

The Advocate of Truth





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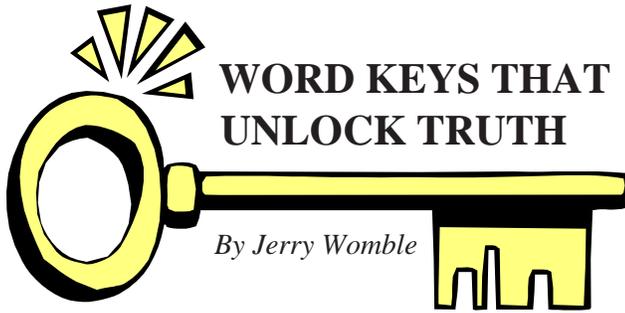
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WORD KEYS THAT UNLOCK TRUTH

By Jerry Womble

BAPTIZE

I am not thinking of the baptism that we perform today but the baptism that Paul spoke of in I Corinthians 10:1-2 when he was speaking of the baptism of the children of Israel as they were fleeing Egypt. He called this a baptism "in the cloud and in the sea". He said that by this they were baptized "unto Moses". He meant that by being under the cloud of protection and by following Moses through the sea, they had a type of initiation, a dedication or a devotion to Moses and the laws that God had given

to him. They were required to carry out the Passover on the 14th day of the first month and all of the other sacrifices throughout the rest of the year on their proper date and in the proper manner.

It seems that the Corinthians had in mind that once they had been baptized they could not fall away from God no matter what they did. But, in Chapter 9 Paul reminds them that they must always strive to live the righteous life by telling them that an athlete must always train for the race that is before him, and that Paul himself considered that he needed to keep his life under subjection so that he would not to be a castaway himself. Therefore, Paul uses the baptism statement in Chapter 10 to remind the Corinthians that the Israelites of Moses' time did fall away and that most of them were refused the right to enter into the Promised Land. If this had happened to Israel, those at Corinth needed to realize that it could happen to them also if they did not hold fast to their commitment.

This is a good lesson for us today to not only repent and be baptized; but also, if we are going to claim to be a child of God, then act like it.

BEFORE THE WORLD WAS



"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5).

No truer statements were ever made than those expressed in the following Scriptures: "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding

out! (Romans 11:33) "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah 55:8-9).

Let us consider four things which were predetermined before the foundation of the world.

THE LAMB OF GOD WOULD BE SLAIN.

"And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Revelation 13:8).

"Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Hebrews 9:25-26).

God did not wait until the last minute to provide a Lamb to be slain for the remission of our sins. This was not an afterthought. It was predetermined. In the wisdom and planning of God, His Father, Christ was slain from the foundation of the world. This became an actuality when He was slain by the wicked hands of men. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know: Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain" (Acts 2:22-23).

WE WERE CHOSEN "IN HIM."

"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in Love" (Ephesians 1:4). God chose us in Christ. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will" (verse 5).

"But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth" (II Thessalonians 2:13).

THE FATHER LOVED HIS SON.

"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24).

As much as the Father loved His Son, He gave Him that we might have everlasting life. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" (Romans 8:32).

THE SON OF GOD HAD GLORY.

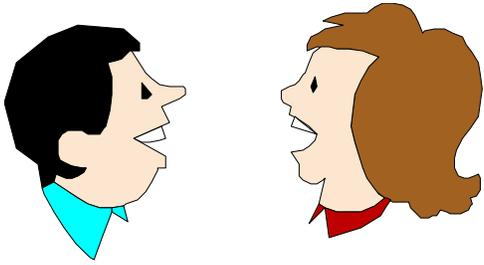
"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was" (John 17:5).

Jesus prayed: "...Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that they Son also may glorify thee...I have glorified thee on the earth... And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them..." (John 17:1,4,22).

All God has ever done, is doing, and ever will do in the future is for the good of mankind. He adequately provides for our physical and spiritual needs.

Contributed

The Lord's Supper will be celebrated on Sunday evening after sundown, April 1st. The footwashing will be done before the emblems are taken. The unleavened bread is blessed and broken first. Next, the grape juice is blessed and distributed.



BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY

A STUDY LESSON

"A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Proverbs 15:1).

The Scriptures are replete with references to both good and evil which proceeds from men's mouths. The tongue, although a very small part of the physical body is a force of such magnitude that the Apostle James likens it to a relatively small and seemingly insignificant rudder that guides a great ship. James then states, "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things..." (James 3:5).

The focus of this lesson is on both positive and negative aspects of the use of the tongue. First, we are told that our mouths must never be used in the act of tale bearing. Busybodying, or gossiping, is abhorrent to God because it seeks to destroy a man's character, rather than to build it up. It may be true. It may be false. However, it is never acceptable to God. Proverbs 11:13 reads, "A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter."

To properly use our tongues requires much watchfulness and self-examination. "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction" (Proverbs 13:3). This verse points out that our mouths can lead us in one of two directions: toward life, or toward destruction. Those who properly examine the words they might speak, and keep them as close as possible to those of their perfect pattern, Jesus, will be talking toward life. What kind of words did Jesus speak? "And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?" (Luke 4:22). Contrariwise, those who keep no watch on the lips will have much difficulty in their efforts to please God. A further point of this lesson is in regard to the manner of our speech. Is it filled with love, tenderness, and consideration for

others? Or is it harsh, critical, cold and calculating?

Many times the same words can be said in such different tones, or with mannerisms, that make the message given by such words and the way they are received by the hearers, entirely dissimilar. Truly, it is written: "A soft answer turneth away wrath: but grievous words stir up anger" (Proverbs 15:1).

The proper and careful use of our tongues can be a great blessing to others. "A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!" (Proverbs 15:23). Our Lord, the apostles, and other writers of the Holy Scriptures, are good examples of how the words of our mouths can be of value and blessing to those who hear them.

The lesson at hand is not that we cease from using our mouths, but that we steer its use toward more and more of those things which bring honor and glory to God, and are a help and encouragement to those around us. "But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ" (Ephesians 4:15).

This wise and proper use of our tongues does not come naturally because of our fleshly weakness. The more we study the faithful ones of old, and gain thereby greater insight in the knowledge of God and His ways, the better enabled we will be to use our tongues rightly, and to refrain from speaking when it might engender strife. We must spare our words. "He that hath knowledge spareth his words: and a man of understanding is of an excellent spirit" (Proverbs 17:27).

We gain the ability to know when and what to speak only by prayer and constant diligence that our words may be acceptable to God. "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O Lord, my strength, and my redeemer" (Psalm 19:14).

THE LORD'S SUPPER EMBLEMS

BY BOND TENNANT



As the children of God gather to partake of The Lord's Supper that Jesus instituted, they are reminded of the words that the Apostle Paul wrote as recorded in I Corinthians 11:23-26, "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." Let us briefly comment on those two symbolic emblems; the unleavened bread and the cup, or fruit of the vine.

When Jesus instituted the symbol of the bread, He told His disciples three things. First, He told them the bread represented His broken body. Second, He told them to eat of it. Third, He told them that they were to do it in remembrance of Him. What did He mean when He said that the bread represented His broken body? Jesus' body was representative of His perfect human life which was the corresponding price laid down in sacrifice to redeem mankind. As the typical Passover involved the "breaking" or slaying, of an unblemished lamb, so Jesus is also spoken of as a "lamb without blemish and without spot." "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Peter 1:18-19). He is the "...Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world"

(John 1:29). Revelation 13:8 records that Jesus was the "...Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Children of God partake of Jesus' broken body by accepting Him as their Redeemer. "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God" (Hebrews 12:2). It is only because of that broken body that we have a relationship with God. A living Jesus in the flesh even though perfect, could do nothing as far as our redemption is concerned. He had to die as a human being. His body had to be broken in death.

As with the bread, Jesus told His disciples and us, what the cup symbolized. He said, "..., Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:27-28). As the bread represented His broken body, so the cup represented the value, or merit, of that life represented in the blood. We read of the precious blood of Christ in I Peter 1:19. Hebrews 9:22 tells us, "And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission." We could have no standing before God if not for what Jesus accomplished on our behalf.

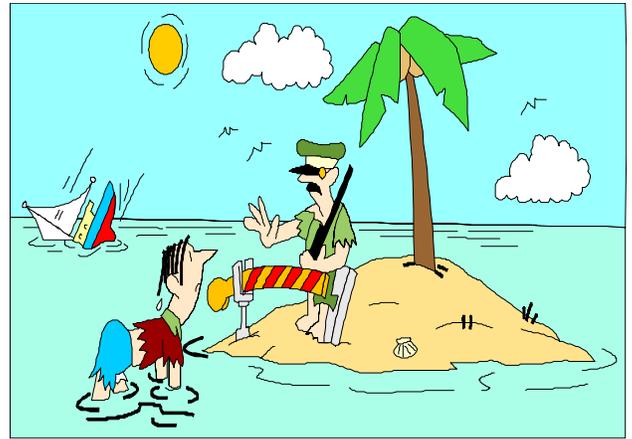
It is important to do as the Apostle Paul admonished in I Corinthians 11:28, "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup." Let's not forget that our worthiness to partake of these emblems, and our faithfulness in doing so, will not be measured so much by what we do the night we partake of them, but by what we do the day following and all the remaining days of our Christian walk.

DO UNTO OTHERS AS YOU WOULD LIKE THEM TO DO UNTO YOU

BY BIBI SHIMON ALLICOCK

Jesus said, "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets" (Matthew 7:12). Whatever we do, we must not do it with hypocrisy or partiality, but we must do it to the honor and glory of Almighty God because "The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Proverbs 15:3).

Many only live for worldly gain and knowledge, but at the end of the day it will come to nought, "Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (I Corinthians 1:25). "For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God" (verses 18-24). "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are



mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are" (verses 26-28). "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (I Corinthians 2:6-8).

Many people are so desperate to be rich materially that they become involved in smuggling and selling drugs. The effect of these drugs on them is very detrimental because they may become very disrespectful, and they also may involve themselves in stealing, prostitution, etc. Hence, both they and their parents have to suffer. When these innocent ones involve themselves in these gross practices, they degrade their parents, and their parents may become very devastated. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away" (II Timothy 3:1-5).

We are admonished that, "Whoso causeth the righteous to go astray in an evil way, he shall fall into his own

pit: but the upright shall have good things in possession. The rich man is wise in his own conceit; but the poor that hath understanding searcheth him out" (Proverbs 28:10-11).

"He that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house; but he that hateth gifts shall live" (Proverbs 15:27). "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Proverbs 16:25). "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the Lord weigheth the spirits" (verse 2). "He that hasteth to be rich hath an evil eye, and considereth not that poverty shall come upon him" (Proverbs 28:22). "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings" (Jeremiah 17:9-10).

"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, and that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne" (Revelation 3:17-21). "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness! No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon" (Matthew 6:19-24).

"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than them-

selves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. 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 that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:3-11).

We must realize that Almighty God is looking over our affairs! We should be very careful of our conversation and the way we treat our fellowmen. "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye, and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Matthew 7:1-5).

"But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you... And unto him that smiteth thee on the one cheek offer also the other; and him that taketh away thy cloke forbid not to take thy coat also. Give to every man that asketh of thee; and of him that taketh away thy goods ask them not again. And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise. For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. And if ye do good to them which do good to you, what thank have ye? for sinners also do even the same. And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, what thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the thankful and to the evil. Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful. Judge not, and

ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be condemned: forgive, and ye shall be forgiven: Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:27-38).

"Do ye look on things after the outward appearance? If any man trust to himself that he is Christ's, let him of himself think this again, that, as he is Christ's, even so are we Christ's" (II Corinthians 10:7). "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise" (verse 12). "But he that glorieth, let

him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth" (verses 17-18).

"Behold that which I have seen: it is good and comely for one to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it is his portion. Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this is the gift of God. For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth him in the joy of his heart" (Ecclesiastes 5:18-20).

DISCOVERY OF LATRINE SHEDS NEW LIGHT ON THE MYSTERY OF DEAD SEA SCROLLS

ANCIENT FIND ADDS TO TRADITIONAL VIEW LINKING SACRED SITE TO THE ESSENES SECT

*by Matti Friedman
Associated Press*

QUMRAN, WEST BANK - Researchers say their discovery of a 2,000-year-old toilet at one of the world's most important archaeological sites sheds new light on whether the ancient Essene community was home to the authors of many of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

In a new study, three researchers say they have discovered the outdoor latrine used by the ancient residents of Qumran, on the barren banks of the Dead Sea. They say the find proves the people living here two millennia ago were Essenes, an ascetic Jewish sect that left Jerusalem to seek proximity to God in the desert.

Qumran and its environs already have yielded many treasures: the remains of a settlement with an aqueduct and ritual baths, ancient sandals and pottery, and the Dead

Sea Scrolls.

Thanks to an Israeli anthropologist, an American textual scholar, and a French paleoparasitologist, researchers can now add another find: human excrement.

Competing theories.

The nature of the settlement at Qumran is the subject of a lively academic debate.

The traditional view, supported by yet a majority of scholars since the site was first excavated in the 1950s, is that the settlement was inhabited by Essene monks who observed strict rules of ritual purity and celibacy and who wrote many of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

The second school says the people living at Qumran

were farmers, potters or soldiers, and had nothing to do with the Essenes. The scrolls, according to this view, were written in Jerusalem and stashed in caves at Qumran by Jewish refugees.

The researchers behind the latrine finding, which is being published in the scholarly journal *Revue de Qumran*, say it supports the traditional view linking the residents of Qumran with the Essenes.

A description of Essene practice by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus in the first century notes that Essene rules required them to distance themselves from inhabited areas to defeat and "dig a trench a foot deep" which was then to be covered with soil.

Joe Zias, a Jerusalem-based anthropologist, to James Tabor, a Dead Sea Scrolls expert from the University of North Carolina, decided to look for the Qumran latrine. If it was far from the settlement ruins and if the excrement was buried, it would offer evidence the people living at the site were Essenes.

Zias and Tabor identified an area behind a rock outcropping, took soil samples and sent them to a French scientist specializing in ancient parasites, Stephanie Harter-

Lailheugue.

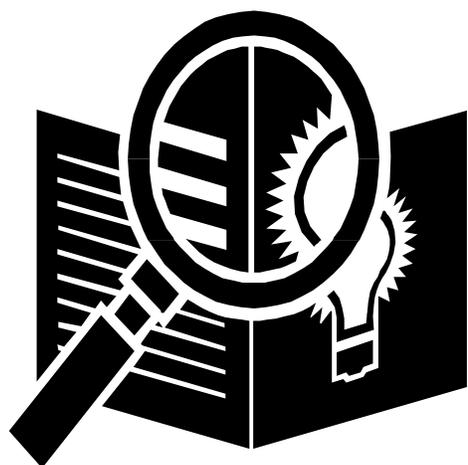
The samples tested positive for pinworms and two other intestinal parasites found only in human feces. Samples from locations nearer the settlement tested negative.

The excrement was found underground - meaning the feces had been buried, as required by Essene law - a nine-minute walk from the settlement.

"A lot of people were concerned with what went into the body, but the Essenes were perhaps the only group in antiquity concerned with what came out," Zias said. "No one else would have gone to the trouble of walking this far."

Still, there is no way to date the fecal parasites, which could have been left by Bedouin who are known to have inhabited the area. To counter this, the paper quotes a Bedouin scholar as saying the nomadic tribes do not bury their feces.

Archaeologists have already identified a toilet in Qumran - inside the settlement. But Zias believes it was for emergencies.



Revelation: Is This a Book of Mysteries?

Part One

By Del DeLong

To many people, the Book of Revelation is a book to be avoided. The prophecies therein seem to be a mystery and seem to be hard to understand. Let us take a closer look.

The word, revelation, seems to be a contradiction to the word mystery. To reveal means to show or make one to understand. Let us look into this "book of mysteries".

In the first chapter, we are told in verse 3, "*Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand*". It is interesting to note that those who read are called blessed, and it is important to keep those things which are written in this book.

The first three chapters are written to the seven

churches in Asia. There is a specific message given to each of the churches telling them where they are doing well, and also where they need improvement.

The message to the first church, Ephesus, praises their patience in well doing, but they are criticized for leaving their first love. In Revelation 2:2-5 we read, *"I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."*

The message to the second church, Smyrna, tells of their poverty and the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not. They are reminded to remain faithful until the end even if they are cast into prison. We see this in Revelation 2:9-10. *"I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."*

The third church, Pergamos, is praised for holding fast to the name of the Lord, and they have not denied the faith. They are upbraided for following the teachings of Balaam and the Nicolaitanes. These teachings lead the people away from the Lord and were contrary to His laws. We read this in Revelation 2:13-15. *"I know thy works and where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth. But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.*

So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate."

Church number four was Thyatira. Their charity, service and faith are praised along with their patience. The deeds which caused them to sin were compounded by their acceptance of the prophetess Jezebel who caused the people to commit spiritual fornication by breaking God's laws. In Revelation 2:19-21, we read, *"I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols. And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not."*

The fifth church, Sardis, was called dead, because their works were not found to be true. A few individuals kept the faith, but a warning was sent out to the rest to come back to the doctrine which was first given to them. We see this in Revelation 3:1-5. *"And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee. Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy. He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels."*

Church number six is Philadelphia. This church is praised, for they have kept God's word and have not denied His name. They are warned also about those who say they are Jews and are not. These belong to the synagogue of Satan. Because the church has kept God's Word, they are promised to be kept from the hour of temptation. Let us read this in Revelation 3:8-10. *"I know thy works:*

behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth."

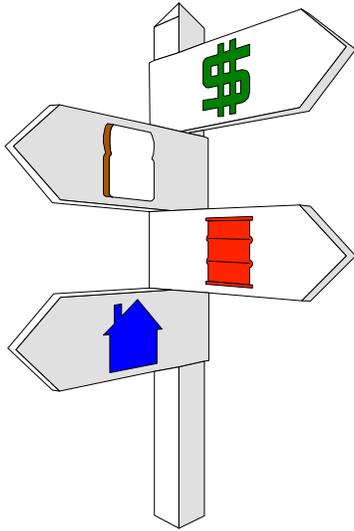
The last and seventh church is Laodicea. They are accused of being "lukewarm" - neither hot nor cold. They depended on their own wealth and goods. They thought that they needed nothing, but they were seeking after the wrong riches. The riches of this world were causing them to become spiritually poor. This is a trap many people fall into today. Let us read Revelation 3:15-19. *"I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."*

The churches listed here are not representative of present day or future churches. They were actual churches of John's time, and the problems described were actual situations in each of the churches. They were warned to remedy the problems, so they could be called true children of God. The problems that existed in those times are still problems we see in our churches today. The message to "fix the problems" can be applied to every one of us. In Revelation 3 verses 20 through 22, a message was made very clear to all of the churches back then, and it is even more urgent for us today: *"Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne,*

even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

The next chapter in the book of Revelation describes the beauty of God's throne. It is not a controversial chapter, but a very descriptive chapter - giving us a glimpse of God's dwelling place. There are wonderful beasts, and beautiful jewels with rainbows shining while thunderous noises are heard in the background. Seven Spirits surround the throne with powerful lamps of fire burning before the throne. A sea of glass spreads before the throne, clear as crystal. This sea will be described later as we further study this wondrous book. Strange-looking beasts worship the Lord and cast their crowns before him. Let us read about this in Revelation 4:3-11. *"And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. And before the throne there was a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four beasts full of eyes before and behind. And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle. And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created."*

We will continue our study in the next installment, and we will begin by looking at the Seven-Sealed Book.



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.

A STRETCH TOWARD GOD

Churches blend the discipline of yoga with biblical theology

by **Barbara Karkabi**
Houston Chronicle

Christian music plays in the background as the women take their places on cross-shaped mats.

For the next hour, Laura Gates gently leads them through exercises that may look like yoga but are known as "Praise Moves: The Christian Alternative to Yoga."

Instead of referring to the "downward-facing dog," a yoga posture that encourages flexibility and helps the flow of blood to the head, Gates calls the move the "tent" and recites a portion of Isaiah 54:2 ("Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwelling").

During the class at Second Baptist Church's Noth campus in kingwood, Gates' students may do as many as 23 different moves. Each posture has an accompanying Bible verse to put the focus on God. Classes begin and end with prayer.

The practice of yoga, which means "union" or "discipline," began in India 5,000 years ago and has evolved through the centuries. It became part of Hinduism as sages and priests used the postures during meditation to seek a union of body, mind and spirit. In the West, Hatha yoga,

with its emphasis on fitness and health, has become very popular and is considered more secular.

Though an estimated 15 million to 20 million people practice yoga in the United States, it has been controversial in some Christian churches for years. But with the rise of "Christian alternatives," some mind-sets are changing.

"Yoga is very closely identified with the Hindu religion," said the Rev. Gary Moore, senior associate pastor of Second Baptist Church.

"There are many wonderful physical benefits, but you need to be careful how you play the spiritual aspect of it. There are parts of it that are not acceptable to a Christian community. We take the best parts and apply it to an exercise regime."

Second Baptist's fitness center at Woodway offers "flexible strength" classes as an alternative. Teachers make sure that it's understood the class is purely physical, he said. Bible passages and prayers are generally used.

The Roman Catholic Church issued a warning about yoga and other Eastern practices in a 1989 document from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, then headed by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now pope Benedict XVI. In 2003, the church reaffirmed its position and warned against mixing Catholicism and Eastern practices in a kind of cafeteria of world religions, said Lawrence Cunningham, professor of theology at the university of Notre Dame.

"The Christian approach is fairly new," said Gates, to date the only certified Praise Moves instructor in the Hous-

ton area. "But as Christians, we believe that we can present it and God will open the door."

Gates, 62, took yoga classes for several years and enjoyed them, until one day she heard something troubling.

"It was like the lights went on," she recalled. "We were being asked to bow down to something, I don't even remember what it was, but it was like water thrown in my face. Under my breath I said, "I bow down to no one except my God, the Lord my God," and started praying. I decided it was not comfortable for me anymore."

Gates, who lives in Humble, began searching the Internet for a Christian alternative. She found what she was looking for with Lauette Willis and her Praise Moves program.

Willis, who lives in Oklahoma, had taught yoga for 20-plus years before becoming a Christian in 1987 and leaving her New Age past behind. She came to think of yoga as "the missionary arm of Hinduism and the New Age movement." But she was also aware of the physical benefits of stretching, and after prayerful thought came up with what she calls "a Christ-centered alternative."

Susan Bordenkircher takes a slightly different approach in her yoga ministry, (described in *Yoga for the Christians* We Publishing Group, \$20). Though she, too, has a "Christ-centered approach," she uses the traditional names for yoga position.

"I totally respect the way yoga has developed over the centuries," she said from her home in Alabama. "The difference between the two is the intention of the class. Instead of quieting yourself to find the divinity within yourself, we're looking for a closer relationship with God."

Bordenkircher, a Methodist who taught traditional yoga and other exercise classes for 11 years, incorporates Scripture verses as mantras, uses affirmations of Christianity with different movements and always ends with prayer.

"I feel strongly that God is using yoga in a way that is beneficial to Christians," she said. "Using the term is important to our ministry, because it shows yoga can be embraced by Christianity." Though no one in Houston is certified in Bordenkircher's *Yoga for Christians* yet, there are variations on the theme.

Judith Carman, a voice teacher, sees yoga as an extension of her voice lessons. She teaches yoga to the

students and is offering a five-week series on "Yoga as a Spiritual Practice" at Trinity Episcopal Church.

While Carman teaches yoga from her background as a Christian, she emphasizes that yoga is not a religion but a spiritual practice that originated in India.

"People and churches need to lose their fear of yoga," she said. "Yoga is nonsectarian in itself; it's how you choose to think about it. In the '60s, it did have the trappings of Hinduism. When I go to a yoga class, if there is a Hindu chant, it's not my tradition, but it's OK with me. But that puts a lot of people off."

Carman teaches traditional yoga positions, but when focusing on breathing or doing mantras, she repeats *maranatha*, an Aramic word that means "come, Lord." That's the approach used by the world Community for Christian Meditation, she said.

During class, they may use a Bible verse or a favorite quote, such as Mother Teresa's "in silence we're filled with the energy of God that makes us do all things in joy."

Traditional yoga teacher Joy Winkler has heard of Christian yoga but doesn't understand the need for it.

"I don't want to say anything negative, because if that works for people, I think it's amazing," Winkler said. "For me, yoga is so inclusive that I don't see the need; it meets people where they are."

Winkler has a studio in the Heights and has taught yoga at a Christian school. Her philosophy is that the benefits of yoga are universal, whether done at a gym, studio or church.

But Willis and Gates point to a recent Orlando *Sentinel* article quoting Sannyasin Arumugaswami, managing editor of *Hinduism Today*.

"Hinduism," he said, "is the should of yoga, based as it is on Hindu scripture and developed by Hindu sages. Yoga opens up new and more refined states of mind, and to understand them one needs to believe and understand the Hindu way of looking at God...A Christian trying to adapt these practices will likely disrupt their own Christian belief."

Ramesh Bhutada, a Houston businessman and Hindu who studied yoga for 15 years, disagrees with Arumugaswami, saying yoga is open to everyone.

"They will get the benefits, regardless of faith or religion," said Bhutada, a member of the Swami Vivekananda Yoga institute in Houston. "If one goes into deeper, very advanced aspects of yoga, or if they go into an ashram or

become a sannyasin (someone who renounces the material world) then a Christian might have to resolve that."

Suzy Shapiro, president of the Yoga Association of Houston, said that while there are fundamentalist and liberals in Christianity and Hinduism, yoga is ultimately what you make of it.

Comment

Why would anyone want a practice like yoga, which is rooted in Hinduism, or any part of it practiced in their church?

This writer has read in *The Facts On Hinduism*, by John Ankerberg & John Weldon, that "True yoga has one specific goal: unite the person to Brahman through experience of mystical consciousness. The individual is to realize that he is one essence with God-i.e., Brahman itself."

This book also states: "According to Hinduism, Brahman is wholly indifferent to what goes on in the world. Brahman is impersonal; it does not speak and is not concerned with good or evil. It is unconcerned with men and women. It has no cares because it has no feeling. It is unconcerned with morals because it has no values. Thus the one who 'knows' Brahman knows that there is no right or wrong, nor is there a world in which they actually happen. In Hinduism the truly 'enlightened' individual is indifferent to all actions, good or evil."

These are the beliefs of Hinduism in America concerning the world we live in: "Ultimately the world we live in is an illusion, worth nothing."

Knowing the true origin of yoga and what it means, who can practice it and have a clear conscience toward God?

TALKING WITH GOD

Talking with God means much more than many people realize. We call it prayer, but prayer is not always talking with God. Some prayers never get farther than the human voice carries. Some people in praying want to do all the talking. This would be talking to God, not with Him. We lose many blessings by not lingering at the altar of prayer, whether in the church building or alone in our secret closet, to hear what God has to say to us.

Then there are others, who if their prayers are not answered at once say there is nothing to prayer. But perhaps there is something for us to do in order for our prayers to be answered. We might pray for a good crop and then sit down and wait for the Lord to pull the weeds, and stare at the ground. God will do His part when we do ours.

There is much that depends on us as to whether God hears and answers. It is the effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous person, a person who is in earnest with God, that He hears. We must be willing for God to have His way. He knows best, and sometimes we might be selfish about the things for which we are asking. The prayer of faith is the effectual prayer.

Some people do not pray often enough to get acquainted with God, and thus are timid and afraid. We must come to God in prayer with love in our hearts and speak up boldly for what we need. God does not always give us what we want. He has never promised to do that, but He sees that we receive what we need.

Many have set a time to pray, and though they never fail when the time comes, it has only become a habit with them, and thus does not come from the desire of the heart. This might explain why some people are surprised when their prayers are answered. The people praying for Peter's release were astonished when they saw him at the door. This shows how much faith they had. But the little girl who answered his call at the door must have believed her prayer was going to be answered.

The person who prays for forgiveness and yet will not speak to some acquaintance when they meet, need not expect to get into the Kingdom, for God will not forgive unless we forgive. Stephen, as he prayed for help, did not forget to pray for even his enemies who were stoning him to death.

When we can talk to God as did Hezekiah when he was sick, unto death, then we can get results. Let us pray without ceasing never becoming discouraged but always ready to say, "Not my will, but thine be done."

From an old Sabbath School Lesson



Questions and Answers

Question: What is involved in leading a good meeting?

Answer: How often have you heard the statement: "A leader is born, not made"? While there is some truth in this statement, for some people seem to be natural leaders, it is also true we need to develop leadership. It is not a light thing to be given a position of leadership. Great is the responsibility, for the success or failure of the meeting depends largely on the way it is conducted.

There are certain things that need to be observed if the meeting is to be a success and to the glory of God alone. One sign is there should be no conclusion of the service. We're warned against this in I Corinthians 14:33 and 40: "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints...Let all things be done decently and in order." It is quite clear that there may be times when the adversary will seek to bring disorder into the Lord's service. Someone may interrupt the speaker; others may decide to carry on a whispered conversation during the message; others may introduce some teaching that is contrary to that of the Word. All of this needs being considered and the leader must seek the face of the Lord for guidance that he may be able to keep all things under control. However, as leaders, we must not wait until the confusion breaks out, but be prepared in prayer so that we will be able to deal with it in God's way and manner.

A meeting, in order to be a success, must be well-planned in advance. Last minute preparations do not

work. Time to prepare must be given to each person that is to be on the program, especially to the one that will bring the message. The leader cannot give this assignment a short time before the service, and expect that the subject will be handled in a satisfactory way. The same goes for Sabbath School. Each Sabbath must be prepared for. Each teacher must take time during the week to prepare giving the lesson the best way so that the members can get the most out of a lesson. Our God is a God of order, and when we have time to study and search the Scriptures for material for our message or lesson, He expects us to do it. Careless preparation means little blessings or no blessings at all.

It is important that the leader doesn't arrive at the last minute to take over, but that he is there well in advance of the service. There may be new persons who should be welcomed. There may be last minute things to be put in order, and if this is all attempted just as the clock strikes for the service to begin, confusion will be the result. If the start of the service is not right, how can we expect the finish to be right?

The secret for the successful meeting is for the leader to keep Christ in the center. Do not allow anything to be done or as in the service that tends to distract the attention of the young people away from the spiritual. In this respect, beware of lags of time in the program. Illustrations are good when they are used as windows to open up some Bible truth. However, stories that are only told

to fill up space or to take up time should be avoided.

It is important for the leader to keep before him the fact that there may be some people that do not know anything about the Bible. He can then get someone to turn to the references for the visitor so that they can become used to handling the Word of God and also to let them prove what the leader is quoting is right. Never allow a stranger to feel out of place. Never let a stranger leave without a word of friendliness and an invitation to return. We believe that many of our groups would be much larger if more thought was given to the stranger. Beware of cliques and painful actions. The spirit of exclusiveness can hinder the work of the church. The spirit of togetherness should prevail in the service of the Lord. We are leaders together with Him.

When God does call a man to be a leader, you can then count on the fact that the Father in heaven will be with him and will enable him. When God called Moses to go forth as the leader of His people Israel, and to deliver them out of the hands of the wicked Pharaoh, Moses hesitated. Can you not understand him when he said, "Who am I, that I should go to pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?" How often has this question been repeated by such who have been selected for leadership? It is natural to say, "Who am I?" However, the Lord understood the heart of Moses and He promised, "Certainly I will be with thee." However, Moses was still not sure of his calling, and he protested saying, "Behold, they will not believe me, nor hearken unto my voice; for they will say, The Lord hath not appeared unto thee." Moses had still another excuse: "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto me thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue."

Do these arguments sound familiar? Have you ever heard similar ones falling from the lips of those who have been called to leadership? Take hold of the promises given to Moses. "Now therefore go, and I will be with thy mouth and teach thee what thou shalt say. Be sure to keep Christ in the center of all our business activities, and He will add His blessing.

Once again we hear a warning concerning the conduct of the meeting. Here is red light that we should ever keep before us in the leading of a service: "Let all things be done decently and in order." Can you not hear the words of the prophet: "But the Lord is in his holy temple:

let all the earth keep silence before him" (Habakkuk 2:20).

Here are a few pointers for the leader. Be sure the meeting has been well-announced and all that is possible done to create an interest. Do your best to inspire the listeners to get busy and bring others. Let each one try to bring in at least one during the year. If perchance the leader recognizes signs of lack of interest in the meetings, then all possible should be done to get to the basis of the problem. Have the meetings not been sufficiently interesting to keep up the attendances? Have they been backed with prayer? Has there not been given enough time to visitation of the members? Has all the responsibility been carried by a few while the others have been left on the outside? Have the people been encouraged to engage in Christian work and take an active part in the life of the church?

A capable leader can be a real incentive to the youth to inspire them into service for their Lord. He needs to have not only talents for successful leadership, but also a real spiritual vision for the development of the church, along with its youth.

The leader has the responsibility to so arrange the opening part of the meeting that it prepares the way for the message that is to follow. A lively song service is always good, but it must never get beyond the stage where it loses its atmosphere of worship reverence.

See that the whole program leads up to a climax and that the interest increases until the reaction is "oh, is it over so soon?" The people should go away with the interest already quickened for the next meeting. A great deal of this responsibility rests with the leader.

Question: Did Delilah really cut Samson's hair?

Answer: Delilah is often pictured shearing off Samson's hair, the source of his strength, as he sleeps peacefully in her lap. Some pictures show Delilah using scissors to perform this unkindest cut of all, but scissors were unknown in ancient Israel.

Other illustrators show Delilah using a more plausible implement, a razor or knife. But this representation is still inaccurate. Delilah did not do the deed herself. She called in a man to shave off Samson's locks as he slept. "And she made him sleep upon her knees; and she called for a man, and she caused him to shave off the seven locks of his head; and she began to afflict him, and his strength went from him" (Judges 16:19).



India

Dedication of the new church building in Jannaram





The parade and procession to the new church building

The ribbon cutting ceremony by Elder Kanakarathnam



The congregation gathered for the service

LESSON I

ELIJAH IS TRANSLATED TO ANOTHER COUNTRY**Scripture Reading: II Kings 2:1-15.****Golden Text: II Kings 2:11.**

"And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven."

NOTE: In our last lesson we studied about Elijah meeting Elisha and anointing him a prophet. Elisha continues to follow Elijah as he is trained to take over for Elijah when he is gone. In this lesson we will study about how Elijah gets to another country.

1. What did Elijah tell Elisha to do, and what was Elisha's reply? II Kings 2:1-2.
2. While at Bethel who comes to talk to Elisha, and what do they say to him? II Kings 2:3.
3. Where are the next two places that Elijah and Elisha go, and who meets Elisha at these places? II Kings 2:4-7.
4. What does Elijah do in II Kings 2:8?
5. What does Elisha ask Elijah to do for him, and what is Elijah's reply? II Kings 2:9-10.
6. What became of Elijah in II Kings 2:11?

NOTE: Elijah was taken up in the atmosphere and sent to another country. Ten years later Elijah sends a letter to the king (II Chronicles 21:12). This shows us that it was just as Enoch was translated to another place so that the native people could not continue to harass him (Jude 14,15).

7. Did Elisha see Elijah taken up, and what did he do next? II Kings 2:12-14.

8. What did the sons of the prophets say and do when they saw Elisha? II Kings 2:15.

NOTE: You can read more about Elisha and the miracles he performs in the book of II Kings.

LESSON II

DANIEL**Scripture Reading: Daniel 1:3-21.****Golden Text: Daniel 1:9.**

"Now God had brought Daniel into favour and tender love with the prince of the eunuchs."

NOTE: We are going to study about Daniel and three other faithful Israelites that were selected to work in the palace for King Nebuchadnezzar. Let us find how God blesses these men for their obedience.

1. What qualities did King Nebuchadnezzar want in children that were chosen to stand in the king's palace? Daniel 1:3-4.
2. Who was chosen, and what was ordered to give to them? Daniel 1:5-6.
3. What new names were given to these four young men? Daniel 1:7.
4. What request did Daniel ask of the prince of the eunuchs, and was God with him? Daniel 1:8-9.
5. Of what was the prince of the eunuchs afraid, and what did Daniel suggest that they do? Daniel 1:10-13.

NOTE: Pulse is eatable seeds such as peas, beans, or lentils.

6. Did the prince consent to Daniel's idea, and what happened at the end of ten days? Daniel 1:14-16.

7. What did God give to the four young men for their

obedience? Daniel 1:17.

8. When King Nebuchadnezzar asked to see the children that were chosen, what did he discover about Daniel and his three friends? Daniel 1:18-21.

LESSON III

DELIVERANCE FORM THE FIERY FURNACE

Scripture Reading: Daniel 3:1-30.

Golden Text: Daniel 3:17.

"If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king."

NOTE: In our last lesson we met Daniel and his three faithful friends. God blessed them. In chapter two of Daniel you can read about King Nebuchadnezzar's dream and how God helped Daniel interpret this dream. Daniel is made ruler over the whole province of Babylon and chief of the governors over all the wise men. We will now study about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and how God delivers them from a fiery furnace.

1. What did King Nebuchadnezzar have made, and who did he order to come and see it? Daniel 3:1-3.

2. What were these people ordered to do in Daniel 3:4-5?

3. What would happen to those who did not worship the golden image, and were there people who obeyed this? Daniel 3:6-7.

4. Who did not serve the king's golden image? Daniel 3:8-12.

5. King Nebuchadnezzar is very angry at the report he hears and orders the three men to come. What did he ask of the three men, and what was their reply? Daniel 3:13-18.

6. What did the King order to be done to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? Daniel 3:19-21.

7. What happened to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego and to the men that threw them into the fire? Daniel 3:22-23.

8. What did King Nebuchadnezzar see in the furnace, and what did he say to Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego? Daniel 3:24-27.

9. After seeing the miracle of the three men being saved from the fire, what did King Nebuchadnezzar say, and what became of the three faithful men? Daniel 3:28-30.

LESSON IV

THE WRITING ON THE WALL

Scripture Reading: Daniel 5:1-31.

Golden Text: Daniel 5:5.

"In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace:..."

NOTE: We last studied about Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego being saved from the fiery furnace. In chapter 4 of Daniel, King Nebuchadnezzar has another dream that Daniel interprets for him. In this next lesson we will now study about King Belshazzar and how Daniel is called to help him.

1. Who is Belshazzar and what do we find him doing in Daniel 5:1-4?

2. While King Belshazzar is at his feast, what strange thing does he see happen? Daniel 5:5. What did the king do after he saw this hand write on the wall? Daniel 5:6-7.

4. Could the King's wise men interpret the writing on the wall? Daniel 5:8-9.

5. What did the Queen suggest that the King should do in

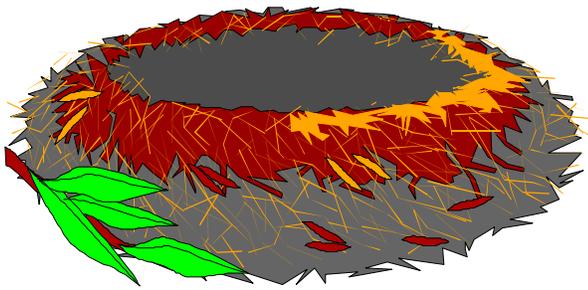
finding out what the message is? Daniel 5:10-12.

6. When Daniel was brought to see King Belshazzar, what did he say to him? Daniel 5:13-16.

7. Summarize in your own words what Daniel tells the king in Daniel 5:17-24.

8. What were the words that were written on the wall, and what did they mean? Daniel 5:25-28.

9. What was Daniel's reward, and what became of King Belshazzar? Daniel 5:29-31.



BIRDS BUILD NESTS

Dr. Walter Wilson

I watched a sparrow build a nest outside my window. It flew up under the eaves with a bit of grass in its beak, which the wind immediately blew off the ledge and onto the top of a rosebush below. The little bird watched it fall, then promptly went after another spear of grass.

The wind was blowing a wild gale. The sparrow put its little feet down upon the piece of grass until the gust of wind had passed. Then quickly it flew down and picked up in its beak the piece that was still hanging on the top of the rosebush. This it laid beside the other, standing on both pieces during each succeeding gust of wind.

With great patience it continued this way for some time until it had woven together enough grass to make a firm clump. This it fastened under the leaves.

Now that the nest was strong enough to support it-

self, the little bird took time to fly around to find what it wanted for lining. It brought bits of string, feathers and leaves, with which it lined the nest, making it soft and comfortable for baby birds who soon would be living there.

Who taught the birds to do this? Did you ever hear of a school in which birds could be taught nest-building? The mother birds never teach their little ones to build nests; neither do the fathers. Certainly only God could put such knowledge into the hearts of the baby birds. The same Lord wants to teach children to belong to Him by faith in the Lord Jesus, so that they too may be able to do the things that God wants them to do.

A certain kind of duck builds a nest about the size of a dinner plate; she makes it so light it floats on the water. She builds it among the reeds in the river. On three sides of the nest, she weaves part of the nest into three loops, which fasten around three upright reeds growing in the water. These prevent the nest from floating away. When the tide comes in, the nest slides up along these reeds; when the tide goes out, the nest slips back into position again.

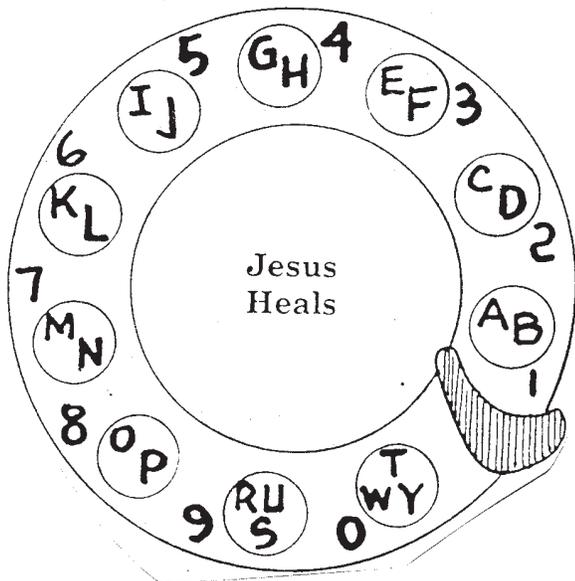
Did this little duck read a book telling her how to make her nest in the water? Of course not! It was the same God who wants us to love and trust Him, and to be saved by His grace from sin, who put this marvelous instinct into the mind of the duck. He wants to show us His way in our lives, so let us trust and obey Him and He will give us His Spirit to direct our paths.

ARE YOU IN NEED?

Are you sad and lonely, dear?
 Jesus Christ is always near.
 Are you fretful, peeved and blue?
 Jesus is a Helper true.
 Are you wishing for a friend?
 Jesus' friendship will not end.
 Are you longing to be pure?
 Jesus' Blood can cleanse for sure.
 Are you wishing for some love?
 You can have it from above.
 Are you needing ANYTHING?
 Ask the lovely Heavenly King.

Refer to the telephone dial to identify the people Jesus healed. Convert the number sequences to the appropriate letters on the dial. For example, 7-1-7 on the dial spells M or N, A or B, M, A, and N are the letters that spell man.

1. 7-1-7 0-5-0-4 0-5-0-4-3-9-3-2 4-1 7-2
2. 0-8-7-1-7 0-5-0-4 8-6-1-4-9-3
3. 7-1-7 0-5-0-4 2-9-8-8-9-0
4. 9-8-7 8-3 7-8-1-6-3-7-1-7
5. 7-1-7 0-5-0-4 8-1-6-9-0
6. 2-1-9-4-4-0-3-9 8-3 5-1-5-9-9-9
7. 7-1-7 1-0 0-4-3 8-8-8-6
8. 1-6-5-7-2 7-1-7



GIFTS FROM GOD

God has given each of His little creatures special abilities. He has also given each of His children certain gifts or talents. The verse below tells us how He wants us to use these gifts. The words are in the wrong order. Rearrange them so that they make sense. The answer is in I Peter 4:10. "As God man of every grace hath manifold received the the of gift stewards even good so as another minister to the one same."

Answers to Telephone Puzzle:

Luke 6:5; Mark 5:34; Luke 14:1-5; John 4:49; Matthew 9:2; Luke 8:41-42; John 5:2,9; John 9:1-14.

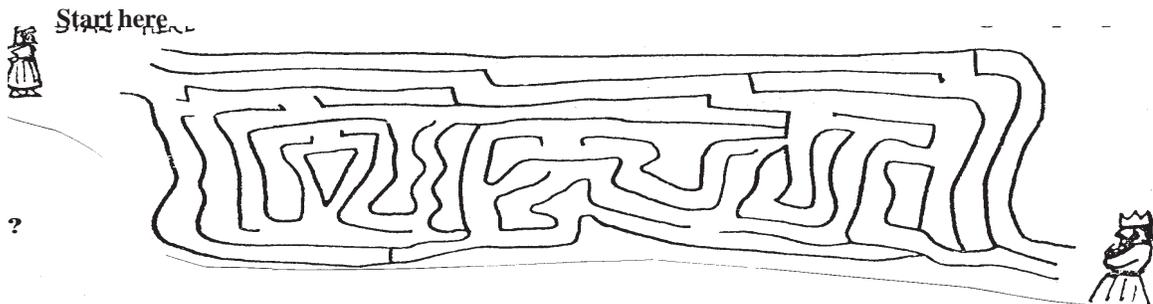
"Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value then many sparrows." Luke 12:6-7.

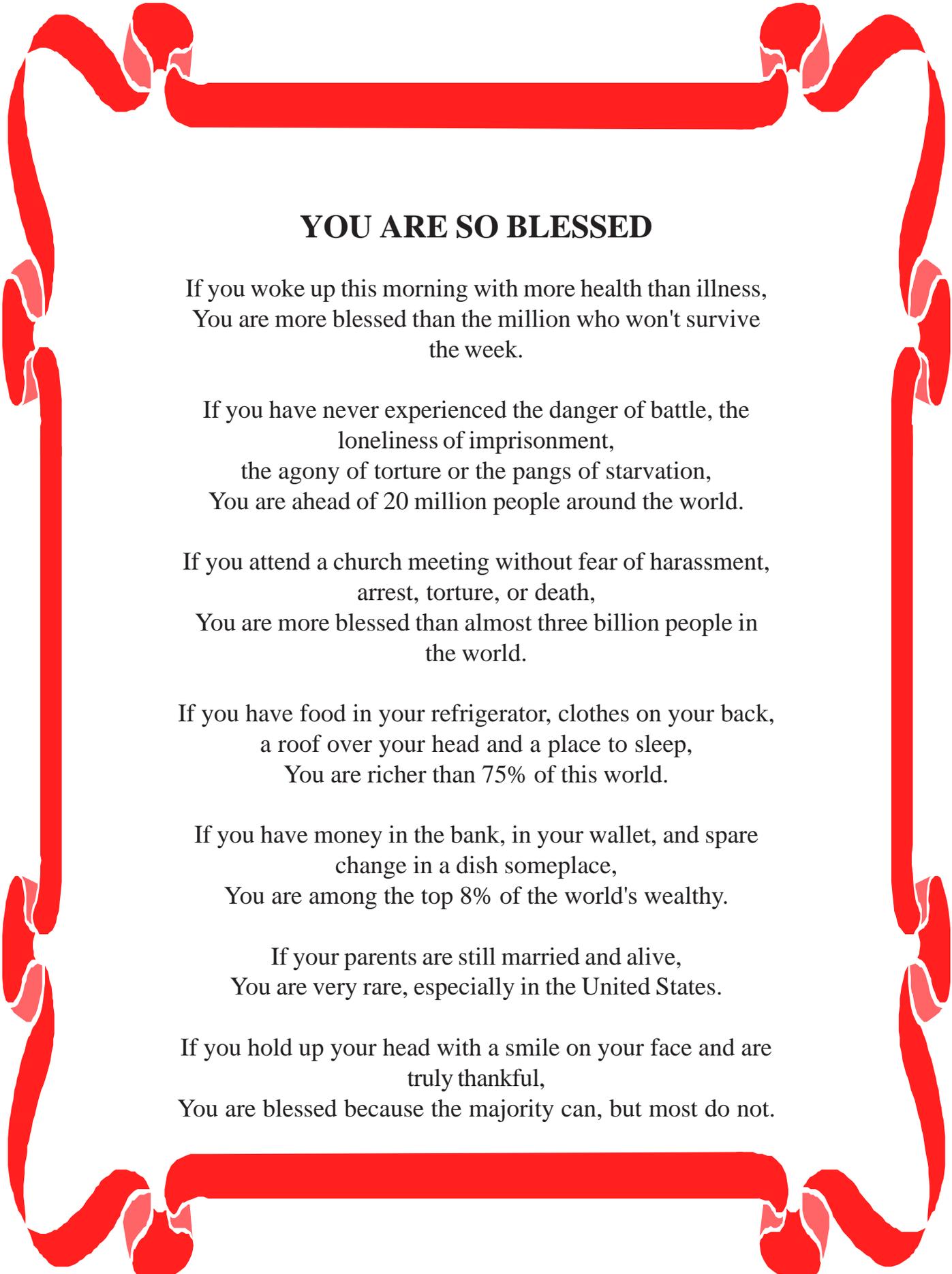
THE VOICE OF GOD

by Henry Boye

To hear the Voice of God,
You need not climb a steeple;
Look around you everywhere,
He dwells among the people.

Can you get Moses to the king through this maze?





YOU ARE SO BLESSED

If you woke up this morning with more health than illness,
You are more blessed than the million who won't survive
the week.

If you have never experienced the danger of battle, the
loneliness of imprisonment,
the agony of torture or the pangs of starvation,
You are ahead of 20 million people around the world.

If you attend a church meeting without fear of harassment,
arrest, torture, or death,
You are more blessed than almost three billion people in
the world.

If you have food in your refrigerator, clothes on your back,
a roof over your head and a place to sleep,
You are richer than 75% of this world.

If you have money in the bank, in your wallet, and spare
change in a dish someplace,
You are among the top 8% of the world's wealthy.

If your parents are still married and alive,
You are very rare, especially in the United States.

If you hold up your head with a smile on your face and are
truly thankful,
You are blessed because the majority can, but most do not.