is corrupted or polluted and so are the rivers, lakes, oceans, and the atmosphere, "for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth."

The marks of this seducing spirit are corruption, violence, and wilderness, and the whole earth is filled with these marks today as it was in the days of Noah. The Lord Jesus prophesied about these conditions:

"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be " (Matthew 24:37-39).

The Lord destroyed all flesh in the time of Noah because this seducing spirit caused all men to become wicked and corrupt. So it is in our days, the Lord Jesus is coming soon with a great wrath to destroy all corrupted flesh.

Dear readers, the prophecies of the Word of God are in process today. The same seducing spirits and doctrines of devils which contaminated man in the past are working in our very days. This only proves that the Word of God is true and the Lord Jesus is coming soon to give the reward to all men according to their works. Let us be aware of these seducing spirits, so that we as children of God do not fall under their influence.



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Taken from **The Home Instructor Part I** - If you'd like to receive a hard copy of this book, send request to The Church of God Publishing House P.O. Box 328 Salem, WV 26426 or call 1-304-782-1411.

Part 16 - THE SPIRITUAL BLINDING OF ISRAEL

Question: What separated Israel from God?

Answer: "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2).

Question: Did God bring the blindness on Israel?

Answer: "(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day" (Romans 11:8).

BIBLE TRIVIA

Trivia questions on page 6

1. *hyssop*
2. *collecting taxes*
3. *warmed himself at a fire in the hall*
4. *Saul*
5. *meat*
6. *ark*
7. *an adder*
8. *Lamech*
9. *Nazareth*
10. *Esther*
11. *Paul*
12. *blind*
13. *Eli*

Question: In this condition can they see, hear, or understand?

Answer: "Make the heart of his people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (Isaiah 6:10).

Question: To what is their reaching for salvation compared?

Answer: "Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light, but behold obscurity; for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes: we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none; for salvation, but it is far off from us" (Isaiah 59:9-11).

Question: How long will the spiritual blindness last?

Answer: "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" (Romans 11:25).

Note: Gentile times will end at Christ's coming and time will lapse into the millennium. Then blindness will be lifted from Israel. The opportunity for salvation will return to them.

Question: What will Israel say when that day comes?

Answer: "And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him... we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation" (Isaiah 25:9).

Question: Will the message of Jesus go to any other people during the time of Israel's blindness?

Answer: "For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles. I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting

away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not high-minded, but fear" (Romans 11:13-20).

Question: Could Paul see the blindness coming on Israel in his day?

Answer: "And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it" (Acts 28:24-28).

NOTE: The blindness of Israel is upon them at this time. The message of salvation is being sent to the Gentiles now. Salvation will again be opened to Israel during the millennium. See the study of "Israel in the Millennium".

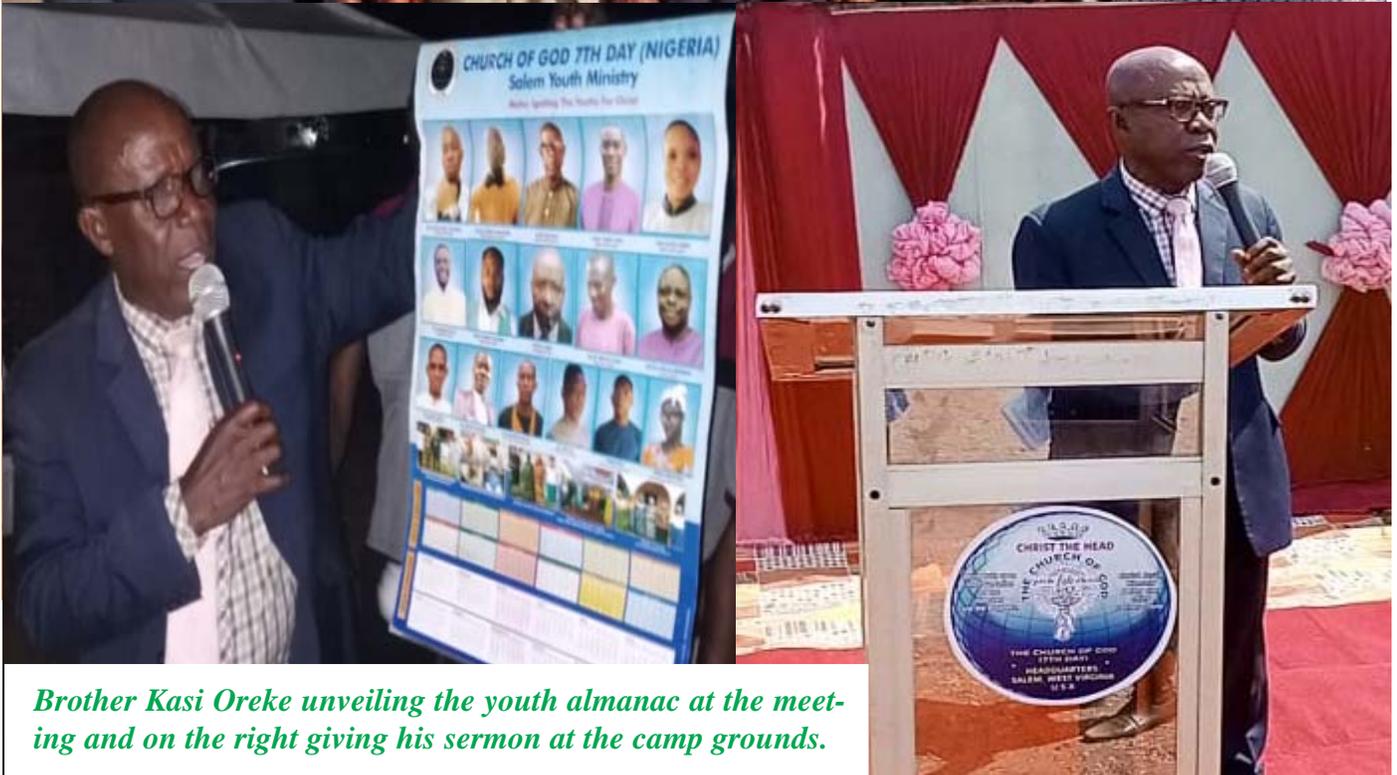
Question: Did any of Israel receive salvation before blindness fell upon them?

Answer: "What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded" (Romans 11:7).

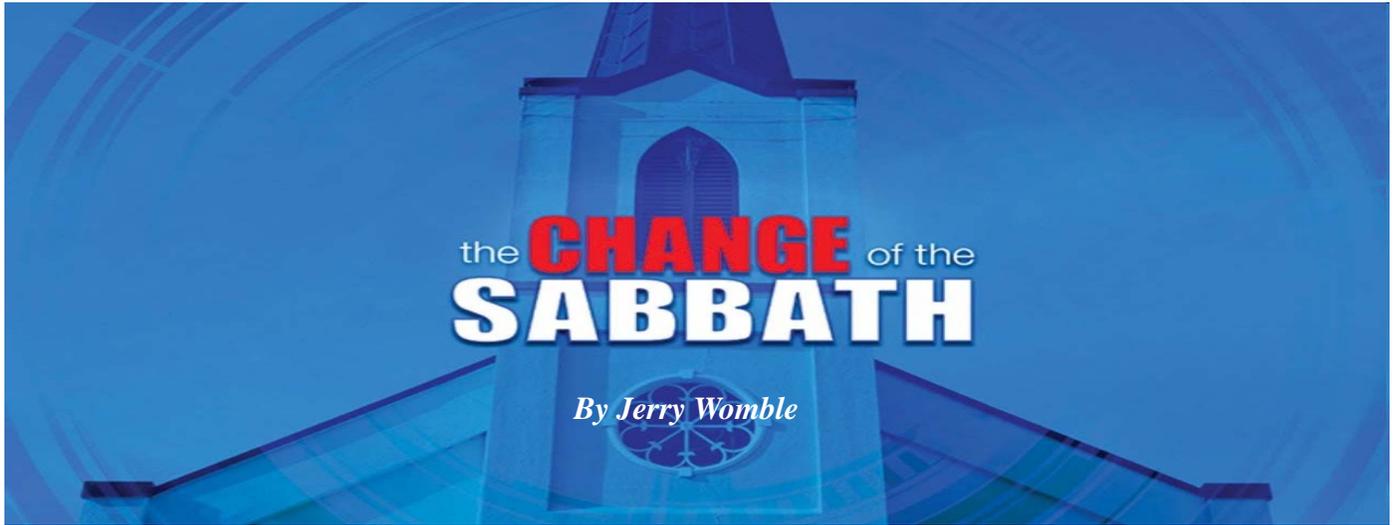
NOTE: The election mentioned here is the 144,000 of Revelation 14:1-4. They were the first to accept salvation through faith and grace, but the rest were blinded.

THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD - AFRICA

Pictured below Brother Kasi Oreke, Teacher Ben Eniefork Udoh, Pastor Shadrach Nwulu, Deaconess Mercy Oreke and Brother Happiness Chigoziem Ogbuji during the camp meeting in December 2022.



Brother Kasi Oreke unveiling the youth almanac at the meeting and on the right giving his sermon at the camp grounds.



In Isaiah chapter 56, verses 1-7, we find where the Sabbath day was meant to be kept by others than just the Israelites. Here the sons of the stranger (the Gentiles) were blessed by keeping the Sabbath and entering into God's covenant. However, in Daniel 7:24-25, we learn of an evil power who would work against the Lord. Here we read: "And he shall speak great words against the most High, and shall wear out the saints of the most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." The Church of God (seventh day) has traditionally taught that this evil power is the Catholic Church who changed the Sabbath to Sunday for religious purposes.

God's Sabbath rest of Genesis chapter 2, verses 1-3 has never changed. One text in the New Testament which proves this is Hebrew 4:1-11. This passage of Scripture proves conclusively that God did not change the Sabbath but that the Sabbath of the New Testament is the same one that He made at Creation.

In the writings of Corpus Juris Civilis C.O.D. (which is a book of Civil Roman Law), from Library #3, Title #12. #3 of March 7, 321 A.D. we learn, "Let all the judges and towns people and occupation of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun; but let them who are situated in the country, freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture, because it often happens that no other day is so fit for sowing corn and planting vines; lest the critical moment being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted by heaven."

The Catholic Church at Laodicea in 364 A.D. accepted the change to Sunday. In the history of councils of the church, from the original documents by Rich Reverend Charles Joseph Hefel, D.D., Bishop of Rottenburg, Book 6, Sec. 43, canon 29 (Vo. 2) page 316, we read: "Sabbath, change of, action of Council of Laodicea. Christians shall not Judaize and be idle on Sabbath but shall work on that day; but the Lord's Day they shall especially honor, and, as being Christians shall, if possible, do no work on that day, if, however, they are found Judaizing they shall be shut out from Christ."

From the Catholics Catechism: Plain Talk about the Protestantism of To-Day--by Mgr. Segur, pp. 213 we find: "It was the Catholic Church which, by the authority of Jesus Christ has transferred this rest to the Sunday in remembrance of the resurrection of our Lord. Thus the observance of Sunday by the protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the Catholic Church."

We have this statement by Martin Luther, from his Augsburg Confession, Article 28: "They (the Catholics) allege the Sabbath changed into Sunday, the Lord's Day, contrary to the decalogue, as it appears; neither is there any example more boasted of than the changing of the Sabbath day. Great say they, is the power and authority of the church, since it dispensed with one of the Ten Commandments."

Alexander Campbell, the founder of the Christian Church (the Church of Christ is a branch of the Christian

Church), in the Washington, Pennsylvania Reporter of Oct. 8, 1821 wrote: "I do not believe that the Lord's Day came in the room of the Jewish Sabbath or that the Sabbath was changed from the seventh to the first day for this plain reason that where there is no testimony, there can be no faith. Now there is no testimony for all the oracles of heaven that the Sabbath was changed or that the Lord's Day came in the room of it. There is no divine testimony that the Sabbath was changed or that the Lord's Day came in the room of it; Therefore, there can be no divine faith that the Sabbath was changed or that the Lord's Day came in the room of it."

Dr. Edward T. Hiscox, (author) of the Baptist Manual, read in a paper before a New Year's Ministries conference, which was held on November 13, 1893. This is Dr. Hiscox's solemn question and declaration: "There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day but that Sabbath day was not Sunday, it was he said however, and with some show of triumph that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week with all its duties, privileges and sanctions. Earnestly deceiving information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament, absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week. Of course, I quite well know that Sunday did come into use in early Christian history as a religious day as we learn from the Christian fathers and other sources. But what a pity that it comes branded with the mark of paganism and christened with the name of the sun god, when adopted and sanctioned by the papal apostasy and bequeathed as a sacred legacy to Protestantism!"

*And for additional reference
The Change of the Sabbath Tract
available to read on the church website
www.churchofgod-7thday.org*

*or hard copies of this tract available
for distribution by calling
the Publishing House
1-304-782-1411*

Keys of the Kingdom

By David DeLong

When Jesus asked His disciples the question, "...But whom say ye that I am?" (Matthew 16:15), a dialogue took place between Simon Peter and the Master. "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:16-19)

What are the keys of the kingdom of heaven which Jesus gave to the Apostle Peter and, by implication, to other disciples? Keys, we know, are devices which close or open a locking mechanism and thus, in a spiritual sense, "bind" or "loose" a person or situation. Before we look at these spiritual keys, however, let us consider some of the ones which our Lord Jesus has.

For instance, we read in Revelation 1:18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death." In this text, the word "hell" is from the Greek word "hades" and refers to the grave. We are assured in the Scriptures that Jesus will open (loose) the graves of the dead and will bring them forth in the first and second resurrections (see John 5:25-29).

In another case, the Apostle John, in writing to the church in Philadelphia, penned these words of the Lord Jesus: "And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth" (Revelation 3:7).

This verse seems to be the fulfillment of Isaiah 22:22, "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he

shall shut, and none shall open.” This refers to Eliakim, who replaced the unfaithful “treasurer” Shebna who was “over the house” (see 22: 15-25). Eliakim, then, apparently became the chief minister of king Hezekiah, having the royal authority that went with the position. This would likely involve the promoting and demoting of Jews, living in Jerusalem and Judah, in various positions of service.

It is believed, therefore, that this verse in Isaiah makes Eliakim a type of Christ, Who has the “key of David”. Christ also opens and shuts in royal authority, and no man can undo what He accomplishes. This “key of David” may also have reference to King David, who is also a type of Christ. In Psalm 89 we read: “I have found David my servant; with my holy oil have I anointed him: With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him...But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted...Also I will make him my firstborn, higher than the kings of the earth...My covenant will I not break, nor alter the thing that is gone out of my lips. Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David. His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me” (verses 20-21,24,27,34-36).

There seems to be a difference of authority here. Whereas Eliakim had the “key of the house of David” (a possible reference to the Jews only), Christ has the “key of David” and all the covenant promises that were given to David as well. This involves an eternal throne, with Christ being made “higher than the kings of the earth.” Therefore, Christ has the authority over the kingdom of heaven, to give the keys unto His followers, so that they can bind and loose on earth and in heaven. Now then, what do these keys include?

One specific key that Jesus, Himself, spoke of was the “key of knowledge”. We read of this in Luke 11: 52, “Woe unto you, lawyers! for ye have taken away the key of knowledge: ye entered not in yourselves, and them that were entering in ye hindered.” This key of knowledge, of course, is the Word of God. These supposed teachers of God were twisting the Scriptures so that they did not enter into His kingdom, nor were they teaching others how to enter into it. Thus, they “hindered” those who were trying to enter in. Disciples of Jesus have an awesome responsibility to use this key of knowledge to enlighten themselves, and others, in how to enter God’s kingdom.

In fact, Jesus said that He is the door through which

the sheep enter into the sheepfold (see John 10:1,7,9). By entering the door of the sheepfold, the sheep enter into God’s kingdom now, in a spiritual sense, and later, in a physical sense. As disciples show others this door (Jesus), they are using the key of knowledge to help people enter into God’s kingdom.

Believers go through Christ the door, and Christ goes through the believer’s door (access to the heart and will.) Each person, by faith, must unlock his or her door to receive Christ. Jesus said, “Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me” (Revelation 3:20).

Many times the Lord, Himself, is the key by which doors are unlocked. For instance, Paul wrote about doors of opportunity in preaching the gospel. We read in II Corinthians 2:12,13, “Furthermore, when I came to Troas to preach Christ’s gospel, and a door was opened unto me of the Lord, I had no rest in my spirit, because I found not Titus my brother: but taking my leave of them, I went from thence into Macedonia.” Again, we read about Paul in I Corinthians 16:8,9, “But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. For a great door and effectual is opened unto me, and there are many adversaries” (see also Colossians 4:3).

Other doors which need to be opened or closed by the Lord are: “the door of my lips” (Psalm 141:3); “the door of faith” (Acts 14:27); and the doors for wisdom and understanding to enter through (Proverbs 8:1-4).

We have been discussing various doors that keys of the kingdom of heaven can open or close. But there are other locks which these keys can do the same for. We might call these “chains of circumstance” which can be used to loose or bind a person with. Let’s look at an example from the Scriptures which shows the loosening of such chains of circumstance.

Isaiah 58:6-9 declares: “Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke? Is it not to deal thy bread to the hungry, and that thou bring the poor that are cast out to thy house? when thou seest the naked, that thou cover him; and that thou hide not thyself from thine own flesh? Then shall thy light break forth as the morning, and thine health shall spring forth speedily: and thy righteousness shall go before thee; the glory of the LORD shall be thy

reward. Then shalt thou call, and the LORD shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity...”

These chains of circumstance can be loosed or undone by any child of God. All it basically takes is a compassionate heart, a willingness to leave one’s comfort zone, and a reliance upon the Lord to provide the things necessary to meet the needs of people. The Lord will see to it that we are richly blessed for doing these things.

Sometimes, chains need to be locked, or bound. This can even include circumstances in the lives of individuals. The book of Proverbs informs us in chapter 3, verse 3, “Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart.” Also, we read in chapter 7, verses 2 and 3, “Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye. Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.” These things need to be such an integral part of our lives that they are bound (locked if you will) upon us (see also Isaiah 8:16).

Notice what the Psalmist wrote, concerning God’s saints, which seems to pertain to their use of the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Though this was written in Old Testament times, I believe it has a bearing upon christians also. We are referring to chapter 149, verses 5-9. “Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high praises of God be in their mouth, and a twoedged sword in their hand; To execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; To bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; To execute upon them the judgment written: this honour have all his saints. Praise ye the LORD.”

The word “heathen”, here, refers to the nations. In a spiritual sense, the “twoedged sword” may refer to the Word of God (see Hebrews 4:12; Revelation 19:15). When children of God have “the high praises of God ...in their mouth”, *and* they use the “sword” of God in their witness to other people, then they are able “to bind their kings with chains”. This may refer to the act of pricking the peoples’ consciences so that they can have the opportunity to hear God’s truth. Or, it may refer to what Jesus said in Revelation 2:26,27: “And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to

shivers: even as I received of my Father.”

Finally, I would like to mention a key that has been given to Christ’s disciples which will help greatly in the furtherance of His kingdom. This is the authority to bind Satan and his cohorts, or to cast them out, in the name of Jesus Christ. Our Lord said in Matthew 12:29, “Or else how can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? and then he will spoil his house.” However, sometimes prayer and fasting is necessary for this to be accomplished (see Matthew 17:14-21).

The Lord Jesus gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven to His disciples so that they could help in the building up of that kingdom. Doors of opportunity and commitment need to be entered; chains of circumstance need to be unlocked; other chains need to be bound. May we recognize, with the early disciples, that “...Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 18:18).

Rebuke Not An Elder

By David DeLong

Rebuke not an Elder, the Scripture says,
But entreat him as a father;
Some people seem to ignore this verse, (a.)
And with it, they don't bother.
Some treat him as a 'good old Joe',
And give him disrespect;
They talk as if they know more,
And hurt his intellect.
Though an Elder is not better
Than others in the Church;
Some take pleasure in trying
To knock him off his 'perch'.
A perch that God has given him,
Not higher than the rest;
But a placement of authority,
Not one that is for jest.
So, please do take this verse to heart,
And don't rebuke an Elder;
Instead of tearing the Church apart,
You should be an expert welder.
(a.) I Timothy 5:1a.

The Children's Page

LESSON I

TRIBUTE TO GOD AND CAESAR

Scripture Reading: Mark 12:13-17.

Golden Text: Mark 12:17.

“And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s...”

1. Who came to see Jesus, and why did they come? Mark 12:13.
2. What question did the Pharisees ask Christ? Mark 12:14.
3. Did Christ know what was in their hearts? Mark 12:15 (first part).
4. What did He ask them to bring to Him? Mark 12:15 (last line).
5. What question did He ask them? Mark 12:16 (first part).
6. What was their answer? Mark 12:16 (last part).
7. What was Christ’s answer? Mark 12:17.

NOTE: “Caesar” in this lesson represents the state. As long as we live in this world, we must pay taxes in order to keep the affairs of the state operating. We may not want to pay taxes, but it is our obligation to the state. However, our first duty is to God. God should come first in all things.

LESSON II

THE WIDOW’S MITE

Scripture Reading: Mark 12:41-44.

Golden Text: Mark 12:44.

“For all they did cast in of their abundance; but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all her living.”

Sabbath School Lessons

1. Where was Jesus sitting at this time? Mark 12:41 (first line).
2. What was He watching? Mark 12:41 (second line).
3. Did the rich give to the treasury? Mark 12:41 (last line).
4. Who came to the treasury? Mark 12:42 (first part).
5. How much did she put in? Mark 12:42 (last part).
6. What did Christ say concerning the widow? Mark 12:43.
7. Why did he say this? Mark 12:44.

NOTE: When we give to the Lord, we do not have to be rich. Whatever we have to give, we should give willingly. There are many people in the world who have a lot of money, but who give very little to God, while others may be like the widow of our lesson and give all they have. God does not expect us to give all our money. But we should try to follow the example of the poor widow and receive God’s blessing.

LESSON III

SOME SIGNS OF CHRIST’S COMING

Scripture Reading: Mark 13:3-10.

Golden Text: Mark 13:7.

“And when ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet.”

1. Where was Jesus sitting this time? Mark 13:3 (first part).
2. Who came to Him and asked Him questions? Mark 13:3 (last part).
3. What questions did they ask Him? Mark 13:4.

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4. What did He warn them about? Mark 13:5.
5. Would anyone come in His name? Mark 13:6 (first part).
6. What would they do? Mark 13:6 (last part).
7. Should we be frightened when we hear of war? Mark 13:7.
8. What must first be done before Jesus comes? Mark 13:10.
9. Is it possible to tell the exact time that Jesus will come, and what should we do? Mark 13:33.

NOTE: You can also read Matthew 24 for this same lesson to study. Jesus is coming back to earth some day, and we should all be ready to meet Him. Therefore, we should study the Bible more and more each day to be ready to meet the Lord when He comes.

LESSON IV

TEN VIRGINS

Scripture Reading: Matthew 25:1-13.

Golden Text: Matthew 25:2.

“And five of them were wise, and five were foolish.”

1. In Matthew 25:1, what does Jesus say the kingdom of heaven will be likened unto?
2. How many of the virgins were wise? And how many were foolish? Matthew 25:2.
3. What did the foolish virgins do, and what did the wise do? Matthew 25:3-4.
4. What did the ten virgins do while waiting for the bridegroom, and what happened at midnight? Matthew 25:5-6.
5. What did all the ten virgins do in Matthew 25:7?

Sabbath School Lessons

6. What did the five foolish ones say to the five wise ones, and what did the wise reply? Matthew 25:8-9.
7. What happened while the five foolish virgins went to buy oil? Matthew 25:10-11.
8. What did the Lord say to the foolish virgins when they returned? Matthew 25:12.
9. Do we know when Jesus will return? What are we to do? Matthew 25:13.

NOTE: We should always watch and be ready for the Lord's return. He comes like a bridegroom for his bride. Do not be like the five foolish virgins who were not ready. Will you be ready to receive your reward?

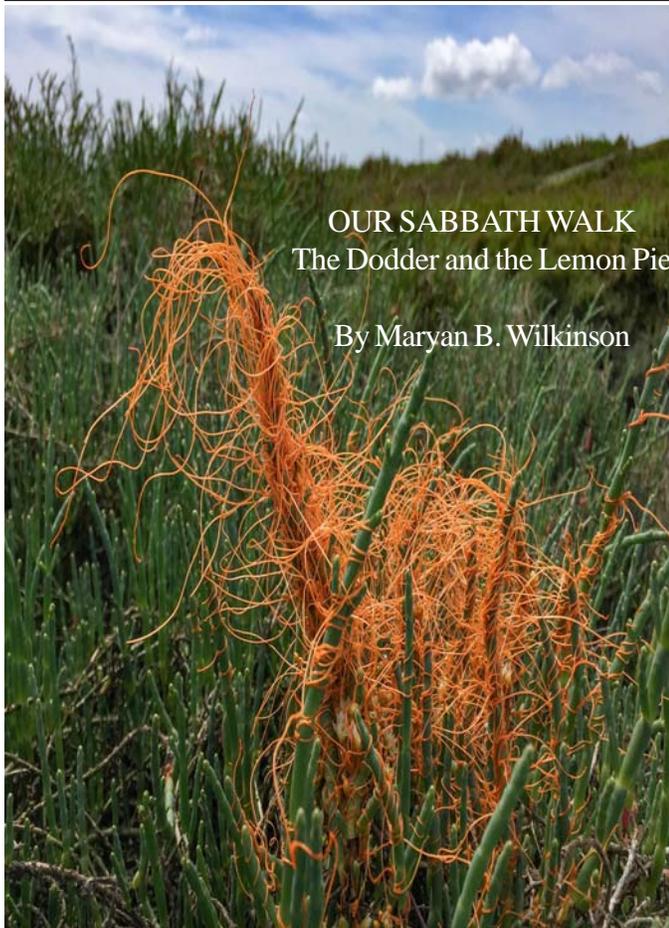
Answers to Missing Words on page 23:

- 1.Hog 2.Lion 3.Fox 4.owl 5.Whale
- 6.Lark 7.Loon 8.Goose 9.Swan 10.Toad

Answers to Sports on page 23:

- 1.Jehu (II Kings 9:20) 2.Nimrod (Genesis 10:9)
- 3.As a runner (II Samuel 2:18)
- 4.Ishmael (Genesis 21:20) 5.Chariot racing
- 6.Peter (John 21:3) 7.Isaiah 22:18
- 8.Paul (II Timothy 4:7) 9.Solomon (Ecclesiastes 9:11)
10. "...one receiveth the prize" (I Corinthians 9:24)





OUR SABBATH WALK
The Dodder and the Lemon Pie

By Maryan B. Wilkinson

Randy was still thinking about Sabbath dinner as the Perkins family walked down the hill from the park.

"Those flowers are just the color of lemon pie," he said.

Daddy looked at the bright yellow flowers.

"Those are buttercups," said Daddy, "They look like lemon pie but they look like butter, too."

"I like yellow flowers the best of all," Randy said. "They look like sunshine and gold and butter and lemon pie!"

Mother laughed. "You cannot seem to forget that pie," she said. "Would you like to have the big piece that is left all for yourself?"

"No!" Nancy objected, glaring at her big brother. "He cannot have it all, can he?"

Mother did not laugh, then. "Would you really like to eat that whole big piece that belongs to all of us?"

"Of course I would," Randy answered. "You could have some applesauce."

Daddy quickly began to tell a story so there would not be cross words to ruin the Sabbath walk. Then, as they walked, Daddy seemed to be watching the side of the road looking for something. He seemed to be thinking hard, but he had a secret sort of smile on his face. Suddenly, he stopped walking.

"Look at this," he said. "Here is something yellow for you to see."

Randy and Nancy looked at the tall weeds beside the road. Daddy was pointing to a piece of ugly yellow thread, tangled in a tall weed.

"Do you mean that string? What is it?" Randy asked. Daddy leaned over and started to untangle the yellow things. "It looks like string or thread, but it really is a plant."

"A plant!" said Randy with surprise. "It does not have any leaves!"

Nancy looked close, too. So did Mother. "It does not have any roots, either," Mother noticed.

Daddy broke off the tall weed and held it up so they could see the yellow stringly plant.

"This is a dodder" Daddy said. "It never grows any roots to get its food from the ground. It just clings to another plant and takes the food that that plant gets from the ground."

"The lazy thing!" Randy said. "But why does it not have any leaves?"

"Leaves are the plant kitchen, where each plant 'cooks' its food into warm sunshine. The sunshine turns the food from the ground into starch and sugar to make the plant grow. This dodder does not bother to grow leaves and make its own food. It only takes the food that the other plant has made."

"It is a selfish plant," Randy said. "Is that why it is so ugly?"

Daddy smiled a big smile. "I think you have the idea, Randy. That is what I hoped you would say. Jesus did not make very many ugly plants. I think He made this one just to show us that selfishness is ugly."

"That dodder reminds me of a girl I knew a long time ago," Mother said. "Hattie was a pretty girl with brown curly hair and pink cheeks, but she always wanted to get everything without working for it. One day we each took some cloth to school to make aprons. We worked hard to make them neat and nice. But Hattie only walked

The Children's Page

around and watched us work. She would not work on her apron. She would not help anyone else, either. When all the aprons were finished, she liked mine the best. She thought I should give it to her."

Daddy laughed. "So you gave it to her, didn't you?"

Mother was surprised. "Why, yes, I did. I gave the apron to Hattie. But somehow it never helped her to look nice. Her face was so unhappy-looking that nobody thought she was pretty at all. But how did you know that I gave it to her?"

"Because you always give things away," Daddy said. "Maybe that is why you are so pretty!"

Mother just laughed, but Randy looked at Mother and knew that Daddy was right. The Perkins family walked and walked around the hill until they had made a big circle. There was the car waiting for them where they had left it.

"Now we are going home," Randy said. "And when we get home there will be a little bit of lemon pie for each one of us."

"Did you not want the whole big piece for yourself?" asked Daddy.

Randy was quiet for a moment or two. "Well it would taste good, but I do not want it all," he said. "I think I will help with the dishes tonight, too. I do not want to be like that selfish dodder."

It was a happy family that rode home together after their Sabbath walk.

"Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh" (Matthew 25:13).

CROSS OUT THE S'S

In each line -
write the other letters in the spaces at the side.
What is the message?

SSSKSESSESSP _ _ _ _

ASSWSSSSASYSS _ _ _ _

SSSSFRSSSOMSS _ _ _ _

SESVSISLSSSS _ _ _ _

Games and Puzzles

How Large Was Noah's Ark?

You will find the dimensions in Genesis 6:15.

A cubit was about 18 inches or 1 1/2 feet.

Now can you figure the size of the ark?

How long was it?

How wide was it?

How high?

How many stories high? Genesis 6:16

How many of each clean beast did Noah take into the ark?

How many of each unclean beast? Genesis 7:2

How many of each clean beast? Genesis 7:2

How long did the Flood last? Genesis 7:17

How old was Noah when he built the ark? Genesis 7:6

How long did he live after the Flood? Genesis 9:28

Can you fill in the missing word in each of these phrases:

1. Greedy as a _____

2. Bold as a _____

3. Sly as a _____

4. Wise as as _____

5. Big as a _____

6. Gay as a _____

7. Crazy as a _____

8. Silly as a _____

9. Graceful as a _____

10. Ugly as a _____

SPORTS

1. Who was noted as a swift driver?

2. Who was a mighty hunter?

3. For what was David's nephew, Asahel, famous?

4. Who was the first archer mentioned in the Bible?

5. What was one of the chief sports of the Egyptians? (It was connected with horses.)

6. Who said: "I go a fishing"?

7. There is only one place in the Bible where a ball is mentioned. Do you know where it is?

8. What writer used such sport terms as "running the race," "finished the course"?

9. Who said: "The race is not to the swift"?

10. Finish the quotation, "They which run in a race run all, but..."

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*and Romans, and we allow that the
old Egyptians worshipped the sun,
and as a standing memorial of the
veneration dedicated this day to him."
-Dialogues on the Lord's Day, page
22.*

*These authorities teach that Sunday
was anciently dedicated by the
heathen to the worship of the sun.
And we learn from the Scriptures that*

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THE RUSHING WATERS

By Del DeLong

*The icy waters jumped and swirled,
With purpose as they sped.
Their destination, as they hurled -
Was unknown as they fled.*

*Our lives are like this water's course,
While on life's way we go -
Do we like foolish waves speed on,
Or do we with purpose know?*

*The way which leads us on to life -
With Jesus, God's dear Son,
And even though we feel much strife
His guidance is the one!*

*Which turns our hectic lives around
When all is said and done -
Our path comes sure when we have
found
His truth, his love - we've won.*

*So like the rushing waters, we
must not succumb to them.
When Jesus turns our path, we'll see
Living water flow through Him.*

