

A photograph of a mallard duck and her ducklings in a natural setting near a pond. The duck is sitting on a nest of straw and twigs, surrounded by green grass and plants. Several small ducklings are huddled around her. In the background, there is a pond with water reflecting the sky and trees. A green rectangular box is overlaid on the image, containing the text "The Advocate of Truth" in white, italicized font.

*The Advocate of Truth*



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# HIGHER HELP

(an expose on suicide)

By David Royer

My wife Berta was telling me recently about a telephone call that one of her school advisors received from a distraught college student. He said he wanted to withdraw from all scheduled classes because he was depressed, sad, felt hopeless, and was thinking of suicide.

I want to believe that this young man was reaching out for help and was stopped from killing himself with the intervention of psychological counselors. (Academic advisors have a protocol to relay any mental illness concerns to trained counselors).

Recent TV commercials are promoting anti-depressant drugs. It seems our culture sees this as a typical “condition” for some people. Why does a negative thought, such as this young student’s enter one’s mind? How does one overcome such feelings? This following information is an expose on the current status of suicide taken from many internet sources. My wish is that this article makes us more aware of the issues and helps at least one of our readers.

First, we must accept the fact, that suicide is on the rise. According to the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention <https://afsp.org>:

Unknown to most Americans is the fact that the rate of suicide is sharply on the rise and has been over the past decade.

- The annual suicide rate is **13.42 per 100,000** individuals.
- Men die by suicide **3.53x** more often than women.
- On average, there are **123** suicides per day.
- The rate of suicide is **highest in middle age** — white men in particular.
- Currently, suicide is the **10th** leading cause of death in the United States.
- A person dies by suicide about every **12.8** minutes in the United States.

\*There is no single cause to suicide. It most often occurs when stressors exceed current coping abilities of someone suffering from a mental health condition.

\*There are powerful forces in contemporary American society that help to explain the sharply rising suicide rate. These include financial insecurity, health and caregiving fears, a declining belief in the American dream, the threat of terrorism, and constant war since 2001, which have all led to alienation, anger and a sense of powerlessness for many people.

\*Psychology Today <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/wicked-deeds/201502>

As reported in *The New York Times* last year, suicide rates among middle-aged Americans have risen sharply in the past decade, prompting concern that a “generation of baby boomers who have faced years of economic worry and easy access to prescription painkillers may be particularly vulnerable to self-inflicted harm.”

Dr. Ileana Arias, Deputy Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) told *The New York Times* that the rising suicide rate among middle-aged Americans might be due to a series of life and financial circumstances that are unique to the baby boomer generation. Men and women in that age group are often coping with the stress of caring for aging parents while still providing financial and emotional support to adult children.



## GET INVOLVED

You don't have to be a mental health professional to help someone in your life that may be struggling. Learn the following Suicide Prevention Lifeline's five steps that you can use to help a friend or loved one that may be in crisis; (<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org>)

1. **BeThe1To Ask:** Ask the tough question. When somebody you know is in emotional pain, ask them directly: "Are you thinking about killing yourself?"
2. **BeThe1To Keep Them Safe:** Is your friend thinking about suicide? Ask if they've thought about how they would do it and separate them from anything they could use to hurt themselves.
3. **BeThe1To Be There:** If your friend is thinking about suicide, Listen to their reasons for feeling hopeless and in pain. Listen with compassion and empathy and without dismissing or judging.
4. **BeThe1To Help Them Connect:** Help your friend connect to a support system, whether it's **800-273-TALK(8255)**, family, friends, clergy, coaches, co-workers or therapists, so they have a network to reach out to for help.
5. **BeThe1To Follow Up:** Check in with the person you care about on a regular basis. Making contact with a friend in the days and weeks after a crisis can make a difference in keeping them alive.

## HIGHER HELP

I would like to tell you that there is one Bible verse or story to offer those with severe depression and suicidal thoughts. However, this is not the case. While the Bible offers words of wisdom and comfort (see below), there are other passages that can be taken out of context: "Be careful for nothing" (Philippians 4:6); "do not worry about your life" (Matthew 6:25); "...neither *is there any* rest in my bones because of my sin" (Psalm 38:3).

\*\*If we as the Church are going to start talking about these issues, here are a few things we should know:

### 1. Depression isn't what the Church sometimes makes it out to be.

It's not a character defect, a spiritual disorder or an emotional dysfunction. Chief of all, it's not a choice. Asking someone to "try" not being depressed is tantamount to asking someone who's been shot to try and stop bleeding. Such an attitude can dangerously appear in the Church as "if only you had enough faith."

Having faith in God's ability to heal is hugely important, and personal faith can help ease depression. But to deny medical or psychiatric treatment to someone suffering from mental illness is no different than denying them to someone with a physical illness. The difference between the two is that the former is invisible.

Speaking of the invisible, some faith traditions are quick to suggest demonic attack as the cause for depression. While I'm convinced that there's a spiritual element—the enemy will exploit any weakness—medical science holds that major depressive disorder is real and the causes are manifold.

### 2. Mental illness is not a sin.

Yes, sins in the past like physical abuse, substance abuse and neglect may contribute to depression, and these sins often continue as coping mechanisms for those suffering from mental illnesses. Yet this doesn't make the sufferer of depression and anxiety a sinner simply for experiencing the crushing effects of their condition.

What happens when mental illness is treated as an unconfessed, unaddressed sin is alienation. Viewing depression as a sin, in and of itself, prevents individuals from seeking treatment. It also ignores the fact that many Christians may respond to depression in unhealthy ways if the root cause is ignored or misunderstood.

### 3. The Bible doesn't provide "easy answers."

The Word is full of wisdom and encouragement for

those suffering from depression and anxiety disorders, but it doesn't come in one-verse doses. Another really scary thing this does, is it can convince a person in the worst throes of their illness, that they're not obeying God. Add that to what feels like the inability just to be – every shaky breath hurts and getting out of bed is impossible – and you've thrown gasoline onto the fire.

A true examination of depression and anxiety in the Bible shows the existential dread that accompanies the illnesses instead of an easy out, one-and-done antidote. God's hand isn't always apparent. As Dan Blazer pointed out in Christianity Today, "most of us have no idea what David meant when he further lamented, "I am forgotten as a dead man out of mind: I am like a broken vessel" (Psalm 31:12). Severe depression is often beyond description."

Rather than prescribing a bit of a verse divorced from its context, a better strategy is to look at those instances of mental suffering along with the Church body and to offer comfort in the fact that even the disciples struggled.

#### **4. Anxiety and depression do not look how we often think.**

When I've opened up to Christian friends about my depression and anxiety disorders, they're often surprised. "You seem so happy all the time!" Depressed people become really good at hiding their symptoms, even from doctors, because of the stigma attached to the illness. Churches often don't address mental illness, which gives the worship team guitarist or the elder even more incentive to keep it hidden away. Furthermore, the symptoms of depression often tend to contradict each other, which makes it really difficult for a person suffering from depression to recognize it for what it is—let alone for the Church to recognize it.

"Learning to recognize the signs" then is often a failing strategy. If churches begin responding to mental disorders as a community willing to offer encouragement and support, people suffering from those illnesses may just be able to accept the help. It may just be people you never expected.

#### **5. Strong churches do not "fix" depression.**

Given all of the above, it's easy to understand how the stigma related to depression, even in the Church, will prevent people from seeking Christian guidance and support. The most Christ-loving and helpful community might not have the appropriate framework for dealing with such clinical disorders, and many churches don't have licensed psychologists on the staff. Pastoral staff can be ill-equipped to deal with depression and err toward a spiritual solution rather than psychological or medical treatment.

\*\*Source: 5 Things Christians Should Know About Depression and Anxiety  
<https://relevantmagazine.com/> Aug 8, 2017

We have access to the Word of God and specific Bible texts that will help those with depression and suicidal thoughts:

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Luke 12:6-7 Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.

Matthew 7:8-11 For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what man is there of you, whom if his son ask bread, will he give him a stone? Or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him?

1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.

Jeremiah 29:11 For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.

Matthew 11:28 Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

James 5:13-15 Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.

Romans 15:13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

In closing, as I mentioned earlier, those who are contemplating suicide are crying out for help. Don't ignore them or if it is you, do not neglect your feelings. You are worth saving. God will help you! Ask for help or if you know someone who is talking about suicide, have them seek professional help at once. There could be physical causes of your thoughts of suicide, and these causes may



well be treatable. If you are considering this, call a highly regarded helpline at **800-273-TALK(8255)**. Talk to someone and pray to God for comfort and guidance. If you know of someone who has or is talking about suicide, tell others, seek the help of others, call the helpline yourself to see what you can do to help.

## **VOLCAN DE FUEGO**

It is Spanish for Volcano of Fire, a volcanic mountain in Guatemala. It has been active on-and-off for years. On Sunday, June 3, 2018 it erupted with fury. Volcan de Fuego is famous for spewing out smoke daily and being continuously active at a low level. This time it erupted violently resulting in many deaths. Molten lava, flying rocks, hot gasses including sulfur dioxide threatened homes and lives in the area. At the same time on the big island of Hawaii, Mount Kilauea was erupting and creating massive destruction. The question is, "Why do we have volcanos?" Perhaps we should ask, "Why do we need volcanos?"

The answer to the first question has to do with the composition and structure of the Earth. The crust of the Earth, along with the upper mantle below it, is divided into sections called tectonic plates. Volcanos (and earthquakes) often occur near the boundaries of those plates. The movement and repositioning of those plates created the continents we have today. Beneath Earth's crust, there is hot and partially molten material in an area known as the mantle. Pressure and the decomposition of radioactive material within the core of the Earth cause the elevated temperature. The fact that the minerals are in a molten state because of the extreme heat allows the movement of the tectonic plates on the surface. A volcano is a rupture in Earth's crust that allows the escape of hot lava and gas from a magma chamber below the surface.

The answer to the second question of why we need volcanos is that they are part of Earth's recycling system. Erosion of Earth's surface leaches away nutrients from the soil. Volcano eruptions bring to the surface essential nutrients to nourish the soil allowing plants to grow and making farming more productive. They also bring to the surface valuable minerals that we need for modern, advanced civilization. Volcanos have also created many islands, such as the Aleutian Islands and the islands of

Hawaii. The movement of tectonic plates and the eruption of volcanos have occurred throughout Earth's history. Without the movement of the tectonic plates with the resulting earthquakes and volcanos, Earth's crust would be flat and covered with water. We would not be here.

Volcanos play a vital role in giving us this vibrant, life supporting planet. They are another evidence of God's creative power.

--From **Does God Exist?**

## *Don't Complain*

*Everyone talks of the weather,  
Which seems to please no one at all;  
In winter they long for spring time,  
And in summer, they cry for the fall.  
The snow is too deep for their liking,  
The temperatures much too cold;  
And so they blame God for the mistake He made,  
For winter has no good to behold.  
The snow is really quite beautiful,  
It cleanses the air as it comes down;  
It gives to each shrub a blanket,  
And blesses each post with a crown.  
The spring is a time to be busy,  
Preparing for summer's long stay;  
The sun goes from warm to much hotter,  
Aiding farmers to harvest their hay.  
The hot sun helps to "dress up" the autumn,  
Giving breath taking beauty to trees;  
And again, we are preparing for winter,  
And the cold, and the snow, and the freeze.  
We should never complain of the seasons,  
And blame God when things don't go our way;  
For He is creating a plan that will please all,  
And soon, we can go there to stay.*

--Betty Whetstone

We must launch out beyond—

## **THE BOUNDS OF OUR FAITH**

--Reprinted

We are saved by faith; we are kept by faith; we walk by faith; we die in faith. All we get from God, we get by faith.

We do not get things from God because we are saved, but because we believe for those very things. It is "According to your faith" (Matthew 9:29), from the hour we look to Jesus for forgiveness, until we enter the coming kingdom. Asking is the law of getting. The reason so many get little or nothing from God is explained by James when he writes, "...ye have not, because ye ask not" (James 4:2).

Our faith is the basis of our asking. If we believe, we ask; and if we ask believing, we receive (Mark 11:24). Therefore, it is important to know how our faith may be increased – for God not only works according to our faith, but He works only within the bounds of our faith. Faith is the channel on which the boats of answered prayer move. Whether it is only a sampan or a great ocean liner that anchors in your harbor, depends on your faith.

"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). The study of the Word of God begets faith in the soul. If faith is weak, it is because we are not reading the Word of God as we need to read it. To get faith, read the Word of God, chapters a day. Ponder it. Study it. Memorize it. Dig deep. Read to feed. "Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy faith may be manifest unto all." Thus, faith in God will spring up in your soul. Faith is simply taking God at His Word.

Are we to pray for faith? As we pray, faith is born. God draws near. Heaven seems very close. Spiritual realities heave into view like mountains rising from mists. The unseen is unveiled. The glory of God comes on us. It is then easy to feel God, to believe God, and to get from God. A praying man is a believing man. Little faith means little prayer. We believe little because we pray little. Prayer puts fuel on the fire of faith. When the defeated disciples came to Jesus to find the cause of their inability to cast the demon out of the boy, He told them the trouble, "...this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting" (Matthew 17:21). They had been arguing rather

than talking to God. To God alone, earnestly and honestly spend thirty minutes in real prayer, and you will come forth with more faith than you had when you went in. Your faith is the index of your prayer life.

Attempt great things for God. Expect great things from Him. Do something. Believe something. Claim a promise and plead it. Undertake for God. Launch out. The disciples prayed, "Lord, increase our faith." He replied (in effect), "Use what you have. Let it go to work." If you have as much faith as a grain of mustard seed, you may remove mountains, and that is more than most people are doing these days of unbelief. Hitch your faith up to

something and make it pull. If lazy, make it work. If weak, feed it on the promises of God. A grain of faith as big as the point of a pin can work miracles.

Undertake something for God beyond your own resources, ability, and human needs. God will come to your rescue. When we do what we can do, God gets no glory. Let the Holy Spirit mark out a pathway of faith for you. As you walk in it, timidity will give place to courage, and fear to faith.

If you want faith, read the Word, pray, keep separated from the world and sin, and undertake something for God beyond yourself. May Christ say of you as He did of the Syrophenician, "Great is thy faith."

*Cynthia's Corner*  
**EVIDENCE FOR GOD IN A SINFUL WORLD**  
*Cynthia Clayton*

Atheists try to use the evils in the world to argue that God does not exist: "If God is loving, why does he allow evil?" Or, "Because there is so much evil, how can a loving God be in control?" Blaming God for evil is illogical because God is love (I John 4:16), and the source of all things that are good and loving (James 1:17). Evil is a consequence of rejecting God and following our own sinful desires. God created us to love and to be loved and to have fellowship with Him (Genesis 1:2; I John 1:3). To do this, He gave us a free will – the ability to choose to love Him and follow Him, or not. Love cannot exist unless there is a choice – not any kind of love. Sexual love without choice is called "rape," and even the world recognizes that rape has nothing to do with love. In Genesis 3, we see that Adam and Eve chose to disobey God and listen to Satan. We also see the consequences of their sin and their choices.

The consequences of rejecting God and His ways are evident today in this world of sin and evil. God gave

humans a free will. When we reject God and all that He represents, we follow our own desires, which God says are sinful (Romans 1:18-32). In so doing, we have to realize too that there is another powerful spiritual force in the world which the Bible calls Satan, the "prince of this world" (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11; II Corinthians 4:4). The Bible also refers to him as "the one who is in the world" (I John 4:4) and "...the whole world is under the control of the evil one" (I John 5:19).

When we choose not to follow God and His teachings, we become vulnerable to the temptations of Satan. Whether we recognize his power and influence or not, he is the source of sin and evil, NOT God! James 1:13-14 tells us that God does not tempt any of us, but each one is tempted "by his own evil desire." In II Thessalonians 2:7-10 we read, "the secret power of lawlessness is already at work; ... the work of Satan which is displayed in all kinds of counterfeit miracles, ... that deceives those who are perishing. They perish because they refused to love the truth and so be saved."

The Word of God is truth (John 17:17). When we reject God and His Word, we are open to Satan's control. The sin and wickedness in the world are evidence of

the rejection of God and His Word.

--From Does God Exist?

# WATERS

By Timoteo Mendoza

“...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. And 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...”

Genesis 1:20-21 pictures us the great quantity of living creatures that the waters brought forth, the aquatic animal kingdom and the aviary animal kingdom that came from the waters. Three quarters of the planet is composed of water. 95.7 percent is seawater, 2.5 percent is freshwater. Water represents the foundation of every living creature in the earth, including man.

In some organisms, almost 90 percent of their weight is water, even the human body being created from the dust of the earth contains 70 percent of water, blood is an 80 percent, the brain a 70 percent and the lungs an 80 percent. Mankind can stay alive without the intake of food, but not without drinking water. When a person loses water because of dehydration, his life is put in a high risk, and this occurs after the sixth day of dehydration. Then the body starts to collapse.

The Scriptures talk about great men such as Moses, Elijah and Jesus who fasted for a period of forty days without eating or drinking water, without a doubt an extraordinary fasting. From the point of view of medical

science, it is impossible for the human body to survive for that many days without water and food. This is only possible when a man possesses a really high level of spirituality. The Spirit of God then nourishes. These three men were nourished by the power of God, and their bodies were far from becoming weak.

The Spirit, the blood and the water give testimony of life upon the earth because they represent the foundation of human life. This testimony, in its time, became indisputable to show that Jesus came in the flesh. When He exhaled at the cross, He gave back the spirit. When they pierced His side, water and blood came out of it. “And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one (they are life)” (I John 5:8). “This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water only, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth” (verse 6).

Water is a source of human life, but it also represents a highly destructive element. Water can perforate rock and metal. It can tear down a mountain and erase cities. God ended human life at the Flood with water. When it goes beyond its limits, it represents a force practically unstoppable.

Despite its highly destructive capacities, man searches for places where there is water to live, because where

there is water, there is life. With effort, they look for water on other planets, with the sight of one day being able to live on them.

The Scriptures talk about men healed in the waters. Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, was cleansed from his leprosy in the waters of Jordan. This miracle of healing caused people to believe in attributing the healing to the waters of Jordan. Nevertheless, that is not it! Naaman wasn't healed because of the waters, but because of his faith for believing that he was going to be healed by diving seven times as the prophet Elisha had told him to do (II Kings 5).

Another miracle is recorded in the times of Jesus (John 5:1-9) at a pool called Bethesda in Jerusalem. During a feast of the Jews, all kinds of ill people (blind, halt, withered) would surround the pool. An angel of the Lord went down into the pool and troubled the water, and then the power of God made whole the first one who stepped into the water. Only the first person getting into the water was made whole as a special gift for the people during this festivity.

When the kingdom of God is upon the earth, from the New Jerusalem will come out a pure river of water of life. "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life" (Revelation 22:1-2, first part). Full of enigma and mystery, this tree's fruit provides permanent life, but not of the body or material, but of a pneumatic order or spiritual. What kind of properties does this fruit have that whosoever eats from it can live forever?

And what kind of river is this whose water is able to germinate and produce fruits on the tree of life? And not just that, what chemical composition do the waters have that they will be able to heal the Dead Sea?

The Dead Sea is located 416 meters below sea level, between Israel and Jordan, fed by the river of Jordan. It also includes the lake Tiberias. It is about 80 km long and 16 km wide, and a coast length of 135 km and a depth of 378 meters. Its salinity is of 28 percent in the comparison with the salinity of 3.1 percent-3.8 percent of the seas. The desalination of the sea water is made through processes such as inverse osmosis, distillation, freezing, evaporation, etc. Which qualities will these waters have to make this complex process to desalinate those waters,

and not only that, but to eliminate great quantities of potassium, bromine, gypsum, magnesium and calcium that these waters contain?

The prophet Ezekiel, in chapter 47, prophesied about these waters which will come out from under the altar and descend toward the east. "Then said he unto me, These waters issue out toward the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea: which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed. And it shall come to pass, that every thing that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live: and there shall be a very great multitude of fish, because these waters shall come thither: for they shall be healed; and every thing shall live whither the river cometh. And it shall come to pass, that the fishers shall stand upon it from En-gedi even unto En-eglaim; they shall be a place to spread forth nets; their fish shall be according to their kinds, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many. But the miry places thereof and the marishes thereof shall not be healed; they shall be given to salt. And by the river upon the bank thereof, on this side and on that side, shall grow all trees for meat, whose leaf shall not fade, neither shall the fruit thereof be consumed: it shall bring forth new fruit according to his months, because their waters they issued out of the sanctuary: and the fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine" (Ezekiel 47:8-12).

## **Be Diligent**

"Be thou diligent to know the state of thy flocks, and look well to thy herds. For riches are not for ever: and doth the crown endure to every generation? The hay appeareth, and the tender grass showeth itself, and herbs of the mountains are gathered. The lambs are for thy clothing, and the goats are the price of the field. And thou shalt have goats' milk enough for thy food, for the food of thy household, and for the maintenance for thy maidens" (Proverbs 27:23-27).

This passage of Scripture speaks of taking advantage of one's opportunities. A person must be diligent to know when such opportunities are available, and then to make the most of them. A farmer or herder in ancient Israel depended upon making the most of his opportunities. His life, as well as the lives of his household, depended upon it. May the Lord help us to be diligent in the work He has given to us. Lives are dependent upon it.

# Laboring For the Lord

By David DeLong

God's people have the distinct pleasure and responsibility of actually laboring together with God. I Corinthians 3:9-15 tells us: "For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire."

God is very patient with His people. He knows that we can only do so much, and even that amount must be supported with His help. However, on the other hand, if we don't labor for Him at our best, or do nothing for Him at all, then we will be like the wicked servant who hid his lord's talent in the earth and was severely punished by his lord on the day of reckoning (see Matthew 25:24-30).

Each of us is given a talent or talents to labor along with God. Like the song says: "In the service of the King, every talent I will bring". So too, we must labor with every talent that is given to us. We will now go to Romans, chapter 12, verses 1-8 for a discussion on the gifts (talents) that are given to each of us. "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. For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness."

According to these verses, everyone is given a work which he or she must perform, even if it is showing mercy with cheerfulness. I Corinthians 12:1-31 shows us other gifts which have been given to members of the Church. The Apostle Paul wrote: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of adminis-

trations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness. For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way."

I have used all of I Corinthians chapter 12 because it is a more complete discussion on the use of gifts. It also shows that no gift is useless nor that one member is more important than any other member. Every member of the body of Christ is necessary to the proper functioning of that body. And just like a human body needs every faculty that it has been given to function efficiently, so too must each member of the body of Christ do his or her job to make Christ's body work efficiently. Each gift within the body is related to the other gifts, and therefore, all are needed.

There is one more major text on gifts that is given in the New Testament. This is Ephesians 4:1-16, and it relates the gifts of leadership in the Church to the submission of those gifts by the members. "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in

wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

To make the Church more efficient, the Lord has provided these various leaders for the Church to which we must be submitted. And, of course, Christ Himself is the head of the Church to whom all of us must ultimately be submitted. The Lord is also faithful in rewarding each person in the Church for the service that he or she will have rendered. But we must be patient and faithfully do what we have been called to do. Hebrews 6:10-12 informs us: "For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

God bless each and everyone to be faithful in laboring for, and with, the Lord.

## The Name of the Lord

"The name of the LORD is a strong tower: the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Proverbs 18:10). There is great power in the name of the Lord. As the Proverb above says, "the righteous runneth into it, and is safe." I have actually heard of a story where a Christian was being held up by a criminal, apparently, and by his speaking the name of Jesus the criminal ran away. We know that the Lord holds great solemnity to His name. The third of the Ten Commandments reads: "Thou shalt not take the name of the LORD thy God in vain; for the LORD will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain" (Exodus 20:7). Referring to Jesus, we find in Philippians 2:9-10: "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth". And in Acts 4:12 Peter preached: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

## Truth

By David DeLong

Truth can only come from God,  
There is no other truth;  
It's found within the Bible,  
And we must inform our youth.

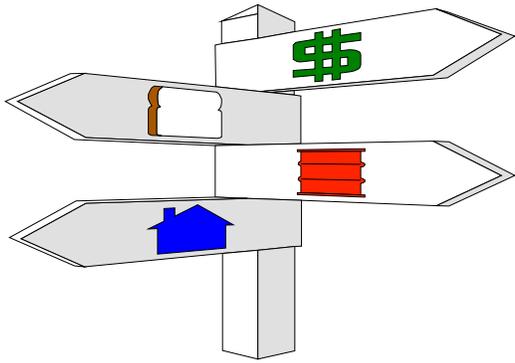
Today, they're taught in public schools  
That man has long evolved;  
It started with a great "big bang",  
When planets, then, revolved

Around a source of gravity  
Like flaming, gaseous suns;  
These "fairy tales" of science, are  
Like jokes, or silly puns.

Then, from a foaming ocean  
Here, on planet earth  
They teach that one-celled forms of life  
Evolved, with little worth.

Man is just an animal  
So, the teachers, teach;  
His life is only like a worm's,  
Or, like a lowly leech.

No wonder that our world, today  
Is filled with sin and crime;  
Wouldn't you be filled with hate  
If you thought you were slime?



# 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.*

To begin this column of The Signs Of The Times, I wish to share with you a few words spoken by Mayor La Guardia. He was mayor of New York City many years ago during the period of World War II.

These few words spoken by Mayor La Guardia appeared in the December, 1941 issue of **Prophecy Monthly** under the title of *Front Porch War*.

“There is no longer a front-line trench; it has been moved to the front porch, and women and children, the aged and the infirm today face as great hazards as do soldiers in uniform. The barbarism of medieval days is rampant again. It must be destroyed.”

### Comment

Barbarism was rampant in medieval days, but it really has never ended. Barbarism is displayed by the actions of worldly people. Many today are being destroyed by barbarism. However, let the true child of God remember that no barbarous person can destroy his salvation.

### ANOTHER FISCAL CRISIS?

There appeared an article in **USA TODAY** with the caption which read *10 years later, we may not be ready for another fiscal crisis*. Following is that article in condensed form:

“The three officials who navigated the United States through the worst financial crisis since the Great Recession warn that policymakers may be forgetting some of the lessons they learned the hard way 10 years ago.

That could make it tougher to manage the next economic crisis.

Former Fed chairman Ben Bernanke and former Treasury secretaries Henry Paulson and Timothy Geithner shared leadership of key institutions during the banking and housing meltdown in 2008 that threatened to bring down the global economic system. A decade later, the three men gathered with a dozen reporters at the Brookings

Institute in Washington D.C., to discuss the forms enacted in its wake and the ability of the United States today to prevent some new crisis from exacting the financial and human toll that one did.

Some things are clearly better, they said, including tighter banking regulations that have set higher standards for liquidity and provided emergency powers for the government to intervene in a crisis. But they agreed that the federal budget deficit, exacerbated by last year’s tax-cut bill, will make it harder for the government to respond when the economy inevitably takes a downturn.

“Better defenses, weaker arsenal,” said Geithner, who was president of the New York Fed when the crisis began and then became President Barack Obama’s first Treasury secretary.

They also warned whether the nation’s current state of constant political warfare would allow the sort of bipartisan action that rescued the U.S. economy then. Albeit with some bumps, and at a cost.

“The crisis brought out some of the very worst in the American system in terms of our dysfunction, the political functions, the problems with our regulatory system and so on, but at the end, it really brought people together,” said Paulson, who was George W. Bush’s Treasury secretary when the crisis struck.

“I wouldn’t want to dismiss the possibility as an American that if we had another crisis that we couldn’t come together,” he said, not exactly describing that prospect as a sure thing. It was hard then, and it likely would be harder now.

“We’re choosing to live with a situation in which things have to get terrible before it becomes politically viable for Congress to legislate the classic set of tools that all countries need to save their economies from panics and depression,” Geithner said.

But the veterans of the 2008 crisis note that sooner or later, there will be another downturn. And they caution that some of the long-term economic trends that contributed to the last one haven't been effectively addressed."

### **Comment**

No doubt there is coming another fiscal crisis! As a matter of fact, many families here in America are having their own private fiscal crisis, not being able to provide the things necessary for their families. I saw a newspaper article which stated that many do not have the funds for air conditioning or heating.

As the article states, many of the safeguards that were put into place to avoid the next fiscal crisis have been removed. Regulations are back to where they were before the fiscal crisis. This opens the door to another fiscal crisis. The fiscal crisis of 2008 is just a foretaste of that which will occur over the whole world with more vigor as the last days progress.

### **WHO LIED OR MISTAKEN IDENTITY?**

As this column is written, the biggest news in politics is the accusation that Bret Kavanaugh, President Trump's nominee for a Supreme Court seat, is accused of sexual assault. Kavanaugh and Christine Blasey Ford, Kavanaugh's accuser, had a testimonial meeting being questioned by members of the Senate. No new facts were presented and not many, if any, Senators' minds were changed with many of them not making up their minds if they would vote for him. Ford was sure that it was Kavanaugh who assaulted her. However, Kavanaugh said that he believed that Ford could have been really assaulted, but it was not by him. The vote on the nomination was delayed until the FBI makes a complete investigation.

### **HURRICANE FLORENCE**

Another sign of the perilous (dangerous) times in which we live was the hurricane Florence which struck The Carolinas and other parts of the south. Several lost their lives. After the slow-moving storm was gone, the floodwaters damaged many houses before they receded.

### **AIR FORCE UPGRADE**

I read that the top Air Force officials said the service must grow dramatically by 2025. Chief among the recommendations is adding 74 combat squadrons to the group of 312. This is an increase of almost 24 percent. This upgrade is to confront the increasing threats posed by China and Russia.

### **Comment**

This reminds us of Joel 3:9-10 which reads, "Proclaim ye this among the Gentiles; Prepare war, wake up the mighty men, let all the men of war draw near; let them come up: Beat your plowshares into swords, and your pruninghooks into spears: let the weak say, I am strong."

### **ELECTRIC CARS**

Many people say that their next car will be electric. A new AAA survey found that 20 percent of Americans say their next vehicle will be an electric car. That's up from 15 percent in 2017. This is the first time this question was asked.

### **BETTER HEADLIGHTS**

According to a newspaper article, better headlights are needed to protect pedestrians. The article reports that new cars and trucks need substantial improvements, including better headlights, to protect pedestrians, following a spike in deaths on U.S. roads, federal safety oversight officials said. The article also tells us that federal rules have blocked adaptive headlights that automatically adjust to oncoming traffic to reduce glare and help drivers see better. Those lights are legal and commonplace in Europe.

### **Comment**

Why are not these adaptive beam headlights legal in the US? Let us hope that they will become legal!

### **NURSING PAY GAP**

According to a reliable source, male nurses earn an average of \$79,688 a year, and female nurses earn an average of \$73,090 a year. This is a difference of nearly \$6,600.

### **Comment**

This really is not fair. Should not all who do the same type of work be paid a set salary?

### **THOUGHTS ABOUT POLARIZATION**

We hear on the news much about those in America being polarized. This means that people believe that their way of thinking and doing is the only true way and must be practiced. It is their way or the highway. All others are wrong! This is especially true in politics. The Democrats want it their way, and the Republicans want it their way. Compromise has been given a dirty name.

It is true that we must never compromise God's Word. However, when it comes to other matters, we know that we cannot perfectly please all the people all the time. Compromise plays a very import part in keeping America civil and free.

# BIBLE

## Study



# Questions and Answers

**Question:** How is true happiness related to contentment?

**Answer:** How many of us have looked up the definition of happiness? The first definition given is one which we should always use if it can be applied: "The state or quality of being glad or contented; contentment." Many people do not have true happiness.

We are living in a world where if there is such a thing as true happiness, we should have it. We are enjoying the finer things of life, all the modern conveniences and blessings the heart could wish. Much of this is due to modern technology. We have technical machines and electronics that are at our command which serve to make life more pleasant. Some of these fine things in life are so inexpensive that those of modest means can afford them.

If it were possible for man to bring happiness, we should, of all people that ever lived on the earth, be the most happy. But many of us are not!

It is impossible for man to bring permanent happiness. We must have the contentment within which God can only give. We must have that assurance that we are accepted of Him who is able to accomplish all things, and in whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. We should be drawing substance from the true vine which flowing through us will be a blessing, not only to ourselves, but to all whom we come in contact.

Christ taught this in His parable to the multitude in Luke 12:15, "**And he said unto them, Take heed, and**

**beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."** He then follows with the parable of the man who began to build greater barns and store his wealth, but in verse 20 He tells what will be his end, that this night his soul would be required of him. In verse 21, He includes this to mean all who do this, "**So is he that layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."**

This proves conclusively that the one who trusts in the things of this world to make him happy will never be happy. You may notice one who has much of this world's goods that you think is happy, but you might change your mind if you could look in on his private family life. This admonition is also given in I John 2:15-17. "**Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."**

Let us note the words of a wise man concerning happiness. We are all familiar with the promise to David that his son would build a house to the Lord that His name might be placed there. We are also familiar with the prayer of Solomon, how he asked God for wisdom that he might rule the people justly and that he might make it the greatest kingdom on earth so that all would marvel at it. We know that he was counted the wisest of all rulers and that kings and queens came from all corners of the then known world

to see the wonderful works of Solomon. The Lord was so well pleased that Solomon did not ask for riches, but wisdom only, that He told him that all these things would be added unto him.

Solomon was content with wisdom, and God then added all the other things that made Solomon's kingdom the richest and most prized in the world. How many people that you know are really content and happy? If we could look into the hearts of all we meet, we would find but few who are truly happy. As soon as the excitement of life wears off we care but little for it, but we are soon craving something else exciting. We create beautiful things, and then they soon lose attraction for us. After that we crave something different, and so on until we tire of it. This is the cause of many suicides, especially among the wealthier class of people. This is also a cause for the unrest which is manifest in the world today. As the nations of the world are made up of individuals, the unrest is just a reflection of the individuals.

Let us stop and examine ourselves to see if we are following in the footsteps of Jesus. If you go to places where God is not honored, please consider where you go. If we should see Jesus in worldly places, could we have confidence in Him? If one is a child of God, one will be Christ-like. Let us try to walk in the footsteps of Jesus!

**Question:** Does Jesus expect us to demonstrate our gratitude and love to Him, although He is absent from us?

**Answer:** One of the most pathetic incidents in Jesus' life was that day when He met ten lepers along the way. The tragic misery of their lot touched His sympathetic heart as human needs always does. He healed them and instructed them to go to the priest who was designated under the law with the authority to pronounce their leprosy cleansed. So overjoyed were these unfortunate men, only a few moments before without hope, that they went hilariously on their way, forgetful of their benefactor.

Suddenly one of the ten remembered and came back to express appreciation to Jesus for His gracious benefit. And then Jesus uttered one of the pathetic statements which has touched all generations, because it seems to be the experience of every generation. "Where are the nine?" They are rushing about their business, heedless of the love of Jesus who gave His blood centuries ago for their

redemption. They are contemning their birthright of Divine grace which makes them eligible to adoption into the family of God. They are ignoring the overtures of reconciliation sent by special embassies of peace from the palace of the King. They are mocking Him, spitting on Him, crucifying Him, deriding Him and passing Him by.

As one moves among the milling masses in our great cities, he is often harassed by the question, How many of these multitudes have returned to give Him thanks? How many have given due recognition to the Giver of all their benefits? How many have come back to bow at His feet for the inner revelation of the infinitely richer gifts which He wants to bestow – gifts which moth nor rust doth not corrupt! Where are the nine?

But this incident suggests a bit more selective situation. Jesus had performed a very special service for and upon them. From the awful hopelessness of their leprous tragedy, they had been suddenly, almost unbelievably, healed. Gone was the blight of life which had completely obscured their skies. Gone was the curse which isolated them from their friends and loved ones. Gone was the heartbreaking barrier between themselves and the things they most cherished. Suddenly, dazzlingly, their horizon was lighted with gracious hope again. Jesus had done a most marvelous thing for them – that which no other could do. They were healed. They were restored. They were whole. All that remained for them to fulfil the provision of the law, going to the priest and having their records cleared of the stigma of their loathsome disease. But with all the unbelievable wonder of it, they forgot to return to give thanks.

Where are the nine among the crowds of our day? They have their names on the church roll, but they almost never go to church. If they do go, they are thinking of their own affairs rather than genuinely worshiping Him who makes possible their affairs. They may even be pious in church but can scarcely wait until outside the door of the sanctuary before they lapse into the miserable rags of their daily affairs. Or they may even be too respectable for such grossness. But in their pharisaical self-rightness they hasten on and forget the deeper concern of the Saviour who heals them.

Yes, Jesus clearly indicated to us that in His absence we are expected to demonstrate our gratitude and love to Him!



## Salem, West Virginia

David and Linda DeLong operating a booth at the Salem University Fair.



## Dedication of the Church in Seamon, Grenada



## LESSON I

JETHRO BRINGS TO MOSES  
HIS WIFE AND SONS

Scripture Reading: Exodus 18:1-12.

Golden Text: Exodus 18:9.

“And Jethro rejoiced for all the goodness which the LORD had done to Israel, whom he had delivered out of the hand of the Egyptians.”

1. Who was Jethro? What did he do when he heard of all that God had done for Moses? Exodus 18:1-2.
2. What were the names of Moses' two sons? Exodus 18:3-4.
3. Did they go into the wilderness to see Moses? Exodus 18:5.
4. Was Moses pleased that they had come to see him? Exodus 18:6-7.
5. Did Moses tell them all that the Lord had done for him? Exodus 18:8.
6. Did they rejoice and praise God for his deliverance? Exodus 18:9-10.
7. Jethro knew now that the Lord was the great God. What did he do to show his praise of God? Exodus 18:11-12.

## LESSON II

## JETHRO COUNSELETH MOSES

Scripture Reading: Exodus 18:13-27.

Golden Text: Exodus 18:25.

“And Moses chose able men out of all Israel, and made them heads over the people, rulers of thousands, rulers of hundreds, rulers of fifties, and rulers of tens.”

1. What was Moses doing for the people in Exodus

18:13?

2. What questions did Jethro ask Moses, and how did Moses answer him? Exodus 18:14-16.

3. Did Jethro think this was good? Why? Exodus 18:17-18.

4. What counsel did Jethro give Moses? What was Moses to show and teach the people? Exodus 18:19-20.

5. Who were the rulers? What would the duties of these men be? Exodus 18:21-22.

6. Did Moses hearken to Jethro's voice? Exodus 18:24.

7. Whom did Moses choose, and who judged the people? Exodus 18:25-26.

8. Where did Jethro go? Exodus 18:27.

## LESSON III

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL  
COME TO SINAI

Scripture Reading: Exodus 19:1-14.

Golden Text: Exodus 19:9 (first part).

“And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud, that the people may hear when I speak with thee, and believe thee for ever...”

1. In what month did the children of Israel reach Sinai? Exodus 19:1-2.

2. The Lord called unto Moses, and what did He tell Moses to say to the children of Israel? Exodus 19:3-6.

3. Whom did Moses call before him? Exodus 19:7.

4. Did the people agree to do all that the Lord had spoken? Exodus 19:8.

5. How was the Lord going to appear unto Moses? Exodus 19:9.

6. What further was Moses to tell his people? In how many days would the Lord come down upon Mount Sinai? Exodus 19:10-11.

7. What bounds were to be set round about? Exodus 19:12-13.

8. What did Moses do when he came down from the mount unto the people? Exodus 19:14.

7. Who was to come up to the mount with Moses? Exodus 19:23-24.

8. Did Moses speak to the people? Exodus 19:25.

### FAULTS

Hazel H. Banks

When I see, your fault, I'll pray about it,  
 When you see mine, pray about it too;  
 That is how the saints can help each other  
 And behave as Christ would have us do.

If, instead of praying we should gossip,  
 Some may stumble on the narrow way;  
 All our words are listened to by Jesus,  
 Is he pleased with what His children say?

Some of us confess that we are guilty  
 Of beholding in the other's eye  
 Motes we cannot see in our own vision,  
 And we'll be so sorry by and by.

Let us ask the Lord to cleanse and fill us  
 With an overflowing of His love;  
 Till we take all faults we see to Jesus —  
 For the help He gives from up above.

In the Word of God, we are admonished  
 Our own faults to others to confess;  
 Not the faults of those we see around us,  
 For their need we are to pray and bless.

### Answers to Elijah and Elisha -

2. 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10. 11. 12.

### LESSON IV

#### GOD'S PRESENCE ON MOUNT SINAI

Scripture Reading: Exodus 19:15-25.

Golden Text: Exodus 19:17.

“And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount.”

1. What happened on the third day in the morning? Exodus 19:16.

2. Where did the people stand when Moses brought them forth to meet God? Exodus 19:17.

3. When the Lord descended upon the mount, what happened? Exodus 19:18.

4. Did god answer Moses when he spake to Him? Exodus 19:19.

5. Did Moses go to the mount as God instructed him? Exodus 19:20.

6. What did the Lord tell Moses to do? Exodus 19:21-22.

## Sometimes God Says No

By Dorothy Walter



Jonnie wanted a new wagon for his birthday. He wanted a new wagon more than he had ever wanted anything else in his life.

"Will you get me a wagon for my birthday, Mother?" he asked.

Mother shook her head slowly. "I don't see how we can this time. There have been so many bills to pay since Betsy was sick. No, son, I'm afraid we can't get it this birthday. Maybe later."

But Jonnie wanted a new wagon. "I'll ask Jesus for a wagon," he said. "Jesus knows how important it is for a boy to have a wagon."

"Do you really need a new wagon, Jonnie?" Mother asked.

"We-e-e-ll," admitted Jonnie, "I guess I could get along without a new one. But Billy has a new red racer, and I want one, too."

"Do you think that you should pray for something you don't really need?" Mother asked quietly. "Jesus is always ready to give us the things we really need. But I'm not so sure we should ask Him for things that are just wants."

Jonnie didn't say any more. But he kept thinking about the wagon. And every night in his prayer he would ask Jesus to send him a new red racer like Billy's. And the more he prayed, the more sure that he was going to get it.

Jonnie could hardly wait for his birthday to come. He told all his little friends about the new wagon. Only he didn't tell them about praying for it. He just told them that he was getting a new wagon for his birthday.

Finally the night before his birthday came, Jonnie was so excited that he could hardly go to sleep. He could hardly wait to play with the new wagon.

The next morning Jonnie woke up early. He could

hear Mother in the kitchen downstairs. He didn't stop to dress. He didn't even put on his house slippers. He ran down the stairs as fast as he could go. He ran in the kitchen "Where is it? Where is it?" He shouted.

"Where is what?" Mother asked.

"My wagon," said Jonnie. "My new red wagon."

"But, Jonnie," Mother said. "I explained to you that we couldn't buy a wagon for you."

"I know that," said Jonnie. "But I prayed, and Jesus is going to give me a wagon."

Mother sat down in the big rocking chair by the window. "Come here, Jonnie," she said. She set him on her lap. "Now, son, let's talk this over."

"But, Mother," Jonnie cried, "I prayed and Jesus answers prayers."

"Yes," said Mother. "Jesus does answer prayer. But only when we ask for the right things in the right way. Daddy and I have to say NO sometimes when you ask for something. It is the same way with Jesus. Jesus sometimes has to say no, too."

"But, why?" Jonnie asked. "He can do anything He wants to. He's got more money than anyone else in the whole wide world. Why couldn't He give me a wagon?"

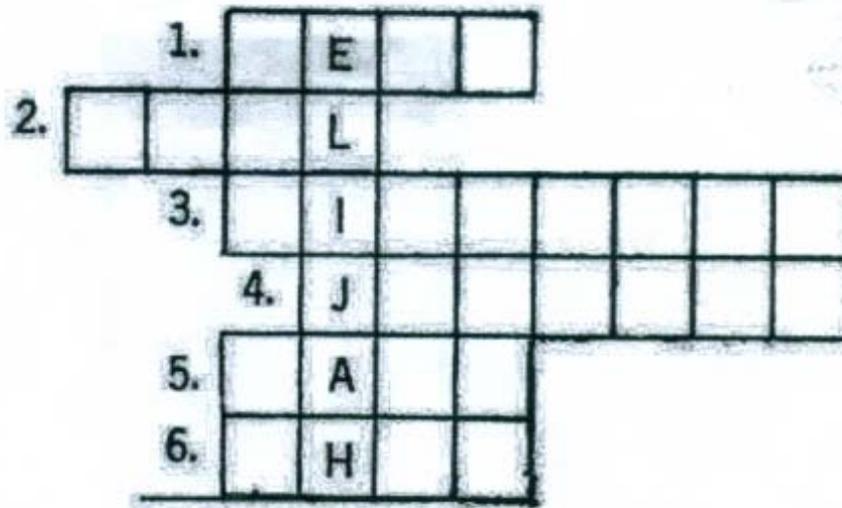
"He could do it," said Mother quietly. "But He knows what is best for each one of us. When we ask for something selfishly, then we shouldn't have what we are asking for. For weeks you have thought about nothing but that wagon. I think Jesus wants you to learn about the importance of things. And maybe when you can put what Jesus wants for you first, instead of thinking only of what you want" - Mother smiled down at Jonnie, "Then maybe He might help us get you the wagon after all."

Jonnie didn't say anything for a long time. At last he said in a small voice, "I see, I didn't ask Jesus whether He wanted me to have it. I just said, 'Give it to me.'"

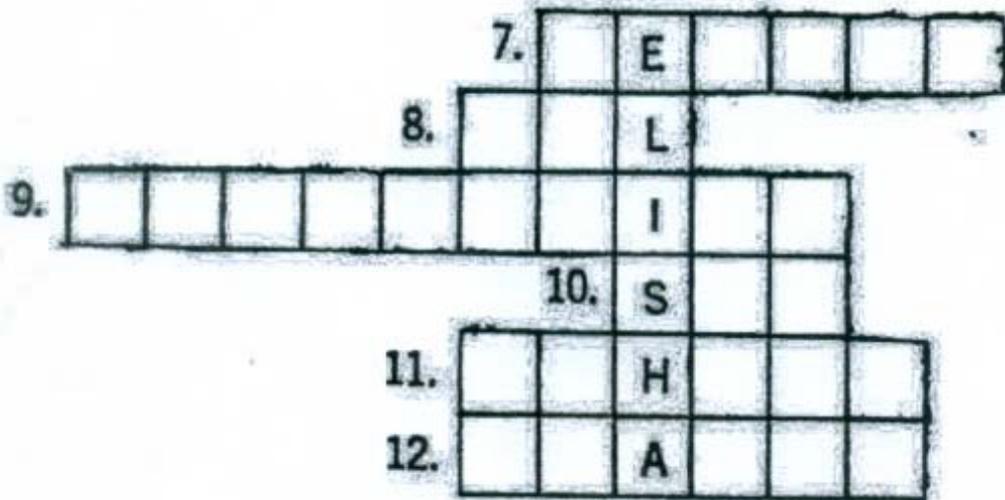
"That's about it," said Mother.

Jonnie reached up and gave Mother a big hug. "I was selfish. Next time I'll try to remember to be unselfish instead."

ELIJAH AND ELISHA



AND



2. Jezebel and her 450 prophets worshipped \_\_\_\_\_ (I Kings 18:19)
3. Naboth owned a \_\_\_\_\_ which Ahab wanted (I Kings 21:1-2)
4. \_\_\_\_\_ was Ahab's wife (I Kings 21:1-2)
5. Elijah said there would be no dew nor \_\_\_\_\_ until he spake the word (I Kings 17:1)
6. God sent Elijah to speak His message to \_\_\_\_\_ (I Kings 17:1)
7. Elijah was taken to \_\_\_\_\_ in a whirlwind (II Kings 2:11)
8. God increased the \_\_\_\_\_ until all of the vessels were filled (II Kings 4:2-6)
9. The great woman at Shunem was called the \_\_\_\_\_ (II Kings 4:12)
10. Elisha said God would give the great woman a \_\_\_\_\_ (II Kings 4:16)
11. Elisha's servant was called \_\_\_\_\_ (II Kings 5:20)
12. \_\_\_\_\_ was a captain of Syria, but he was a leper (II Kings 5:1)

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## **The Road To Calvary**

By David DeLong

The road our precious Savior walked  
To die upon a tree  
Was bitter as a man could bear--  
The road to Calvary.

He wasn't forced to walk this road,  
From it, He could be free;  
But, willingly He walked along  
The road to Calvary.

And looking far beyond the pain,  
He fully paid the fee;  
It was a price none else could pay,  
The road to Calvary.

And now, we praise our Lord, above:  
He died for you, for me;  
We praise Him that He fully walked  
The road to Calvary.



