

# *The Advocate of Truth*

*Keeping The  
Heart*

*Heirs of God*

*Checkmarks*

*Jesus Said,  
"Come"*

**Deuteronomy 33:26**

"There is none like unto ... God ... , who rideth upon the heaven in thy help, and in his excellency on the sky."



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**The Lord's Supper this year will occur on Thursday evening, April 9, 2009 (Roman time), after sundown. This is the beginning of April 10th (Bible time)**



# *Keeping The Heart*

*Selected by Bond Tennant*

Our Lord considered the matter of keeping the heart very important. He gave us many admonitions to help us understand what is required of us to keep our hearts properly. Mentioned in the Scriptures are many attributes, or elements, of a sanctified heart. Children of God must have them continually imbedded in their minds.

Meekness and humility are two of these attributes. "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls" (Matthew 11:29). Humility is a very important element to have in the heart. Jesus was a perfect example of One possessing true humility. In the verse just quoted, He indicated that if we become yoked with Him, and learn from Him, we will become like Him in meekness and humility of heart. In so doing, we will find peace and rest for our souls. Following in the footsteps of Jesus is another way we develop a meek and humble attitude. We sit at the feet of Jesus every time we come together for fellowship and study. Jesus said that he would be with us on these occasions. He does this through the Spirit of Truth. If we humble ourselves, we will find it possible to learn valuable lessons from every member of the body, even those who may appear to be the weakest saints among us. Let us have meekness and humility in our hearts.

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding" (Proverbs 3:5). We must trust with all our hearts. We could go nowhere if trust and confidence were not a part of our heart condition. In the quietness of study and meditation, it is easy to trust in the written Word of God. However, many times we lean on our own understanding in meeting the trials and experiences in our daily lives. Many times we fail to apply the things we have learned from His Word. Let us learn to seek His will and guidance in all things pertaining to our daily lives, and then to follow it in our decisions, words,

and actions. If we have this trustful attitude of heart along with submissiveness to His leading, we will be richly blessed with the guidance of our Heavenly Father.

Obedience is another important element in the keeping of the heart. "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart" (Psalm 119:2).

Obedience is a universal law of God. None can have everlasting life without learning this fundamental principle. For the children of God, this means a conscientious doing of the Lord's will daily, and a sincere application of the principles of truth and righteousness in their lives. The Psalmist declares that this is not something we can do halfheartedly, but we must give wholehearted obedience to the Lord. We must obey, not out of being forced, but because our hearts delight to do God's will. "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Psalm 40:8).

Peace is also important in the keeping of the heart. "And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful" (Colossians 3:15). The peace of God is wonderful! Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you..." (John 14:27). We can lose that peace of God simply by partaking of the things of the world. We must not let the cares, ambitions, fears, etc. that are so much a part of the world cause us to lose favor with our Lord. Let us not allow anything in this life to interfere with the peace of God ruling in our hearts.

Love is a very important ingredient that we must have in our hearts. "And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might" (Deuteronomy 6:5). Nothing else would matter if we did not have love in our hearts. It is wholehearted love when we love God with all our hearts. Nothing short of that is acceptable to God. "We love him, because he first

loved us" (I John 4:19). We increase our love for God by learning more about Him through the study of His Word. In this way, we are drawn into a closer fellowship with Him. Genuine love of God is in proportion to our knowledge and understanding. We love God because we know something of His character and plan. He has revealed Himself to us in order that we can love Him. He wants our love and adoration. Our love for Him is increased as we study and seek to increase our understanding of His Word and His will for us. As we come to know more about our brethren and their faithfulness to the truth, our love for them increases. We love them in the same way that Jesus

loved Peter, James, and John more than the others because of their great zeal.

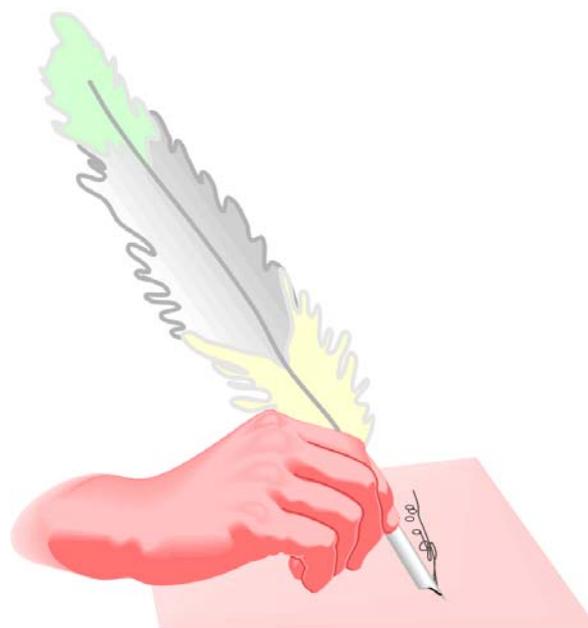
The last necessary heart ingredient which we consider is patience. "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh" (James 5:7-8). We may not always be as patient as we would like to be, but it must be a part of our heart condition. With patience, we must wait upon the Lord in all things.

# Heirs of God

By David DeLong

Children of God are to keep His commandments, not in an attempt to *earn* salvation (part of God's inheritance), but to remain qualified as heirs for *receiving* His inheritance. This may sound confusing at first, but the proper understanding of this concept is vital for being an heir of God and inheriting His vast riches.

Receiving eternal life and being in God's kingdom is all about inheritance and heirship. We read in Colossians 1:12-14, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins."



We understand the principle of inheritance and heirship in the physical world. A person does not need to earn another's inheritance that has already been left to him or her in a will. The only requirement to receiving the inheritance is that the person be a *bona fide* (genuine) heir. Now, this heir will automatically receive the inheritance at a specified time--with one exception: the person becomes disqualified (disinherited) as being an heir. What could cause this situation to happen? Usually it is due to the improper actions of the heir. A son, for example, may become disqualified from his father's inheritance because of "wild living," which puts reproach upon the father's (and the son's) good name.

Let us see how this is shown in the book of Titus.

Chapter 3, verses 5-8 reads: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men."

We are made heirs then, "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us." This is done by "washing of regeneration" (including baptism), "and renewing of the Holy Ghost" (hands of minister/s laid upon the person after baptism to receive the Holy Spirit. See Acts 8:14-17.) The reception of the Holy Spirit is actually "the earnest ('pledge' --NASB) of our inheritance" (see Ephesians 1:11-14). It is like receiving a "down payment" now of the inheritance to come. Heirship has now been conferred upon the believer. However, the person, to remain a bona fide heir, is under obligation to "be careful to maintain good works."

What do these "good works" include?

First, and foremost, we must *love God*. James 2:5 tells us, "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" Jesus made it plain that to inherit eternal life we are to love God with all our being, and our neighbor as ourself (Luke 10:25-28).

Another qualification for heirship is that we suffer with Christ. We read about this in Romans 8:14-17. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."

Jesus tells His followers that unless they forsake all that they have, they cannot be His disciples (Luke 14:33). But listen to what the disciple will receive when he does forsake all for Jesus: "And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall re-

ceive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life" (Matthew 19:29).

A disciple cannot be lacking in zeal for the Lord and His work, but as the writer of Hebrews 6: 11,12 admonishes: "And we desire that every one of you do shew 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." (See also Colossians 3:23,24).

Obedience to the Lord is always a requirement for heirship. We find concerning Jesus and His disciples, "Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered; And being made perfect, he became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Hebrews 5:8,9).

This is apparently what Jesus was trying to convey to the rich young ruler who came to Him. We find the account in Luke chapter 18, verses 18-23. "And a certain ruler asked him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life? And Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, that is, God. Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Honour thy father and thy mother. And he said, All these have I kept from my youth up. Now when Jesus heard these things, he said unto him, Yet lackest thou one thing: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me. And when he heard this, he was very sorrowful: for he was very rich."

Notice the three points that Jesus emphasized to this man for inheriting eternal life. First, He informed him that he must keep God's commandments. Second, he must forsake all that he had. (Whether the Lord asks us to *sell* all that we have and give to the poor or not, we must also forsake all that we have.) Third, he was to follow Jesus as Lord of his life.

Regarding the keeping of God's commandments, we read in Revelation 22:14, "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." This is a part of the inheritance of the saints. Having a *right* to the tree of life and entering in to the New Jerusalem because of keeping God's commandments are privileges of heirship.

Matthew chapter 25, verses 31-46 used to be some-

what of a puzzle to me. This passage tells about the time when Jesus comes again and sits upon His throne judging all nations. The sheep (“blessed of my Father”) are set on Jesus’ right hand, while the goats (“ye cursed”) are set on His left. Verses 34-36 informs us: “Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: For I was an hungred, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.”

What puzzled me was that the passage sounded as if one could *earn* salvation by doing the good works that Jesus listed. Now, however, seeing these verses in the light of the responsibilities of heirship (“inherit the kingdom prepared for you”), it makes sense to me that only a true heir of God could bring such glory to Christ by doing these good works. In other words, doing these good works as a believer (“sheep”) is proof that the “doer” is a qualified heir of God’s kingdom.

The situation of the “goats” in this parable also deserves some thought. By not doing the good works mentioned in the passage, the goats show that they either never were an heir of God, or else they have lost their heirship by living selfish (unfruitful) lives. (Notice that Jesus, in John 15:2 the first part says, “Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away...”).

The above parable shows that not inheriting the kingdom can come about because of sins of omission. Sins of commission can also cause a person to not inherit the kingdom. We find this latter situation in Galatians 5:19-21. “Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, Idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.”

So adamant was the Apostle Paul about this subject that he wrote not only to the Galatians about it, but also to the Ephesians. “For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God” (Ephesians 5:5). In fact, he goes beyond the works of the flesh, to flesh itself. “Now this I say, brethren, that

flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption” (I Corinthians 15:50).

That one can be disinherited is further emphasized by Paul when he wrote, “But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway” (NASB--“disqualified”, I Corinthians 9:27).

Let us now follow this fascinating theme of inheriting God’s kingdom and eternal life from the pages of Scripture.

Heirship begins with Christ, Himself. In the parable of the householder, Matthew 21:33-41, we read of a householder (God) who “planted a vineyard” and “let it out to husbandmen” (children of Israel). These husbandmen beat and killed servants that were sent to them to “receive the fruits” of the vineyard. Then the householder sent his son to the husbandmen. We learn in verses 38-41: “But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him (Jesus), He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen (Gentiles), which shall render him the fruits in their seasons.”

Christ was actually “...appointed heir of all things...” by the Father, and was “...made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they” (Hebrews 1:2,4). Therefore, those who become “heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ”, can only participate through the heirship that rightfully belongs to Christ.

All of the faithful saints of God are included in this heirship, including, Noah (Hebrews 11:7), and Abraham (Hebrews 11:8-10). Verse 8 tells us, “By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed...” Let’s now take a closer look at the inheritance that was promised to Abraham.

Genesis 12, verses 1-3,7 reads: “Now the LORD had said unto Abram (Abraham), Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great;

and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed...And the LORD appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto the LORD, who appeared unto him.”

A number of promises were made to Abraham, including the fact that he was to become “a great nation”. We read more about this promise in chapter 13, verses 15 and 16. “For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered.” We know that Israel did become a great nation through Abraham.

Another promise given to this Patriarch was, “...in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.” This involved the spiritual promise that would come through Christ. Notice that when we go to Genesis 15, we find Abraham struggling with the concept of God’s inheritance. Verses 3 through 6 informs us: “And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of the LORD came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him forth abroad, and said, Look now toward heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, So shall thy seed be. And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.”

The heir that was to be born to Abraham was, of course, Isaac. But in a prophetic sense, the heir to be born to him would be Christ many generations later. Therefore, when the Lord likened Abraham’s seed to “the stars”, this apparently would include not only Christ and the children of Israel, but also the Gentile believers as well.

Please listen to the words of Galatians 3:6-9: “Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness. Know ye therefore that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham.”

Verses 16 and 29 of Galatians chapter 3 echos this thought. This reads, “Now to Abraham and his seed were

the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ...And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” What wonderful promises! Jewish and Gentile believers alike are “blessed with faithful Abraham.” They are also “heirs according to the promise.” What did God’s promise to Abraham include? It included nothing less than the *earth* itself!

God made a covenant with Abraham which included the inheriting of land. (Another one of God’s promises to Abraham had been, “...Unto thy seed will I give this land...”) In Genesis 15:9-21 we are told about this covenant. Abraham took a heifer, a she goat, a ram, a turtle-dove, and a pigeon, and “divided them in the midst”, except for the birds. In verses 17 and 18 we read: “And it came to pass, that, when the sun went down, and it was dark, behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces. In the same day the LORD made a covenant with Abram, saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”

The Lord apparently expanded upon this covenant in Genesis 17, verses 2,4,7-8. God told Abraham: “And I will make my covenant between me and thee, and will multiply thee exceedingly...As for me, behold, my covenant is with thee, and thou shalt be a father of many nations...And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.”

Let us now look at a remarkable passage in the book of Romans. Chapter 4, verses 13, 16-18, regarding the promise that God made to Abraham, declares: “For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world (“kosmos”--“earth”--margin), was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith...Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though

they were. Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be.”

The Lord re-emphasized His promises with Abraham when the latter offered up his son Isaac upon Mount Moriah. Through an angel, He “...said, By myself have I sworn, saith the LORD, for because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thy son, thine only son: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; because thou hast obeyed my voice” (Genesis 22:16-18).

Notice how this incident is commented upon by the Apostle Paul in Hebrews 6:13-15,17: “For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he swore by himself, Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise...Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath.”

All of God’s covenant promises were given to Abraham through heirship. As we have seen, this included Abraham himself, and his seed (Christ and others who are heirs with Christ--Isaac, Jacob, the descendants of Jacob, and the believing Gentiles.) One of the promises of heirship that we have already mentioned is about land inheritance. Abraham, as we have noted, inherited the land of Canaan and also became “heir of the world”. But what does his seed inherit?

The answer to that question is that Abraham’s seed inherits the earth. A number of verses that we have already quoted from informs us that the children of Israel are to inherit the land of Canaan, or Israel. (See Genesis 13:14-17; 15:7,8,18-21; 17:8; see also Exodus 32:13.) Others of Abraham’s seed will also have their share of the earth. Psalm 25:12 and 13 reads, “What man is he that feareth the LORD? him shall he teach in the way that he shall choose. His soul shall dwell at ease; and his seed shall inherit the earth.” Also, we read in Psalm 37:11, “But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.” Jesus refers to this passage in Matthew 5:5. It is interesting to think that as the Holy Spirit is given as a pledge of eternal life to come,

so may Abraham’s inheritance of the land of Canaan be a pledge of the whole earth which will someday become the inheritance of God’s people, as He sees fit to give it.

In recapping this article, let me once again point out that receiving eternal life and being in God’s kingdom is first about receiving His Holy Spirit through conversion and baptism. This allows one to become a child of God which then confers the right of heirship upon the believer because he or she has now been adopted into God’s family. All of this is God’s free gift to the believer. Now, however, qualifications are placed upon the heir to *remain* an heir in good standing. This involves doing good works, including the keeping of God’s commandments, and avoiding sins of omission and commission.

Heirship is through Christ, Who was “appointed heir of all things”, and through Abraham, who became “the heir of the world”. Both Israel and believing Gentiles are a part of this heirship. However, these two groups are not completely independent of each other. We read in Ephesians 3:6, regarding the church of God, “That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.”

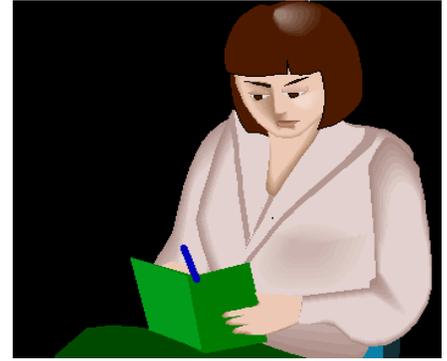
One of the promises of God is that all of His children will inherit land in the future kingdom. Israel will inherit the land of Canaan (this has already been their inheritance since the days of Abraham), and others will inherit the earth as God directs.

A question may now come to our readers’ minds. Just how many good works does an heir need to do to stay qualified as an heir of God? Actually, this is not the question that should be asked. Rather, the emphasis should be on this question: How much glory can I bring to the Father and His Son through my life? If this is our attitude, then the good works will take care of themselves. And when we bring dishonor to our Lord, we repent and go on trying to bring glory to Him once again. Doing this, He will never disinherit us.

This process is a part of our sanctification. Paul wrote in Acts 20:32, “And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.” Husbands and wives are “heirs together of the grace of life” (I Peter 3:7). Finally, the Lord encourages us, “He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son” (Revelation 21:7).

# CHECKMARKS

By Sherry Womble



I grabbed Wesley's hand and prepared for the worst. It had been years since I'd played Red Rover, and my mind quickly reminded me I was in "heels" and too old for school yard behavior. I shrugged. In a matter of seconds, it would be over, and I would be freed from the torture of knowing I was still the weakest of defense.

Wesley, however, had a different idea and shook my hand away. He looped his arm around mine locking our arms at the elbow. He rounded his shoulders and commanded for me to "lean in."

Stan, the youth pastor, barreled in our direction. Wesley yelled a rumbling tornado of energy which grew with each stride of Stan's approach. I quickly tossed my shoes aside letting the hot grass fuel my determination.

Stan fell into the line, but our arms held, and delight spread through the teams as our prisoner was engulfed. I quivered with excitement and shook out my arms which felt hot and wobbly. I had prevailed.

Later that night around the campfire, we reflected on the day's activities. I closed my eyes to reflect on my suc-

cess. It was easier to defeat the runner when there were two standing in agreement. I flipped my Bible open to Ecclesiastes 4:12 and placed a checkmark next to the verse.

"What are you doing?" Stan asked.

I looked up to see all eyes on me. I smiled and chuckled with discomfort. "Well..." I said, "When I witness a story or a situation mentioned in the Bible, I place a checkmark next to it."

The fire popped as a few heads bobbed in thought.

Courage entered my heart, and I continued. "It says in Romans 15:4 what is written in the Scriptures is for our learning, to bring us hope. So when I get discouraged, I fan the pages of my Bible and watch the checkmarks flash before me. It's proof to me God is active in my life."

Wesley's voice lifted from the other side, "What about the ones without checkmarks?"

I sighed with great reassurance, "They're reminders of all He plans to teach me."



Evidently this book was written by King Solomon. During the time of his reign over Israel, Solomon had become very rich, and he surrounded himself with much glory and pomp. God had blessed him with great wis-

dom, yet he was most unwise in his personal life. He wrote much in this book to indicate that in his latter years he realized the folly of his ways, so he sought to admonish others not to follow his foolish example. The book is a

## THE BOOK OF ECCLESIASTES

reminder that despite riches, pleasure, honor, and glory, life is vain without God (Ecclesiastes 5:7).

However, in addition to this wise counsel to follow closely the way of the Lord, the Book of Ecclesiastes furnishes valuable information concerning the nature of man and the condition of death. We know that God declared to father Adam that he would be punished with death if he partook of the forbidden fruit. But Satan said, "...Ye shall not surely die" (Genesis 3:4). This was the origin of the theory that "there is no death." It was obvious from the beginning of human experience that man's body died, so Satan deceptively induced man to believe that he possessed a "soul" or "spirit," which escaped when the body died, and that this "spirit" is immortal and does not die.

Evidently this false theory was prevalent in Solomon's day, for he asked the question, "Who knoweth [who can prove] the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that [it] goeth downward to the earth?" (chapter 3:21). Solomon had already answered this question in "...even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again" (verses 19-20).

Chapter 12, verse 7, in a description of death and what it means, reads, "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who

gave it." The word "spirit" in this text translates a Hebrew word which simply means the breath of life. Every part of man, both his body and his breath, at death returns to its original condition, which leaves one who has died exactly as before he was born, except that he is remembered by God and will be restored to life in the resurrection.

In chapter 9, verse 10, we are furnished a further description of death, and at the same time a concise definition of the Hebrew word *sheol* which is the only Hebrew word in the Old Testament which is translated hell. However, in this text, this Hebrew word is translated "grave." Let us quote the verse: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might; for there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest."

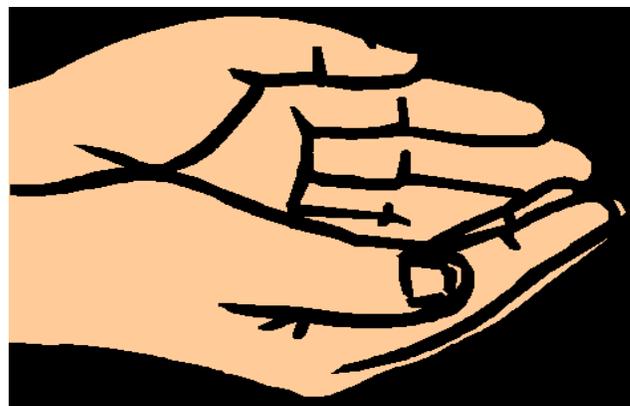
There is another revealing statement of truth in verse 4 of chapter 1. Here we read, "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever." This is in keeping with God's plan. It refutes the traditional theory which has come down to us from the Dark Ages that the earth will be destroyed by fire at the second coming of Christ. Again we are assured of human survival.

Solomon concludes the book with the admonition, "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil" (chapter 12:13-14).

## Jesus Said, "Come"

By Josue Torres Martinez

"And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord save me. And



immediately Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" (Matthew 14:29-31).

Peter's problem began when he stopped focusing on

Christ. Then he started to fear (doubt). It was a fear that contradicted the words of Jesus when He told His disciples "...Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid" (verse 27).

To allow doubt and fear to undermine our faith can cause so much damage to our physical and spiritual life! Peter had entered into a path that only could be followed by faith. If he didn't have Jesus, he had nothing. It was about reaching Christ or nothing. It was about walking with Jesus on water, or sinking into the depth of the sea.

**To allow doubt and fear to undermine our faith can cause so much damage to our physical and spiritual life! Peter had entered into a path that only could be followed by faith.**

The failure of Peter does not prove that he did wrong to obey the call of the Lord. Jesus did not blame him for leaving the boat. Jesus could not tell the poor servant to come and then reprimand him for coming. He knew the weakness of Peter and considered it because we read that Jesus asked, "Wherefore didst thou doubt?" It was a reprimand, but when Peter heard these words, he was already safe in the arms of the Lord. Now, we must not put so much emphasis on the fact that he began to sink, as in the fact that he walked on water. The boat had twelve disciples of Jesus in it, and only one overcame his fear.

Peter could have stayed put with the others. However, the Scriptures say that Peter raising his voice told Jesus, "...Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. And he (Jesus) said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus" (verses 28-29).

The attitude of Peter is a matter of faith. Believing is a word of ACTION! You do not receive anything unless you believe in it. We see that Peter walked on the water. If the other disciples had really believed, they would have rushed to catch up with their Lord just like Peter did.

The Apostle Paul said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Philippians 4:13). These

words from the Apostle Paul are for our admonition. Peter could walk on water because of his great desire to follow Christ. Peter's action made him a man who literally walked on water just to reach his Lord. The crossing was not easy, but he made a great effort. We should put into practice his example in our lives and at church.

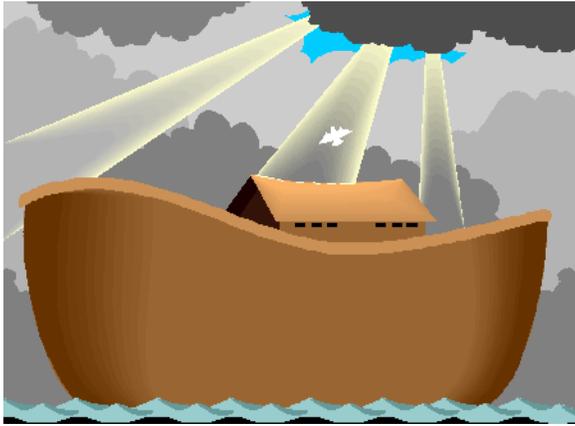
How many of us have felt overwhelmed, depressed and discouraged by viewing the boisterous wind? For some voluntary or involuntary reason, we may stop focusing on Jesus. That is when we sink into the sea (world). Like the Apostle Peter, we must cry, "Lord, save me."

Where there is fear (doubt), there can be no faith. Where there is faith, there will be no fear (doubt). Fear (doubt) and faith cannot exist in the minds of God's children at the same time. We either believe or we do not believe.

"And Jesus, walking by the sea of Galilee, saw two brethren, Simon called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers. And he saith unto them, Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men. And they straightway left their nets, and followed him" (Matthew 4:18-20). They followed Him without a question, without thinking, without looking at what they left behind. Hebrews 11:1-13 tells us of the heroes of faith in the Old Testament. If the New Testament heroes of faith were listed, surely the name of the Apostle Peter would be included.

"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake" (Philippians 1:29).





# NOAH AND THE FLOOD

Contributed by Bond Tennant

"...Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and Noah walked with God" (Genesis 6:9).

Noah is one of the best known names in the Bible, although the sacred book furnishes only a few details concerning his personal life. The record assures us, however, that he "...found grace in the eyes of the LORD...", that he was "...perfect [upright] in his generations...", that he "...walked with God...", was obedient to God, and in one of his last recorded acts, we find him offering sacrifice to God (Genesis 6:8-9; 8:20).

We know from these few details that Noah was a man of faith and righteousness. These facts are important and by themselves cause him to stand out prominently among those with whom he was associated. This prominence is greatly augmented by the circumstances which surrounded his life and the marvelous manner in which God used him to save a remnant of the people from the pre-flood world.

The circumstances making necessary the sending of the flood are found in Genesis, chapter 6. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them" (verses 5-7). Verse 11 declares that the "earth was filled with violence."

It was because of Noah's uprightness and faith that God selected him to be the preserver of the human family. He "found grace in the eyes of the LORD," Who said to him, "...The end of all flesh is come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I

will destroy them with the earth" (verse 13).

God gave Noah instructions concerning the building of an "ark" to carry himself, and his family, through the waters of the flood. These instructions are recorded in Genesis 6:14-16. It was to be made of gopher wood, better known as cypress--a kind of timber which, both for its lightness and its durability, was employed by the Phoenicians for building their vessels. The general consensus of scholars is that the word "ark" means a box, chest, or boat.

Nothing is said as to the exact shape of the ark, but its dimensions are given. It was to be 300 cubits in length, 50 cubits in width and 30 cubits in height. The exact length of a cubit is uncertain. Smith's Bible Dictionary gives it as 21 inches. If this is correct, the ark would have been more than 500 feet long, over 87 feet in width, and its height would have been about 50 feet. Obviously, this was no small boat but compared favorably in size with our average ocean-going vessels--much larger than many of them.

The planks of the ark were to be protected by a coating of pitch--inside and outside--to make it watertight, and perhaps also as a protection against marine animals. In it there were to be a number of small compartments in which the various animals with their food supplies could be distributed. These were to be arranged in three tiers: "with lower, second, and third stories shalt thou make it." Every necessary detail was provided for, including light and ventilaton.

It is likely that Noah began at once the great project of building the ark. No modern machinery was available for the job. It was all handwork. Noah's faithfulness is reflected in the fact that he continued his labor until the ark was completed, which, we may assume, was not until near the time when the flood came.

In II Peter 2:5, we are informed that Noah was "a preacher of righteousness." This also reveals his firm stand for God and for the principles of righteousness, for it must have required courage to be a witness for the Lord in a world that was corrupt and filled with violence. No hint is given that anyone was brought to repentance by his preaching, although his sons and their wives were doubtless in harmony with his message. Noah's continued work of building the ark would in itself be a wonderful sermon attesting his faith in the Creator's Word.

The ark loaded, and Noah and his family themselves safe, description is given of the appalling catastrophe: "...the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights...And the waters prevailed, and were increased greatly upon the earth;...and all the high hills, that were under the whole heaven, were covered" (Genesis 7:12,18,19). While the rain lasted for forty days, the waters prevailed for another 150 days, seemingly all the while on the increase. This would indicate that the sources of the flood were other than merely rain.

Geologists and archaeologists know that there was a flood throughout the area known to be the "cradle" of the human race. No evidence has yet been produced to refute the universality of the deluge. We favor taking the language of the Scriptures literally, accepting the meaning which is apparent from a mere surface reading, thus believing that the flood actually did cover the whole planet.

The record states that at the end of the time which the waters "prevailed", "...God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all the cattle that was with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged" (Genesis 8:1). The next verse says, "The fountains also of the deep and the windows of heaven were stopped..." This indicates two sources of the flood waters--the "fountains of the deep" and the "windows of heaven." But now they were both "stopped," and the waters returned from off the earth continually" (see verses 2-3).

As the waters receded, "...the ark rested...upon the mountains of Ararat." This was in the "seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month..." (verse 4). About three months later the tops of the mountains were seen. Forty days after this "Noah opened the window of the ark" and sent forth a raven.

He also sent forth a dove which "...found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the

ark..." (verses 8-9). Noah then waited another seven days and sent forth the dove again, and "...the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more" (verses 10-12).

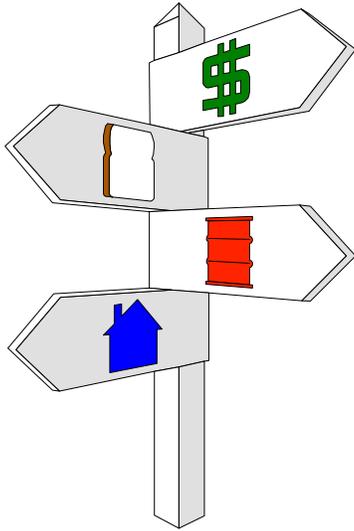
Noah was resourceful in discovering the extent to which the water had receded, but he awaited God's directive before leaving the ark, saying to Noah, "Go forth of the ark, thou, and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee." It was in obedience to this that "...Noah went forth, and his sons, and his wife, and his sons' wives with him: Every beast, every creeping thing, and every fowl, and whatsoever creepeth upon the earth, after their kinds, went forth out of the ark" (Genesis 8:12-16; 18-19).

A world had come to an end, and now a new world was beginning. Jesus referred to the "days of Noe" (or Noah), telling us that as it was "...in the days of Noah, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man" (Luke 17:26).

Soon after leaving the ark, Noah built an altar, and on it he offered sacrifice to the Lord. "And Noah builded an altar unto the LORD; and took of every clean beast, and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt-offerings on the altar" (Genesis 8:20). Noah's offering was doubtless intended as an expression of thanksgiving for the marvelous deliverance from the waters of the flood. God, in turn, appreciated this offering, the account saying that He "...smelled a sweet savour..." (Genesis 8:21).

In recognition of Noah's sacrifice, God entered into a covenant with him never again to destroy all flesh from the earth by a flood of waters. Noah and his family were commanded to multiply and replenish the earth, or, as it is in the Hebrew text, "to fill." God gave the rainbow as His token for confirmation of the covenant. "And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh" (Genesis 9:14-15).

Evidently man had never before seen a rainbow, and for the very good reason that the flood rains were the first to fall upon the earth. In Genesis 2:5-6 we read, "...the LORD God had not caused it to rain upon the earth,...But there went up a mist from the earth, and watered the whole face of the ground."



# 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.*

## Bee Colony Losses May Worsen, Experts Warn

McClatchy-Tribune

Washington--A record 36 percent of U.S. commercial bee colonies have been lost to mysterious causes so far this year and the worse may be yet to come, experts told a congressional panel Thursday.

This year's bee colony losses are about twice the usual seen after a typical winter, scientists warn. Despite ambitious new research efforts, the causes remain a mystery.

The escalating campaign against what's generically called colony collapse disorder includes more state, federal and private funding for research. Publicity efforts are getting louder--a costumed Mr. Bee was seen wandering around Capitol Hill this week--and lawmakers are becoming mobilized.

On Thursday, Congress heard from farmers with troubled crops, from beekeepers struggling with lost hives, from frustrated researchers and even from corporate leaders worried about their own economic futures.

Colony collapse disorder is characterized by a sudden decline in a bee colony's population and the inexplicable absence of dead bees.

First reported in 2006, "the nation has unfortunately turned into a full-fledged crisis," said Rep. Dennis Cardoza, D-Calif., chairman of the House horticulture and organic agriculture subcommittee, which convened the hearing.

The Houston Chronicle

## COMMENT

Colony collapse disorder is widespread in Europe, South America and elsewhere.

Agriculturalists estimate that one third of the human food supply depends directly on insect pollination. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, honeybees are responsible for the majority of that pollination.

Therefore, the loss of the honeybee to pollinate such a large part of the human food supply contributes to famine in the world which Jesus said would be one of the signs of the end of the age (Matthew 24:7).

## LIVING UP TO GOD'S COMMAND

New Bible shines a light on the Scripture's call to serve the poor.

By The Rev. Ken Gurley

Nearly 3,000 silent sentinels stand guard over the poor. Stationed throughout both the Old and New Testaments, these Scripture verses remind each believer of his or her responsibility to help the less fortunate.

The U.K. Bible Society is shining the spotlight on these 2,848 passages in the Poverty and Justice Bible. The new

release of the Contemporary English Version translation highlights in bold and orange ink the verses devoted to recognizing and meeting the needs of the poor.

The society's search for the many biblical references to the poor was prompted by a question from best-selling pastor Rick Warren, who recently has emphasized Christian responsibility to the vulnerable and the indigent.

"I went to Bible college, two seminaries and I got a doctorate," Warren said in an interview with Christianity Today. "How did I miss God's compassion for the poor?"

Christians have traditionally been friends of the poor. As Jesus ministered to and befriended many economic and societal outcasts, so have his followers.

Remember Katrina? Houston leaders stepped forward and shouldered a huge load in the plight of the evacuees, as did the area's community of faith. Hundreds and thousands of churches and ministries in this area sacrificed greatly to care for the hurting.

The point of the Poverty and Justice Bible, however, is that compassion should not be spasmodic, but a steady current of caring concern.

Congratulations to the Bible Society for publishing this volume, which brings to mind a few observations and points for discussion:

\* How can we reconcile these passages with our Lord's statement, "the poor you will always have with you" (see Matthew 26:11).

\* Historically, churches that emphasize righting social wrongs tend to de-emphasize the preaching of the Gospel. Jesus said that man does not live by bread alone but by God's Word as well (see Matthew 4:4). Does focusing on an urgent need (poverty and injustice) eclipse meeting the important need (salvation)?

\* Heaven was talked about a lot in years gone by. Does our present preoccupation with remedying social ills reveal a greater grip on this earth than Heaven? Or is this justified?

\* Christ's most withering criticism was saved for Laodicea, one of the seven churches of Asia (Revelation 3:14-21). Blessed with material possessions, the church did not realize how impoverished in spirit it was. Is there ever a time when poverty can be more of a blessing than a curse?

*The Houston Chronicle*

## COMMENT

A child of God does not need such a Bible to remind him that he must serve the poor. Serving the poor is just as important as shunning and preaching against certain social practices of the world which are condemned by God. Both are commanded in the Bible which is the Word of God. The Bible contains all the counsel of God. The Apostle Paul wrote, "For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27).

## VOODOO CEREMONY TARGETS HURRICANES

Voodoo priestess Sallie Ann Glassman will perform a public voodoo ceremony dedicated to Our Lady of Prompt Succor and Ezili Danto asking their aid in protecting New Orleans from hurricanes, tonight at 7 p.m. at Achade Meadows Peristyle, 3319 Rosalie Alley, off Rampart between Piety and Desire streets. Those attending are asked to dress in white or in red.

### THE ADVOCATE

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

## COMMENT

The above shows us the vanity of man in his vain imagination. Our Lady of Prompt Succor and Ezili Danto are not able to protect New Orleans or any other place from hurricanes or any other natural disaster. The followers of voodoo are as those mentioned in Romans 1:21-23: "Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things."



# Questions and Answers

**QUESTION:** To what did Jesus refer in Matthew 24:40-41?

**ANSWER:** Matthew 24:40-41 reads, "Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left."

The Lord Jesus was referring to the first phase of His second coming. Remember when the Lord comes the second time, the coming has two parts to it. Jesus comes the first part "For His Saints." At the battle of Armageddon, which is the second part, Jesus comes "With His Saints."

When Jesus returns "For His Saints", two people may be in the garden working together. One will be taken up into the air (clouds) to be with Jesus, but the other one will be left. Two will be in bed together. One will be taken, but the other one will be left. Two women will be grinding using a hand mill. One will be taken, but the other one will be left.

I Thessalonians 4:13-18 further explains it. Let us quote it now: "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also

which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

**QUESTION:** What custom did Jesus object to when He blamed the Pharisees for praying in the streets?

**ANSWER:** You are thinking of Matthew 6:5 which reads, "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward."

This verse has reference to the desire of the Pharisees to parade their outward show of religion. A rigid Pharisee prayed many times daily and had certain set hours for doing so. Many of them took pains to show their praying customs to the public for its admiration, and thus allowed their hours of prayer to overtake them while at the

street corners in full view of any who might be about. They sought the praise of men and would not scruple at any method for attracting public attention.

What the Lord desires to impress upon us here is that our religion should be of the heart and not of the market place. Our religion should be of that which is satisfied when He that seeth in secret knows about it.

A commentator once said, "If a man's religion be a round of forms and ceremonies, then he will be sure to want somebody--some fellow man--to look on and admire, and he will soon come, more than less consciously to adjust and arrange his doings so as to win men's admiration." This, however, is not Christ's religion and, therefore, He warns against it.

**QUESTION:** Will you please summarize The Second Epistle Of John and The Third Epistle of John?

**ANSWER:** Yes, we will.

### The Second Epistle of John

John's second letter is brief. It was written to "...the elect lady and her children..." (verse 1). We have no certain knowledge as to who this person was. Verse 13 indicates that she had a sister, and the main purpose of the letter seems to have been to caution this sister against allowing her kindness and generosity to work injury to the cause of Christ and the truth.

False teachers were plaguing the church of that early period. One of their heresies was the denial that Jesus Christ had come in the flesh. This was a serious error, for it meant a denial of the very foundation of Christian faith and hope. Therefore John wrote, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds" (verses 10-11).

### The Third Epistle of John

The third and last letter of the Apostle John is also very brief. It was addressed to "...the wellbeloved Gaius,

whom," John wrote, "I love in the truth" (verse 1). The main purpose of the letter seems to have been to request Gaius' cooperation in caring, at least temporarily, for some brethren who were moving into the territory where he lived (verses 6-8). Perhaps Gaius was a wealthy man, one whom the Apostle John knew to be well able to make temporary provision he was asking.

John gave his personal recommendation of the brethren for whom he was asking asylum, and said, "...ye know that our record is true" (verse 12). To assist these brethren in their time of need would be a manifestation of Christian love.

In Hebrews 13:2 we read, "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares." In befriending the brethren recommended by John, it might well be that Gaius became acquainted with some of the Lord's angels.

**QUESTION:** What is the meaning of the word "Christ"?

**ANSWER:** In Greek, the word **Christ** means "anointed one." In Hebrew, the word is **Messiah** which also means "anointed one." (See John 1:41 and Daniel 9:25-26). God has anointed Jesus Christ by His Holy Spirit to be the Saviour of the world (Isaiah 61:1; Matthew 3:16; Acts 10:38). The Jews rejected Jesus as that Messiah that they had been looking for. Paul, after his conversion, boldly preached to the Jews (and the Gentiles) that Jesus is the Christ (Acts 9:22; 18:28).

**QUESTION:** What is the meaning of "there came other boats from Tiberias" in John 6:23?

**ANSWER:** Tiberias was a town on the Sea of Galilee, which sea was also called the Lake of Tiberias. The town itself was the capital of Galilee for some time. It was from this town that the boats spoken of had come and had landed near the place where the miracle of feeding the five thousand had taken place. It was in these boats that the people who sought the Lord Jesus came across to Capernaum seeking Him.



*Tijuana, Mexico*

*These photos were taken at the dedication of their new church building.*





**LESSON I**

**PAUL AT EPHESUS (PART II)**

**Scripture Reading: Acts 19:13-22.**

**Golden Text: Acts 19:20.**

**"So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed."**

1. Who tried to copy Paul's deeds by using the name of the Lord Jesus Christ? Acts 19:13.
2. Who was Sceva, and how many sons did he have? Acts 19:14.
3. What did the man with the evil spirit say and do to Sceva and his sons? Acts 19:15-16.
4. What did this event cause to happen in Ephesus? Acts 19:17-18.
5. What did many of the people do to show their faith in God? Acts 19:19.
6. Did the word of God grow and prevail? Acts 19:20.
7. What did Paul next purpose to do? Acts 19:21.
8. What two men did Paul send to Macedonia? Acts 19:22.

**LESSON II**

**SILVERSMITHS AT EPHESUS**

**Scripture Reading: Acts 19:23-41.**

**Golden Text: I Peter 2:2.**

**"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby."**

1. Who was Demetrius? Acts 19:24.

2. From what did the silversmiths get most of their wealth? Acts 19:25.

3. Who did the Ephesians worship? Acts 19:26-27.

4. Were Demetrius and the other silversmiths happy to learn of God's Word? Acts 19:28.

5. What took place in Acts 19:29?

6. Did Paul enter into the theatre? Why? Acts 19:30-32.

7. Who was going to speak to the multitude, and why did he not speak? Acts 19:33-34.

8. Explain in your own words what happened in Acts 19:35-41.

9. What did Paul do when this uproar was over? Acts 20:1.

**LESSON III**

**PAUL IN TROAS**

**Scripture Reading: Acts 20:1-16.**

**Golden Text: Acts 20:12.**

**"And they brought the young man alive, and were not a little comforted."**

1. After the uproar in Ephesus, to where did Paul travel? Acts 20:1-2.

2. Paul returned to Macedonia. Name the disciples that accompanied him into Asia, and tell what country they were from? Acts 20:3-4.

3. How long did it take them to go to Troas, and how long did they stay there? Acts 20:6.

4. Where do we find Paul speaking, and what time of the day is it? Acts 20:7-8.

5. What happened to the young man, Eutychus, while Paul was preaching? Acts 20:9.
6. What did Paul do to help this young man? Acts 20:10.
7. After bringing the young man back to life, what did Paul do? Acts 20:11.
8. Name the different places where Paul stopped each day. Acts 20:13-15.

**LESSON IV**

**PAUL IN MILETUS**

**Scripture Reading: Acts 20:17-38.**

**Golden Text: Acts 20:35 (last part).**

**"It is more blessed to give than to receive."**

1. When Paul entered Miletus, whom did he send for? Acts 20:17.
2. As Paul talked to the elders, what did he tell them about his manner of preaching the gospel? Acts 20:18-20.
3. To whom did Paul testify? Acts 20:21.
4. Where did Paul say he was going, and did he know what to expect there? Acts 20:22-24.
5. Paul told the leaders to take heed. What two things did he say would happen after he left? Acts 20:28-30.
6. In whose hands, or care, did Paul put the brethren? Acts 20:32.
7. What very important words did Paul leave with the brethren? Acts 20:35.
8. When Paul finished speaking, what did they all do? Acts 20:36-38.

**DO YOU KNOW THAT JESUS IS ALIVE?**

You have heard how the Son of God, Jesus, once lived in this world and how He was killed by wicked men and nailed to a cross of wood.

The third day, after He died, some of His friends were in a room together. They were talking about Him. Some said with beaming faces, "He is alive again for we have seen Him." But others said, "Oh, how could that be?" And there was such a great big longing in their hearts to see Him.

All in a moment Jesus stood there with them.

The doors were locked. No door had been opened or closed. How did He get in?

But that made no difference to the Son of God, who was risen from the dead. Before He was crucified, He walked upon the water and raised the dead. What would a closed door mean to Him when those who loved Him were on the other side of the door?

Jesus spoke so sweetly to His friends, "Peace be unto you," meaning "My loved ones, be happy and rest in My love, for I love you dearly and give My peace unto you." What more could He say? Still these friends seemed frightened. This was all so strange to them because they had seen Him die on that awful cross. They knew He had been dead.

But Jesus told them not to fear. They looked at His hands and the marks of the nails that fastened them to the cross which were there. They looked at His feet and the marks which were there also. And, even more, they saw the hole in His side; for a soldier had pierced His side with a spear, and that made the blood flow out upon the ground.

When they saw these marks, they knew that it was Jesus. They were so glad that their precious Lord was alive and that He loved them still. They scarcely knew how to act.

Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." With His breath, He gave the Holy Spirit of God to them. But God raised Jesus through the Holy Spirit, and the Spirit was still with Him.

Jesus is now in Heaven, but He will come again, and then we who love Him shall see Him and hear Him speak and see those marks in his hands and in His feet.

-Author Unknown



## THE WIND

BY  
ALDEA JOHNSON

Mother was getting supper ready in the cozy, warm kitchen. Susie sat in her little chair by the window, watching her and thinking how nice everything was. The lamplight glowed softly through the room. In the stove, the fire snapped cheerfully, and Mother hummed a little tune as she moved about. The table, which Susie herself had set, was gleaming with its pretty cloth, its dishes, and its sparkling silver.

Susie did not care how the cold November wind howled outside when it was so warm and cheerful in here. She loved to hear the teakettle singing on the stove. Tonight it sang to her. "We'll stay inside where it's warm and bright, and it's dark and cold outside, tonight."

Just then Mother called, "Oh, Susie, Daddy wants you to bring another lantern out to the barn. The milking will soon be finished, so you can come back to the house with him."

Susie hesitated. It was so dark outdoors. Then the old wind shrieked as it tore past the house, calling to Susie.

"It's dark out here--whoo-oo, whoo-oo! We'll trip

you up and we'll chase you, too, whoo-oo, whoo-oo, whoo-oo!"

"Mommy, do I have to go?" asked Susie, with a little shiver. "I'm afraid."

"But there's nothing to be afraid of, Honey," smiled Mother. "You love to play outdoors all day."

"It isn't dark then!" wailed Susie. "The wind will get me now, and maybe there'll be a-a bear, or something. I don't like the wind."

"Didn't I see you playing with someone this morning?" Mother laughed. "You chased him all the way up the lane, and then you turned with your arms out stretched, and he chased you all the way back again. Your cheeks were like poppies, your eyes like stars, and you laughed and shouted for joy."

"That was the wind, Mommy, that was the wind!" Susie laughed, too, just remembering what fun it was. "But it wasn't this wind, Mommy," she added soberly. "The same wind, Susie," mother said softly. "God sends His wind to help Mother Nature do her fall house cleaning, and to put all the little growing things safely to sleep under a thick blanket of leaves. The wind loves to run and shout, just as you did today, but he is really kind and good. You run out now, Susie, and call to the wind. Say, 'Come on, wind! I'll race you to the barn!' Then see what fun you will have."

So Susie took the lantern which mother had lighted, and away she went. The wind puffed at her and blew her about, and the friendly dark wrapped her in a lovely soft cloak. As she reached the barn door, she was laughing and breathless.

"Thank you, God," she whispered, looking up at the tossing apple-tree boughs. "Thank you for letting the wind blow me about and for your watchful care in the friendly darkness."

*I will praise the Lord today  
In my work, and in my play;  
With my lips I'll praise Him, too--  
That's the least that I can do.*

GEMS OF TRUTH

ALPHABET CODE

SUPPLY THE MISSING WORD

J.H. Greening

To discover the secret message, write above each letter the letter which comes before it in the alphabet. We've helped you get started.

Write the correct numbers in the space provided, and when you have done all you can remember, check by looking up the Scripture references given.

A  
B

S \_ \_ \_ \_  
T P G U

1. A widow cast \_\_\_\_\_ mites into the treasury (Luke 21:2).

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BOTXFS

2. A man lay at the pool of Bethesda who had an infirmity for \_\_\_\_\_ years (John 5:5).

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UVSOFUI

3. A year of jubilee came every \_\_\_\_\_ years (Leviticus 25:11).

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BXBZ

4. The ark was in the house of Obed-edom for \_\_\_\_\_ months (I Chronicles 13:14).

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XSBUI

5. We know of \_\_\_\_\_ friends of Jesus who lived at Bethany (John 11:5).

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CVU

6. Bethany was about \_\_\_\_\_ furlongs from Jerusalem (John 11:18).

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HSJFWPVT

7. Jesus sent out the \_\_\_\_\_ to preach, by \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (Mark 6:7).

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XPSET

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TUJS

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VQ

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BOHFS

# The Word of God

By David DeLong

The Word of God is like the thunder,  
Blasting, breaking sin asunder,  
Spoiling war, and taking plunder,  
Causing men to pause and wonder.

The Word of God is like a sword,  
It's quick, and sharp, and shows the Lord,  
When through the mind It has explored,  
All wrong intents It tries to ward.

The Word of God is like a hammer,  
But It pounds without a clamor,  
It is sure, and does not stammer,  
Smashing what is earthly glamor.

The Word of God is like a seed,  
It grows in hearts that will take heed,  
But It will choke in worldly weed,  
Unless from cares a man is freed.

The Word of God is like a fire,  
Burning bright, and ever higher,  
Consuming "self" on altar pyre,  
Scorching out the thorn and brier.

The Word of God is like a light,  
Shining hope in darkest night,  
And to the blind, restoring sight,  
Showing forth what path is right.

The Word of God is Christ, the Son,  
He gave His life for everyone,  
We must accept what He has done,  
The battle is already won.

