



The Advocate of Truth



ALWAYS REJOICING

"As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (II Corinthians 6:10).

I Thessalonians 5:16 tells us, "Rejoice evermore." Let us look at some other scriptures associated with rejoicing:

"Happy is that people, that is in such a case: yea, happy is that people, whose God is the LORD" (Psalm 144:15).

"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations" (James 1:2).

"Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (I Peter 1:8).

"O clap your hands, all ye people; shout unto God with the voice of triumph" (Psalm 47:1).

God's children do not rejoice just for show or to impress. They have reasons for their rejoicing. Let us list the scriptural foundation for just three of these reasons.

They rejoice because their past sins are forgiven.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:9).

"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12).

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered" (Psalm 32:1).

"Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases" (Psalm 103:3).

They rejoice because their present is girded and guided.

The world is full of confusion, war clouds, trials, and temp-

tations, but "The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want" (Psalm 23:1).

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

"Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

"Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world..." (Matthew 28:20).

They rejoice because their future is bright with hope.

"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:2-3).

While awaiting execution, the Apostle Paul said, "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing" (II Timothy 4:6-8).

"For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens" (II Corinthians 5:1). "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is" (I John 3:2).

WORDS OF ETERNAL LIFE... THE ANGEL SAID: "WORSHIP GOD"

BY JOSUE TORRES M.



And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things. Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: **worship God**" (Revelation 22:8-9).

To worship God is part of the first angel's message, "...and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Revelation 14:7).

God desires that all peoples and nations worship Him. This desire is known by all the angels. Therefore, the angel told John to only worship God.

When the apostles asked Jesus how to pray, He said unto them, "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven..." (Matthew 6:9-13). According to this, we conclude that the angels in heaven worship God by doing His will. They know that God is above all things, the Owner of everything, and that He is immortal.

Men must realize that God is Spirit. Therefore, they must also worship in spirit.

When speaking about God, the Apostle Paul said, "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honour and power everlasting. Amen" (I

Timothy 6:16).

We are told in the last part of Isaiah 43:10, "...before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me."

Men do not realize this because they have never been concerned with knowing God. For men to be able to worship God, they must first accept Him as the only God. Second, they have to understand that God alone can give or take life. Third, men must realize that God is Spirit. Therefore, they must also worship in spirit.

The Gospel according to John records this statement that Jesus, the Son of God, made: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth" (Chapter 4:24). However, the carnal mind of men does not understand this because they have to analyze and materialize the Word of God which is spirit and life.

The tendency of men to worship has always been to worship just what they see. Habakkuk 2:19 tells us: "Woe unto him that saith to the wood, Awake; to the dumb stone, Arise, it shall teach! Behold, it is laid over with gold and silver, and there is no breath at all in the midst of it."

The Lord Jesus Christ revealed that the worshipers of God must come to a true understanding and acceptance of Him. John 17:3 says: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent."

We must not worship other gods. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God said: "...Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, **Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve**" (Matthew 4:10).

VALUE AND WORTH



Every product on the market has value (cost) associated with it simply as a result of being designed and produced. In manufacturing, a product must not have more value (cost) than it is worth (to sell), or the investment will be lost.

When a company decides to make a new product, they first research the market to find the sales potential for the product. Then a team of engineers designs the product, and the drafting department makes drawings that are sent to other factories who will build unique parts. Meanwhile, the company's buyers search the market to get the best price on parts commonly available that will meet the engineer's requirements. Add carton design, advertising, planning and scheduling, promotional literature costs and other details of product development, and you have a figure that represents a large amount of value (cost) while the product is still worthless because it hasn't yet been manufactured.

During the stages of product development, quality control becomes involved. Quality control must approve every part that goes to production. They monitor production for correct assembly and packaging. They evaluate the finished product for appearance and functionality. When the product is finally being sold, they analyze the returns from the field, to determine the cause of failure and to recommend corrective action.

What determines the level of quality required? It is how the produce is to be used. For example, consider

the manufacturing of batteries. We expect a flashlight battery to fail after a few hours' use. But what if the battery is to assure continuous operation of a person's heart pump? For such a use, one would want the most reliable battery available that is regularly checked to be sure it is working properly and well charged. Here the worth dictates the quality to be of greatest importance.

Now let us make a parallel to the project in which each of us is involved: how we add value to the product (godly character) that the great Inspector (Jesus) will count worthy of full value (eternal life).

God the great Creator is the Owner and Operator of this special manufacturing firm. He is looking for those who will work with Him (see II Corinthians 6:1), in producing the product of greatest worth in the universe which is a godly character. Toward this end, He provides the largest part of the initial investment (value). Through His Word, He provides instruction, a clear statement of the standard of quality He expects, and an abundance of examples. He even includes details about One who added value perfectly, Jesus Christ, making a template for others to follow. God also provides a team of quality control experts, angels that encamp about us (see Psalm 34:7) to guide the project. They arrange circumstances that test our worth, making it possible for us to know where we are failing and make changes as required.

God expects us to add value to the product (our character). How do we add value that has the worth our Heav-

enly Father is looking for? Let us read the first part of Jeremiah 26:13, "Therefore now amend your ways and your doings, and obey the voice of the LORD your God..." Another translation reads, "Now change your lives and start doing good and obey the Lord your God."

Whatever we do or think, we should always consider its worth to God. When His representative, Jesus Christ, returns, He will be interested in only one thing, our worth. Our worth will be the direct result of the value we added. "Watch ye therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man" (Luke 21:36).

If a wrong or defective part is assembled in the engine of an automobile, value (cost) will be added, but the automobile will be worthless because it won't function as intended. The only way to give the automobile worth is to

correct the problem. This is just what God requires of us while we are building a character of worth to Him. He knows that sometimes we will add a wrong part to our character that spoils our worth. Some examples are pride, anger, hate, or bitterness. To be of worth to God, we must replace that wrong part with the right part while we have opportunity.

Our one concern is to be sure that the value we add has worth. We are not building a product that is soon consumed, but rather a character to last eternally. For this reason, the value we add must be of the highest quality. When Christ returns, He will inspect every finished product for quality.

Now is the time to search out and replace any parts of our character that will be the cause of our rejections before the Chief Quality Control Inspector arrives.

- Contributed



THREE GREAT UNCHANGEABLES

BY BOND TENNANT

"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel (the permanent character of His Word), confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable (unchangeable) things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil" (Hebrews 6:17-19).

This is a day of change and instability. There seems to be nothing that will not be unchanged tomorrow. These are the days of new ideas, philosophies, and new moralities. Governments are changing, educational institutions are changing, and the nominal churches are changing, not

only in theology, but in practical Christian living. Some churches are rushing about trying to change doctrines, teachings, and practices so they can be relevant to contemporary situations and circumstances. But there are still some unchangeables.

Let us now consider some scriptures that speak of only three unchangeables.

God is unchangeable.

David testified to this great truth. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God" (Psalm 90:2).

God Himself testified to it. "For I am the LORD, I change not..." (Malachi 3:6, first part).

The nature, will, and attributes of God are exempt from all change. No change is possible in God, whether of increase or decrease, progress or deterioration, contraction or development.

All change must be to better or to worse. God is absolutely perfect, and no change to better is possible. Change to worse is equally inconsistent with perfection. God has existed from eternity, and He will exist for eternity.

The legend stamped with the pillars of Hercules upon the coins of Spain was "NE PLUS ULTRA" meaning "nothing beyond." However, when Columbus discovered America, the legend was changed to "PLUS ULTRA" meaning "more beyond." With God, there is more beyond, and there is plenty more beyond. There will never cease to be plenty "more beyond."

"Of old hast thou laid the foundation of the earth: and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure: yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them, and they shall be changed: But thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end" (Psalm 102:25-27). "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (James 1:17).

God is unchanging in His holiness. "But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy" (I Peter 1:15-16). God told the Israelites: "For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy..." (Leviticus 11:44). "For I am the LORD that bringeth you up out of the land of Egypt, to be your God: ye shall therefore be holy, for I am holy" (verse 45).

The Word of God is unchangeable.

"For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven" (Psalm 119:89).

"The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever" (Isaiah 40:8).

Jesus said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" (Matthew 24:35). The words of Jesus are in God's Word--the Bible.

John 10:35 tells us that the Scripture cannot be broken.

The Word of God is quick, powerful, and sharp. "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12).

"So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

"Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces?" (Jeremiah 23:29).

"For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans 1:16).

Our Lord Jesus Christ is unchangeable.

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8).

Jesus performed a number of miracles, but His ministry did not cease at the cross, nor at the conclusion of His forty days upon earth after His resurrection.

He is our High Priest. He is the same Saviour and Lord today. "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Hebrews 1:3).

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us" (Hebrews 9:24).

"Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin" (Hebrews 4:14-15).

He is our Mediator. "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (I Timothy 2:5).



Gideon

a Faithful Judge and Leader

During a period of 450 years after the death of Joshua, there were no definite governmental arrangements in Israel. During this period everyone did what seemed good in his own eyes. "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). For the most part, the trend was toward unrighteousness and worshiping false gods. God punished the Israelites with the Canaanites, whom they had not completely driven out of the land as He had commanded. "And they forsook the LORD, and served Baal and Ashtaroath. And the anger of the LORD was hot against Israel, and he delivered them into the hands of spoilers that spoiled them, and he sold them into the hands of their enemies round about, so that they could not any longer stand before their enemies. **Whithersoever they went out, the hand of the LORD was against them for evil,** as the LORD had said, and as the LORD had sworn unto them: and they were greatly distressed" (Judges 2:13-15).

However, the Lord raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. "Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them" (verse 16). Othniel, a nephew of Caleb, was the first of these judges, and the well-known Samuel was the last. Little is known of most of these judges in Israel except the simple fact that through them the Lord delivered His people from their enemies when they cried to Him in their distress. One of the judges was a woman named Deborah, who through the able generalship of Barak, delivered the Israelites from bondage to Jabin, king of Canaan, whose army was commanded by Sisera. Please read chapters four and five. Barak is named in Hebrews 11:32 as one of the ancient

faithful. Following the great deliverance under the generalship of Barak, the Israelites had rest for forty years. "So let all thine enemies perish, O LORD: but let them that love him be as the sun when he goeth forth in his might. And the land had rest forty years" (Judges 5:31).

But they did not remain faithful to the Lord, and He delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years. "And the children of Israel did evil in the sight of the LORD: and the LORD delivered them into the hand of Midian seven years" (Judges 6:1). They were delivered from this captivity by Gideon, whom the Lord raised up as a judge and leader. We are given considerable information concerning Gideon.

Gideon was the fifth judge of Israel, and when first mentioned, he is visited by an angel while threshing "wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites." "And there came an angel of the LORD, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him, and said unto him, The LORD is with thee, thou mighty man of valour" (verses 11,12). That he was addressed as a mighty man of valour might indicate that he had already been active in resisting the enemies of Israel, or the statement could be prophetic of Gideon. Gideon's reply to the angel was not too enthusiastic. It was difficult to see how, under the circumstances it could be said that the LORD was with him, or, in fact, with any of the Israelites. He asked the angel, "...if the LORD be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the LORD bring us up from Egypt? but

now the LORD hath forsaken us, and delivered us unto the hands of the Midianites" (verse 13).

This reply does not necessarily indicate that Gideon doubted the assertion of the angel but perhaps was simply his way of getting further information and a firmer assurance. **Gideon reasoned that if God performed miracles in the past to deliver his people He should be able to do so again.** Gideon wanted to be sure that this would be the case. Through the angel, the Lord replied to Gideon, "Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?" Even this assurance did not convince Gideon, for he replied, "Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house." Please read verses fourteen and fifteen.

Here Gideon displays the characteristics which has been possessed by all whom the Lord has used for outstanding service. His family was poor, and evidently circumstances were such that Gideon had been made to feel surprise and commendable hesitancy when the Lord indicated him to be His choice for a deliverer of His people. "And the LORD said unto him, Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man" (verse 16). When assured by the Lord, "Surely I will be with thee," even the humblest and the weakest of men become valiant and courageous if they have faith in Him, but Gideon's faith needed bolstering. He did not doubt the Lord, but he wanted to be sure that it was the God of Israel Who was communicating with him. So, again, he replied, **"...If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me"** (verse 17).

Gideon then asked the messenger not to depart "...until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee..." The messenger promised to remain. "And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pot, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it" (verses 18-19). Then the messenger of God said to Gideon, "...Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes...and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then the angel of the LORD departed out of his sight" (verses 20-21).

The angel of the Lord had appeared to Gideon in human form, and it was only through this miraculous manifestation of divine power and the sudden disappearance

of the heavenly messenger that Gideon realized with whom he had been speaking. Gideon said, "...Alas, O Lord GOD! for because I have seen an angel of the LORD face to face. And the LORD said unto him, Peace be unto thee; fear not: thou shalt not die" (verses 22-23).

Now that Gideon had been assured that the Lord's blessing was with him, he was ready to proceed with the task of liberating the Israelites from the Midianites. As a necessary preparation for this, Baal worship must be destroyed in the land. This was a severe test upon Gideon. His own father had established a "grove" for this heathen worship.

The same night that the angel of the Lord first spoke to Gideon, the Lord said to him, "...Take thy father's young bullock, even the second bullock of seven years old, and throw down the altar of Baal that thy father hath, and cut down the grove that is by it: And build an altar unto the LORD thy God upon the top of this rock, in the ordered place, and take the second bullock, and offer a burnt sacrifice with the wood of the grove which thou shalt cut down" (verses 25-26).

Gideon carried out these instructions. He utilized the help of ten of his servants "and did as the LORD had said unto him." He carried out the instructions at night because he feared the reaction of his father's household and thought it would be best to have the act completed before they discovered it. Gideon did not underestimate the violent reaction of the Baal worshipers. "When the men of the city" learned what had been done and that Gideon was responsible, they demanded that he should die.

They made this demand of Gideon's father, Joash. But his father, although he had established the altar of Baal and the grove which his son had destroyed, was a good reasoner. He replied to those who demanded Gideon's life, "...Will ye plead for Baal? will ye save him? he that will plead for him, let him be put to death whilst it is yet morning: if he be a god, let him plead for himself, because one hath cast down his altar" (verse 31).

Joash had evidently been somewhat impressed with the fact that Baal had been unable to prevent the destruction of his own altar, and wisely his sympathies were moving toward Gideon, and his confidence in the God of Israel was mounting. He named his son, Jerubbaal, "...saying, Let Baal plead against him, because he hath thrown down his altar" (verse 32).

Next, a real crisis developed. "Then all the Midianites

and the Amalekites and the children of the east were gathered together, and went over, and pitched in the valley of Jezreel. But the Spirit of the LORD came upon Gideon, and he blew a trumpet; and Abi-ezer was gathered after him. And he sent messengers throughout all Manasseh; who also was gathered after him: and he sent messengers unto Asher, and unto Zebulun, and unto Naphtali; and they came up to meet them" (verses 33-35). Therefore, Gideon found himself surrounded with an army ready to follow his leadership in an attack upon Israel's enemies. For one who had been considered least in his father's house, this must have been rather a frightening situation, and it is no wonder that he felt the need of further reassurance from the Lord. "And Gideon said unto God, If thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said, Behold, I will put a fleece of wool in the floor; and if the dew be on the fleece only, and it be dry upon all the earth beside, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by mine hand, as thou hast said." (verses 36-37). The Lord was patient with Gideon and honored his request. "And it was so: for he rose up early on the morrow, and thrust the fleece together, and wringed the dew out of the fleece, a bowl full of water" (verse 38). This should have been very convincing, but still Gideon was not fully satisfied. **To make doubly sure, he reversed the conditions, asking the Lord on the second test to let the fleece remain dry and the dew fall on the surrounding ground.**

"And Gideon said unto God, Let not thine anger be hot against me, and I will speak but this once: let me prove, I pray thee, but this once with the fleece; let it now be dry only upon the fleece, and upon all the ground let there be dew" (verse 39). God honored his request again. "And God did so that night: for it was dry upon the fleece only, and there was dew on all the ground" (verse 40).

There was a lesson that the Lord wanted Gideon to learn which was not to depend upon the strength of numbers. God told him that the army which he had mustered was entirely too large. "And the LORD said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me" (Judges 7:2).

The original size of the volunteer army that placed themselves at the disposal of Gideon was thirty-two thousand. Under the Lord's instructions he told his men that any among them who were afraid should return to their

homes. "...And there returned of the people twenty and two thousand; and there remained ten thousand" (verse 3). Then "...the LORD said unto Gideon, The people are yet too many; bring them down unto the water, and I will try them for thee there: and it shall be, that of whom I say unto thee, This shall go with thee, the same shall go with thee; and of whomsoever I say unto thee, This shall not go with thee, the same shall not go." (verse 4).

The test was a simple one. "...Every one that lappeth of the water with his tongue, as a dog lappeth, him shalt thou set by himself; likewise every one that boweth down upon his knees to drink" (verse 5). Only three hundred out of the ten thousand lapped the water. These three hundred were to constitute the entire army which Gideon was to lead against the Midianites.

A tremendous army of Israel's enemies had camped in the valley of Jezreel. No doubt Gideon needed some direct assurance from the Lord that such an array of armed strength could be routed by a mere three hundred men. "And it came to pass the same night, that the LORD said unto him, Arise, get thee down unto the host; for I have delivered it into thine hand. But if thou fear to go down, go thou with Phurah thy servant down to the host: And thou shalt hear what they say; and afterward shall thine hands be strengthened to go down unto the host. Then went he down with Phurah his servant unto the outside of the armed men that were in the host" (verses 9-11).

This visit to the ranks of the enemy was made by night, and unobserved by the enemy's watchmen. "And when Gideon was come, behold, there was a man that told a dream unto his fellow, and said, Behold, I dreamed a dream, and, lo, a cake of barley bread tumbled into the host of Midian, and came unto a tent, and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that the tent lay along. And his fellow answered and said, This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon the son of Joash, a man of Israel: for into his hand hath God delivered Midian, and all the host" (verses 13-14). Hearing about this dream doubtless gave Gideon the assurance he needed that his three hundred, whom the Lord had selected to be his army, would actually rout the Midianites. Returning to his soldiers, he said, **"...Arise; for the LORD hath delivered into your hand the host of Midian" (verse 15).**

Gideon's three hundred soldiers had been given no arms, but now he gave each one a trumpet, a lamp or torch, and a pitcher. Then Gideon separated his troops

into three groups, deploying them on the hills surrounding the host of Midian encamped in the valley below. Gideon took his place with one of the little companies.

He instructed all to do as he did. When he blew his trumpet, they were to blow theirs. Simultaneously they were to break the pitchers which were being used to conceal their torches. Then they were to shout, "The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon." The Midianite who interpreted the dream of his fellow had said, "This is nothing else save the sword of Gideon." Perhaps many for the Midianites had heard about his dream and its interpretation; so when they heard the shout of the three hundred, they would surely think the dream was coming true.

There was really more involved in Gideon's strategy than we can see on the surface. Small though his army was, he had them deployed in such a manner as to virtually surround the camp of the Midianites. For the Midianites to hear three hundred trumpets sounding and to see three hundred flickering torches surrounding them on all sides would really give the impression that they were being attacked by a tremendous army.

Fear and panic spread through the ranks of the enemy: "...and the LORD set every man's sword against his fellow, even throughout all the host..." (verse 22). As the Midianites attacked each other, they fled, and Gideon's victory was complete. Having accomplished the task of routing the main army of the Midianites, Gideon then "...sent messengers throughout all mount Ephraim, saying, Come down against the Midianites, and take before them the waters unto Beth-barah and Jordan..." (verse 24). The men of Ephraim responded to this call and joined in the fruits of victory.

However, these men complained to Gideon because he had not asked them for help from the beginning. His reply was "...Is not the gleaning of the grapes of Ephraim better than the vintage of Abi-ezer?" (Judges 8:2) This satisfied the Ephraimites.

Gideon, like Moses, is one of the humblest and at the same time ablest statesmen of the Bible. When the angel of the Lord first spoke to him, he explained that he was the least of his father's house. He heard the Midianites use the expression, "the sword of Gideon," but when he instructed his little army to use this as a battle cry, he added the Lord's name, and put it first--"The sword of the LORD, and of Gideon."

Gideon continued his campaign against the enemies

of Israel until they were completely routed out of the land. After the initial attack, he uses greater numbers of men. When his victories were complete, "...the men of Israel said unto Gideon, Rule thou over us, both thou, and thy son, and thy son's son also: for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian (verse 22).

In refusing to rule over Israel, Gideon manifested his humility and perspective. He replied to this request, saying, "...I will not rule over you, neither shall my son rule over you: the LORD shall rule over you" (verse 23). This faithful judge in Israel kept the Lord before his people, emphasizing that only by obedience to Him could they expect to remain free and prosperous.

In defeating the enemies of Israel, there was a great slaughter of men. From the corpses, the Israelites had collected earrings of gold. While Gideon refused to be king, he requested these earrings, and his men gave them to him. "And the weight of the golden earrings that he requested was a thousand and seven hundred shekels of gold; beside ornaments, and collars, and purple raiment that was on the kings of Midian, and beside the chains that were about their camels' necks" (verse 26).

With this gold "...Gideon made an ephod thereof, and put it in his city, even in Ophrah: and all Israel went thither a whoring after it: which thing became a snare unto Gideon, and to his house" (verse 27). Perhaps Gideon had good intentions in making this golden ephod, not realizing the temptation it would present to the Israelites to worship it instead of God. It was a mistake by which this great man of God was snared.

"And Gideon the son of Joash died in a good old age, and was buried in the sepulchre of Joash his father, in Ophrah of the Abi-ezrites" (verse 32).

The results of Gideon's example and faithful judgment lasted only as long as he lived. "And it came to pass, as soon as Gideon was dead, that the children of Israel turned again, and went a whoring after Baalim, and made Baal-berith their god. And the children of Israel remembered not the LORD their God, who had delivered them out of the hands of all their enemies on every side: Neither shewed they kindness to the house of Jerubbaal, namely, Gideon, according to all the goodness which he had shewed unto Israel" (verses 33-35).

Contributed

The Wilderness Experience

By David DeLong

Sometimes a person wonders such things as, “why is life at times so hard?” “Why do I struggle so?” “Why are troubles hitting me?” If the person is a believer in Christ, the answer, at least in part, is that he or she is going through the “wilderness experience.”

All believers will go through three experiences: living in the land of Egypt (before conversion, being enslaved to sin and Satan); entering Canaan (the believer’s home in God’s coming kingdom); and the wilderness experience (the believer’s walk of faith in this present age.) In this article, we will be examining some examples of the physical wilderness to illustrate principles of the spiritual wilderness that we are traveling through, as well. God’s children have been on a journey, even in ages past, to a permanent home. Hebrews 11:13 tells us: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”

The wilderness has been defined as “a place not inhabited and usually not cultivated.” In other words, it’s not a good place to call a permanent home. **Why does The Lord allow his children to go through this wilderness experience then?** We get a partial answer to this question by looking at Isaiah 48:10: “Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” Though this appears to be the time when Israel was captive in the land of Babylon, the Lord reminds His people of the time that they wandered in the wilderness, also. Verses 20 and 21 of this same chapter read: “Go ye forth of Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans, with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The LORD hath redeemed his servant

Jacob. And they thirsted not when he led them through the deserts: he caused the waters to flow out of the rock for them: he clave the rock also, and the waters gushed out.” **The Heavenly Father allows such experiences to be a refining process for His children.** It is to help them come to a complete trust in Him.

Notice what the Lord tells the Israelites in Deuteronomy 8:1-10: “All the commandments which I command thee this day shall ye observe to do, that ye may live, and multiply, and go in and possess the land which the LORD swore unto your fathers. And thou shalt remember all the way which the LORD thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live. Thy raiment waxed not old upon thee, neither did thy foot swell, these forty years. Thou shalt also consider in thine heart, that, as a man chasteneth his son, so the LORD thy God chasteneth thee. Therefore thou shalt keep the commandments of the LORD thy God, to walk in his ways, and to fear him. For the LORD thy God bringeth thee into a good land, a land of brooks of water, of fountains and depths that spring out of valleys and hills; A land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey; A land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass. When thou hast eaten and art full,

then thou shalt bless the LORD thy God for the good land which he hath given thee.”

In these verses, the Lord gives a number of specific reasons why the Israelites went through the wilderness experience. First, the Scriptures tell us, it was to humble them. One of the purposes of being humbled is to show people that the universe does not revolve around them. We are all born self-centered, and we need to learn that, though God places great worth upon us, we are not as indispensable as we may think. The Lord needs to be first in every area of our lives. We need to trust Him implicitly.

Next, the Scriptures inform us that the Lord proved them. The Israelites needed to know what was in their hearts, whether they would keep His commandments, or not. We don't always know what is in our hearts, either. We may think we do, but sometimes situations arise that cause us to react in an ungodly manner. In fact, our actions may shock us. **The Lord lets His people go through experiences that will reveal the intents of their hearts, so that by repentance, they will learn to live obedient lives.**

The Lord also allowed His children in the wilderness to be hungry. Then, He miraculously provided for them by giving them manna to eat. He did this to show them that they needed to live by every word of the Lord, and not just by bread. The Lord also provided for them by making it so that their clothing didn't get old, and by not letting their feet swell. Certainly the Israelites could identify, at least in part, with what the Apostle Paul wrote many centuries later: “I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need” (Philippians 4:12.)

The children of Israel were to consider also that the Lord was dealing with them as a father does with his son, in that they were chastened at times for disobedience. Likewise, the Lord corrects His children today, sometimes with severe punishment. But, we must keep in mind that it is for our good. Listen to the words of Hebrews 12:5,6,11: “And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth...Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby.”

So the Lord exhorted the Israelites to live faithfully for Him, because He had great blessings to give them in the land of promise which they could inherit. Great blessings also await those who are faithful in their walk with the Lord today, both in this present age, and in the world to come. Let us bless God, therefore, for His goodness to us, whether we go through happy times or hard times.

Some folks may think that the wilderness experience is a terrible situation to go through. But it doesn't have to be. It depends upon our reaction to God's leading. The wilderness can be frightening, bewildering, a land of suffering, or one of incredible beauty. Like the song says, “my Lord knows the way through the wilderness; all I have to do is follow.” However, sometimes we don't learn the lessons of faith and obedience right away. When that happens, we may be in for some long wandering.

That is what happened to the children of Israel. When Moses sent the twelve spies to search out the land of Canaan, they brought back an evil report of the land, except for Caleb and Joshua. Notice what Numbers 13:32-14:2 reads: “And they brought up an evil report of the land which they had searched unto the children of Israel, saying, The land, through which we have gone to search it, is a land that eateth up the inhabitants thereof; and all the people that we saw in it are men of a great stature. And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight. And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried; and the people wept that night. And all the children of Israel murmured against Moses and against Aaron: and the whole congregation said unto them, Would God that we had died in the land of Egypt! or would God we had died in this wilderness!” **Because of this rebellion against the Lord, the Israelites wandered in the wilderness for forty years, and that generation which murmured died out.**

Another thing to remember is that there are dangers lurking in the wilderness, such as serpents and scorpions. The Lord reminded His people what He had done for them in Deuteronomy 8:15, “Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, wherein were fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where there was no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint.” Today, in our wilderness experience, we need to be on guard against Satan and his demons. In fact, Jesus seems to compare them to serpents and scorpions in Luke 10:17-

20. This passage reads: “And the seventy returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. And he said unto them, I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven. Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven.”

Satan definitely lurks in the wilderness. God tests us for our good, but Satan tempts us to try to make us fall. Even our Lord Jesus was tempted in the wilderness by the devil (Matthew 4:1-11.)

However, as our Lord defeated Satan in the wilderness, we must too. This is the place where the battle is won. We have the same Word of God that Jesus used to make the enemy flee. We have access to the same Holy Spirit for power to overcome.

The wilderness can be a place of refuge and refreshing, as well as one of incredible beauty. After the dragon (Satan) was cast out of heaven, Revelation 12:13-16 tells us that he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man child (Christ.) Verse 14 reads: “And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.”

John the Baptist pointed The Israelites to Jesus by being, “The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:3,4.)

Our Lord, Himself, used the desert as a place of refreshing. He went there after the death of John the Baptist (Matthew 14:10-13); He sent His disciples there after they needed rest (Mark 6:30-32); He departed there for prayer after healing people and casting out devils (Luke 4:40-42; Mark 1:32-35.)

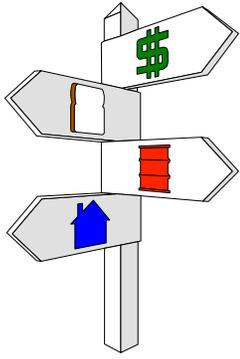
How about us? If we are believers, then we are undergoing a wilderness experience. **We can confess that we are “strangers and pilgrims on the earth.” But, are we enjoying the journey?** Are we learning the lessons of the wilderness? Are we willing to be humbled by the Lord, and to be proved by Him whether we will keep His commandments? Will we be content to eat His manna, and not our own “food”? Are we willing to be chastened by Him when

we disobey? Do we dread the serpents and scorpions? Sometimes the heat and dryness and other concerns of the wilderness can cause us to take our eyes off of the One Who is leading us.

And what happens when we’re so troubled at times that we feel we can’t go on? Elijah seemed to be at that point when Jezebel was about to have him killed. After leaving his servant in Beersheba, the Bible tells us, “But he himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness, and came and sat down under a juniper tree: and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life; for I am not better than my fathers. And as he lay and slept under a juniper tree, behold, then an angel touched him, and said unto him, Arise and eat.” (I Kings 19:4,5.) Twice Elijah ate and drank of the Lord’s miraculous provisions, giving him the strength for forty days and forty nights to come unto Horeb the mount of God.

Also, when Abraham sent Hagar away from him and Sarah, the Scriptures inform us, “And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread, and a bottle of water, and gave it unto Hagar, putting it on her shoulder, and the child, and sent her away: and she departed, and wandered in the wilderness of Beersheba. And the water was spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs. And she went, and sat her down over against him a good way off, as it were a bowshot: for she said, Let me not see the death of the child. And she sat over against him, and lift up her voice, and wept.” (Genesis 21:14-16.) **The Lord then provided a well of water in that wilderness, just when Hagar was beside herself with despair. He will do the same for us!**

In conclusion, let’s ponder upon the great love and care that the Lord had for His people Israel, a love and care that He has for His people today: “He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the LORD alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.” (Deuteronomy 32:10-12.)



The Signs of the Times

BRITAIN FUNDING ISLAMIC STUDIES AT UNIVERSITIES

**Prime Minister Tony Blair urges focus on modern
"realities" of faith, not distortions**

By Thomas Wagner - Associated Press

LONDON -- Prime Minister Tony Blair this week announced \$2 million in funding to back Islamic studies at British universities, urging the public to listen to the religion's moderate scholars rather than to its radicals.

Blair's government hopes the funding will lead to a major shift of the focus of Islamic studies from an Arab and Middle Eastern perspective to that of the plural society in Britain.

Blair told imams, scholars, and clerics at a two-day conference in London that British Muslims "overwhelmingly" wanted to be "loyal citizens," despite attention given to a small number of radicals.

"Around the world today there is a new given to promulgating the true voices of Islam," Blair said.

He urged clerics at the conference to explain Islam to the world and place it in its broader context, how it has roots in Judaism and Christianity, and how it has developed. Blair urged them to explain "how far removed it is in truth from the crude and warped distortion of the extremists."

The money is to be used to support recommendations of a report by Islamic scholar Ataullah Siddiqui that was commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills.

The Siddiqui report warned that many university courses in Islamic studies focus too narrowly on the Middle East, failing to reflect the modern "realities" of Muslim life in multicultural Britain.

"Discussion over the years about Islamic studies in higher education has been conducted quite separately from, and probably in complete ignorance of the Muslim commu-

nity and their patterns of belief and practice," the report said. "Equally, the teaching of Islam and the mentoring of students as mediated by madrasahs is, to a very large extent, oblivious of realities around them."

Siddiqui's review was commissioned a year ago amid concerns that some students were being exposed to radical Muslim preachers on campus who condone terrorism.

COMMENT

This is a very thought-provoking article, and it leaves questions to be answered. What is the real distortion of Islam? Are the number of radicals embracing Islam small?

When we wish to prove the substance of a person or organization, we must consider their track record (actions in the past).

Islam spread rapidly under Muhammad and his successors through Jihad (holy war). It is recorded that he planned 65 campaigns and personally led 27. These campaigns made "converts" by the millions at the point of a sword. At its peak, Islam had conquered all of North Africa and almost took over Europe.

Christians are accused by many Muslims that they killed many during the Crusades. But the Crusades were products of the apostate Roman Church.

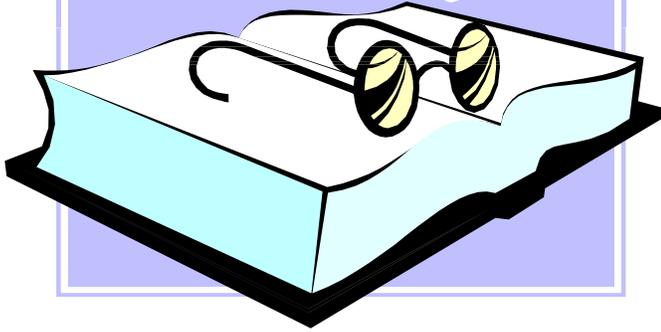
The Muslims' holy book, the Koran, also calls Christians and Jews infidels and demands that no Muslim have anything to do with them. Their written tradition is to bring all mankind into submission and to kill or enslave all those who do not believe in Allah and Muhammad his prophet. See Surah 2:190-192; 4:76; 5:33; 9:5,29,41; 47:4 in the Koran. A few words from the Koran are, "Take not the Jews and Christians for friends...slay the idolaters wherever ye find them...Fight against those who...believe not in Allah nor the Last Day." How can a Muslim explain these verses in his holy book? Could those radical Muslim preachers just be expounding on what the Koran says?

Let us look at one Muslim country. One must be a Muslim to be a citizen of Saudi Arabia. One cannot carry a Bible on the street or have a Bible study in the privacy of one's own house. In that country and some others, it is officially the death penalty for a Muslim to convert to any other religion.

Muslims build mosques and worship freely in the West. However, in their own countries, they deny such freedoms to others. The principles of Islam are far removed from those of Judaism and Christianity.

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: Why is faith required in the life of a child of God?

Answer: Someone has well said, "He who is poor in faith here will be bankrupt hereafter." The study of faith as seen in the lives of children of God is a helpful and profitable study. Let us see the place of faith in the life of a child of God.

1. It requires faith to produce pardon. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God" (Ephesians 2:8). This verse does not tell us that faith is the gift of God. It is salvation that is the gift of God. In these first ten verses of Ephesians 2, Paul is dealing with the subject of salvation. Salvation is the gift of God. Paul declares you are saved through faith.

John says we are saved by believing. See John 1:12. The word "believe" in the New Testament is the equivalent to "having faith". Peter says the lame man was healed and made whole by faith. See Acts 3:16. Jesus said concerning Jairus' daughter, "...thy faith hath made thee whole..." See Luke 8:48. We are all "...children of God by faith..." See Galatians 3:26. Genuine faith in Christ will save any man.

2. It requires faith to please God. "But without faith it is impossible to please him" (Hebrews 11:6, first part). Men and women who do not have faith do not please God. Why did Noah please God? It was because he had faith. Why did Enoch please God? It was because he had faith. Abraham pleased God because he had faith. "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief." Daniel pleased God because he had faith. This delivered him from the fear of men. Do you want to please God? Well, you must have faith in God!

3. It requires faith to pray. "...for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Hebrews 11:6). James, writing on practical Christianity, said, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (James 1:5-6).

Prayer is exercising faith in God. If you do not have faith in God, there is no use of your praying. Prayer is experiencing God's favor. The soul that prays is in fellowship with God and is conscious that God is interested in his need. Prayer is expecting from God. If we do not

have faith, we are wasting our time talking to God.

4. It requires faith to proceed in the Christian life. The Apostle Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me" (Galatians 2:20). Faith is the soul's intake. Love is the soul's outlet. Little faith will bring you a sad life, but great faith will bring eternal life to you.

We are to advance in the faith but also to adhere to the faith. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and the doctrines of devils" (I Timothy 4:1). In the closing days of this dispensation, many are departing from "the faith."

Paul wrote to Titus and told him that he should rebuke certain ones, and to do it sharply, "that they may be sound in the faith." Paul was just asking others to do what he himself had always done.

At the closing of his earthly ministry, Paul said, "...I have kept the faith" (II Timothy 4:7). Above all things, we are to advertise the faith. To the saints at Rome, Paul said, "...your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world" (Romans 1:8). James says, "...I will shew thee my faith by my works" (James 2:18). Faith is essential in making progress in the Christian life. Faith in God always triumphs. Faith is the link that binds our nothingness to God's almightiness.

5. It requires faith to prevail: "...this is the victory that overcometh the world..." (I John 5:4). Faith is God's method of victory over the world. Worldly Christians have meager faith. Genuine faith drinks deeply from the well-spring on high. The worldly Christian partakes of the bitter dregs of earth's fountain. The Lord Jesus knew what "great faith" could mean to one of His followers. He chided those on board with Him who were being tossed in the storm and were filled with fear. To them, He said, "O ye of little faith."

Question: What was there in the paradise of Eden?

Answer: In the garden, there were many trees bearing fruit, and trees of great beauty. There were many living creatures--birds, animals, and fish who lived in peace and

who ate only food that was natural to their areas. "And God said, Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed; to you it shall be for meat. And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so" (Genesis 1:29-30). "And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis 2:9).

Question: Did Adam and Eve repent?

Answer: The Bible does not answer your question in plain words. However, we do know that they reared Abel (whom Cain slew), and he was righteous in God's sight. This would only be so because Abel was reared properly. This could only have been accomplished through a repentant heart.

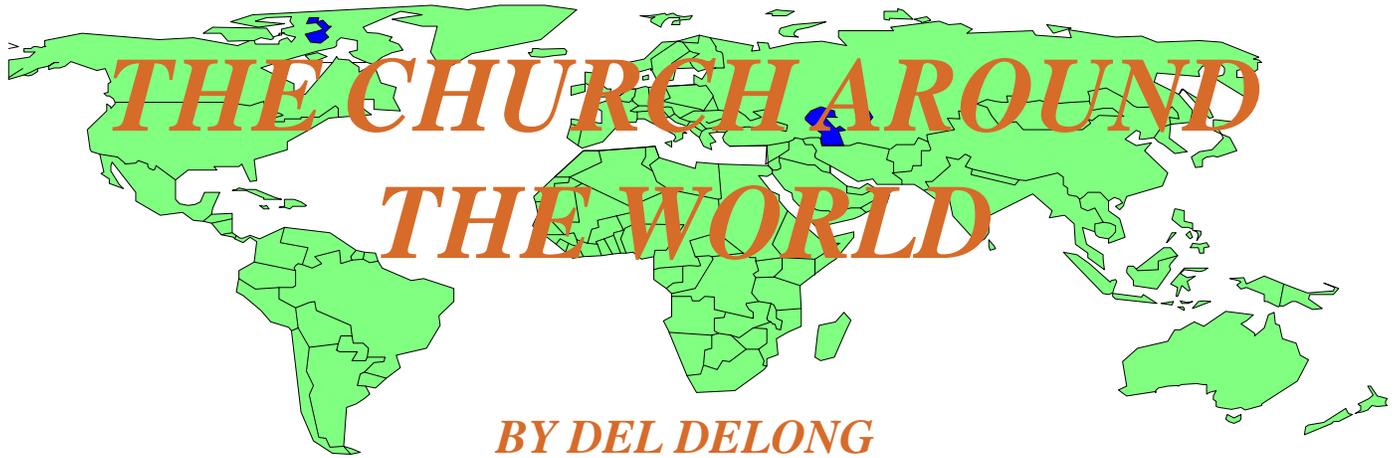
We continue reading that there was also Seth, of whom said Eve, "...God...hath appointed me another seed instead of Abel, whom Cain slew." Read Genesis 4:25. These sons of Adam and Eve were righteous in God's sight. The answer then is yes, Adam and Eve did repent.

Question: What is the "witness of the Spirit"?

Answer: The "witness of the Spirit" is the inward assurance which the believer enjoys of his filial relation to God, namely, that the Holy Spirit witnesses to and with his spirit that he is a child of God, and that his sins are forgiven. The fruit displayed by one who has the "witness of the Spirit" is set forth in Galatians 5:22-23.

Question: What does the phrase "Buy the truth, and sell it not" which is found in Proverbs 23:23 mean?

Answer: The meaning is that we should get the truth whatever it may cost us, and that we should not part with it for any consideration, money, pleasure, fame, etc. The truth is more precious than all these.



THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

BY DEL DELONG

These photographs were taken in Seagoville, Texas recently. They show a baptism being performed, and afterward, the laying on of hands for the reception of the Holy Spirit.





Repentance and baptism, in the name Lord Jesus Christ, are the first steps the child of God must take. A commitment to follow the footsteps of Jesus, love God and keep His commandments is essential in the believer's walk.

LESSON I

SHEEP AND GOATS

Scripture Reading: Matthew 25:31-46.

Golden Text: Matthew 25:33.

"And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left."

1. Who is the Son of man that will come in His glory? Matthew 25:31.
2. Who will be gathered before Him, and what will He do then? Matthew 25:32-33.
3. Who are the sheep that the shepherd divides from the goats? Matthew 25:34. (These are the children of God.)
4. Did the sheep share their food and clothing with those who were in need? Matthew 25:35-36.
5. Did they visit those in prison and try to help them? Matthew 25:36.
6. Who are the goats that are separated from the sheep? Matthew 25:41. (These are the unrighteous.)
7. What did the ones on the left hand not do? Matthew 25:42.
8. Are all people sinners before they ask God for forgiveness? Romans 3:23.
9. If we refuse and rebel against the Lord and His ways, are we classified with the goats? Isaiah 1:20.

NOTE: We should all work to try to be like sheep. We want to be chosen for our good works.

LESSON II

THE WOMAN WITH THE ALABASTER BOX

Scripture Reading: Mark 14:1-9.

Golden Text: Mark 14:7.

"For ye have the poor with you always, and whensoever ye will ye may do them good: but me ye have not always."

1. When did this event take place? Mark 14:1 (first part).
2. What was uppermost in the chief priests' minds? Mark 14:1 (last part) and verse 2.
3. Where did this event take place, and what happened? Mark 14:3.
4. What did this cause some people to do? Mark 14:4-5.
5. How did Christ answer their complaining? Mark 14:6.
6. Whom did He tell them that they always had with them? Mark 14:7.
7. What did Jesus say this woman had done? Mark 14:8.
8. What did He say to be her memorial? Mark 14:9.

NOTE: It is not always the big deeds that make us great before God. It is the little things which may mean a great reward. You may want to read Matthew 26:6-13 for this same story.

LESSON III

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:17-30; I Corinthians 11:26-30.

Golden Text: I Corinthians 11:28.

"But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup."

1. What did the disciples ask Jesus in Matthew 26:17?
2. What was Jesus' answer to the disciples, and did they do as He said? Matthew 26:18-19.
3. At what time of day was the Lord's Supper Service observed? Matthew 26:20.
4. Did Jesus know that one of the apostles would betray Him that night? Which apostle betrayed Jesus? Matthew 26:21, 25.
5. What did Jesus do with the bread after He blessed it? Matthew 26:26.
6. What did Jesus do with the cup after He gave thanks over it? Matthew 26:27-28.
7. What do we remember or show when we eat of the "bread" and drink of the "cup"? I Corinthians 11:26.
8. What must we do before we partake of the Lord's Supper Service? I Corinthians 11:28.
9. What happens if we partake of the Lord's Supper Service unworthily? I Corinthians 11:29.

Note: Before we partake of the Lord's Supper Service, we must accept Jesus as our Savior and be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many of you boys and girls have not taken that step, but it is our prayer that someday you will become a "child of God." For additional information on this read Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:7-20; John 13:1-17.

LESSON IV

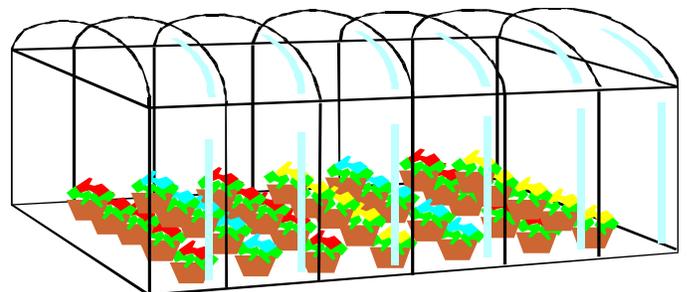
IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE

Scripture Reading: Matthew 26:36-46.
Golden Text: Matthew 26:38.
"Then saith he unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me."

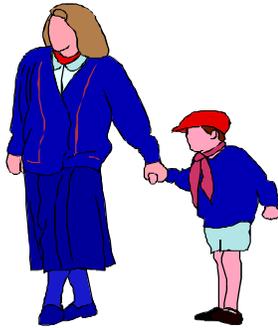
1. Where does Jesus now go, and who is with Him?
THE ADVOCATE OF TRUTH

- Matthew 26:36-37.
2. What did Jesus say to His disciples in Matthew 26:38?
 3. What was Jesus' prayer in the garden? Matthew 26:39.
 4. What did Jesus discover when He went back to the disciples? Matthew 26:40.
 5. What did Jesus tell His disciples? Matthew 26:41.
 6. What did Jesus pray the second time, and what did the disciples continue to do? Matthew 26:42-43.
 7. What was the last prayer in Gethsemane? Matthew 26:44.
 8. What did Jesus say just before Judas came to betray Him? Matthew 26:45-46.

NOTE: For this same lesson, you can also read Mark 14:32-42 and Luke 22:40-46.



**In each little garden I'll scatter my seed,
 Where flowers will grow instead of the weed.
 I'll sow seeds of happiness, love and cheer;
 My flowers shall blossom every day of the year.
 I'll sow seeds of wisdom, knowledge and right;
 His seeds of promise are filled with delight.
 I'll sow for the Master as on I go,
 And scatter God's seeds while here below.
 I'll sow God's seeds as I go here and there,
 For His flower garden everywhere.**



HELPING HIS MOTHER

"I don't like to bring in wood chips all the time," grumbled little John to himself.

"All right John," said his mother, who had overheard him. "You needn't bring in any more chips until you are willing to."

"Really, Mama?" cried little John.

"Yes," answered his mother, "for I don't like to have boys about that grumble and hate to work."

The barn was finished long before supper time, for no one bothered little John that day. His mother picked up the wood chips herself, and did not even call him to run on errands.

But when the barn was finished, little John was tired of it and ran into the house to ask his mother to tell him a story.

"I can't tell you a story," answered his mother, "for I am busy. Run now and play."

But John was tired of playing, so he wandered into the kitchen, and there he smelled the Friday's baking.

He ran and looked on a low shelf in the pantry where his mother always put a little pie for him, but the shelf was bare.

"Mama," cried John, bursting into the sitting room where his mother sat sewing, "where's my little pie?"

"What pie?" questioned his mother, who seemed surprised.

"Why, you always make me a little pie or turnover when you bake; that's the one I mean."

"I used to," said his mother, "but I was too busy this morning to bother with little pieces."

John went soberly outdoors and sat down in the shade of the new barn to think. If he had helped his mother,

wouldn't she have had time to tell the story, and if he had brought in the wood chips when she was baking, wouldn't she have found time to make him a little pie?

"I ought to help my mother whether she bakes me pies or not," said little John solemnly to himself. "It doesn't take but a minute or two to pick up a pan of chips, and it's fun to run on errands."

"Mama," he said, half an hour later, "I've brought in a full box of wood and two pans of chips. I like to bring in chips, cause it helps you. I'm willing to help after this whether you bake little pies for me or not."

"All right," laughed his mother, who saw that John had learned his lesson, "the next time I bake maybe there will be a little pie for you."

-Selected



MOTHER'S DAY POEM

"She always seems so tired" is what friends say; She never has a chance to get away.

Home, husband, children, duties, great or small, Keep her forever at their beck and call.

"But," she confides, with laughter in her eyes, She never yet felt fretted by these ties.

"Just to be needed is more sweet," says she, "Than any freedom in this world could be."

-Mary Eversley

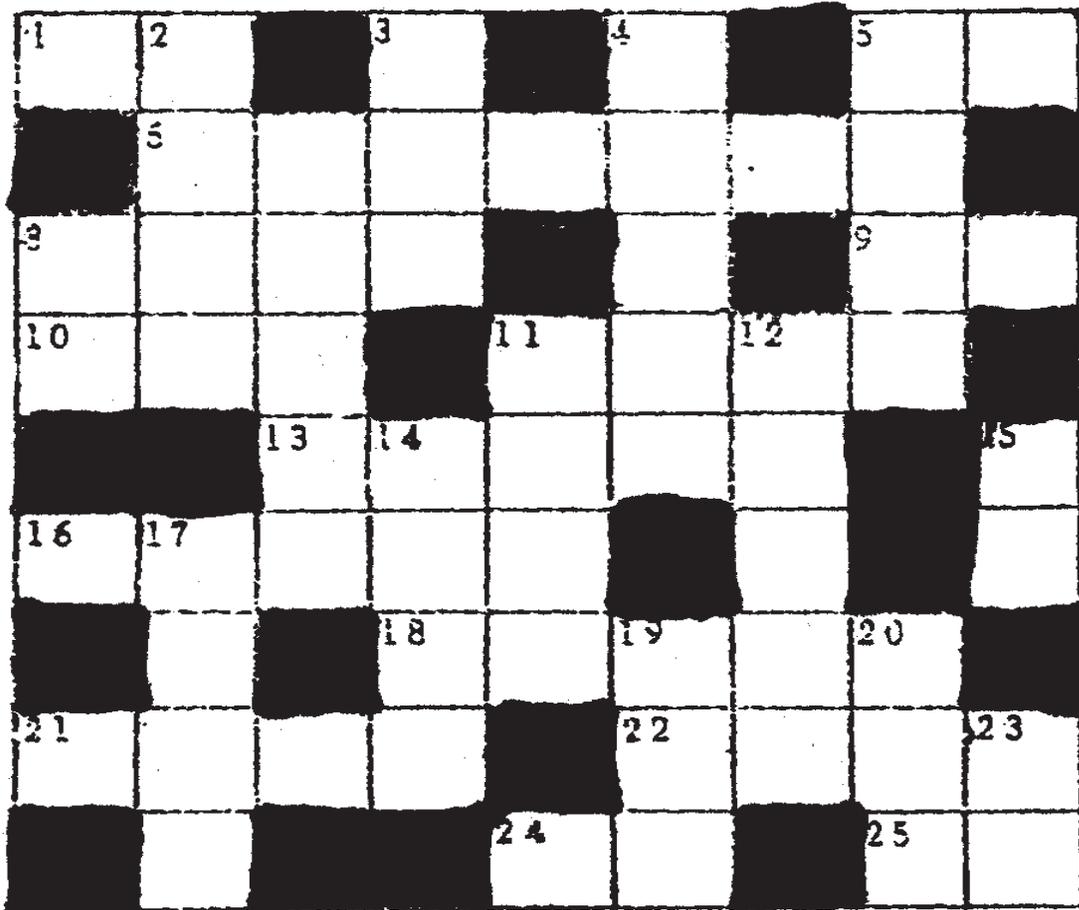
ACROSS

1. The LORD our God willserve. Joshua 24:24.
5. ...also is the resurrection of the dead. I Corinthians 15:42.
6. And shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to Matthew 20:19.
8.is the mother of Jesus.
9. The opposite of yes is
10. In music it means duet
11. Lest He... us sleeping. Mark 13:36.
13. I will...the shepherd. Matthew 26:31.
16. ...was born in a manger.
18. He calleth his own ...by name. John 10:3.
21. Jesus washed his disciples'.... John 13:5,14.
22. Name a city in Judah. Joshua 15:52.
24. For...is God which worketh in you. Philippians 2:13.
25. ...are the children of light. I Thessalonians 5:5.

DOWN

2.son of Isaac. Genesis 25:25.
3. There is ...in the presence of the angels. Luke 15:10.
4. We should bring forthunto God. Romans 7:4.
5. He shall ...them a Saviour. Isaiah 19:20.
7. Jesus was nailed on a
8. The abbreviation for Medical Doctor...
11. Or if he ask a ...will he give him a serpent? Luke 11:11.
12. Charity....faileth. I Corinthians 13:8.
14. Ye....must be born again. John 3:7.
15. Come unto ...all ye that labour. Matthew 11:28.
17. So shall we ...be with the Lord. I Thessalonians 4:17.
19. To him that overcometh will I give to...of the tree of life. Revelation 2:7.
20. ...me that thou owest. Matthew 18:28.
23.ye kind one to another. Ephesians 4:32.

BIBLE PUZZLE



God's Throne

By David DeLong

In heaven was an opened door,
A trumpet-voice then beckoned John
To come, and see what was in store,
Such as a throne, and Him thereon.

God's aspect was like awesome jewels:
"A jasper and a sardine stone";
A rainbow circled Him Who rules,
Being "round about the throne".

And four and twenty elders sit
Around this throne in raiment white;
Upon their heads gold crowns did fit,
As Seven Lamps were burning bright.

Four beasts there were, all full of eyes,
Who rest not with their praises poured;
As to the Father each one cries:
"Holy, holy, holy, Lord..."

Then, the elders, that same hour,
Before the throne, each casts his crown;
They give God glory, honour, power,
Worship Him by falling down.

