

A photograph of a winter forest. The trees are covered in a thick layer of snow, and the ground is also blanketed in white. In the foreground, a wooden bench is partially visible, also covered in snow. The overall scene is serene and quiet.

The Advocate of Truth



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THE UNICORN

By David Royer

WEBSTER'S NEW WORLD COLLEGE DICTIONARY: UNICORN 1. a mythical horse-like animal with a single horn growing from the center of its forehead.



There is a curiosity in the Old Testament section of the Bible (King James Version). It talks of Unicorns. Atheists say: See, this helps prove that the Bible is just a book of fairytales.

It is true that Unicorns are mentioned nine (9) different times. See:

Numbers 23:22; Numbers 24:8; Deuteronomy 33:17; Job 39:9-10; Job 39:11; Psalm 22:21; Psalm 29:6; Psalm 92:10; Isaiah 34:7

Our job, as children of God, is to not accept today's interpretations that do not honor and exalt God's inspired words. We need to research, study and defend our beliefs and the Bible's authority. Here are just a couple of Bible verses that emphasize this point:

II Timothy 4: 2-4, "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."

II Timothy 3: 15-16, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee

wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:"

Let's examine this "fable" of Unicorns

The King James Version of our Bible was produced in 1611. So, let's look at an older, original definition of Unicorns, as provided by Webster's Dictionary, dated 1828.

'UNICORN', *noun* [Latin unicornis; unus, one, and cornu, horn.]

1. an animal with one horn; the monoceros. this name is often applied to the rhinoceros.

Now, let us examine how this animal is used in the Bible verses:

Numbers 23:22; Numbers 24:8 and Job 39:11—An animal that describes strength and determination (as in the power of God to deliver his people)

Deuteronomy 33:17; Psalm 22:21 and Psalm 92:10—An animal with one or two horns

Job 39:9-10—Cannot domesticate or trust this animal

Psalm 29:6—The young animal "romps" around

Isaiah 34:7—An animal that describes strength (as in this prophesy, that strong world leaders will be humbled and destroyed)

So, we know that our Bible's use of the word Unicorn (and other Bible versions) is speaking of a powerful, horned animal. Perhaps it was a wild ox, wild bull, wild buffalo, rhinoceros or even a "now-extinct" animal. What we do know is these Bible references do not refer to a mythical horse-with-a-horn creature.



THOUGHTS ABOUT THE PARABLE OF THE LOST SHEEP

Bond Tennant

In the parable of the lost sheep, found in Luke 15:4-6, we are told of a shepherd who had a hundred sheep, ninety-nine of them were safely in the fold, but one had gone astray and was lost. The parable shows that, under such circumstances, the shepherd would leave the ninety-nine, "...and go after that which is lost, until he find it" (verse 4).

As a rebuke to the attitude of the scribes and Pharisees, the application of this lesson is evident. The scribes and Pharisees considered themselves to be in harmony with God and safe within the "sheepfold." To them, the publicans and sinners were outside the realm of God's blessings and were lost. However, they were doing little or nothing to find and rescue them. They murmured against Jesus when He showed an interest in them.

On another occasion, and for the same reason, the scribes and Pharisees questioned Jesus' eating with publicans and sinners. The account says, "When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Mark 2:17). The sinners being called to repentance would correspond to the lost sheep of the parable.

The scribes and Pharisees were as much lost as were the publicans and sinners. Outwardly they made professions of holiness, but inwardly they were "...full of dead men's bones,..." and were hypocritical in most of their professions (Matthew 23:16-33). However, the lesson of the parable was based upon the professions of this hypocritical class, not what they actually were. They claimed to be the shepherds of Israel. However, they showed little concern for those who had gone astray, and they resented it when Jesus displayed interest in these "lost" sheep.

The parable sets forth the divine attitude toward those who are lost in sin and condemned to death. This attitude is one of sympathy and love. This is reflected in that notable text, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16). Romans 5:8 says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." The Apostle Paul wrote that, "...Jesus came into the world to save sinners..." (I Timothy 1:15).

In applying this general lesson of the parable, we do not need to make a specific application of the proportion of those in the fold to the lost sheep. The proportion is ninety-nine to one! The reverse of this proportion has been more nearly true. In all ages, the vast majority of mankind has not been among those safe in the fold! In the nation of Israel, at the time of Jesus, the publicans and sinners doubtless outnumbered those who made serious professions to please God.

The ratio of the professed righteous to the sinners could have been Jesus' way of driving this lesson home with greater force. The thought is that even if it were true that there was only one lost sheep, those who really loved the Lord could not be content until that sheep was found and brought back to the fold. All of the Lord's people should be guided by this principle.

The death of Jesus, as man's Redeemer, makes it possible for the sin-cursed and dying race to be rescued from death. The Apostle Paul wrote that, "...God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, ... and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Because of this, "...we are ambassadors for Christ..." (II Corinthians 5:19-20). The followers of Jesus are associated with Him in the work of reconciliation.

The parable states that when the shepherd returned home after rescuing the sheep, "...he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost." Then Jesus added, "I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance" (Luke 15:6-7). We can be assured that even now whenever a person is led to repentance through the "word of reconciliation," and vows to fully do God's will, there is rejoicing in heaven. Let there be gladness among all of the Lord's people on such occasions!



Nigeria

GETTING UP STEAM

By Carlo Rasmussen
(Deceased)

Recently while reading a book of helpful information, I found under a sub-heading some valuable thoughts.

The sub-heading was “Getting Up Steam.” The object of the lesson was a train locomotive. Many of us have seen the old train locomotive standing by the train station getting ready to pull the heavy loaded train cars to their destination. Every now and then the locomotive bursts out with a loud snort of steam that escapes into the air. This tells us that the engine is ready to go with a full head of steam inside to work with. As the conductor waves his hand that all is ready, the locomotive, with all that gathered steam, seems to pull away with the train. At times, the power was so great the huge wheels would even spin under the pressure. The point brought out here is that the locomotive was ready to go with a full boiler of steam, and when “All Aboard” was sounded, the engine pulled the train right away.

What is your condition, reader? Are you building up that steam of the Holy Spirit of God within you? Possibly you are filled with God’s power that the Apostle Peter wrote about in I Peter 1:5. Satan’s final rush is steadily coming to a climax. God is calling from everywhere those who are seeking the Truth of the Scriptures through the Lord Jesus Christ. The time is at hand when Satan will make an open show of himself through the man of sin of our age, whom he will choose. The sign-posts on the highway of time reveal this to be true as the Word of God has foretold it centuries ago. The short space of time when the “man of sin” will be revealed is coming into its season. Where do you stand, and whom do you serve?

Many of the Church of God around the world are

“pressing onward” as they see the Great Day approaching. The time is now to be busy more than ever about the Father’s business. Each of us needs to press harder to be more filled with that Holy Spirit of God. Just as the locomotive was gathering up steam for the big pull, so we should be making haste and be filled to capacity and ready as the Church of God makes that final pull. “Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand” (Ephesians 6:13).

Let us not forget that which has been given to us. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the Living God through wickedness and unbelief, especially after having received the gift of eternal life and all the blessings therewith through our Lord Jesus Christ. It is the “eleventh hour.” Are you “getting up steam?”

Reprinted





Principles and Reasons Different Types Of Judgment

By Moises Torres M.

Let us study on some types of judgments required in our Christian life, salvation, and rewards.

1. The Word of God and the Gospel is a judgment:

John 12:47-49: "And if any man hear my words, and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: **the word that I have spoken**, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak."

Romans 2:16: "In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ **according to my gospel.**"

The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ judges us (sets us in a right mind) when we accept its teachings; and if we do not, this same gospel and Word of God will judge us in the last day.

2. Discernment:

This kind of judgment is a gift of the Holy Spirit and helps us to discern between good and evil. So it leads us to justice if we use it.

Hebrews 5:14: "But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, *even* those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

I Corinthians 2:15-16: "But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ."

I Corinthians 12:8-10: "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge

by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another **discerning of spirits**; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:"

It is through the Holy Spirit these gifts are given to us, but we need to use them so our senses are exercised to discern both good and evil.

3. Our own words:

Mathew 12:36-37: "But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned."

We need to be very careful when we open our mouth to speak; once our words have gone out it is not possible to get them back to us.

4. The Judgment of the Holy Spirit:

John 16:7-11: "Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believe not on me; Of righteousness, because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more; Of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged."

These verses explain some of the reasons the Lord Jesus had to go away and send the Holy Spirit as our Comforter and ally. The Holy Spirit was sent as a witness of the Lord Jesus, because many did not believe in Him; He would also reprove the world of righteousness because it is the Holy Spirit who works and places our hearts in the light of righteousness. He was also sent to remain and

admonish the world, the prince of this world is in a state of judgment and condemnation, so that we are alert of his seductive power.

5. Judgment in the sense of rule:

Matthew 19:28: "And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

I Corinthians 6:2-5: "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life? If then ye have judgments of things pertaining to this life, set them to judge who are least esteemed in the church. I speak to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you? no, not one that shall be able to judge between his brethren?"

The Apostle recommends the church to grow in knowledge to rule the world in the coming age and not focus our minds in smallest matters. The Lord also told his disciples they will sit in twelve thrones to rule the twelve tribes of Israel.

6. Self-Examination:

I Corinthians 11:28-32: "But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of *that* bread, and drink of *that* cup. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body. For this cause many *are* weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world."

We learn in this reading that a self-examination judgment is a very important practice of our faith. Even the Lord's Supper in itself is a judgment because if we drink and eat of the Emblems of the body and blood of the Lord unworthily, we eat and drink damnation (Verse 29).

7. Classification:

This section includes subjects as the Judgment Seat of Christ mentioned in II Corinthians 5:9-10, which is an exclusive judgment for the saints according to the works of faith they build upon the foundation –The Lord Jesus Christ. Compare this with the Parable of the Talents

(Matthew 25:14-30).

The Judgment on Nations described in Matthew 25:31-46, is also a judgment of classification. Notice this is not a judgment for the saints, because those who are to the right or to the left (sheep and goats) recognize the statements of Him who is sitting on the throne.

We may consider the resurrection of the Saints in this same section. "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."

It is the same Son of God who at the right time will choose those who take part in the resurrection for eternal life. The Lord is the Judge of the resurrection.



PARTIALITY

By Gonzalo Hernandez



“My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons. For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts?” (James 2:1-4).

According to the dictionary, partiality is defined as “unfair bias in favor of one thing or person compared with another. A particular liking or fondness for something.” In many cases partiality is related to bribery. According to the dictionary, bribery means “Money or favor given or promised in order to influence the judgment or conduct of a person in a position of trust. Something that serves to induce or influence.”

All human beings are exposed to being partial. In fact, many companies have anti-corruption policies, which have limits in giving and receiving gifts of money, voyages, food, etc. To break any established policies has criminal and economical consequences for those who engage in corruption. Christians are also exposed to partiality. If we think about the policies established by God, we will see that they are different from those of society. Let us mention some of them. “Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver” (II Corinthians 9:7). God does not set limits on offerings. What he asks for is that if we are going to offer, we should do it selflessly and not try to buy the heart or favor of another. “Then said he also to him that bade him, When thou makest a

dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbours; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompence be made thee” (Luke 14:12). On the other hand, he who receives help needs to be sure that his heart is not corrupted nor perverted.

There are very clever men who have the habit of giving presents. They flatter others with the intention of gaining a business, a favor or appreciation. “Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves: be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves” (Matthew 10:16). We should be wise in order to not let our heart be bribed by those types of people. Who does not like to be praised or talked to sweetly? As an old Mexican saying goes “who is given bread and cries”.

Apostle James’ example is very common, and it occurs when one favors or gives better treatment to those who seem to have a better economical or political position. Partiality can occur at any time, at any situation, or at any place by one who gives another person better treatment just because of his appearance or position. “To have respect of persons is not good: for for a piece of bread that man will transgress” (Proverbs 28:21).

There are generous and kind people who live to help and give to others selflessly. Obviously, the one who receives the help will appreciate the person who helps him or her, and there is nothing wrong with that. It becomes bad when the one who receives the help does not treat others in the same manner. The Scripture teaches us to love our neighbor, and if in our congregation we are only polite and attentive to those who help or notice us, we show partiality. Remember, the proverb says: “For for a

piece of bread that man will transgress.” If we analyze this phrase, we will see how embarrassing this situation is, to transgress for a simple piece of bread, or for any other type of help whether it be money, etc. Brother, do not despise the love or friendship of someone and for bribery receive a piece of bread, money, clothes or flattery. Do not let your heart be corrupted or bribed.

The following is another example of respect of persons. If at church the minister does not treat equally all congregants, or the congregants give special attention to a minister from another city, partiality is shown. “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?” (I Corinthians 3:5) When we think about respect of persons, we usually think that this only happens from rich and powerful people towards the poor and defenseless people, but as we mentioned earlier, anyone can fall into doing this. As members of society, and even more of a church, we should treat everyone equally, smile at them, be

courteous and helpful since we are all brethren. There are good manners that apply for everyone and towards anyone. “If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well: But if ye have respect to persons, ye commit sin, and are convinced of the law as transgressors” (James 2:8-9). One commits sin when he only shows respect for certain people, or when one exalts someone else in a superficial way, based only on someone’s appearance, race, economical or social status.

God has no partiality, and as His children we should imitate Him. “And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear” (I Peter 1:17). God will judge everyone according to his works. He knows the heart of the people, and He knows who have bad intentions and respect of persons.

UNTYING SOME KNOTS

--Reprinted

Jesus had been telling about His second coming and the final judgment of the world. Now He was ready to add a final word unto His disciples.

"...After two days is the feast of the passover, and the Son of man is betrayed to be crucified" (Matthew 26:2). In the months before this, Jesus had repeatedly foretold His death and resurrection (Matthew 16:21; 17:22-23; 20:17-19). Now He definitely placed the time of His betrayal, and it was only two days away.

"Then assembled together the chief priests, and the scribes, and the elders of the people..." (verse 3). If this drama were being presented on TV, the picture of Jesus and His disciples now would fade out and be replaced by a gathering of the most eminent rulers of the Jews. About seventy of these people formed the council that acted both as legislature and as high court. The high priest was chairman of the council, and he had summoned

these men to meet in his official residence and office building. We are not told that this was an official meeting of the council, however. Possibly it was a caucus of the rulers most violently opposed to Jesus. In that case, moderates such as Nicodemus (John 3:1-2; 7:50-51) were not invited.

"And consulted that they might take Jesus by subtilty, and kill him" (verse 4). They had determined to get rid of Jesus, but at this time they dared not move against Him openly, as the next verse shows.

"...Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar among the people" (verse 5). Uncounted thousands of people were gathering at Jerusalem for the feast of the Passover, and most of them were favorable to Jesus. See how they welcomed Him when He came to town (Matthew 21:8-11). If the police would seize Jesus as He taught in the temple, the rulers thought an excited and high-spirited mob might overwhelm the officers and rescue

Him. Of course, such violence had no place in Jesus' plan, but the rulers did not know that. They knew a riot in the city not only might save Jesus from arrest, but also might bring Roman troops to restore order. Then the Romans might not only restore order, but also replace the Jewish rulers. Therefore, those rulers thought rioting must be avoided at all costs.

"Now when Jesus was in Bethany..." (verse 6). If we were watching this drama on TV, this would be called a flashback. We have been reading of a time two days before the Passover (verse 2), but it was four days earlier when Jesus came to Bethany (John 12:1). Bethany is well known as the home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus (John 11:1-44), and these three were present at a supper in Jesus' honor (John 12:2-3); but the supper was in the house of Simon the leper. It seems reasonable to suppose that Jesus had healed this man's leprosy, else Simon would not be hosting a dinner party.

"There came unto him a woman having an alabaster box of very precious ointment, and poured it on his head, as he sat at meat" (verse 7).

"But when his disciples saw it, they had indignation, saying, To what purpose is this waste?" (verse 8) Disciples of Jesus still face similar questions.

"For this ointment might have been sold for much, and given to the poor" (verse 9). The ointment was worth about a year's pay for a laboring man (John 12:5). Imagine how many poor people that could have helped!

"When Jesus understood it..." (verse 10). When He became aware of their complaining. **"Why trouble ye the woman? for she hath wrought a good work upon me."** To help the poor would have been good, yes; but to honor Jesus in this way was also good.

"For ye have the poor always with you..." (verse 11). Mary and the disciples could help the poor at any time (Mark 14:7), and so can we, but that need not keep us from doing other good things. **"...Me ye have not always."** Jesus took the opportunity to remind the disciples again of His coming death.

"For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial" (verse 12). Only Jesus knew how soon He would be buried, but we suggest that among His followers possibly Mary alone perceived that He actually meant what He said when He foretold His death.

"...Whosoever this gospel shall be preached in

the whole world, there shall also this, that this woman hath done, be told for a memorial of her" (verse 13). So today we hear the story in memory of Mary – and to warn us not to be too critical of those who honor Jesus in ways that seem extravagant.

"Then one of the twelve, called Judas Iscariot, went unto the chief priests" (verse 14). Now we see why Matthew has introduced this flashback in his narrative at this point. It is to explain why greedy Judas went to the priests. Judas had sparked the disciples' complaint, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was the treasurer and could steal some of what was given for the poor (John 12:4-6). Smarting because he could not get his hands on the price of Mary's ointment, he took another way of enriching himself.

"...What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you?..." (verse 15). The rulers needed a way to take Jesus secretly, with no crowd to protect Him (verses 4-5). Judas proposed to show them when and where they could find Him almost alone. **Thirty pieces of silver.** If there were shekels, they were worth much less than Mary's ointment, but Judas may have reasoned were better than nothing.

"...From that time he sought opportunity to betray him" (verse 16). Judas found his opportunity at the Passover. There were no huge crowds then, for the people gathered in family groups for the Passover supper. Read on through verses 17-56.





"The Weapons Of Our Warfare"

By David DeLong

The Apostle Paul wrote in II Corinthians 10:3-5: "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ". These weapons that Paul is writing about are "mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds". What are some of the strong holds to which the apostle is referring? Some of the strong holds are "imaginations" which must be cast down. Other strong holds involve "every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God", and includes "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ".

We must use the weapons of our warfare to pull down these strong holds because we have no strength of our own to do so. We will come back shortly to examine these weapons, but for now I wish to look at the strong holds, themselves.

Imaginations

The word "imaginations" is from the Greek word "logismos" and it means "reasoning, (conscience, conceit,) imagination, thought". Any of man's reasoning that is not according to the Bible is wrong. An example is that of evolution. This is taught not so much as a theory in the schools, but as a fact. But the Word of God totally refutes evolution. The Bible even leaves no room for "theistic evolution" or the belief by some that God started the evolutionary process. God's Word states that, "By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let

all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast" (Psalm 33:6-9). This is very plain and strong language which the Bible uses for how the earth and the heavens came about. He simply spoke His word, and they came into existence. It did not take eons of time for the universe to come into existence. Therefore, man's reasoning on evolution is in error and needs to be discarded and cast down.

Every High Thing That Exalteth Itself

This would include attitudes which place man's ways and thoughts above God's ways and thoughts. We read in Isaiah 55:7-11: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts. For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: 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."

Every Thought To The Obedience Of Christ

For me it seems easier to control my actions than to control my thoughts. But every thought that we think must be put under the control of Christ. This then, is when complete obedience to Christ takes place. The bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ is a task which must be accomplished every day. It must be

done with the weapons of our warfare to be successful. We will now look at some of those weapons which the Lord provides for us to be overcomers. These weapons are both for defensive and offensive purposes. Let us examine now some of the defensive weapons that are at our disposal.

The Whole Armour Of God

We must be protected from the onslaughts of Satan and his minions. Ephesians 6:10-18 informs us: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints".

Having our loins girt about with truth is of the utmost importance. Most of the entire world does not know what truth is, even most of the professing Christians don't know. To them, truth is what you make of it or it is based upon the traditions which have been taught to them. What a true privilege it is to know and obey the truth. This truth only comes from the holy Bible and from nothing else! Only those who are intent upon doing God's will can know this truth. Jesus said: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself" (John 7:17).

The breastplate of righteousness can only come from Jesus Christ. Our own attempts at righteousness are utter failures. Isaiah 64:6 tells us: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

We need to always be prepared to take the gospel to

everyone who is seeking. In Romans 10:13-17 we find: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

The shield of faith is what protects us from the fiery darts of the wicked. Satan shoots these darts at us whenever he can. Therefore, we do not want to be caught off guard. Faith in the Lord is what undergirds everything we do. Hebrews 11:6 admonishes us: "But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Let us always be diligently seeking the Lord.

The helmet of salvation, as well as the shield of faith, must be taken from God's hand. These are not automatically given to us; they must be taken, or received. Now let us look at some of the offensive weapons from the Lord.

The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, allows a saint to go on the offense against the wicked. Actually, some of the offensive weapons could also be defensive ones. The Word of God, the Bible, protects us from evil as well as lets us take an offensive stance in promoting the Kingdom of God. Hebrews 4:12 reads: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged 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."

Prayer is also an offensive, as well as a defensive, weapon. Paul wrote in Ephesians 6:18: "Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints". Not only are we to be in supplication for all saints, but we must be watching for them as well. We, to some degree, are called to be watchmen (see Jeremiah 6:17; Isaiah 62:6; 56:10).

Another offensive weapon is fasting. The Lord Jesus expects His followers to be fasting at times. In Matthew

6:16-18 the Lord didn't say "if you fast" but "when ye fast". "Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly." Fasting is a powerful weapon to strengthen the disciple against sin and against Satan. At one point the Lord chided His disciples for not having the spiritual strength to cast out a demon. We find this incident in Matthew 17:14-21. "And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certain man, kneeling down to him, and saying, Lord, have mercy on my son: for he is a lunatic, and sore vexed: for oftentimes he falleth into the fire, and oft into the water. And I brought him to thy disciples, and they could not cure him. Then Jesus answered and said, O faithless and perverse generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me. And Jesus rebuked the devil; and he departed out of him: and the child was cured from that very hour. Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, Why could not we cast him out? And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting."

A weapon which is not always regarded as a means to help the disciple be an overcomer is fleeing away from certain situations. A good soldier knows when he or she must retreat. This is true also of a good soldier of Christ. In John chapter 10 Jesus speaks about His sheep knowing His voice. However, in verse 5 He says: "And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers." May we never follow strangers, but only Christ. We should flee away from strangers.

The Apostle Paul warns us to, "Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body" (I Corinthians 6:18). In I Corinthians 10:14 he wrote: "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry."

To Timothy Paul admonished: "For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they

have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. But thou, O man of God, flee these things; and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness" (I Timothy 6:11). And in II Timothy 2:22 Paul wrote to Timothy: "Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart." In all these situations fleeing is not cowardly. It is the means that God has provided to get a person away from temptations.

Many weapons have been provided to us by the Lord. These weapons are mighty to the pulling down of strong holds. May we never trust in our own power to accomplish that which only the Lord's strength can do for us. On the other hand, may we be ever ready to use these weapons for our edification and overcoming in this life.

God's Law

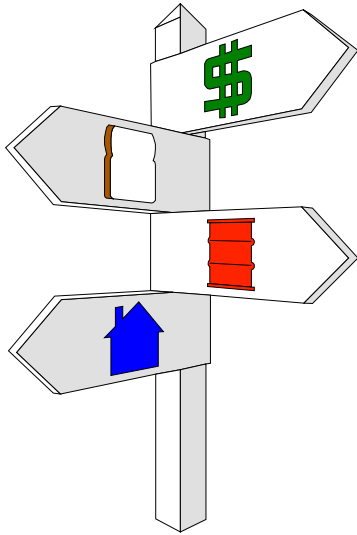
By David DeLong

Some say God's Law is done away,
They say it's not in force;
But, this leads folks to go astray,
They sin without remorse.

God's Law defines what makes up sin,
Its transgression is what's wrong;
And if we wish to fully win,
We'll obey it all day long.

His Law is holy, just, and good,
His commandments pure, and wise;
To do them's only what we should,
They are our special prize.

God's Law is always binding,
Giving light upon our path;
And we are surely finding
That to break it brings God's wrath.



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.

BRING YOUR LAPTOP

A newspaper article reported that the United States has lifted the ban on laptops on planes entering the country. They were earlier banned because it was feared that terrorists could plant explosives in them.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

What is your opinion of artificial intelligence? Two of technology industry's leaders are at odds when it comes to artificial intelligence. The following are four paragraphs from an article that appeared in the **Houston Chronicle** entitled *Future of artificial intelligence divides technology titans*.

Tesla Motors CEO Elon Musk has a pessimistic view of the risks associated with such technology.

"I keep sounding the alarm bell," Musk told the National Governors Association in June. "But until people see robots going down the street killing people, they don't know how to react because it seems so ethereal."

Facebook leader Mark Zuckerberg on Sunday called Musk's dire warning overblown and described himself as "optimistic."

"People who are naysayers and try to drum up these doomsday scenarios – I don't understand it," Zuckerberg said while taking questions via a Facebook Live broadcast. It's really negative, and in some ways, I actually think it is pretty irresponsible."

Comment

The arrival of artificial intelligence is really a sign of the times. It shows how much knowledge has increased in these last days.

JEHOVAH'S WITNESSES BANNED

I understand that the Jehovah's Witnesses have been banned in Russia. Let us be thankful that we live in America where there is freedom of religion. That is one reason why the Church of God headquarters is located therein.

UNBELIEVABLE

Webster's New World Dictionary defines unbelievable as being beyond belief and astounding. This describes the many wildfires which are ravaging parts of California at the time of the writing of this column. A great deal of devastation is in the California wine country, made up of an eight county swath of Northern California. There are numerous deaths and numerous people have been hurt.

I was watching the situation of the fires on my computer, and it was most difficult to see entire neighborhoods and cities completely destroyed by fire. Many of the residents evacuated their homes with just the clothes on their backs and just the few possessions they could muster.

Some of the residents have been allowed to return to see what is left, if anything, of their houses. They are going to have to make a decision on whether to rebuild on the same plot of land or move their families to another area that is not so fire prone. Also many may have to seek additional financial help in order to rebuild.

Let us pray for all the victims of these fires.

MASS SHOOTINGS

There appeared an article in **USA TODAY** entitled *WHY*. The article stated that there are no easy answers for motives behind mass shootings. The following is that

article:

The devastation keeps coming – 26 slaughtered in Newtown, Conn, 49 gunned down in Orlando, 58 slain in Las Vegas.

Over about five years, six mass shootings in the USA each took the lives of 12 or more people, and since the start of 2017, at least 119 people died in such shootings, according to **USA TODAY** research.

Overall mass shootings have increased in frequency and deadliness according to a *Mother Jones* database that focuses on public attacks in which the motive appeared to be an indiscriminate killing. The *Mother Jones* date show some sharp spikes and plummets - a "zigzag," says Maria Tcherni-Buzzeo, a criminal justice professor at the University of New Haven. Overall, there is a rise, which she calls "puzzling" as violence in general trends downward.

There is no single, obvious reason for the increase, she says, but "you can't escape the conclusion that accessibility of weapons of essentially mass destruction definitely makes a contribution."

David Hemenway, a professor at Harvard's Department of Health Policy and Management, also points to firearms. "Our guns are becoming more and more lethal and more militarized," he says. "It's now so much easier to kill large numbers of people."

He sees mass shootings as "a contagion."

"I think certain crime is contagious," he says. As mass shootings become more publicized and normalized, they become "an option" that a perpetrator perhaps wouldn't have thought of previously.

Some shooters want to create a legacy, says forensic psychiatrist Steven Pitt, an advisor to the Jefferson County District Attorney's Office on the Columbine High School shooting in 1999 in Colorado. "There is the sick mentality as to who can be the biggest and the best or who can go down as committing the biggest number of murders," Pitt says.

Non-stop news coverage and social media posts about these shootings could encourage "disaffected individuals to engage in similar copycat offenses," he says.

Tcherni-Buzzeo has a similar theory: "The next person wants to one-up the previous one."

Pitt stresses that "it's overly simplistic to simply say one size fits all when it comes to these types of mass shootings. We know that different mass shootings have different ideologies."

Some want to make a political statement, he says. Others may be disgruntled office workers, have paranoid delusions or have been dumped by a significant other.

"You are talking about individuals and individual behavioral choices," he says.

Though some statistics point to a rise in mass shooting frequency and deadliness, Northeastern University criminology professor James Alan Fox says there is no clear evidence especially since there is a lack of consistent benchmarks and no common definition of a mass shooting used by those gathering statistics. "Some years are worse than others – it swings up and down for no real reason," says Fox, who is on the **USA TODAY** Board of Contributors.

He contends that mass shootings have not increased but that there is one thing definitely on the rise: fear. The preponderance of information on social media and TV "gives you the impression that things are worse," he says.

Comment

The reason why mass shootings and the killing of people by guns is the same reason why there is much sin in the world. Shootings, along with other sins, are really contagious. The sin plague began way back in the garden of Eden when Adam and Eve, our first parents, disobeyed God. Down through the ages, the sin plague has grown worse and worse. "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived" (II Timothy 3:13).

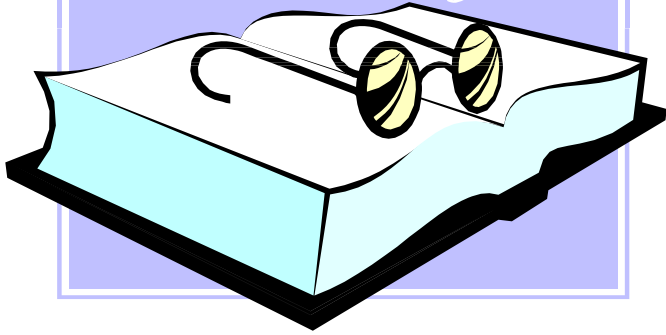
There is only one vaccine against this sin plague, and that is to repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission (forgiveness) of committed sins. See Acts 2:38.

Yes, fear has also increased because of those evil men and seducers. However, the child of God must not fear these evil men and seducers, even if their lives are taken. Jesus said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul (life): but rather fear him (God) which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). Luke 12:4 records Jesus as saying, "And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do". The Psalmist said, "In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me" (Psalm 56:11).

--Continued on page 19

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

QUESTION: Will you please write about all I must do to be saved?

ANSWER: You must believe (Romans 10:8-17) and have faith (Hebrews 11:6). You must repent (Acts 17:30) and turn away from sin (Acts 26:20). You must be baptized (I Peter 3:21) by being immersed in water (Acts 8:38). You must lead a holy life (Romans 6:4) by obeying God's commands (Ephesians 5:1-10).

Now when you do all this, are you saved?

No, not yet! You have done all God requires you to do, all you can do, but you are not saved yet. After you have obeyed all God's commandments, you are yet mortal. Death still has a claim on you, as you see by reading Romans 5:12. Christ has promised, however, to give all the faithful ones immortality when He comes the second time (Mark 10:29-30; Romans 2:7). Then all the faithful, whether living or dead, will receive eternal life if they have been begotten by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3-5; I John 5:1-2).

Then the salvation of the saints will be complete, but while you are not saved yet, your salvation is nearer than when you first believed (Romans 13:11). If you continue faithful until Christ comes, you can then say, "**O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?**"

(I Corinthians 15:55) This is the only way anyone can now be saved.

The first thing to consider in salvation is faith or belief. What must you believe?

A Bible answer is that faith comes by hearing the Word of God (Romans 10:17). You must know what the Word of God teaches before you can believe it. Mark 1:15 says you must believe the gospel.

Well, you say "what is that?"

The Bible answer is that the gospel is good news about God's Kingdom that is to be set up on the earth when Christ comes (Matthew 25:31-40). Do you believe that? It was what Jesus preached when He was here on earth (Matthew 4:23; Mark 1:14; Luke 8:1).

The next thing after faith is repentance. What is that?

The Bible answer to that is, "To turn away from something." In seeking salvation, the sinner must turn away from sin. Stop sinning. Cease to do evil and learn to do well. Break off your sins by turning unto the Lord! (Romans 12:9). If you have done this, you have repented; if not, you are yet in your sins.

Do you know what sin is? Again, we must go to the Bible for the definition of sin. We find that in I John 3:4, "**Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.**" What law? It is the Ten Commandment law. This law is perfect, just and good. "**The law of the LORD is perfect,**

converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes” (Psalm 19:7-8). “Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good” (Romans 7:12).

The third specific duty that the seeker after pardon from his past sins must perform is baptism.

Notice in Acts 9:18, as soon as Paul realized his condition – a sinner, dependent on God’s mercy – he arose immediately and was baptized. How can the candidate for baptism know how this act must be performed? The religious world teaches that this act may be performed in three different ways: by sprinkling, by pouring, by immersion. Does this not seem strange when the Word of God declares that there is one baptism, not three? (Ephesians 4:5) The same Word declares that in baptism we are buried with Christ, **“planted together in the likeness of his death”** (Romans 6:5). Does sprinkling or pouring resemble burial or planting?

Baptism, when performed Scripturally, becomes a beautiful illustration of God’s plan of salvation. Man is a sinner and the **“...wages of sin is death...”** (Romans 6:23). When one consents to be baptized, he also consents to die. This consent was given when the person repented, turned away from sin, ceased to sin; or to use a Bible phrase, became “dead to sin.” Now being dead, he is ready to be buried in the watery tomb (Romans 6:3-5). As Christ was raised up out of the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea to die no more, so he who obeys God’s commandments thus far comes out of the watery grave with the promise of Christ that, if faithful to the end, Christ will bestow a life that will never end; for at Christ’s coming all the faithful ones will become immortal (I Corinthians 15:51-54). Do you not see how beautifully baptism by water illustrates God’s plan of salvation?

Nicodemus wanted to know about his salvation (John 3:1-2). He asked Jesus, “We know that thou art a teacher come from God...” Jesus answered him that he must be born of the water (baptism) and of the Spirit (at the resurrection). We must have a begetting before there can be a birth. The begetting is a reception of the Holy Spirit. We receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands by the ministry (Acts 19:5-6; 8:17). We read in I John that being born of the Spirit we will not sin, but being begotten

of God we will keep ourselves from sinning.

This brings us to a time in the process of salvation when it can truly be said that a person is saved! Now, what saved that person? Was it faith? Was it repentance? Was it baptism? Was it a holy life? Was it the resurrection at Christ’s coming? Surely it is safe to say, “It took all these to save a sinner!” Not one of these duties could be left out. From what will Jesus save us? Only two things: He will save us from sin if we accept His offer of pardon (Romans 8:1). He will save us from death at His coming if we are faithful to the end of our mortal life (Revelation 2:10; 3:10-12). Oh what great reward for so little service on our part! And the reason for it all, we find in the most beautiful verse in all the Bible, **“...God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life”** (John 3:16).

Thus we conclude that to be saved by God’s plan of salvation the person seeking salvation must be taught what he must do in order to be saved. This was Christ’s way. He sent out teachers, chosen for this purpose. **“Go,”** said Christ to these teachers, **“teach all nations.”** What did Christ tell them to teach? Christ Himself had been teaching, and when He sent out others to teach, He did not instruct them to teach a new doctrine. They were to preach just what Christ did. What did Christ preach? Here it is: **“...Jesus went about all Galilee,... preaching the gospel of the kingdom...”** (Matthew 4:23). Jesus said that He was sent for this purpose. A record of their work declares that they taught the same gospel of the Kingdom of God, and when they found people who believed it, they baptized them.

So, do you not see that it behooves to learn what that gospel is and obey it? – for that is what you must do to be saved!

QUESTION: What is a good definition of ungodliness?

ANSWER: While sin designates the failure of man to measure up, and transgression depicts willful resistance against God’s authority, ungodliness describes those wrongs which are directed specifically against mankind.

In a nutshell, ungodliness is treating our fellow men in any manner contrary to the way God would treat them.



Nigeria, Part 3

A cross section of the brethren at the Church in Enugu, Nigeria.



--Continued from page 15

POLITICAL MESS

There is some unbelievable political news taking place at this time. The president and congress have accomplished little or nothing. Almost all the victories President Trump can claim have been by his signing executive orders.

There are conflicts everywhere. The Senate leader has disagreements with President Trump. However, the Senate leader and President Trump held a news conference in which they tried to confirm that they were in good agreement. There are many divisions within the political parties.

There are even divisions within the president's cabinet. The Secretary of State and President Trump disagree on how to handle the North Korean situation. The US ambassador to the United Nations wants the US to be more tough on Russia, but President Trump has taken a softer tone. In fact, President Trump has said little bad about Russia and its president.

In the news, it was reported that the Secretary of State called President Trump a moron, which is a very foolish or stupid person. When asked the Secretary of State if he really did call the president a moron, he refused to answer the question. Later at a news conference, President Trump dismissed the incident and said that he has full confidence in the Secretary of State.

Comment

It makes one wonder how good government can be had in America with the officials in such disarray and not acting in a civil manner. I am sure that their actions are very displeasing to God. "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people" (Proverbs 14:34).

POSTAGE STAMP INCREASE

I read that the U.S. Postal Service would have to boost prices for mailing letters and packages by nearly 20 percent in order to avoid bankruptcy. That means that the price of a first-class stamp could jump from 49 cents to 60 cents if the post office gets the power to raise stamp rates beyond the rate of inflation.

A SCRIPTURE QUOTING ROBOT?

There appeared an article in a newspaper which said that some technical experts had developed a robot that could quote Scripture.

Comment

Many may quote Scripture, and they may know the book, chapter and verse. However, if they do not practice what they preach, they are no better than a robot!

CREMATION

According to a report, more Americans are choosing cremation over a traditional burial. The report said that burials accounted for 43.5 percent of funerals last year, down from 45.4 percent in 1915. Cost is one factor because cremation is usually cheaper than conventional burial.

AGEISM

A TV news report said that in the world of technology, especially Silicon Valley, many older workers are forced to look for work in other technology hubs.

MORE ABOUT SELF-DRIVING CARS

The following is an article which appeared in the **Houston Chronicle**:

Panel passes bill to advance self-driving cars

Congress took the first step toward setting rules for self-driving cars this week, as a House panel unanimously approved a measure that would allow thousands of automated vehicles to hit the road while federal regulators develop safety standards and pre-empt state rules.

The legislation garnered bipartisan support after Republican leaders adopted Democratic proposals for provisions to bolster safety oversight of self-driving vehicles by federal regulators.

The full House energy and Commerce Committee may vote on the bill as soon as next week, and it could reach the House floor after the August recess.

LESSON I

THE SEARCH FOR A WIFE FOR ISAAC

Scripture Reading: Genesis 24:1-16.

Golden Text: Genesis 24:4.

"But thou shalt go unto my country, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son Isaac."

1. When Abraham was getting old, what did he want his servant to do? Genesis 24:1-4.
2. What did the servant take when he started on his journey? Genesis 24:10.
3. When he arrived at the city, what did he do? Genesis 24:11.
4. What did the servant ask the Lord to do? Genesis 24:12-14.
5. When he had almost finished talking to the Lord, what happened? Genesis 24:15.
6. What did the maiden look like? Genesis 24:16.

LESSON II

REBEKAH GIVES THEM WATER

Scripture Reading: Genesis 24:17-28.

Golden Text: Genesis 24:28.

"And the damsel ran, and told them of her mother's house these things."

1. What did she say when the servant asked Rebekah for a drink? Genesis 24:17-18.
2. What did she say and do after the servant had finished drinking? Genesis 24:19-20.
3. When the servant asked her who she was, what did she say? Genesis 24:23-25.

4. When he heard this, what did he do? Genesis 24:26.
5. What did the servant say? Genesis 24:27.
6. What did Rebekah do when she heard who he was? Genesis 24:28.

LESSON III

LABAN AND BETHUEL'S CONSENT

Scripture Reading: Genesis 24:29-52.

Golden Text: Genesis 24:51.

"Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the LORD hath spoken."

1. When Laban, Rebekah's brother, heard about the servant at the well, what did he do? Genesis 24:29-30.
2. What did Laban say to the servant? Genesis 24:31.
3. What did he do when he entered the city? Genesis 24:32-33.
4. For what did he say that he had come to them? Genesis 24:40.
5. When the servant told Laban and Bethuel that he wanted to take Rebekah home for Isaac's wife, what did they say? Genesis 24:51.
6. What did the servant do when he heard this? Genesis 24:52.

ANSWERS TO BIBLE RIDDLES

1. Fox - Judges 15:4,2.
2. Noah - Genesis 6:8-13;
3. Jericho - Numbers 22:1
4. James - Mark 1:19
5. The Wicked - I Chronicles 28:9
6. Quarrel - II Kings 5:7

LESSON IV

REBEKAH'S DECISION

Scripture Reading: Genesis 24:53-59.

Golden Text: Genesis 24:59.

"And they sent away Rebekah their sister, and her nurse, and Abraham's servant, and his men."

1. What did the servant give to Rebekah and her family? Genesis 24:53.
2. What did Rebekah's mother and brother say when the servant was going to leave? Genesis 24:54-55.
3. What was the servant's answer? Genesis 24:56.
4. How did they decide to settle it? Genesis 24:57.
5. What was Rebekah's answer? Genesis 24:58.
6. Who went with Rebekah? Genesis 24:59.



BIBLE RIDDLES

By Madeline Pettet

See how many clues it takes you to solve these riddles.

1. We live in holes.
We are sly animals.
We spoil crops.
Samson caught 300 of us.
Who are we?
2. I was born the son of Lamech.
I found grace in the eyes of the Lord.
I built an ark.
Eight of us were saved from the flood.
Who are we?
3. I am a city near Jordan.
Two spies were sent to me.
Jesus healed here and also Elisha.
My walls fell down.
What is my name?
4. I am the son of Zebedee.
I am also the brother of John.
Jesus appeared to me.
There is a book by my name in the New Testament.
Who am I?
5. We walk in darkness.
God will mock us.
We must make a choice.
Jesus welcomes us if we confess.
Who are we?
6. They must be avoided.
Sometimes we get out of hand.
Herodias had one against John.
It takes two people to make me.
What am I?

BEING FRIENDS

"Oh, Miss Edgerton!" Tommy was in such a hurry to tell the news that he ran half a block to catch up with the teacher as she entered the school yard and then was so out of breath that he could not do anything but sputter for a minute.

"What is the matter?" asked Miss Edgerton, and she waited until Tommy calmed down.

"Denny Collins broke his leg!" cried Tommy. "He got knocked down by a car yesterday, and they put his leg in a cast, and he has to stay on a couch maybe three weeks!"

"Oh, poor Denny!" exclaimed Miss Edgerton, while the other children added what they had heard to Tommy's story.

"He won't have a chance to get the prize, will he, Miss Edgerton?" asked Peter Lowe.

"No, I'm afraid not," Miss Edgerton answered. "It's too bad, for Denny has worked very hard. He and you, Peter, and Lucy have stood the highest so far."

Peter looked at Lucy and Lucy looked at Peter. They said nothing to each other. Both wanted that prize as much as Denny did. It was a magazine for boys and girls to be given to the one who should make the highest grade for the term in arithmetic. Peter and Lucy were about even then, and Denny just a bit ahead of them. But if Denny had to miss three weeks -- "I know I could get it!" said

Peter to himself; and, "I knew that I could get it!" said Lucy to herself. But neither of them said anything to the other. Peter couldn't keep from thinking, however, about how dreadful it would be to have to stay on a couch or a chair for three weeks, and the prize, too. And Lucy remembered how her arm had hurt the time she fell out of the hammock and broke it. "And I'd just hate not to have a chance to win."

"Peter," said Miss Edgerton in the afternoon, "will you gather up all Denny's books and things? I'm going to ask you to take them to him. Maybe he can study at home."

"Yes, ma'am," said Peter, "I'll be glad to."

When he had strapped them all together neatly, he went up to Miss Edgerton's desk. "May I speak to Lucy a minute?" he asked. Miss Edgerton said, "Yes." Peter went back to his seat after whispering with Lucy, looking as though something very important indeed had been decided.

After school, Miss Edgerton found Peter and Lucy waiting to speak to her, plainly eager and excited about something.

"Miss Edgerton," began Peter, "we are going to take Denny's books to him every day and help him, you know, so maybe--we thought."

"If we can explain everything, Miss Edgerton, just like you do, and he works all the problems himself and sends them in to you, we thought maybe he'd have a chance for the prize, anyway," said Lucy.

Miss Edgerton looked amazed. "O course, he would," she said, "but you two--it would lessen your chance, you know. No one else is near you."

"That's all right," Peter declared hastily, "we want him to have a fair chance, and if he wins it, why."

"We'll be glad," said Lucy. "We haven't any broken legs, you see, and Denny's worked so hard he deserves the prize."

"Then that's fine," said Miss Edgerton. "That is really a kind thing to do."

How did it turn out? Well, Denny, Peter and Lucy all worked as hard as they could, fair and square, and Denny won the prize. They had become such good friends over the lessons that the magazine was passed from one to the other each month, and Miss Edgerton said: "It seems to me that you all won the prize."

EXODUS 13:17-22

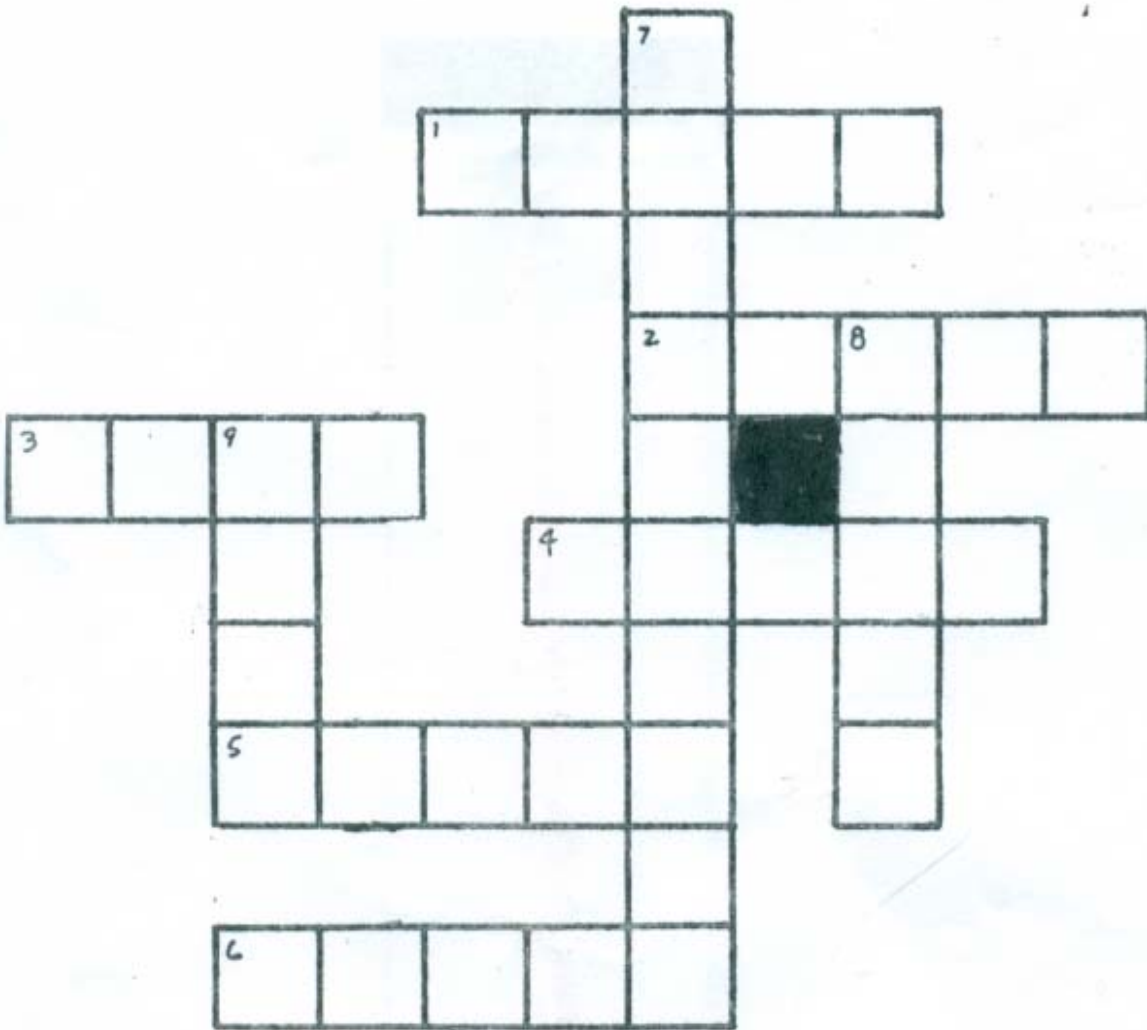
ACROSS

- 1. God chose _____ to lead the Israelites out of Egypt.
- 2. Moses's brother.
- 3. The Israelites _____ Egypt quickly. The opposite of stayed.
- 4. A pillar of _____ led the people by day.
- 5. The people had spent 400 years as slaves in the land of _____.

6. The Israelites took their _____ of cattle with them.

DOWN

- 7. The children of Israel, God's people.
- 8. A certain course of a journey, Rhymes with "pout".
- 9. A pillar of _____ was with the people at night.



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LIFE'S RECORD BOOK

*As day light creeps over the mountain
Bringing Dawn to another new day;
And the blank pages of life that's unwritten
Before its time had drifted away.
There's so many kind words that need saying,
And good deeds that need to be done;
And this blank page is there to record them
Before the setting of sun.
A tired faced old lady is watching
For children, who are no longer there;
And a crippled old man is hoping
That you will pause, and offer a prayer.
A young child that has just lost a mother,
His sweet face all crumpled with tears;
The words that you offer for comfort
That he will remember, the rest of his years.
And then there was this very small puppy
Gazing up at you, as he whimpered with pain;
Lifting up a paw that was bleeding and swollen,
To help him you had so much to gain.
You gently removed the thorn that was sticking
And causing his spirits to fail;
He licked the hand that helped him
With a "woof", and wag of his tail.
There's so much you can put on each blank page
As life's book you filled, one page at a time;
And when you give this book to your Maker,
You are not ashamed to say
"This is mine!"*

--Betty Whetstone

