



The Advocate of Truth





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By David Royer

At the end of each year (December 31) various churches in the United States will have worship services to reflect on the past year, offer prayers of gratitude & thanks, and to receive continued blessings in the new year. This is their spiritual way of celebrating the largely secular holiday of New Year's Eve. The origin of these services began with "WATCH NIGHT".

Watch Night began with the Moravians, a small Christian denomination whose roots lie in what is the present-day Czech Republic. The first such service is believed to have been held in 1733 on the estates of Count Nicholas von Zinzendorf in Hernhut, Germany.

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement, picked it up from the Moravians, incorporating a Watch Night vigil into the practices of his denomination. Methodist Watch Nights were held once a month and on full moons, with the first such service in the United States taking place in 1770 at Old St. George's Church in Philadelphia. These services survive to the present day in that denomination's worship manuals as "Covenant Renewal Services."

As to what was being "watched over" in those earlier

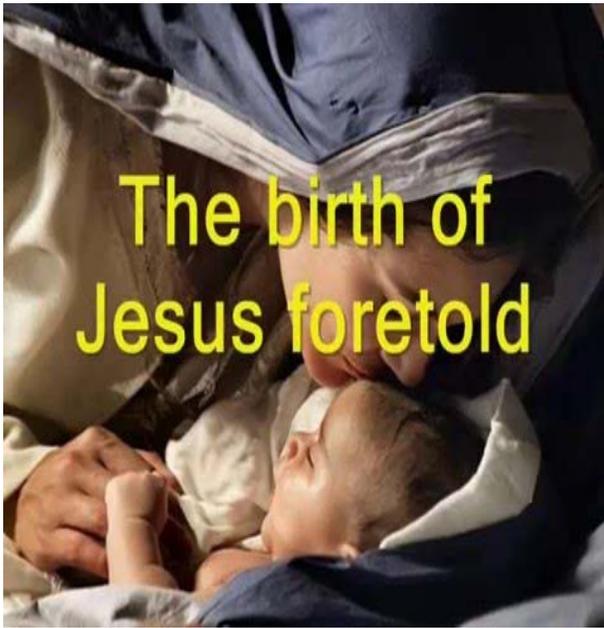
services, it was one's covenant with God. These gatherings were a time for congregants to meditate on their state of grace — were they spiritually ready to meet their maker if the call were suddenly to come? As the 13th chapter of Mark instructs, the faithful need to be ever vigilant, because the hour of the Lord's coming is not known. (Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh.)

The end-of-year Watch Night of 1862 took on special significance attaching to the impending January 1, 1863 enactment of the Emancipation Proclamation, and that night has come to be known as "Freedom's Eve." On 22 September 1862, President Lincoln issued his Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, which stated: "[O]n the first day of January ... all persons held as slaves within any State, or designated part of a State, the people whereof shall then be in rebellion against the United States shall be then, thenceforward, and forever free." Lincoln subsequently issued the Emancipation Proclamation itself on January 1, 1863.

While that proclamation did not end slavery the moment it was issued, it did at least proclaim some slaves free. Knowing that this was going into effect the next day must certainly have influenced the nature of that year's Watch Night within the African-American and abolitionist communities. This added a second layer of what was being watched for (the coming of freedom at the stroke of midnight) to the more usual fare (the coming of the Christ at an unspecified future date and therefore the need to maintain a constant personal state of spiritual preparation). Among African-American congregations, that second layer of meaning has since become permanently woven into the fabric of the original, making New Year's Eve Watch Night services as much now about remembering the end of slavery as it is upon personal reflection on the state of one's soul.

1Reference: www.snopes.com/fact-check/watch-night/

In closing, I propose a "WATCH DAY". Why wait for the end of the year? How about every morning we wake, take a moment to thank God for the new day and ask for His help to demonstrate Peace, Power and Purpose as a worthy example of following in the footsteps of Jesus.



Note: The following is in no wise meant to be a Christmas article. However, it is good to meditate upon the birth of Jesus anytime during the year.

THE FORETOLD BIRTH OF JESUS

Bond Tennant

Luke 1:26-35 tells us of the appearance of the angel Gabriel to Mary, Jesus' mother. The appearance to Mary is a remarkable one. It is no wonder that her response was one of humility and disbelief. Why would God bless her among all the women of Israel? Mary eventually understood the magnitude of her part in the birth of the promised Messiah. In the moment of this declaration, the many prophecies related to this birth were no doubt obscured to her vision. Luke declares that the people at this time "were in expectation" of the appearance of the Christ (Luke 3:15), who would return Israel back to the prominence in the world. Based on this expectation, all new Jewish mothers might have wondered in their hearts whether their child might be the promised one.

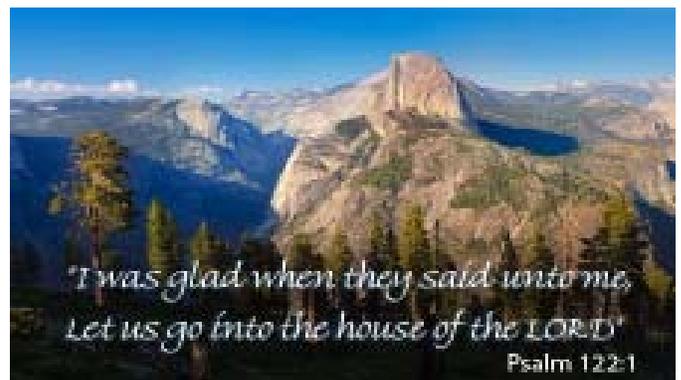
No doubt Mary's humility and loving character weighed heavily on her choice as the chosen one to bear this miraculous child. She also fulfilled a special prophecy. The Prophet Isaiah describes what many might consider a strange requirement for the mother of the promised Messiah: "Therefore the LORD himself shall give you a

sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel" (Isaiah 7:14). This prophecy, along with Luke's testimony that Mary was still "a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph", would be another proof that Jesus was indeed the Son of God (Luke 1:27).

Isaiah also spoke of the future effect this birth would have on the world of mankind. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this" (Isaiah 9:6-7).

The future government of God's kingdom will be upon the shoulders of this offspring of Mary, the glorified Jesus. He shall sit upon the throne of David to bring blessings to the world according to the promise given to Abraham and repeated many times by Israel's prophets. His kingdom will be a righteous one and will last forever.

The Prophet Micah describes the world's eagerness to embrace this kingdom once it is established, "But in the last days it shall come to pass, that the mountain of the house of the LORD shall be established in the top of the mountains, and it shall be exalted above the hills; and people shall flow unto it. And many nations shall come, and say, Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, and to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for the law shall go forth of Zion, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem" (Micah 4:1-2).



CHRISTMAS TRACT

CHRISTMAS MEMORIES

The observance of Christmas is attributed to Pope Telesphorus, who died A.D. 138. At first it was the most movable of the Roman Church festive days, often confounded with the Epiphany, and celebrated by the Eastern churches in the months of April and May. In the 4th century, Pope Julius I ordered that an investigation be made concerning the day of Christ's Nativity. Such evidence as was found caused the theologians of the East and West to agree upon December 25 as a uniform date for the observance. One of the factors influencing their decision was that most of the heathen nations regarded the winter solstice as the beginning of the renewed life and activity of the powers of nature. The Romans, Celts and Teutons from the oldest times celebrated the season with great feasts and merriment. The wise administrators of the Roman church realized the advantage of transforming this celebration into a Roman Church festival.

CHRISTMAS

"Christmas" is a word meaning "the mass of Christ." It is commonly spoken of as the day upon which the birth of Jesus is celebrated. However, there are few people who have taken the time, or desire, to make a study of this question in order that they might really know the origin and purpose of the day called Christmas. They take it for granted that it is the most notable day of the year, and continue to celebrate it in various ways by religious formal worship, gluttonous eating, reveling, unbridled drinking, and more commonly by exchanging of useless, costly, unwarranted, or embarrassing gifts. We are all aware of the fact that during Christmas season the spirit of rivalry and competition enters into the giving of gifts, and the poor often give more than they can afford, and thus leave honest debts unpaid, or go without necessities until they have caught up with their Christmas spending spree. It must be admitted that the manner in which Christmas as a whole is observed is no honor unto Jesus Christ; but on the contrary, is a dishonor. The Lord truly cannot be honored by frivolity, debauchery, revelling, drunkenness, much less by the prevalent practice of telling falsehoods unto the children about Santa Claus. God is never honored

with a lie and we must reap from our children just what we have sown into their lives. "In 1644 the English Puritans forbade any merriment or religious services by act of Parliament, on the ground that it (Christmas) was a heathen festival, and ordered it to be kept as a fast." Hislop, the English clergyman, in his excellent treatise on Roman so called holy days adopted from the Pagans, has this to say about Christmas: "The Festivals of Rome are innumerable; but five of the most important may be singled out for elucidation-viz., Christmas-day, Lady-day, Easter, the Nativity of St. John, and the Feast of Assumption. Each and all of these can be proven to be Babylonian. And first, as to the festival in honour of the birth of Christ, or Christmas, how comes it that that festival was connected with the 25th of December? There is not a word in the Scriptures about the precise day of His birth, or the time of the year when He was born. What is recorded there, implies that at what time so ever His birth took place, it could not have been on December 25th. At the time the angel announced His birth to the shepherds of Bethlehem, they were feeding their flocks by night in the open fields. Now, no doubt, the climate of Palestine is not so severe as the climate of this country; but even there, though the heat of the day may be considerable, the cold of the night, from December to February, is very piercing, and it was not the custom of the shepherds of Judea to watch their flocks in the open fields later than about the end of October. It is in the last degree incredible, then, that the birth of Christ could have taken place at the end of December. There is great unanimity among the commentators on this point. Besides Barnes, Doddridge, Lightfoot, Scalinger, and Josephus in his 'Jewish Antiquities,' who are all of the opinion that December 25th could not be the right time of our Lord's nativity, the celebrated Joseph Mede pronounces a very decisive opinion to this same effect. After a long and careful disquisition on the subject, among other arguments he adduces the following: 'At the birth of Christ every woman and child was to go to be taxed at the city whereto they belonged, whether some had journeys; but the middle of winter was not fitted for such a business, especially for women with child, and children to travel in.' Therefore Christ could not have been born in the depth of winter. Again, at the time of Christ's birth, the shepherds lay abroad watching their flocks in the night time; but this was not likely to be in the middle of winter. And if any shall think that the winter

wind was not so extreme in these parts, let him remember the words of Christ in the gospel. 'Pray that your flight be not in winter.' If the winter was so bad a time to flee in, it seems no fit time for shepherds to lie in the fields and women and children to travel. Indeed it is admitted by most learned and candid writers of all parties that the day of our Lord's birth cannot be determined, and that within Church Community no such festival as Christmas was ever heard of till the third century, and not till the fourth century was far advanced did it gain much observance. How then, did the Romish Church fix on December the 25th as Christmasday? Why, thus? Long before the fourteenth century, and long before the Christmas era itself, a festival was celebrated among the heathen, at that precise time of the year, in honor of the birth of the son of the Babylonian queen of heaven; and it may be fairly presumed that in order to conciliate the heathen, as well as to swell the number of nominal adherents of Christianity, the same festival was adopted by the Roman Church, giving it only the name of Christ. This tendency on the part of Christians to meet Paganism half-way was very early developed..." "Upright men strove to stem the tide, but in spite of all their efforts, the apostasy went on, till the Church, with the exception of a small remnant, was submerged under Pagan superstition. That Christmas is a Pagan festival is true beyond all doubt. The time of the year, and the ceremonies with which it is celebrated, prove its origin." - Hislop. *The Two Babylons*, pp. 91-93. From the Bible records we compute that Jesus was born about the middle of October. The facts are given in the gospel by St. Luke, the beloved physician. We quote the records: "There was in the days of Herod, the king of Judea, a certain priest named Zacharias, of the course of Abia (or, Abijah): and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elisabeth." - Luke 1:5. Zacharias, being a descendant of Abijah, would serve in the course of his forefather in the priesthood, which was in the eighth course, as we learn from I Chron. 24:7-19. There were twenty-four courses of priests who served in the house of the Lord. Two courses served in each month. One course in the first half of the month, and the other course in the last half of the month. Zacharias being of the eighth course would, consequently, serve the last half of the fourth month. Bible months begin with the "New Moons." See I Sam. 20:24,27. The first month of the year begins with the New Moon nearest spring Equinox, when days and nights are

equal. Ex. 12:2; Lev. 23:5-11. The first Bible month, Nisan, would therefore begin about the last half of March, and contain the first half of April, the second month April and May, the third May and June, the fourth June and July. Zacharias, therefore, serving in his course, which was the eighth, would be at his duty the first half of the month we call July. While Zacharias was in the temple and "executed the priest's office before God in the order of his course, (that is the eighth)....there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord....But the angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elisabeth shall bear thee a son...And it came to pass, that as soon as his days... were accomplished, he departed to his own house. And after those days his wife Elisabeth conceived..." - Luke 1:24. Elisabeth, therefore, conceived sometime about the middle of July. Six months later would therefore be the middle of January, as one may readily count. "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, To a virgin....And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favour with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS." - Luke 1:26-31. As this announcement was made, unto Mary in the sixth month of Elisabeth's pregnancy, which began about the middle of July, it would therefore be about the middle of January. Nine months later would bring us to the middle of October. This then would be the approximate time of the birth of Jesus, and not December 25th. Should we therefore celebrate Christ's birthday in October? No! There is not one word in the Bible which says we should observe the birth of Christ. Nowhere in all the Scriptures do we find the word Christmas. God would not have us celebrate the birth of Christ, but rather the day of His death.

Inasmuch as we find no command in the Scriptures to authorize us to observe Christmas, and as the day is not mentioned in the Bible, from whence did the day come and how came it to be observed as the birthday of Christ? If an unabridged Webster, or Standard Dictionary, or an unabridged encyclopedia, or a good book on mythology, is consulted, it will be quickly learned that the 25th of December was celebrated by pagans centuries before the birth of Christ, and today is observed by practically every heathen religion under heaven. Christmas, like all other heathen feast days still retained in the churches of our day, came from Babylon. After the Flood of Noah's day,

there lived a very wicked man named Nimrod, a great-grandson of Noah, and the founder of ancient Babylon. This man was so evil that it is said he married his own mother, who bare a child to him. His mother's name was Semiramis. After Nimrod's death, Satan used his wicked mother to propagate the evil doctrine of the survival of Nimrod as a spirit being. Semiramis claimed that a full grown evergreen tree sprang overnight from a dead tree stump, which symbolized the springing forth unto new life of dead Nimrod. She also claimed that on each anniversary of his death, Nimrod would visit the evergreen tree and leave gifts thereon. This then is the origin of the Christmas tree. The 25th of December is supposed to be really the birthday of Nimrod. Santa Claus is but another form of the name St. Nicholas, and reliable reference books explain that Old Nick is a term for the devil. The Chaldean mysteries founded by Semiramis have come down to us through the pagan religions, into the Catholic church, and from thence many accept them without question, and observe them according to the custom of the day. We shall now give certain references gleaned from reliable encyclopedias, which confirm our conclusions just given. First, we quote from The New Standard Encyclopedia's article, Christmas: "Among the Romans certain practices were adopted from another pagan feast in honor of the birth of the Sun, or Sol." "The prejudice against Christmas observance, as too strongly tinged with the heathen traditions, was so strong in Scotland that, until recently, children in Presbyterian families had no Christmas. Even yet it is not a popular holiday in Scotland."

"The custom of making presents at Christmas time is associated with the gifts presented to Christ by the wise men of the East: but, in reality, at least so far as English speaking people are concerned, it is derived from an old heathen usage." "Many of the usages of the Germans and Romans were adopted from heathenism to Christianity." From The Encyclopedia Britannica, Edition 1910, Article Christmas, we glean the following: "Before the 5th century there was no general consensus of opinion as to when it should come in the calendar, whether on the 6th of January, the 25th of March, or the 25th of December." "In Britain, the 25th of December was a festival long before the conversion to Christianity." "The 25th of December, the day that was observed at Rome as the day when the victorious god reappeared on the earth, was held at the Natalis invicti solis, 'the birthday of the unconquered Sun.'

Now the yule log is the dead stock of Nimrod, deified as, the sun-god, but cut down by his enemies; the Christmas-tree is Nimrod redivivus-the slain god come to life again." -Hislop, pp. 98. "In many countries the boar was sacrificed to the god (Nimrod) for the injury a boar was fabled to have done him." "On Christmas-day the Continental Saxons offered a boar in sacrifice to the Sun." "In Rome a similar observance had evidently existed; for a boar formed the great article at the feast of Saturn." "Hence the boar's head is still a standing dish in England at the Christmas dinner, when the reason of it is long since forgotten." Idem, pp. 99-101. "Even where the sun was the favorite object of worship, as in Babylon itself and elsewhere, at this festival he was worshipped not merely as the orb of day, but as god incarnate. It was an essential principle of the Babylonian system, that the Sun or Baal was the one and only god. When, therefore, Tammuz was worshipped as god incarnate, that implied also that he was an incarnation of the Sun. In the Hindu mythology, which is admitted to be essentially Babylonian, this comes out very distinctly. There, Surya, or the Sun, is represented as being incarnate, and born for the purpose of subduing the enemies of the gods, who, without such a birth, could not have been subdued." -Idem, p.96. "The wassailing bowl of Christmas had its precise counterpart in the 'Drunken festival' of Babylon; and many of the other observances still kept up among ourselves at Christmas came from the very same quarter. The candles, in some parts of England, lighted on Christmas-eve, and used so long as the festive season lasts, were equally lighted by the Pagans on the eve of the festival of the Babylonian god, to do honour to him: for it was one of the distinguishing peculiarities of his worship to have lighted wax candles on his altars. The Christmas tree, now so common to people, was equally common in Pagan Rome and pagan Egypt. In Egypt that tree was the palm-tree; in Rome it was the fir; the palm-tree denoting the Pagan Messiah, was Baal-Tamar, the fir referring to him as Baal-Berith. The mother of Adonis, the Sun-God and great mediatorial divinity, was mystically said to have been changed into a tree, and when in that state to have brought forth her divine son. If the mother was a tree, the son must have been recognized as the 'Man the branch.' And this accounts entirely for the putting of the Yule Log into the fire on Christmas-eve, and the appearance of the Christmas-tree the next morning." -Idem, p.97. "There can be

no doubt, then, that the Pagan festival at the winter solstice--in other words, Christmas--was held in honour of the birth of the Babylonian Messiah." -Idem, p. 102. Thus we learn from these encyclopedias and reliable writers the fact that the 25th of December, is not a Christian holy day, but, on the contrary, a pagan feast day adopted and retained by the churches to our present day. Those who follow the custom of observing Christmas, follow not the Bible, but pagan ceremonies. Of accepting and observing the manners of the heathen, the prophet of the Lord is very explicit, as he denounces the practice in words which cannot be misunderstood. We quote about the well loved Christmas tree: "Thus saith the LORD, Learn not the way of the heathen....For the customs of the people are vain: (useless, foolish) for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; (or, as in our day with artificial silver and gold, or tinsel) they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not." -Jer. 10:2-4. The propagation of Christmas with all its heathen practices, is pagan and harmful. Those who accept and observe the ancient pagan holiday should heed the admonition of the Lord Jesus Himself, who said: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9). We trust that each truth-seeker will seek out of the Bible, not only the heathen practice of Christmas, but also other pagan rites and ceremonies and days, such as sprinkling, Easter, Sunday, etc., which have crept into the churches of today. Verify our references from the reliable books we have given, or others you may have at hand. Be among those who prove all things, and hold fast to those which are good.

THE SABBATH

"And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made" (Genesis 2:3).

Last week we considered the Ten Commandments and found them to be still in force according to the Bible. In fact, Jesus Himself told the man in Matthew 19:16-19 to keep the Ten Commandments if he wanted eternal life.

In view of this, isn't it strange that only part of this law that God explicitly commands us to remember is the part that most professing Christians want to forget? It is equally strange how flimsy and shallow are the reasons advanced by scholars promoting the change of the Sabbath to Sunday worship.

After presenting the Sabbath, its origin, purpose and importance in an excellent manner, The New Bible Dictionary by J. D. Douglas explains the change of the Sabbath as follows: "On the first day of the week the Lord rose from the dead, and the Christians began to assemble on that day for worship of the risen Christ. This day is the Lord's Day, and as such is the sabbath which God had instituted at creation. The commands regarding it have never been abrogated. It belongs to God, not to the pleasure of man; it is for the benefit and blessing of man, and that blessing is obtained by a resting on the sabbath from all one's regular toil" (J. D. Douglas, The New Bible Dictionary, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.: Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1975, p.1111).

This is typical of the way most scholars treat this subject. They give no Biblical instruction or example as to why it was changed. They simply state that it was in honor of Christ's resurrection. We realize that Jesus was not resurrected on Sunday, but even if this were true, it would not be reason to change a command of God.

Notice that they want to bring the rules and principals of the Sabbath over to Sunday. He even makes it the Sabbath of creation. How well Jesus described this when He said, "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).

This law was written with the finger of God and given to Moses intact. It should stand or fall as a whole. Most churches attempt to abolish the Sabbath while retaining the other nine. But in the absence of a direct command from God we must recognize them as a whole. We cannot arbitrarily pick and choose from God's Word and reject what we dislike. It is His place to command and our place to simply obey.





GOD....., AND FISH

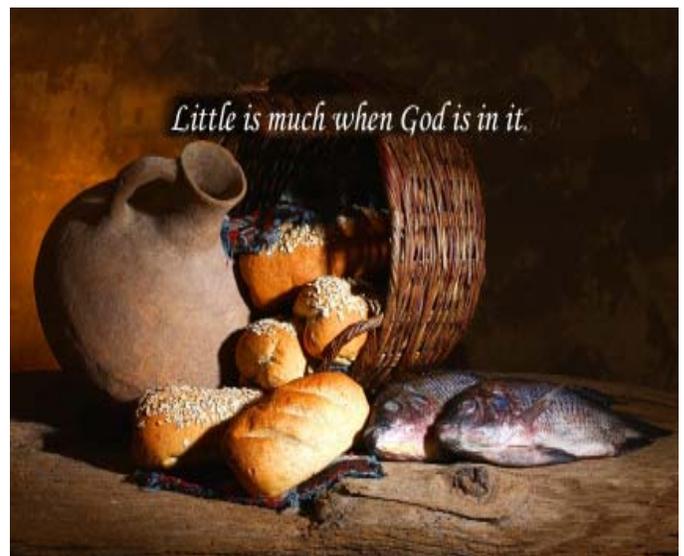
*The stories God tells in the Bible
Are a bit strange, but always are true;
He uses a fish for a message
To deliver to just me and you.*

*The first is the tale of poor Jonah,
God had given him a hard task to perform;
He must warn the great city of Nineveh,
That their sinning was causing them harm.
After three days and nights in that dark place,
Jonah came to a new point of view;
It would be better to obey God in the first place,
Which now he was willing to do.
The fish had tried hard to digest him,
Then off to the shore it did swim;
And spit Jonah out onto dry ground,
Very glad to be rid of him!*

*When the time came to choose his disciples,
Christ's steps led to the sea shore, and then,
"Follow me", he told the two fishermen,
"And I'll make you the fishers of men!"
There was time when He fed the 5,000,
And numbered only the men;
There were also the wives and children,
Which more than doubled it again.
He was told there were two little fishes
And five small loaves was what they had;
He blessed the food and then broke it,
And all of the people were glad.
And later he fed four thousand,
Repeating the miracle again;
The people had all that they wanted,
All the women, and children, and men.*

*It was a wonderful miracle,
And even for all thy might wish;
God had proven that "all things are possible",
By using a few little fish!
Then there is the tale of two fishermen
Who had labored the whole night long;
Not one tiny fish had they taken,
It seemed they'd done everything wrong!
"Go out into deeper water",
Are the words that Jesus spoke;
They then gathered in so many fishes
Their net was beginning to break!
And again, two of his disciples
Had labored all night with their net;
Seeing no gain from their labors,
Not one fish had they managed to get.
When they heard Jesus speak from the sea shore,
"Drop your nets down the right side of the boat";
It was immediately filled with great fishes,
So heavy the boat couldn't float!
Then they dragged their net to the sea shore,
And in utter amazement did see
After counting the great fish they had taken
There lay one hundred fifty and three!
This poem turned out longer than I had intended,
So I'll now put an end to these tales;
So before "fish" come to your table,
First make sure they have fins AND scales.*

--Betty Whetstone



RUTH SPOKE

Reprinted

Ruth the Moabitess had been very silent up to this moment. She had silently shown her love for God and Naomi in many ways. She had gone to the border of the land of Judah with her mother-in-law. She had shown respect to her mother-in-law by quietly listening to all she had to say. She had kissed Naomi, showing her love for her, and, last of all, she had cleaved to her, demonstrating her utter devotion to her. Now she speaks.

We read of another in Scripture who waited for others to speak, then poured out his heart. Elihu spoke after Job's three miserable comforters had heaped upon Job their words, and after Job himself had answered them. We read in Job 32:4-6, "Now Elihu had waited till Job had spoken, because they were elder than he ... And Elihu the son of Barachel the Buzite answered and said, I am young, and ye are very old; wherefore I was afraid, and durst not shew you mine opinion."

There is a great lesson in this particular portion of the Book of Ruth for young people. God works through young people in marvelous ways when they obey His commands to the very last letter. There are instances when God has revealed His secrets and plans to young people, and He has chosen them to speak to multitudes older than they. But these same young people have had to do what Ruth and Elihu and Moses and Joseph and Daniel and Solomon and David and Timothy did--learn from their youth to silently endure the wrongs, or shall we say rather, the domineering rights of their elders.

Think of Joseph, hated because God's blessing was upon him. For years he silently endured the cruel treatment his elder brothers had brought upon him. He did not vindicate when the wife of his master wrongfully accused him. He did not complain when he was in subjection to the keeper of the prison. And what was his testimony in the end? "Ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good."

Then think, too, of David. When yet a lad he was eyed by overbearing Saul, and he had to escape for his life. And why all the cruel treatment? "Saul was afraid of David because the Lord was with him." What was David's testimony? The equivalent to the New Testament's "Rebuke not an elder" -- "But I would not stretch forth mine hand against the Lord's anointed."

We could go on and on pointing out various characters in the Word of God who had silently endured many wrongs in their youth. But we rejoice at the latter end of their lives. It speaks of victory. Now Ruth was silent up to this moment. She was not enduring any wrongs inflicted upon her by her mother-in-law, but she was listening to her discouraging words to go back. It was not Naomi's intention to discourage Ruth, but to strengthen her determination if she really meant that she wanted to go.

You know, it is strange that hard things, discouraging events, disappointments, and often things that tend to turn one from a determination, are the very things that strengthen that determination if it is of the Lord! It is thrilling to see God work that way. We say we love the Lord with all our hearts. We tell Him so. But God wants more than our lip service. If we meant what we said with all our hearts, He is going to test us to see if we are true. If through a heart-rending test we are not brought into a sweeter fellowship with the Lord, and live closer to Him than ever before, then we were not telling the truth when we said we loved the Lord. If any test that comes into your life tends to make you want to avoid quiet times with the Lord, or causes you to lose interest in gospel meetings, then your heart is not right in God's sight. Look back in your life and see if there was not a time when you said you loved the Lord. He tested you and proved that what you said was not true. You really loved yourself and your interests more than you loved Him and the things of God.

After silently listening to her mother-in-law, finally Ruth speaks. She pours out her heart. She begs her mother-in-law to let her not leave her. "...Whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God" (Ruth 1:16). Notice her determined "I wills." "Where you go, I will go. Where you live I will live." Nothing can change the mind of one truly in tune with God. No matter what hardship was coming to Naomi, Ruth was ready for it too. Over land or sea, wherever Naomi went, Ruth would be following in her footsteps. If Naomi was to live in a shack, so would Ruth.

Ruth was not only willing to be with Naomi, but she was willing to call herself an Israelite, or become an adopted daughter. She was willing to become closely connected with the foreign nation. Then she said, "...Thy God [shall be] my God." Now she embraced the whole of Naomi's life. "Thy God"-- the one who has allowed

these strange, trying tests and trials to come into Naomi's life, the same one who had permitted heartaches, tears, and affliction-- "thy God." There must have been something strangely sweet about Naomi's life to cause the young girl Ruth to want the same God who had dealt "bitterly" with her (verse 20).

Have you ever met a strangely sweet, mysteriously powerful child of God? Did you ever think of the experiences he had passed through? Did you ever hear about the "bitter" experiences that drew him close to the Lord? If you love God with all your heart, you will find, too, that you dearly love this one who has been dealt with "bitterly," and you will find yourself saying, "Thy God my God."



BIBLICAL PROTEIN

Some time ago, an article appeared in one of the atheist journals ridiculing the idea that men such as John the Baptist and Samson could live on a diet of locusts. The question is whether eating locusts and honey is unwise nutritionally and medically (not to mention aesthetically). I never had an answer to that allegation until I came across an article concerning medical research on the subject.

It turns out that the protein content of all insects, especially locusts, is very high. Locusts and grasshoppers have over three times as much protein as chicken and fish and over four times as much as pork and lamb. Beef is more than three times lower in protein than locusts. Among insects, the protein content of locusts is very high. For example, locust protein content is three times as rich as ant protein.

So that seems to settle the question of biblical protein. From a nutritional standpoint, I would have to say there was great wisdom in eating locusts. I cannot comment on the flavor, but for the time being, I suspect McDonald's will stick with hamburgers.

From "Does God Exist?"

Let Your Heart Be Singleminded

By David DeLong

Let your heart be singleminded,
Let your face be set as flint;
When it comes to living for the Lord,
Show more than just a hint.

Give your all unto Lord Jesus,
And hold back no part at all;
Be fully faithful to your Lord,
Be faithful to your call.

Let your heart be singleminded,
Let your hands be full of use;
In the battles for the Lord God
Let there be no faithless truce.

In this war for consecration,
May we true be ever found;
Let us fight as heroes always fight
When giving up no ground!

Open Rebuke

"Open rebuke is better than secret love. Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful" (Proverbs 27:5-6). All of us want to be liked and loved by others, and very few of us, if any, enjoy being rebuked by another. But let us always remember that the wounds of a friend are more beneficial to us than someone who tries to "kiss up" to us. The person who does that is actually an enemy to us. He, or she, is being like Judas Iscariot who kissed Jesus at the same time he was betraying Him.

Sometimes a rebuke, done in love, is exactly what a person needs. Sometimes it is exactly what we need. Jesus used rebuke against a person, or persons, as a last resort when nothing else would work. He used the method of rebuking the scribes and Pharisees at least eight times in Matthew chapter 23. The scribes and Pharisees would not accept the message of Jesus, so He lovingly rebuked them for their sins. The Apostle Jude wrote: "And of some have compassion, making a difference: And others save with fear, pulling them out of the fire; hating even the garment spotted by the flesh" (Jude 1:22-23).

Conscience Sake

By David DeLong

"And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:16). This was the goal of the Apostle Paul: "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men." This also needs to be the goal of every child of God. But, sadly, it appears not to be the goal of some. There are some "children" of God who try to soothe their consciences so that anything they do is acceptable to them.

The development of a good conscience should start very early in a child's life. Thus, it is of the utmost importance that parents do their best to instill in their children a very good concept of right and wrong based upon the teachings of the Bible. It appears that Timothy was well taught by his mother and grandmother. II Timothy 1:5 tells us: "When I (Paul) call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also."

Sometimes our conscience will allow us to do something which may be against another person's conscience. Paul addresses one such issue in I Corinthians 8:4-13: "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice unto idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or in earth, (as there be gods many, and lords many,) But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him. Howbeit there is not in every man that knowledge: for some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered unto an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. But

take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend."

If a person goes against his or her conscience long enough, then that person's conscience can become seared, or hardened. We read in I Timothy 4:1-2: "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; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron". We are given explicit admonition in Hebrews 3:7-13: "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Conscience is one guide that the Lord has given to us so that we can live holy and righteous lives. May we ever be, like the Apostle Paul, living with a conscience void of offense.

The Gospel Of Christ

By David DeLong

The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatians: "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Galatians 1:6-9).

The Galatians were apparently having a hard time understanding what the gospel message was that Paul preached to them. Perhaps there are some today who are struggling with the concept of the gospel as well. Let us turn to the passage of Scripture where Paul gives a clear and concise description of the gospel message.

This passage, where the gospel is spelled out, is contained in I Corinthians 15: 1-8: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

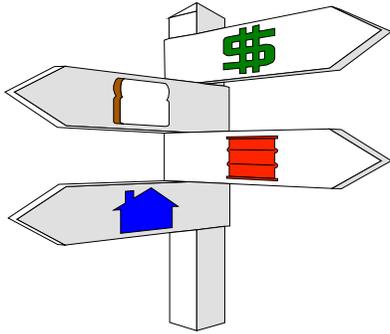
Notice how simple the gospel message is according to Paul: (1.) Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures (2.) And that he was buried (3.) and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. Then He was witnessed as being alive by hundreds of brethren, including Paul.

Notice that Paul does not mention anything about our

keeping the law of God in the "pure" definition of the gospel. There is nothing that a person can do to help save himself from sin. Only the shed blood of Jesus Christ can do that. Ephesians 2:8-9 gives us more light on this: "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." However, the keeping of God's law must be preached alongside of the gospel message to show us what sin is. I John 3:4 reads: "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

Next, it should be observed that Jesus was buried (in a tomb). He was not cremated, nor was His body left on the cross. Christ's being buried is a part of the gospel message that Paul preached. Perhaps this was emphasized because it fulfilled prophecy. Isaiah 53:9 tells us: "And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth." Third, Jesus rose again from the grave on the third day. The third day perhaps is emphasized because Jesus said this was the only sign that He would give concerning His Messiahship. In Matthew 12:38-40 we read: "Then certain of the scribes and of the Pharisees answered, saying, Master, we would see a sign from thee. But he answered and said unto them, An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas: For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

That appears to be the essence of the gospel message. Yes, it must be told also that Jesus was witnessed alive by a number of His disciples for proof of His resurrection. But the three points that Paul preached concerning Jesus seem to be the message of the gospel. We must not add or detract from this simple message or we could end up being accursed like Paul warned the Galatian brethren.



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.

FLYING CARS

I read that flying cars might be closer than we think. Sometime ago we featured that inexpensive helicopters that take people above the fray of traffic congestion is on the horizon. We have often seen flying cars in the comic pages.

STILL RECOVERING

Some still feel the blow of the Great Recession. The following is a portion of an article from **USA Today**. “There have been many advances, but they are uneven. Older, college educated, white and higher-earning individuals have recovered the best, while the financial fortunes of younger people, lower earners, those with no college degree and African-Americans improved more slowly.

“We’ve seen an impressive recovery on important measures, but certain groups continue to struggle,” says Gerri Walsh, senior vice president of investor education at FINRA. “We’re entering into a new normal where even as the economy improves, financial capability is not keeping pace for all Americans.”

CHILDHOOD POVERTY

A report on childhood well-being shows that the number of children living in poverty has swelled over the past three decades in fast-growing, ethnically diverse states such as Texas, Arizona and Nevada as the nation’s population center shifts south and west.

MASS SHOOTINGS

According to a newspaper article, there were 251 mass shootings in just 216 days. The most recent two have been in Dayton, Ohio and El Paso, Texas. The Dayton incident left at least nine dead and more than two dozen

injured.

The second mass shooting was at a Walmart in El Paso, Texas. It was crammed with people who were doing school shopping. This incident left 20 dead and 26 injured.

A CHRISTIAN NIGHTCLUB

The following is an article entitled *Church takes its lounge act to a higher degree* that appeared in the **Houston Chronicle**:

On the first Friday of the month, God Encounter Church transforms to become a whole different type of religious experience.

The lighting dims. Lounge tables pop up. Singers and poets gather near the microphone. The church located at 12423 Cutten, shifts gears and essentially becomes a nightclub.

Unlike other clubs, however, Shift Christian Lounge centers on faith and fellowship.

“We need to be able to create different avenues so that people can serve God, have fun and be themselves,” founder and pastor Tony Ervin said. “This is an environment where you can come in and relax – and be out at night.”

The idea for a religion-themed nightclub came from his time in Orlando, Fla., Ervin explained.

“Christian lounges are big there, he said. “When I came here, I thought, maybe we should give it a try and see how people respond.”

Marcus Sullivan, a deejay and radio host of a morning Christian hip-hop show on 91.7 FM, was one of the first people tapped to become a part of the event.

Ervin called and recruited him as a host and emcee for

the night.

At first, when he heard about the new venue, he couldn't totally envision it. "Once I pulled up, I could feel the energy of the lounge," he said. "And there's entertainment that's really good, professional singers, poets,"

Just like a regular club, Sullivan ended up staying until 1 a.m. "And I had an amazing time," he said. "I'm sold on it."

Houston needed a space like this, he added. He can imagine the list of performers growing as they discover the opportunity. He does not know of any other platforms dedicated to Christian artists.

"It's just not being done," Sullivan said. "We had Christian hip-hop artists headlining, spoken word and even a mime. We had everything. It brought our faith. It brought out friends. It brought out fun."

He said having a safe space for faith, open at night, was popular with his friends and listeners.

Christians do exactly the same thing that secular people do," he said. "Christians go to the Texans game. They go to concerts. They go to clubs."

Younger Christians are looking for a new way to connect with new friends around their faith, Ervin said. "When you come to God, you shouldn't lose your identity," he said. "You just change worlds." Shift Christian lounge seeks to fill that void. The grand opening, the first Friday in June, was well attended.

"Slowly, it's building a buzz," Ervin said.

When people saw Sullivan's social-media posts about the June event, they wanted to go to the following occasion. "The morning after, I woke up to dozens of comments," he recalled. "People were saying, 'this is fresh. This is dope. This looks awesome.'"

From his experience, Sullivan is certain that the concept will catch on. "People will fall in love with it," he said. "I think that it's going to be huge."

And he believes the idea came right in time. "The name says everything," he said. "A shift in culture needs to happen. We can't do the same old thing and get the

same results."

That's what Ervin wanted to do – to help pull younger generations back to the church.

"It came about because I wanted to create an atmosphere for millennials," he said. "We have a lot of millennials walking away from the church. The elders are preaching the same thing, to come to where we are. We need to go and meet them where they are. That's what Jesus did. He met us where we're at."

Tickets for each event are available online and at the door. Proceeds go to the performing artists and to keep the lounge in business.

Ervin said if the demand rises for more frequent gatherings, he'll head back to the drawing board.

Sullivan has a hunch that this is the beginning of something that can gain greater momentum in Houston. "It's a night out," he said. "It's a date night. It's a social event. It's a networking event."

Comment

This article gives forth something for every Christian to consider. Why must a Christian follow the way of the world in order to connect with others of faith? There are some interesting things brought out in this article.

Let us quote a portion of this article, "Christians do exactly the same thing that secular people do." "Christians go to the Texans game. They go to concerts. They go to clubs."

"Younger Christians are looking for a way to connect with new friends around their faith, Ervin said. When you come to God, you shouldn't lose your identity," he said. "You just change worlds."

Let us analyze this quote. First, Christians do not do exactly the same thing that secular people do. Jesus expects his followers to be different than secular people. Most of all, Christians do not go to night clubs.

Second, the best way to connect with friends about faith is by word of mouth and love.

Third, when one comes to God, he must lose his own identity as an old man of sin and put on his new identity as a new man following our Lord Jesus Christ.

BIBLE

Study



Question: Do you believe that Jesus was a carpenter? Is it possible that He was a mason?

Answer: In the King James Version, Jesus is referred to by His countrymen as a carpenter and the son of a carpenter. See Mark 6:3 and Matthew 13:55.

Some Bible teachers observe there is little wood in modern-day Israel. This makes them speculate that Jesus was really a stonemason by trade. They say that someone called a “builder” in a land of wood houses would be a carpenter, but a “builder” in a land of stone houses, like Palestine, would be a mason.

This is speculation, but it is not supported by the Greek text. Scholars agree that the Greek word used to describe Jesus’ trade is not the general word for builder, but the specific word for a craftsman in wood.

All modern English translations reaffirm the King James Version.

Question: Will you please explain Matthew 12:31-32?

Answer: Matthew 12:31-32 reads, “Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost (Spirit) shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost,

Questions

and

Answers

(Spirit) it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.”

Matthew 12:31-32 has to do with sinning against the Holy Spirit. Those who claim that the Holy Spirit is the third person in a trinity of which the Father and the Son are the other two, and all co-equal in power and authority, would have a hard time explaining this statement by Jesus. He says that while sin against Himself would be forgiven, sin against the Holy Spirit would not be forgiven. This disproves the absolute equality of the Holy Spirit and the Son of God. When we understand what the Holy Spirit is and the circumstances under which these words of Jesus were spoken, all is clear, harmonious, logical and satisfying.

In the context of our opening Scripture, we are told of one of Jesus’ miracles when a man was brought to Him “...possessed with a devil, blind, and dumb both spake and saw” (Matthew 12:22). The people who witnessed this miracle were properly “amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?” (Matthew 12:23). To those Israelites, the “son of David” was the promised Messiah. When they saw, through Jesus, the exercise of what they knew must have been divine power, they were convinced that He was indeed the great one whom the God of Israel had promised to send. In their simplicity of mind and humbleness of heart, they were glad to acknowledge the truth when it was so conclusively demonstrated to them.

This was not so with the Pharisees. When they “heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils” (verse 24). These Pharisees, in their hardness of heart, refused to accept the logical explanation of what they had witnessed. They

had seen the power of God--the Holy Spirit of God--manifested in the casting out of a devil from this afflicted man. However, they were ready and willing to deny the facts, closing their minds to the reality of what had happened.

This was the background of Jesus' statement in our text. By it, Jesus implied that the Pharisees, in denying the truth of what they had clearly witnessed, had set themselves in opposition to the Holy Spirit of God. Indeed, as He said, they had blasphemed against the Holy Spirit in that they had charged that its good work was in reality the work of the devil. Such a sin, Jesus said, could not be forgiven, neither in this world or age, nor in the age to come.

This account highlights the fact that the Holy Spirit is simply the holy power of God by which He accomplishes all His good purposes. In this instance, it was exercised through the Master in ridding this afflicted man of the "devil" which was causing him to be blind and dumb, and restoring him to health. It was a miraculous demonstration of divine power. The exercise of divine power is always miraculous in the sense that our finite minds are unable to understand it. However, to deny its accomplishments is a sin which God does not overlook.

Why is it that sin against the Holy Spirit cannot be forgiven? In a broad sense it is sin against light, against knowledge. In the case of the Pharisees, there was a chance that they could misunderstand Jesus' teachings. After all, while He spoke as never man spoke, their conception of Him had to be based upon His words. No fault could be found with Jesus' "gracious words." In the imperfection and prejudice of the Pharisees, they could nonetheless have misunderstood the meaning of what He said. This, Jesus indicated, could be forgiven, but to distort the meaning of the miracle-working power of the Holy Spirit was not ignorantly done. It was a willful sin, so could not be forgiven. They had sinned against what they knew to be right.

This principle is seen in God's dealings with Saul of Tarsus, who afterward became the Apostle Paul. Saul was a bitter opponent of the Christian cause. With what he believed to be righteous hatred, he persecuted the early believers. While on the way to Damascus to conduct more persecution, he was struck down to earth by a

blinding light shining above the brightness of the sun at noonday. He heard a voice speak to him, saying, "...Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" (Acts 9:4) The voice explained, "...I am Jesus whom thou persecutest..." (verse 5).

It was in all good conscience that Saul had been opposing Christ and the Christian cause. Now, though, given a demonstration of the power of God informing him that Jesus truly was the Christ of promise, it dramatically changed his whole outlook. Had he been like the Pharisees, he might have insisted that the devil was trying to interfere with his work. He might have even more zealously tried to stamp out the heresy of the Nazarene, Jesus, and continued on to Damascus to complete his mission of persecution. However, Saul's heart was right. He accepted the logic of events that had occurred, was convinced, and gladly entered into the service of the Messiah whom previously he had been persecuting.

Paul had been a "blasphemer" and a "persecutor." He had done great injury to the brethren in Christ, but he had not blasphemed against the Holy Spirit. His sin was against Christ, whom he did not know. He had sinned "ignorantly" and in "unbelief" so mercy was extended unto him. This was great mercy indeed, for he was forgiven and exalted to the high position of an apostle in the church. The situation would have been different if, when that great demonstration of power which he characterized as a "vision" was given to him, he had been "disobedient" to it. This would have been an unforgivable sin.

Question: What are the three types of fasting?

Answer: The Absolute Fast – This is a fast in which the one fasting abstains from both food and drink. Such fasting is an exceptional form and is used for only critical situations. See Deuteronomy 9:9, 18; Exodus 34:28; I Kings 19:5-8; Ezra 10:6; Acts 9:9.

The Normal Fast – This is the most common type of fast. In this type of fast, all foods are avoided, though water is taken.

The Partial Fast – The only illustration of this fast is Daniel. For 21 days he abstained from every "tasty food, nor did meat or wine enter his mouth" (Daniel 10:3). On this type of fast, all desirable foods, meats and special drinks are avoided.



The Congo, Africa

Apostle Henry Miroro with the Board of Seven in the Congo.





Gatherings of folks in the Congo.



LESSON I

LESSON II

RUTH GLEANS IN THE FIELD OF BOAZ

MARRIAGE OF RUTH AND BOAZ

Scripture Reading: Ruth 2:1-23.

Golden Text: Ruth 2:8.

"Then said Boaz unto Ruth, Hearest thou not, my daughter? Go not to glean in another field, neither go from hence, but abide here fast by my maidens".

NOTE: In our last lesson, we learned that Naomi, her husband, and two sons dwelt in the land of Moab. After the death of her husband and sons, she and Ruth, her daughter-in-law, returned to Bethlehem to live.

1. Where did Ruth work after she returned to Bethlehem? Ruth 2:1-3.
2. Did Boaz see Ruth in the field and ask who she was? Ruth 2:4-6.
3. What did Boaz tell Ruth to do? Ruth 2;8-9.
4. When Ruth asked Boaz why she had found favor in his sight, what was his reply? Ruth 2:10-12.
5. What did Boaz command his young men to do for Ruth? Ruth 2:15-17.
6. Who did Naomi tell Ruth Boaz was? Ruth 2:20-22.
7. Did Ruth continue to glean in the field until the end of the barley harvest? Ruth 2:23.

Answers to Crossword Puzzle - Across - page 23.

- | | | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|-----------|
| 1. honey | 2. owe | 5. nest | 7. Esther |
| 8. st | 11. on | 12. out | 13. end |
| 15. Eden | 17. he | 19. leg | 20. Aven |
| 21. ever | 22. to | 23. or | 24. and |
| 26. toe | 27. wrote | 28. re | |
| 30. yea | 32. see | 3. If | |

Scripture Reading: Ruth 4:1-18.

Golden Text: Ruth 4:13.

"So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son."

NOTE: We learned in our last lesson how Ruth met Boaz, while she was gleaning in the field. In chapter 3, you may read about the courtship of Boaz and Ruth. Their marriage led to the formation of the family that was to produce the Saviour.

1. When Boaz went up to the gate, whom did he meet? Ruth 4:1.
2. How many of the elders of the city sat with them? Ruth 4:2.
3. What did Boaz say to the kinsman? Ruth 4:3-5.
4. Could the kinsman redeem the inheritance? Ruth 4:6.
5. What was the custom in Israel concerning redeeming and changing? Ruth 4:7.
6. What did the kinsman tell Boaz to do, and did Boaz comply? Ruth 4:8-9.
7. Did Boaz take Ruth for his wife? Ruth 4:10-13.
8. Ruth bore a son by Boaz. What was his name, and who was his nurse? Ruth 4:16-17.

Answers to Crossword Puzzle - Down - page 23.

- | | | | | |
|------------|-----------|-----------|--------|---------|
| 1. honest | 3. owest | 4. nest | 6. ye | 9. thou |
| 10. enter | 12. order | 14. nor | 15. Ed | |
| 16. eleven | 18. niger | 19. laver | 24. is | 25. now |
| | 29. eye | 31. seek | | |

LESSON III

THE BIRTH OF SAMUEL

Scripture Reading: I Samuel 1:1-28.

Golden Text: I Samuel 1:20.

"Wherefore it came to pass, when the time was come about after Hannah had conceived, that she bare a son, and called his name Samuel, saying, Because I have asked him of the LORD."

NOTE: We have finished the study of Naomi, Ruth and Boaz. Now we will study about another young child, Samuel, and how he was used of the Lord as a prophet.

1. Who was Hannah, and what was her husband's name? I Samuel 1:1-2.

NOTE: Hannah's husband loved her very much, but she was unable to have children.

2. Did it grieve Hannah because she could not have any children? I Samuel 1:8-10.

3. What was the vow which Hannah made to the Lord in her prayer? I Samuel 1:11.

4. What did Eli, the priest, think was wrong with Hannah as she uttered her prayer to the Lord? I Samuel 1:13-15.

5. What did Eli then tell her to do? I Samuel 1:17.

6. Did the Lord answer Hannah's plea to Him? I Samuel 1:18-19.

7. What did Hannah do when Samuel was old enough to be weaned? I Samuel 1:24-28.

NOTE: God gave Hannah a child, and in return Hannah kept her promise to God. It is important to remember that we should also keep any promises that we make to God. God always keeps His promises.

LESSON IV

SAMUEL'S MINISTRY

Scripture Reading: I Samuel 2:1-36.

Golden Text: I Samuel 2:26.

"And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men."

NOTE: In our last lesson, we learned about the birth of Samuel, and how he was dedicated to the Lord by his mother. Now we shall study about Samuel's ministry.

1. Let us read again verses 1-8. These are beautiful words of praise by Hannah. Tell about some of the descriptions she gave to God.

2. Eli was a priest of the Lord. Did his sons know the Lord? I Samuel 2:12.

3. What was the priest's custom with the people? I Samuel 2:13-17.

4. Did Samuel minister before the Lord, and what did his mother make for him each year? I Samuel 2:18-19.

5. Did the Lord bless Elkanah and Hannah? I Samuel 2:20-21.

6. The sons of Eli were very wicked as you may read in I Samuel 2:22-24.

7. A man of God came unto Eli, and what did he tell him would happen to his house? I Samuel 2:27-34.

8. Who was to be raised up in this place? I Samuel 2:35-36.

Answers to True or False on page 22.

- 1. True 2. True 3. True 4. False 5. True
- 6. True 7. False 8. False 9. False 10. False
- 11. True 12. False 13. False 14. True
- 15. True

SUSAN'S IDEA

There once lived a small girl named, Susan. God was the head of the house she lived in. Every night Susan's family, including her parents and her sister Sally, sat in the living room while Mother read from the Bible, and Father prayed. They also sang songs of praise. Susan liked these worship services. They made her feel that God was very close to her. She liked to hear the Bible stories especially.

One night, when it was almost time for worship, something happened! A storm came up! The wind blew hard. it blew so hard that the electric light wires were broken down and so the lights were out all over the house. It was very, very dark.

Susan and her brothers and sister Sally had a hard time walking from one room to another. They stumbled over things, and one of her brothers took a tumble before they all found their way into the living room.

Their father's voice spoke from the darkness, "It is too dark for Mother to read a story tonight so we will have a prayer and go to bed."

Susan was very disappointed. "But," she thought, "if it's too dark to see, can't we..." then she had an idea! She groped out into the darkness near where she sat, and finding her mother, whispered something to her.

Mother said, "Of course, Susan!" So Mother and Susan felt their way out of the room. When they came back, Susan had a candle. It was the candle she sometimes used when she went upstairs to bed.

"Now," she exclaimed, "Mother can read us a Bible story!" So Mother read a story before they had prayer.

"...and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah 11:6). Here is spoke of a child leading the beasts in the new kingdom, but a child can lead over people into the ways of God, too, just as Susan found a way to show her love for God and made it possible for the family to hear more about Him.

*TRUE OR FALSE?*

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

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

A WHISPER SONG

*I want to send a whisper song
across the waters blue,
and say to all the children there,
"Jesus loves you! Jesus loves you!"
If they should not quite understand
They'll wonder if it's true;
But I will keep on whispering still,
"Jesus loves you! Jesus loves you!"
"If you want your friends and family to know
what God is like,
Let them see what He can make you like."*

ACROSS

1. The food that John the Baptist ate, besides locusts. Matthew 3:4.
2. _____ no man anything. Romans 13:8.
5. A bird that wandereth from her _____. Proverbs 27:8.
7. The Book of the Bible that follows Nehemiah.
8. The abbreviation of street.
11. Jesus taught in the synagogue _____ the Sabbath. Luke 13:10.
12. Be sure your sin will find you _____. Numbers 32:23.
13. Something that will come after the gospel is preached in all the world. Matthew 24:14.
15. The name of the garden in which the Lord placed Adam. Genesis 2:15.
17. He maketh me to _____ down in green pastures. Psalm 23:2.
19. To make bare the _____. Isaiah 47:2.
20. The young men of what place shall fall by the sword Ezekiel 30:17.
21. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory for _____. Amen. Matthew 6:13.
22. _____ is the prefix of the word (endure) found in Genesis 33:14.
23. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, _____ any likeness of anything. Exodus 20:4.
24. Six days shalt thou labour _____ do all thy work. Exodus 20:9.
26. The children of Israel were to put ram's blood on the great _____ of their right foot. Exodus 29:20.
27. Jesus _____ with his finger on the ground. John 8:6.
28. The prefix of the word recall.
30. Martha said " _____, Lord, I believe that thou art the Christ." John 11:27.
32. When Jesus comes, every eye shall _____ Him, Revelation 1:7.
33. _____ we are Christ, then we are Abraham's seed. Galatians 3:29.

DOWN

1. Seven men of _____ report. Acts 6:3.
3. "Pay me that thou _____." Matthew 18:28.

4. The sparrow found a house and the swallow a _____. Psalm 84:3.
6. Jesus said, " _____ are the salt of the earth," Matthew 5:13.
9. _____ shalt have no other gods before me. Exodus 20:3
10. Jesus said, If thou wilt _____ into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19:17.
12. Thou art a priest for ever after the _____ of Melchizedek. Psalm 11:4.
14. Thou shalt not do any work on the Sabbath, Thou _____ thy son. Exodus 20:10.
15. The children of Reuben and Gad called the altar by what name? Joshua 22:34.
16. Peter stood with the _____ and lifted up his voice. Acts 2:14.
18. Simeon, that was called _____ was in the church at Antioch. Acts 13:1.
19. The Lord told Moses to make what out of brass? Exodus 30:18.
24. The kingdom of God _____ hand. Mark 1:15.
25. Remember _____ thy Creator. Ecclesiastes 12:1.
29. If thine _____ offend thee, pluck it out. Matthew 18:9.
31. _____ and ye shall find. Matthew 7:7.



A CROSSWORD PUZZLE
by Marcille Bartholomew

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ALONG LIFE'S WAY

*Sometimes while sitting alone,
You wonder what is next;
Then you call upon the Lord,
He never does object.*

*He is always present,
Even, when we are not aware;
With His loving care and mercy
He is always there to share.*

*So I put my trust in Him,
And call upon His name;
If we fail to hear Him,
He certainly is not to blame.*

*So live in obedience unto the Lord,
Let Him direct you, along life's way;
Whatever trials you may face,
Victory! Will be yours, each day.*

--Bertha Love

