

The Advocate of Truth

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The Advocate of Truth is the official organ of The Church of God (7th Day) with headquarters at Salem, West Virginia.

It is published once a month on the fourth Monday of each month by The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, West Virginia 26426. The magazine is mailed under the periodicals rate at the Post Office in Salem, West Virginia.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Your subscription is free. It is paid for by people who are concerned about the truth.

Your contributions are sincerely appreciated. You may request this periodical by sending your mailing address to this address.

POSTMASTER:

Please send address changes to:

THE CHURCH OF GOD
PUBLISHING HOUSE
P.O. Box 328
Salem, WV 26426-0328

Telephone: 304-782-1411
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Volume LXVIII

Number 3

August 26, 2019

The Advocate of Truth

USPS 542-940

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The Present Wrath of God

By David Royer

[The final wrath of God is associated with the return of Jesus and the final judgment of all people on this earth. This article focuses on the current wrath of God.]

We know from Paul's writings that wrath is present and made known to us: "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth" Romans 1:18. These are my observations:

A news item that the Westboro Baptist Church of Topeka, Kansas, set up a demonstration during a memorial service in Thousand Oaks, CA, for those killed in a mass shooting (13 including bar patrons, the gunman, and police). The demonstrators carried signs that read: "God's Wrath is Revealed".

Tony Perkins, President of the Family Research Council, said the recent Louisiana flood revealed God's punishment on gay people living in the area.

A group of Muslim Clerics said that Hurricane Sandy devastated parts of the U.S., Cuba, and Haiti, because of the wrath of God. This was punishment for a produced TV film that mocked their prophet, Mohammad.

The pastor of the Fairview Baptist Church in OK suggested to State Senators that recent tragic shootings and natural disasters were God's wrath as a result of immorality in State laws allowing for gay marriage.

Several senior Church of England bishops said that devastating floods in England were God's judgment on the immorality and greed of modern society.

The Christian Truth Center's leader, Joshua Munguti says: "God's wrath is coming to Kenya. South Africa repent, Mexico repent, Caribbean Islands Repent, Sweden repent, Spain repent, and all other world nations repent for God's wrath is now revealed."

God's wrath has been attributed to other catastrophes including: mass shootings in IL, PA, WA, OR, TX, VA, FL, NV, SC, PA, CT, CO, NY; 150,000+ people perished in the tsunami that swept over southern Asia; a high-rise apartment fire in England; a pandemic in Africa; tornadoes in AL; mass killings in schools, churches, synagogues and mosques; and other regional and local floods.

It seems that the larger the catastrophe and lives lost, we want to justify them as "acts of God" or His wrath being poured out. Blaming God for "bad things" happening seems to be increasing. Far too often we look at the world and its natural disasters and decide what is just and unjust based on our thoughts and emotions. However, we cannot "second-guess" God. Isaiah 55:8-9 says: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, declares the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."



God has the power to be vengeful. He is sovereign over the entire universe, including all that happens on the earth. Nothing happens that God does not allow, but we cannot automatically blame things on His wrath. God is not the author of suffering, but He does allow crime,

murders, abortions, diseases, calamity and natural disasters to happen ever since sin entered the world. (Ever since the first sins of Adam & Eve, death, sorrow, and destruction became man's destiny.)

God pronounced a curse on the earth due to this "original sin". (See Genesis 3:17). That curse extends to everything in nature and makes it difficult for people to live productively. Paul confirms that we live in a broken world, and natural disasters will occur because all creation is currently under this curse of sin: *"For the creation waits in eager expectation for the children of God to be revealed. For the creation was subjected to frustration, not by its own choice, but by the will of the one who subjected it, in the hope that the creation itself will be liberated from its bondage to decay and brought into the freedom and glory of the children of God. We know that the whole creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time."* Romans 8:19-22 (NIV used for clarification) So, here it says that all creation is in a state of decay and on some future day it will be liberated from the curse.

Humanity's sin subjects the planet to this bondage of corruption. Some tangible, natural and biological effects are earthquakes, tornadoes, fires, epidemics, hurricanes, diseases, tsunami, droughts, floods, lightning strikes, etc. But these are not all "judgments" of God because of people's sin. Unfortunately, it is often the innocent that suffer the consequences of living in today's world of sin.

To say that natural disasters and atrocities perpetrated by killers are all due to the wrath of God goes too far. God is not in the business of causing natural disasters and calamities. On the contrary, He is the giver of life. The Bible says, *"The same [the Word] was in the beginning with God. <https://www.kingjamesbibleonline.org/John-1-3/> All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men."* John 1:2-4.

We know that anything involving God is holy, pure and morally perfect. Because of this, 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.

Lawlessness and evildoers in this world do not render God powerless. Actually, it is just the opposite. He promises to be with us; and, if we live our lives in a relationship with Him and His Son, Jesus Christ, we will be led in a life of peace and freedom from fear of natural disasters, accidents, calamities, and deranged killers. His promise means that we can lose our physical being but still obtain the gift of everlasting life and avoid the final wrath of God. *"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."* Romans 8:10.

We all know 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. 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."* I added verses 17 and 18 to emphasize what happens to those who do not believe or put their faith in Jesus as their savior.



*To summarize here are some characteristics of God's present wrath:

1. **God's present wrath is mainly passive.** A passive judgment, whereby God allows the sinner to self-harden and self-condemn (Romans 1:24–28). God, from his position of "righteous judge,"

can choose to withdraw his sin-restraining power from sinners; thereby he “gives them over to their lusts. Those who do not see sin as judgment will have difficulty understanding how God can allow men to fall more deeply into sin. But sin is a judgment. Sin is not a reward, but a curse and self-perpetuating. Metaphorically, allowing the sinner to drink more from the cup of sin is a current judgment. Whereby, it comes to pass that they harden their hearts and mind.

2. *God’s present wrath allows sin to increase.*

God allows sin to grow, to the point where it becomes more and more visible to us in changes/increases of negative social behavior, corruption, apostasy, moral degradation, and catastrophes. *“But because of your stubbornness and unrepentant heart you are storing up wrath for yourself in the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God.”* Romans 2:5. God’s future wrath will put an end to sin, causing its effects to cease while creating a new heaven and earth.

3. *God’s present wrath is reversible (unlike His final wrath).*

God’s present wrath is a gracious gesture on God’s part. It is not permanent. When God gives men over to sin, He is not giving up on them. Giving men over to sin is God’s way of encouraging men to forsake their sin and to be saved. However, God’s future wrath, once in force, cannot be escaped.

4. *God’s present wrath is often not recognized.*

God is judging men for their sin today, and few even know it is happening. Unbelievers are unaware of God’s judgment, because they do not know God, nor are they alert to His presence and power in the world today. Even many Christians are equally ignorant of God’s present judgment of sin. They think of it only in terms of the future. They think of the sinner’s present self-indulgence in terms of pleasure, not punishment.

5. *God’s wrath is satisfied in Christ.* The meaning of Christ’s crucifixion is not that God punished his Son to avoid punishing humanity, but that Christ himself took responsibility for the world’s evil and absorbed its consequences. Jesus Christ provided our atonement and became the propitiation for our sins. Don’t ever get the idea that God loves you because Christ died for you. No, it’s the other way around. Christ died for you because God loves you!

6. *God’s wrath is just.* *“But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?”* Romans 3:5-6. God’s anger and wrath must always be seen in relation to His maintaining and defending his attributes of love and holiness, as well as his righteousness and justice. The wrath of God should be a motivating truth. It should be a fearful reality, a deterrent to sin. It should be, for the unsaved, a motivation to turn in faith to God for salvation. It should also be, for the Christian, a great source of encouragement and hope. *“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.”* Romans 8:1. We who pray for the coming of His kingdom, so that God’s will might be done on earth, as it is in heaven, should find comfort and joy in the wrath of God, which will not only punish sin but remove sin, once and for all, from the earth.

* Some items were furnished by Bible.org; reprinted with permission; Excerpts from: <https://bible.org/seriespage/2-present-wrath-god-romans-115-32> by Robert L. Deffinbaug

If Lightning is the
Wrath of God..He
Must be Really Mad at
Trees.



IN-CLOSING:

From The Church of God (7th Day)'s website www.churchofgod-7thday.org: Sanctification is commanded for the people of God. To be sanctified means to be set apart for a holy purpose. "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." Acts 26:18.

We benefit from God's love and blessings bestowed on us. However, we have no individual claim on life. We live in a world that is subject to upheaval and death from a variety of sources. Calamities and tragedy remind us of the fact that apart from the salvation that Jesus offers, there is no-turning-back from the ultimate destruction of earth and humankind. We can expect more and more degradation as we come closer to the time of His return to earth.

Today's natural disasters, accidents, and murderous assaults remind us of several truths: life is short, we are frail, and death is inevitable. Sadly, we also are reminded of the countless lost souls among us and personal property destruction. By expressing faith and hope during a crisis, Christians glorify the Lord, offer help to the affected, encourage one another, and get on with life. The sincere daily act of praying for the forgiveness of our sins, drawing closer to and declaring our faith in the saving grace of Jesus, will shield us from the present wrath of God.

SEEKING FAITH

by Betty Whetstone

This world where we live is filled

With evil,

with violence, hatred and sin;

*And this evil is camped on our
door step,*

*Just waiting for a chance to
sneak in.*

Here little children are

Abused and forsaken,

Old folks pushed off in a

Corner to die;

And we so hope for the Faith

Once delivered,

And for it we hope and we cry.

But God is the same as He

Always has been,

And His mercy never once

has gone wrong;

And He hears every prayer

That we utter,

And smiles at every word of

Our song.

The cares of the world can't

Defeat us,

Even tho they carry great weight;

God knows how to conquer

Our enemy,

And His love overshadows

The hate.

We must always press onward

And upward,

Where God holds in waiting our

Crown;

And as we wait for

Our heavenly reward,

His love for us will always

abound.

And when finally we have

Reached the Kingdom,

Our Faith held in our hearts

Like a seed;

And when we all can touch the

Hem of his garment,

We will find all the Faith

That we need.

THOUGHTS ABOUT THE CHRISTIAN LIFE AND HURT

Bond Tennant

To listen to some ministers, one may get the impression that living the Christian life is hurt free, but that is not true. Hurt is involved in the Christian life. Jesus experienced it, so did the Apostle Paul. Every truehearted follower of Jesus has experienced it. How can anyone teach that it is not hurt free?

The early Christians had external foes who were bent on stamping out their religion. These early believers worshiped, preached and practiced their faith in the face of severe opposition. The Apostle Paul said, "... *so fight I...*" (I Corinthians 9:26). To his own, he said, "*Fight the good fight of faith...*" (I Timothy 6:12). At the close of his life, he could say, "*I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith*" (II Timothy 4:7).

We may ask how does hurt go along with Jesus' promise of peace? Yes Jesus did pronounce a blessing on every one who would follow Him, and He said that each faithful follower would receive a hundredfold of blessing in this life, to be followed by eternal life in the future.

However, to have this blessing, one must die with Him. How is this possible? Let us read Romans 6:10-12, "*For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof.*" Death means a life surrendered. When a life is surrendered, there is suffering.

In Matthew 10:39, Jesus said it another way. He called His followers to lose their lives for His sake.

God did make commands that caused hurt. Hebrews 11:35-38 gives the experience of some who obeyed Him. They "*...were tortured, not accepting deliverance; that they might obtain a better resurrection: And others had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment: They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (Of whom the world was not worthy:) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth.*" Yes, obeying was not pain free!

Children of God know that Christ was obedient unto death. They know that He agonized in the Garden of Gethsemane. Christ knew that soon He would be arrested, tortured and put to death. Knowing all of this He still did not rescind His command to "*follow me.*"

Peter said, "*Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you*" (I Peter 4:12). Christ commanded it: "*follow me.*"

For those children of God today it still hurts because their old nature is at odds with Christ, and they cannot follow Christ and hold onto their own nature. Paul compared this struggle to a battle when he said, "*For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would*" (Galatians 5:17).



The Magpie

Author Unknown

In a meadow lived a magpie. From his perch the bird could see every creature that moved beneath. The magpie collected bits of things that it kept tucked away in its nest. The magpie believed that this meadow belonged to him and everyone and everything that crossed beneath his tree were truly beneath him.

All the creatures in the meadow knew the magpie and they were all very careful to say only things the bird liked to hear, and they did whatever he told them to do. This was because the magpie had a terrible temper and would often pelt those he did not like with the things he had stored in his nest. The things were usually hard or sharp.

All the animals knew better than to cross the magpie. However, it came to pass that a small field mouse took up residence in the hollow of the tree's roots. The mouse said a cheerful "Good Morning" to the bird every day. Each day the mouse offered to share some of the things he had collected with the bird.

The magpie was so furious at the appearance of this cheerful little intruder that at first, he didn't even speak to him. Then he recovered himself and began pelting the mouse with bits of things from his nest to get him to leave.

On the first day the bird dropped twigs and branches down on the mouse. The mouse very happily gathered the twigs and took them inside his burrow. The second day the bird threw acorns and hard nuts down on the mouse, often leaving him red with welts and bruises. The mouse collected these things and took them inside.

By the third day the magpie was really seething with hatred for this mouse. How dare he invade his territory and then ignore the bird's best efforts to drive him away? The bird waited for the mouse to leave his hole and then rained his collection of stones down on him. After licking his wounds, the mouse again hauled the stones into his burrow.

The fourth day mouse was out in the field and spotted a boy standing by the tree. The boy was laughing and standing over the magpie. He had felled the bird with his slingshot and was preparing to crush it beneath his boot. Quick as a flash the mouse ran to the boy and bit him hard on the ankle. The boy shrieked, dropped his weapon, and ran home crying.

The mouse scurried over to the magpie and began to smooth his ruffled feathers. Then he went inside and brought out bits of cloth and some of the sticks the bird had used to pelt him and fashioned a stretcher.

He placed the magpie on the stretcher and pulled him into his burrow where he nursed him back to health by feeding him acorn broth by a twig fire. He served the broth in a stone bowl.

It took nearly a week before magpie was well enough to speak. He could not believe that it was a mouse who had saved him. When he could talk, the bird said, "Why? After the way I treated you, why would you save me?" The mouse looked truly shocked by the bird's words. "Why? After all the kindness you have shown me, how could I do otherwise," the mouse said. "Kindness!" gasped the magpie. He did not say more, because he was suddenly ashamed of what his real intentions had been.

"Yes, you gave me twigs for my fire and branches to build my furniture," the mouse said. "You gave me enough acorns and nuts to feed me through the winter and enough stones to make these fine bowls. True, your aim was often poor, but how could I be angry with so generous a neighbor?"

From that day on the magpie became truly generous, to his new friend, the mouse and all the other animals in the meadow. He flew far and wide collecting bits to share with them. Only now he was sure to give his offerings gently and he never again cast a stone at a neighbor. Moral: Discover your gifts and offerings.... even when they are from the most unlikely of places.

DECONSTRUCTING GENESIS

CHAPTER ONE

The Introduction of God and the Creation of Man

Marie Rasnick Fetzer

The Theory of Everything

Some of the fundamental questions asked by the Human Race include, “How was the Universe made?”, “Is there a God?”, “What’s the meaning of life?”, “Is this all there is?”, “Why do bad things happen to good people?” These questions, and more, have been pondered for centuries.

World famous physicist, Stephen Hawking, spent his life in search of “The Theory of Everything”, in an effort to describe “a hypothetical single, all-encompassing, coherent theoretical framework of physics that fully explains and links together all physical aspects of the Universe.” That sounds really impressive. While finding a Theory of Everything is still one of the major unsolved problems in physics, scientists might do well to put down their pencils. The answer has already been discovered, but by only focusing on the “physical aspects” of the Universe, they’re unable to see it. They’re leaving out the key part of the equation, the “spiritual aspect”. They’re leaving out God.

The answer to the question of how the Universe was made, and the knowledge of our identity and the destiny that should govern our lives, can be found in God’s “Instruction Book”, the Bible. The first book of the Bible, Genesis, takes us back to the beginning, where we are introduced to God, our Creator, and provides insight into the origin and purpose of Mankind.

The Book of Genesis can be divided into two parts. The first part is the Primeval History (chapters 1-11), which introduces the basic themes of Creation, the Fall of Man, the Flood and the Dispersion of the Nations, and provides the basis for understanding the entire book. The second part of the book, the Ancestral History (chapters 12-50), narrates the pre-history of the Nation of Israel through

the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph. There is so much information contained in this amazing book, that it seems impossible to absorb it all.

According to the Jewish calendar, Creation occurred in the year 3761 B.C. The study guide in my own King James Bible indicates Genesis covers from about 4004 B.C. to 1689 B.C. That’s approximately 2,315 years. When you consider that the whole rest of the Bible, from Exodus to the end of Revelation, only spans about 1,802 years, that means that over half of the Bible’s recorded human history is encompassed in just its first few pages, within the Book of Genesis. That’s how important it is!

In the Beginning

I "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." In the very first sentence of the Bible, we are introduced to God, the Being that “*created the heaven and the earth*”. “*In the beginning*”, means from the beginning of creation which was also the beginning of time. Time is an historical era in which God is allowing Man to rule himself. At the end, Mankind will be judged and temporal things will fall away, time will cease to exist, and eternity will resume. Time can be measured; it has a beginning and an end. But God existed before time. His existence has no beginning and no end. If you’re having a hard time wrapping your head around this concept, think of it this way: “Time interrupted eternity”.

If we cross reference certain verses in the New Testament, we learn that God was not the only being present at the time of creation! John 1:1-5 states, “*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the*

beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.” John 1:14-18 identifies “The Word” as Jesus Christ. Colossians 1:15-17 refers to Jesus, “*Who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of every creature: For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*” In Mark 1:11 we read that Jesus is God’s Son: “*And there came a voice from heaven, saying, Thou art my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*”

So in putting these powerful verses together, we learn that “The Word” was present at the beginning and was the One doing the work of Creation under the guidance of God the Father, and that “The Word” was actually Jesus Christ in His pre-human existence. Jesus is the “firstborn of every creature”, which means He was created, and it is understood that, of necessity, He must have been created *before* Genesis 1:1 when His creative work began. While Jesus is the Son of God, He is not the same person as God the Father, and therefore not part of a mysterious “Trinity”, however these verses do reveal a mystery to us: “Jesus is in fact God, separate from God the Father, but in the “God-Family”.

2 "And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." In Hebrews 11:3 we read, "By faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of things which are visible." Scholars use a Latin term, "creatio ex nihilo", which refers to God creating everything from nothing. It means that the Universe came into existence by the divine power of God’s Spirit and was not assembled from pre-existing matter or energy; that things that are visible do not owe their existence to anything visible. "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." (Psalm 33:6.)

3 "And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. 4 And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. 5 And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day." The Word spoke creation into existence. On this first day of creation, there was light, but the sun, moon and stars were not created until the fourth day. So where did this light come from? There are many verses in Scripture that refer to Jesus as the spiritual light of the world, such as, "Your light has come, the glory of the Lord shines upon you." "For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising" (Isaiah 60:1-3). Another says, "...I am the light of the world..." (John 8:12). We know Jesus is the Son of God, but He is also referred to as the Sun (S-U-N) of Righteousness in Malachi 4:2: "But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." Revelation 21:22-23, goes on to tell us, "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 in another verse, Revelation 22:16, Jesus calls Himself "the bright and morning star". So it seems logical that in the beginning, the light on the first day of creation emanated from the glory of God. The Book of Revelation tells us that, after the old world passes away, there will be no need for the sun and moon, as the glory of God will lighten the New Jerusalem. "And the evening and the morning were the first day", shows God’s authority and structure in determining the span of time He calls a day, which begins and ends at sunset.

6 "And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters. 7 And God made the firmament, and divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second

day." On the second day of creation, God created the firmament to separate the watery abyss into two parts. He placed the atmosphere as a barrier to separate the waters of the fountains of the deep from the storehouses of water above so that the world could become inhabitable.

9"And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so. 10And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas: and God saw that it was good. 11And God said, Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb yielding seed, and the fruit tree yielding fruit after his kind, whose seed is in itself, upon the earth: and it was so. 12And the earth brought forth grass, and herb yielding seed after his kind, and the tree yielding fruit, whose seed was in itself, after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 13And the evening and the morning were the third day." On the third day, God separated the waters from the dry land. He set in motion the boundaries of the seas, and brought forth the first living things; grass and plants and trees. Although they were created as fully grown plants, each contained seeds that would continue to reproduce their individual species according to their own kind. This means that, while God allows variation within a kind, something of one kind will never develop into something of another kind, which dispels the inaccurate notion that life on this planet developed through evolution.

14"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: 15And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. 16And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. 17And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, 18And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. 19And the evening and the morning were the fourth day." On the fourth day of creation, God made the sun, moon and stars to supply light and to be used in the calculation of

days, months, years and seasons, and for fixing positions for travel and navigation – to keep track of time.

20"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly the moving creature that hath life, and fowl that may fly above the earth in the open firmament of heaven. 21And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly, after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. 22And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth. 23And the evening and the morning were the fifth day." God brought forth all the creatures of the sea and air, large and small, to multiply abundantly according to their own kind.

24"And God said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so. 25And God made the beast of the earth after his kind, and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good." On the sixth day of creation, God created all the animals and creeping things on the land, again, after their own kind. Man was created last, but was different from all the other creatures.

26"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." The first part of this verse has proven to be problematic to many scholars, and its usage has been interpreted in a host of different ways. Here we see "God" talking to someone else. He says, "Let US make man in OUR image, after OUR likeness..." Some of the interpretations regard this verse as a reference to the Trinity; a relic of polytheism; God addressing the angels in heaven; a poetic account of creation; or indication of God's majesty, as in the use of the royal "we". Some say that it is a mystery and cannot fully be known, which would be true without the help of the Holy Spirit. The Bible tells us that, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation." (2 Peter

1:20.) If we allow the Bible to interpret itself, we already know that “The Word” was with God at the beginning, and so it seems evident that in this scenario, it was God the Father and “The Word”, that is, Jesus Christ in His pre-human existence, who were talking together about creating Man in their own image and likeness.

27"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. 28And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." The Bible tells us that God is a Spirit (John 4:24). So this passage would seem to imply that, while Man was created as a physical being, he was created differently from the animals and was endowed with a spiritual nature; with the capacity of possessing god-like qualities and potential. He was given the ability to reason, to exercise free will, to understand language and aspire to an understanding of and relationship with God. When God created Mankind, He gave him dominion over every living thing upon the earth, as a gift, which mirrors God's ownership and rule over all Creation.

29"And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. 30And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so. 31And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day." God supplied plants and fruit yielding trees and every green herb to be food for both animals and man. Based on these verses, it does not indicate that any living thing ate animal flesh at that time. And as with every previous act of creation that God had completed, He beheld his work and declared it “good”. And the evening and morning were the sixth day.

Jewish, Christian and Muslim traditions credit Moses as the author of Genesis. While some consider its first

few chapters as merely a “creation myth”, Christians regard it as the Word of God, written under the inspiration and authority of the Holy Spirit; the historical record of the beginning of time, creation, life, sin, and salvation.

There is a saying that, “when a man doesn't believe in God, he will believe anything”. Scientific and religious views concerning how the cosmos came into existence have long been at odds with each other, but this should not be so. Scientists rely on their intellect to describe how the universe could have been made without God. They rely on empirical observation and logic derived from radiometric dating of geological core samples to “prove” that the earth is millions of years old, and assert that our existence is merely the product of countless cosmic accidents. Conversely, fundamental religionists rely on faith and believe God created the world as described in Genesis. Proverbs 3:5 tells us to “Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding” and Proverbs 1:7 tells us that, “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction.”

Unfortunately, the core dogma of creation in some Christian denominations is inevitably changing, as popular belief in evolution has resulted in many theologians backing away from taking Scripture literally. Consider a statement put out by the Roman Catholic Church in England and Wales which said, “We should not expect to find in Scripture full scientific accuracy or complete historical precision”. And several years ago the Church of England even went so far as to issue a posthumous apology to Charles Darwin, saying that it had shown too much “anti-evolutionary fervor” when his book, “The Origin of Species”, was published, which is astounding considering the enormous damage his ideas have inflicted upon Christianity over the past one hundred and sixty years, and continue to do so today.

If one observes carefully, he will see that creation was crafted with the “appearance of age”. Light from the stars, which is said to take an average of 23 billion years to reach earth, was already visible from the moment the stars were created. Plants and animals were created in full

maturity, and Adam and Eve were created fully grown, with a fully developed intellect and understanding of language.

God set into place the rules for time, the laws of thermodynamics, gravity, elemental particles and all the laws of nature. God created them, and God can suspend them at any time, which is pretty much the definition of a miracle! God certainly temporarily suspended these laws when he turned back the shadow of the sundial ten degrees as a sign for Hezekiah, *“And Isaiah said, This sign shalt thou have of the LORD, that the LORD will do the thing that he hath spoken: shall the shadow go forward ten degrees, or go back ten degrees? And Hezekiah answered, It is a light thing for the shadow to go down ten degrees: nay, but let the shadow return backward ten degrees. And Isaiah the prophet cried unto the LORD: and he brought the shadow ten degrees backward, by which it had gone down in the dial of Ahaz.” II Kings 20:9-11.* And again when Jesus was born of a virgin, *“Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost” Matt 1:18,* and again at the wedding feast of Cana when Jesus turned the water into wine: *“Jesus saith unto them, Fill the waterpots with water. And they filled them up to the brim. And he saith unto them, Draw out now, and bear unto the governor of the feast. And they bare it. When the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was: (but the servants which drew the water knew;) the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, And saith unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine; and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse: but thou hast kept the good wine until now.” John 2:7-10.*

The Medieval Jewish philosopher Maimonides wrote that seeming conflicts between science and the Bible arise from either a lack of scientific knowledge or a defective understanding of the Bible. While believers do not know exactly how the world was created, Hebrews 11:3 tells us that, *“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.”* And that is enough for our salvation.

Chapter Two - Life in the Garden of Eden will be featured in next month's Advocate of Truth.

Continued article from Signs of the Times page 14.

MORE TERRORISM- Several were killed and injured in Sri Lanka when many suicide bombs went off. News reports said that officials knew of threats made by many of those bombers, but they did not take any action. The city was put on curfew, and they expected that there might be another widespread attack. A Muslim terrorist group has claimed responsibility for the attack. They said that it was in revenge for an attack on three mosques in New Zealand. **Comment -** The revenge for an attack on the three mosques in New Zealand is not according with God's Word. The Apostle Paul wrote, “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord” (Romans 12:19).

TEENS AND DIGITAL MEDIA USE - A newspaper article reported that a study links teen ADHA to digital media use. It is that teenagers who frequently use digital media are more likely to develop attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder. The study found that teens who used digital media the most were twice as likely to develop new ADHA symptoms over two years than teens who used social media the least.

MEASLES - Twenty years after it was declared eradicated, measles has neared record comeback. A report said that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reported that 387 measles cases have been confirmed from Jan. 1 to March 28, an increase of 73 cases last week alone. Measles is very common in many parts of the world. **Comment -** It is advised that everyone be vaccinated against measles. One report said that measles vaccinations are 97 per cent effective. However, some have objections to being vaccinated on religious grounds.





THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

ABOUT THE ELDERLY

The following is an article which appeared in **USA TODAY** entitled Aging, Alone, Overlooked And In Danger. It gives disturbing facts about the elderly being abused and neglected. It is condensed:

Across the USA, solitude has become a threat for hundreds of thousands of senior citizens living at home. Last year, state Adult Protective Services (APS) intervened in more than 142,000 cases to protect seniors at risk from what is termed “self-neglect” – seniors who have become too physically or mentally incapacitated to care for themselves and have no other care providers.

Overall, according to the new federal data obtained exclusively by the New England Center for Investigative Reporting (NECIR), state-based APS agencies completed more than 713,000 investigations in fiscal year 2017. The agencies identified nearly 235,000 victims of abuse, including the self-neglect cases. About 10 percent of the total abuse victims counted were under 50, because some states include abuse or neglect of younger adults with disabilities.

These numbers, part of an initial attempt by the federal government to track maltreatment of seniors nationwide, understand the scope of the problem, probably dramatically, according to the agencies compiling the data.

“The elder abuse data is not complete. It’s correct in terms of what’s reported, but there are so many cases that aren’t reported,” said Alice Page, an Adult Protective

Services and systems developer with the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. “We’re way behind in elder abuse reporting than, for example, in child abuse reporting. It’s just a different system. There’s much more emphasis and resources that have been put into Child Protective Services than have been into elder abuse or abuse of adults. And so we’re sort of playing catch-up.”

Elder abuse can range from physical or sexual assault against vulnerable seniors to financial scams to abandonment or neglect by caregivers. A common threat is self-neglect: an elderly person unable to provide for his or her own clothing, shelter, food, medication or other basic needs and having no one to provide care. The problem is growing as the population ages.

States have operated under a federal mandate to collect data on child abuse for decades. There is no federal mandate to do the same for elder abuse and neglect.

“We have often referred to elder abuse as a silent issue. For decades, people just didn’t want to address it at all,” said Edwin Walker, deputy assistant secretary for aging at the Department of Health and Human Services, which leads the effort to build the national database.

The Administration for Community Living embarked on a voluntary effort with the cooperation of state APS agencies to compile a national database of abuse seniors living at home. For the most part, abuse in nursing homes or other settings is managed by other agencies and counted separately.

A state-by-state breakdown reveals holes in the data. The totals do not include reports from six states – New Mexico, Oregon, Nevada, South Dakota, West Virginia

and Wisconsin – for a variety of reasons. West Virginia does not collect statewide data on maltreatment of seniors, leaving it to each county to keep its own tally. Wisconsin counts its data on a calendar year, not a fiscal year, thus has not been able to produce reports for the time period the federal data system uses.

Oregon sent its data in late and was not included in this year’s report. Officials in Nevada and South Dakota have been gearing up to provide data for the new federal reporting system called the National Maltreatment Reporting System (NAMRS) and expect to be included in next year’s report.

States all have different standards for determining when abuse or neglect has occurred, meaning the same set of evidence may qualify as a “substantiated” abuse or neglect case in one state, but not in another.

Comment

It is a sad fact that there are so many abused and neglected elderly in our country. The situation is increasing as there are fewer young being born and Americans are living longer. Let us all be aware to come to the aid of abused or neglected seniors, especially if they should be members of our own families.

WITCHCRAFT IN THE US

I saw an article in a magazine that featured the fact that witchcraft is increasing in the United States. I think it is worth printing:

According to three religious surveys conducted by Trinity College in Hartford, Connecticut, the number of Wiccans in the United States increased from 8,000 to 340,000 between 1990 and 2008. A more recent report by the Pew Research Center indicated that in 2014 Wiccans and pagans numbered between 1 million and 1.5 million persons, or 0.4 percent of the population. And a Market Watch report shows that in 2017 psychic services in the United States amounted to some \$2 billion. Among other things, spirit mediums have been casting spells on President Donald Trump. One witch said that her spell “was not meant to physically hurt him, only to keep him from succeeding at his tasks.” Christian author and speaker Julie Roys says that witchcraft is especially attractive to millennials because it’s “a pre-Christian

tradition that promotes ‘free thought’ and understanding of earth and nature.

-CNSNews.com

Comment

Witchcraft was forbidden by God before the pre-Christian time. “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live” (Exodus 22:18). “There shalt not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a WITCH” (Deuteronomy 18:10).

Witchcraft is forbidden by God in this dispensation because it is one of the works of the flesh. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, WITCHCRAFT, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies” (Galatians 5:19-20). Witchcraft can be considered a doctrine of the devil.

Witchcraft may promote ‘free’ thought in that a carnal person is free to believe in it. But in no way does it promote an understanding of the earth and nature. A correct understand of the earth and nature can only come from reading and believing God’s Word.

TWO EARTHQUAKES

Two earthquakes have happened recently. They were both a little over 6 points on the richter scale. One happened in the Philippines, and one happened in Taiwan (free China).

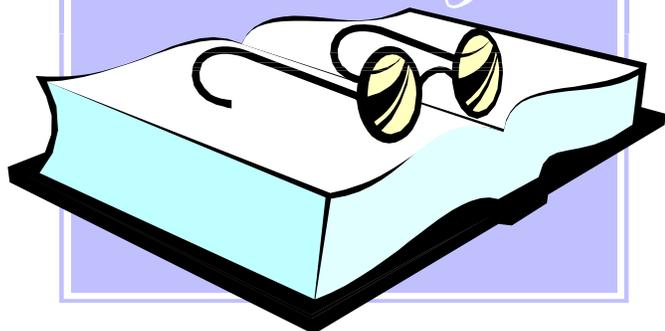
Comment

This brings to memory a prophecy that Jesus gave to His disciples when asked about when shall these things be and what shall be the sign of His coming. Let us quote Matthew 24:7, “For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and EARTHQUAKES, in divers (various) places.” We find Jesus speaking of earthquakes in diverse places in Mark 13:8 and Luke 21:11.

Let us take note of the word “diverse” which means different or various. There are instances of earthquakes which have happened in the past where no one expected one would occur. **Continued on page 13.**

BIBLE

Study



Question: How may I know the difference between Satan's voice and God's voice?

Answer: There is a simple way of doing this. We can know the difference between God's voice and Satan's voice. God's voice will always agree with the Word of God, the Holy Bible. Satan's voice may agree partially, but never fully. After forty days in the wilderness, Jesus was tempted by the devil, who offered Him three good things. The things Satan offered Jesus were not wrong themselves, but they required a deviation from the truth in the attitude and action of Jesus if He was to do them. It wasn't wrong for Jesus to turn a stone into bread. It wasn't wrong for Jesus to have all the kingdoms of this world. It was not wrong for the angels to bear Him up lest He dash His foot against a stone. But Jesus exposed the error in each of these temptations and said in effect, "But the Bible says, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Father. Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God and him only shalt thou serve." Jesus gave scriptural answers. We must understand the Bible in order to know the difference between the voice of God and the voice of Satan. Discerning the difference between God's influencing us and Satan's influencing us depends upon how much of God's Word we have ingested and how much of it has become a daily practice of our daily life.

Question: What were some of the characteristics of

Questions and Answers

Jesus? Please give some scriptural references.

Answer: Jesus was Holy: "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke 1:35).

"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).

Jesus was righteous: "He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities" (Isaiah 53:11).

"Thou hast loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Hebrews 1:9).

Jesus was faithful: "And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins" (Isaiah 11:5).

"Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (I Thessalonians 5:24).

Jesus was just: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh

unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt the foal of an ass” (Zechariah 9:9).

“And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth” (Acts 22:14).

Jesus was meek and lowly: “He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth” (Isaiah 53:7).

“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls” (Matthew 11:29).

Question: The Bible says. “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect,” and it seems impossible to be perfect and sinless in this world. How can Christians have victory over sin?

Answer: Victory over sin is one thing, and sinless perfection is another. The latter is not attainable so long as we are in the body, but the former is the Christian’s privilege and should always be his aim. “I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Romans 12:1-2).

Question: Can we come into the same state of holiness possessed by Adam and Eve before they fell?

Answer: Holiness is not the correct way to describe the state of Adam and Eve before the fall. They were innocent, but they had not yet been tested. It is impossible for any one who has known what sin is to come into the same state possessed by Adam and Eve before they fell.

Question: What kind of sin is it when people in their prayer command God to do something?

Answer: This kind of sin is a presumptuous sin, and it approaches blasphemy!

Question: Will you explain Exodus 32:32-33?

Answer: In this passage, Moses appears as the intercessor for his people. So earnest was he in his pleading for them that he was willing to be lost himself if only his people might be saved. This same spirit is seen in Acts 7:60 and Romans 9:3.

Question: Will you please list a few things that the Scriptures tell us that we must do?

Answer: The Scriptures tell us that we must practice the golden rule and provide things honestly. “Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide thing honest in the sight of all men” (Romans 12:17).

“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets” (Matthew 7:12).

The Scriptures tell us that we must love our neighbor as ourselves. “Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself” (Matthew 22:36-39).

The Scriptures tell us that we must learn to be content with what we have. “Let your conversation [behavior, conduct, life] be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” (Hebrews 13:5).

“For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and raiment let us be therewith content” (I Timothy 6:7-8).

The Scriptures tell us that we must quit stealing and go to work. We must work long and hard in order to earn more so that we can give to him that has needs.

“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth” (Ephesians 4:28).

The Scriptures tell us that we must realize an astounding truth that what we measure to others will be measured to us. “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).



Myanmar

Some of our brothers and sisters in a church gathering in Myanmar.





LESSON I

LESSON II

THE WALLS OF JERICHO FALL

THE SIN OF ACHAN

Scripture Reading: Joshua 6:1-27.

Golden Text: Joshua 6:5 (last part).

“...and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.”

NOTE: Do you remember about the spies going into Jericho and how Rahab hid them from the king? Now, today, we study how Israel went back to that city to take it by the help of the Lord, and what happened to Rahab.

1. Was Jericho afraid of the children of Israel? Joshua 6:1.
2. What did the Lord tell Joshua? Joshua 6:2-3.
3. What instructions did Joshua give his people? Joshua 6:6-7.
4. Were the people to talk or shout as they went around the city? Joshua 6:10.
5. What happened for six days? Joshua 6:14.
6. What did they do differently on the 7th day, and what was to happen after they did this? Joshua 6:15-16.
7. Were they to allow anyone within the city to live? Why? Joshua 6:17.
8. Were the people to keep anything for themselves that was within the city, and what were they to do with the silver and gold? Joshua 6:18-19.
9. Tell what happened after they marched around the city seven times and the priests blew the trumpets, and the people shouted? Joshua 6:20-21.

NOTE: Jericho was taken by the direct help of God to give the Israelites confidence that He would be with them.

Scripture Reading: Joshua 7:1-26.

Golden Text: Joshua 7:20.

“And Achan answered Joshua, and said, Indeed I have sinned against the LORD God of Israel, and thus and thus have I done.”

NOTE: You remember in our last lesson the Lord told the people not to take anything for themselves which was within the city for it had been cursed by the Lord. One man did not obey. Let us see what happened.

1. Joshua sent spies to the city of Ai, and what report did they bring back? Joshua 7:2-3.
2. Joshua did as the spies said, and what happened? Joshua 7:4-5.
3. What did Joshua say to the Lord? Joshua 7:6-9.
4. What did the Lord tell Joshua was wrong? Joshua 7:10-12.

NOTE: Joshua started searching through the camp to find who was guilty.

5. Who was found to be the guilty one, and what had he done? Joshua 7:19-21.

NOTE: Achan took something which did not belong to him, and the Lord had told him not to take anything in the city. Do you think people are the same as Achan today?

6. Joshua sent messengers to find the things Achan had taken. Where did they bring them? Joshua 7:22-23.
7. What happened to Achan, his family and all he owned? Joshua 7:24-25.

NOTE: Coming right after the miraculous crossing of the Jordan and the fall of Jericho, it was a terrible shock to

Israel. God was with them, but He wanted them to understand that He wanted absolute obedience. It was a lesson for the people. Does God change, or is He still the same today?

8. What did the people place over the bodies of the ones who were stoned? Joshua 7:26.

LESSON III

THE CAPTURE OF AI

Scripture Reading: Joshua 8:1-28.

Golden Text: Joshua 8:21.

“And when Joshua and all Israel saw that the ambush had taken the city, and that the smoke of the city ascended, then they turned again, and slew the men of Ai.”

1. What did the Lord instruct Joshua to do? Joshua 8:1-2.
2. How many men did Joshua choose to go against Ai? Joshua 8:3.
3. Did Joshua obey the Lord? Joshua 8:9-11.
4. What method did Joshua use to capture Ai? Joshua 8:14-17.
5. Did the plan which the Lord had given Joshua prove successful? Joshua 8:18-21.
6. What is the condition of the city of Ai even to this day? Joshua 8:28.

NOTE: If Joshua had not obeyed the instructions which the Lord gave him, he never would have captured Ai in such a wonderful way. We too must obey the Lord in everything He has told us to do.

LESSON IV

THE GIBEONITES

Scripture Reading: Joshua 9.

Golden Text: Joshua 9:15.

“And Joshua made peace with them, and made a league with them, to let them live: and the princes of the congregation sware unto them.”

NOTE: In our last lesson we learned how miraculously Joshua captured Ai by following the Lord’s instructions. Let us study now about the land of Gibeon and how they made a league with Joshua.

1. When the Gibeonites heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, what did they do? Joshua 9:3-5.
2. The Gibeonites went to Joshua’s camp at Gilgal. What was the purpose of this meeting? Joshua 9:6.
3. Did Joshua make peace with the Gibeonites? Joshua 9:15-16.
4. What did the Gibeonites become to the children of Israel? Joshua 9:21-23.
5. Why were the people of Gibeon so hasty in making a league with Joshua? Joshua 9:24.
6. What did Joshua do to these people that very day? Joshua 9:27.



WHAT LOVE DOES

Love is loving, love is kind,
Love makes you your mother mind;
Love makes you forgive a wrong,
Love makes people brave and strong.



CAMPING IN THE BACK YARD

By Geraldine Boundey

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

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

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

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

Mother thought for a minute. “I believe I have an idea that will work,” she said. She hurried to the garage and was soon back with a large folded bundle. “I remembered we had this large piece of canvas in our garage.

Our clothes lines are good and strong. Let’s try hanging this canvas across two of the lines. Then we will fasten the sides and corners with small wooden stakes.”

George and his friends soon had a fine, strong tent that was big enough for all three of them to get inside at one time. How pleased they were! Now they could really have a nice time.

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

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

“That’s a good idea, let’s ask our mothers right now!”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“I wish I were, too. I didn’t know it would be this scary,” Terry added.

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

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

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

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

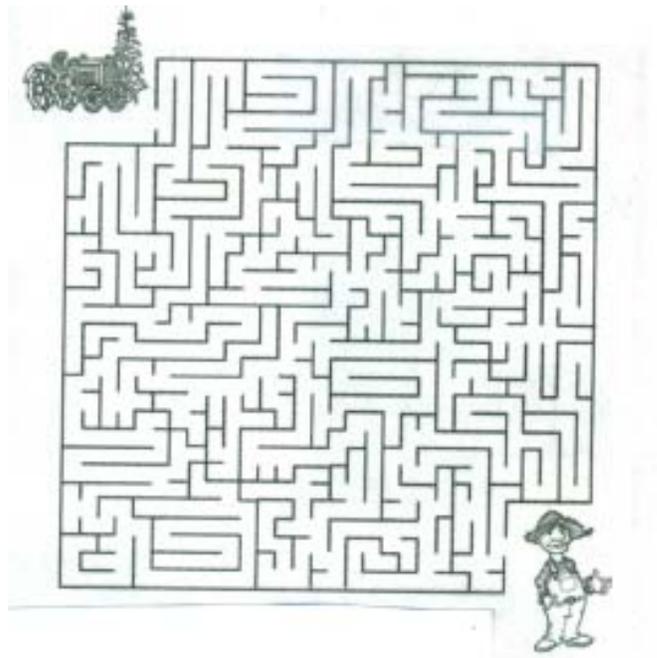
The next morning Mother thought of the boys as soon as she woke up. “I haven’t heard any noise out there. I wonder how they got along last night,” she thought to herself. “If George had come in I am quite sure I would have heard him. I’ll get up and go out to see how they are.”

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

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

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

Help the farmer find his tractor by making your way through the maze.



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Daniel In The Lions' Den

By David DeLong

Daniel trusted in his God,
And prayed to Him each day;
The princes of the kingdom
Then, moved without delay.

They had the king of Media
Sign a great decree;
For thirty days could no one ask
Of God, or man, a plea

Except unto the king, we learn,
Or else they would be then
Thrown into an awful plight--
Into a lions' den.

But, Daniel kept on praying,
And sure enough was sent
Into the den of lions
Where one whole night he spent.

The king was up next morning,
And hastened to the site;
Has your God protected you
From the lions' bite?

Daniel said an angel
Had shut the lions' jaws
None had hurt him, it was seen
With their teeth or claws.

The king then took the princes,
Their children and their wives;
And cast them to the lions,
Which ended all their lives.

Before the bodies reached the floor,
The lions broke each bone;
Now, everyone could fully see
That God protects His own!

