

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

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PRAYER: If you need prayer, please phone or write:

Roger Decker, Pastor
83 Decrow Ave.
Newark, OH 43055

Email: pastor@church-of-god-online.com
Phone: 740-344-2543 or 1-888-730-0461
Fax: 740-344-4737
Print Shop Phone: 740-345-1312

This monthly religious journal is published for the benefit of the Church of God universally. It is our supreme purpose to reach the world for Christ through the printed page. Our burden is to reveal the truth of God's Word to all mankind, to expose sin and error, war against apostasy, and to eradicate the longstanding traditions of men that have no biblical foundations.

Brother Roger L. Decker Editor
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:

- A personal God (John 4:24)
- A divine Christ (John 1:1, 14)
- An infallibly inspired Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- Salvation from sin (Matt. 1:21)
- The new birth (John 3:3, 5-7)
- A holy life (Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12)
- Sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23)
- Unity of God's people (John 17:21, Eph. 4)
- Divine, physical healing (James 5:14-16)
- The ordinances (Matt. 28:19-20; John 13; 1 Cor. 11:23, 34)
- Eternal life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43)
- The Trinity (1 John 5:7, 8)

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

- Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
- On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
- Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
- God admits members (1 Cor. 12:13-18)
- Sin puts you out of it (Rom. 11:22; Ex. 32:33)
- The saved only are members (John 15:2-6)
- Membership is offered to all (Rev. 22:17)
- Final rewards (Rev. 20:12-15; 21:3-4; 22:14)
- Bible name of the Church (Acts 20:28; Gal. 1:13; John 17:11)

We reserve the right to edit and/or decline any material for any reason. Not responsible for unsolicited articles or items.

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Guest Editorial

The Prophecy of the Seventy Weeks

A Time Line to the End of Old Israel as the People of God

Part 4 of 4

The Position of Old Israel

Daniel 9:24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy.

25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined.

27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.

In the previous issue we studied this prophetic writing and saw that at the conclusion of the seventieth week, old Israel was cut off as the people of God. In this article we

want to consider what happened to old Israel after they were cut off? Daniel 9:26 says, ". . . the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." This is not a reference to some supposed antichrist coming and making a covenant with the Jews and then breaking it and bringing in a tribulation period. Verse 27 states, ". . . for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate."

Jesus referred to this abomination of desolation in Matthew 24:15 when He said, "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand)."

Luke made it a little clearer in Luke 21:20 when he wrote, "And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh." When did this occur and of what desolation was he speaking? Daniel 9:27 reads, ". . . for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate." It was when verse 26 says "the prince . . . shall come." This is a different prince than the Messiah. When Daniel wrote of "Messiah the Prince" in verse 25, the Scripture has a capital P; however, when referring to Titus, the Scripture has a lower case p. Prince Titus and the Roman armies came in A. D. 70 and made Jerusalem a desolate place.

What happened to old Israel? Jesus said in Matthew 23:38, "Behold, your house is left unto you desolate." Our lesson text says in verse 27, ". . . he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation [or the end of the world]." Israel will never again be a favored people as a literal seed. Old Israel has forever been cut off as a people, because of their rejection of the Messiah, which means "the anointed One."

Jesus told literal Israel in Matthew 21:43 very clearly, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth

[continued on page 26]

Revelation 14:1 And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads.

2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their

harp:

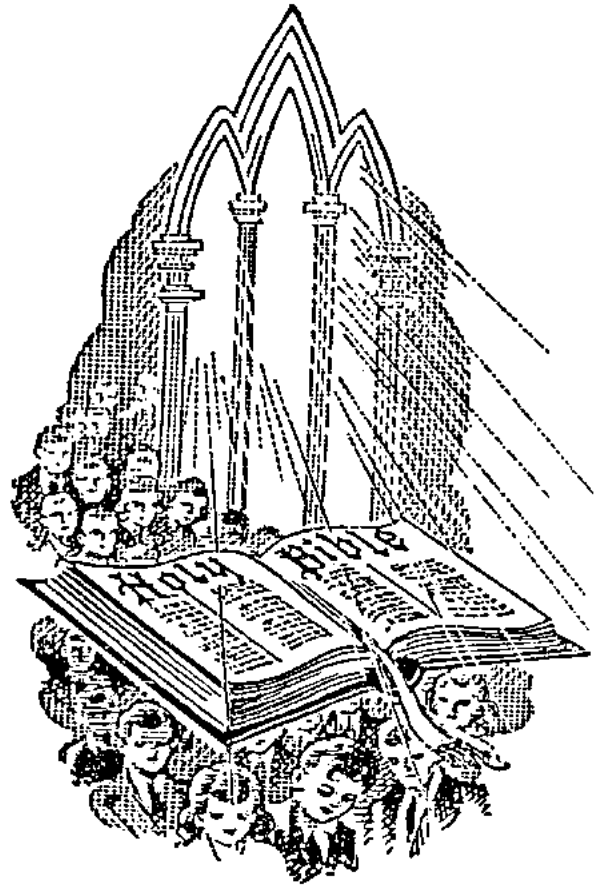
3 And they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are vir-

gins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

These
Are
They . . .



Brother Roger L. Decker

The Two Witnesses

The Scripture text gives a clear picture of the Church of God in the evening time. Verse 1 says John looked; something attracted his attention. He saw a Lamb standing on Mount Zion. What does that tell you? He saw the Lamb back in His rightful position in the church: he saw the Lamb standing in authority, as the supreme Sacrifice for sin.

In the Scripture reading we see a church that was visible for all, a church that stood out so much that it got John's attention. He said in the first part of verse 1, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion." This church was visible for all the world to see. These Scriptures bring us right up to the sixth-seal age, to approximately the year 1880.

The two witnesses (the Holy Spirit and the Word) were on their

feet. How do the two witnesses stand? The tabernacle is with men, so the only way the two witnesses can stand is through human beings. As the Head of the church, the Lamb was taking His place as the supreme Head of the church in authority, being the supreme Sacrifice for sin. Revelation 11:11-12 says: "And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great

fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them."

At that time the two witnesses were in mourning and in sackcloth. Revelation 11:2-3 tells us: "But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." From the approximate date of A. D. 270 to A. D. 1530 was a period of forty-two months. Forty-two months times thirty days a month equals one thousand two hundred and threescore (sixty) days, the time that the two witnesses were clothed in sackcloth.

What does being "clothed in sackcloth" represent? It shows that they were in mourning. Why were they in mourning? They could not do the work that God intended them to do. They were in mourning in a time of apostasy and darkness, and the beast (Roman Catholicism) came up out of the sea. Then in the sixth-seal time, the Word and the Spirit were once again upon their feet, and there was a visible Church of God. The Church of God was not visible down through the dark and cloudy day, or in the days of Roman Catholicism. Now, I am not saying that people were not saved, but I am saying that the Church of God, with the coming of the sixth-seal age, the evening time of light, was beginning to shine. As individuals humbled themselves before the Cross, the Word and the Spirit stood upon their feet. John said in verse 1 of our Scripture text, "And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand."

The sixth-seal ministry believed that they were called to restore the doctrines and the teachings of the

morning-time church. It has been estimated that the message of the sixth-seal brethren called thousands out of Babylon in a fifteen-year period. When light comes, it becomes a great light to those who are in darkness. The Bible lets us know in Matthew 4:16, "The people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up." The ministry of the sixth-seal brethren relied completely upon God for His direction.

False Systems of Worship

In Revelation, Chapter 14, we can see that John looked and something caught his eye. What he wrote in Chapters 12 and 13 was not pleasant to look at. There was nothing pleasant in those two chapters of the Revelation, with the exception of the fact that the saints had victory. Chapters 12 and 13 of the Revelation portray false systems of worship. In Revelation 12:3 you can read of the *dragon*, and in Revelation 13:1 you can read about the *beast*, and then in Revelation 13:11 you can read of another beast called the *false prophet*, or Protestantism.

Someone may ask, "Don't you believe that God is in Protestantism?" No, I do not. I believe there are people getting saved there in spite of the system, but God is calling people out of false systems of worship. He does not want His people down in Babylon or in a Protestant church. It fulfills the Scriptures that tell of seducing spirits and doctrines of devils. One has to get a seducing spirit before he can take on a doctrine of a devil.

Revelation, Chapters 12 and 13, portray a dark, dismal picture as the church battles the beasts of the Revelation. Those are systems of worship that oppose being a true follower of Jesus Christ. Someone may say, "I know what the Bible says, but our church does not teach that." True followers of Christ "follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." False systems of worship

hold God's people in bondage. They mix God's Word with false interpretations. Mount Zion is a type of the Church of God, and you can read about it in Hebrews 12:22-23: "But ye are come [the Hebrew writer did not say, 'ye are on your way,' but 'ye are come'] unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect."

In those verses of Scriptures we see a visible body of Christ who had come out from false systems of worship, and they were standing. Today it is time that more people take a stand for Truth. Those people were standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion. You may say, "You ought to come over to our church. It is comfortable there." Then you ought to get out of it, friend. God does not want you to sit comfortably all the time. The next thing you know, you will be rocked to sleep. God has something to say, and when God speaks, the flesh gets stirred. The only reason that you are comfortable is that the preacher causes you to feel that way. He does not speak, "Thus saith the Lord"; he speaks, "Thus saith the people."

Feeding Upon Good Pasture

God's man is called to feed the Church of God. He is not called to feed any other church. He is not called to feed the Baptist Church, the Catholic Church, the Pentecostal Church, or any other false system of worship. Pentecost is not a church; it is the name of a day. The Scripture speaks of when the Day of Pentecost was fully come, not of when the Church of Pentecost was fully come. According to the Bible, there is only one church, but many people do not like to hear that. I do not preach what people want to hear; I preach, "Thus saith the Lord." There is only one Church of God. Having two or

three brings confusion. Oh, there are those who are liberal who call themselves the Church of God. Nevertheless, God called His overseers to feed *the* Church of God.

Going back to the Scripture text, we can see full salvation on display once again, a picture of the church being restored in the sixth seal. You may say, "I don't believe in the dress standard or any other part of the outward standard. I don't believe that God is interested in those areas of our lives." Well, you show me one congregation that has let down on the standard that even comes close to having the power that the sixth-seal brethren had.

In Revelation, Chapter 11, you will find that they still had the Word and the Spirit, but they had only their dead bodies. Verse 8 states, "And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt [in other words, bondage and sin], where also our Lord was crucified." This Scripture lets us know that they do not get rid of the Word and the Spirit altogether. They kill them, but they do not bury them. In other words, they do not allow them to be in their rightful position.

If you ask some people how things are going, they say, "Oh, God is really moving." They do not tell you that they do not have the Holy Spirit. God's Word and His Holy Spirit will not work in confusion. First Corinthians 14:33 states, "For God is not the author of confusion." If God had several churches, that would cause confusion. You can read in the Word of God that the body of Christ is one. Also, there is only one Spirit, one Lord, and one baptism. Why? God does not want His people to be confused.

Ephesians 4:4-6 reads: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." When I speak of Babylonian worship, I am speaking

of the system. There are good people there, and we do our best to get them out so that they do not receive the plagues that God has poured out on Babylon.

In Revelation, Chapter 14, we can see full salvation being restored. It portrays the sixth-seal age, when God brought together all the people who were scattered on the hills of Babylon. The Prophet Ezekiel wrote in Ezekiel 34:13-15: "And I will bring them out from the people, and gather them from the countries, and will bring them to their own land, and feed them upon the mountains of Israel by the rivers, and in all the inhabited places of the country. I will feed them in a good pasture, and upon the high mountains of Israel shall their fold be: there shall they lie in a good fold, and in a fat pasture shall they feed upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed my flock, and I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord GOD."

Why will the flock lie down? They are going to get rest. There is no rest when you wander from hill to hill in Babylon. God feeds His people on good pasture, and they get fat spiritually. They no longer wander from hill to hill, but they lie down in good pasture. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." There is no rest in the false systems of worship. Why? The Baptist doctrine, the Pentecostal doctrine, the Roman Catholic doctrine, or the Methodist doctrine cannot give you rest. It takes the full Word of God to give rest; it takes good pasture.

First Timothy 6:6 says, "But godliness with contentment is great gain." To lie down in a good fold is a sign of contentment. God's people receive strength to live godly from the Word, and with that strength comes contentment. We are living in an age when many people are always discontented over something. Psalm 22:29 says, "All they that be fat upon earth shall eat and worship: all they that go down to the dust shall bow before him:

and none can keep alive his own soul." Those who eat at God's table have an abundance. In Babylon there is a famine; but when people come out of Babylon, they feast on the good Word of God.

Departing From the Faith

First Timothy, Chapter 4, tells us that in the latter times, some shall depart from the faith. How can they do it? They do it by giving heed to seducing spirits, and then they pick up doctrines of devils. How did their minds get changed? How could they have accepted Babylonian teachings after having once known the Truth? They gave heed to seducing spirits. Now they see nothing wrong with Babylon, even though God said He was going to plague it and is plaguing it. The standard does not mean a thing anymore to those who have departed from the faith. The principle of the teachings on the standard are in God's Word. When God's Word speaks of modest apparel, that is just what it means. To be modest, you must have a little shamefacedness.

There is a famine in Babylon. Amos wrote about it in Amos 8:11-12: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord GOD, that I will send a famine in the land, [Who sent it? God sent it.] not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the LORD: [Now you are going to get a picture of today, a time when people are discontented and wandering from sea to sea.] And they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the LORD, and shall not find it." That is what happens when people do not really want the Truth. They wander here and there seeking it, but they never find it. If you ask some, "Where are you going to services now?"

"Oh, I am going to such-and-such."

"You are? I thought you were going over there."

"Yes, I was going there."

It is almost as if going to church is a matter of multiple choice. That is the reason God did not give you a choice, because He knew people would do that. Therefore, God took away the choices and just gave one church.

Psalm 137:1-4 reads: "By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion. [Why did they weep? They wept because all they had was a memory. Where did they hang their harps? They hung them on a willow.] We hanged our harps upon the willows in the midst thereof. For there they that carried us away captive required of us a song; and they that wasted us required of us mirth, saying, Sing us one of the songs of Zion. How shall we sing the LORD'S song in a strange land?" In other words, how could they sing the Lord's song in a place where God was not dwelling?

The people hung their harps on the willows. They were trying to exist with merely a memory of Zion. What was the harp used to convey? It was used for at least two things: praise and contentment. Psalm 43:4 says, "Then will I go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy: yea, upon the harp will I praise thee, O God my God." Here we find it was used for praise. We can see that it was also used to bring contentment in 1 Samuel 16:23, which reads, "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

You cannot have praise in your heart and be contented down in Babylon. The only thing you can do with the harp in Babylon is hang it up on the weeping willows, because it symbolizes the way you feel.

If you have the Spirit of God in your heart, then you will not be content to stay in a false system of worship. Isaiah 35:10 has better news for you: "And the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to

Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." There will be true heartfelt praise. There is no heartfelt praise in Babylon. Real praise comes out of a clean, thankful heart, a heart that has been cleansed from sin, a heart that has been washed in the blood of the Lamb. Who sings the songs of Zion? Only the redeemed can sing the songs of Zion. What kinds of songs are they? They are songs of redemption. Individuals can be redeemed out of Babylon and redeemed out of sin. Isaiah said the ransomed of the Lord, the redeemed, shall return.

Identifying False Systems of Worship

Our Scripture text tells us in verse 4, "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. . . ." When the Scripture talks about not being defiled with women, this is a spiritual application. Throughout the Gospel Day, there is the woman who represents the true Church of God. However, there is also a false system of worship, portrayed as a false woman. The Bible lets us know that the undefiled are virgins; they are espoused to one Husband. What do they do? They follow the Lamb. They are redeemed from among men, and they have no guile or hypocrisy. They are not defiled with women, or false religion. God does not want His people to commit spiritual fornication with false systems of worship.

Throughout the Gospel Day, there has always been a true church; but there has also been that which is false, yet she has claimed to belong to Christ. The Prophet Isaiah wrote in Isaiah 4:1, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." What is the bread that God wants us to eat? We read in John 6:35 that Jesus said, "I

am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." What bread do the false systems of worship eat? Revelation 19:18 says, "That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains [the leaders of false systems of worship], and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great."

What is the apparel of God's people? The Bible says in Isaiah 61:10, "I will greatly rejoice in the LORD, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels."

Again, Isaiah said, "And in that day seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel. . . ." The false woman, or the false systems of worship, have an apparel, but the Bible says it is their "own apparel." What apparel do they have? 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."

Jesus said in John 10:27, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." The true people of God follow Holy Ghost leadership. They hear the voice of Christ and follow Him. They do not go wherever they please, but whithersoever He goeth. The Lamb does not go down to Babylon, because He is not speaking there anymore.

The body of Christ does not separate itself from any part of the body. In other words, the church does not separate from the church. We need one another. We should be patient and long-suffering with one another. Someone may say, "There are some awfully good preachers in

those false systems of worship." There may be. Jimmy Swaggert was a good speaker, but what about his life? Does his life not have anything to do with it? There are many good speakers out in false systems of worship. They have good voices and a lot of knowledge, but are they living holy lives?

Identifying the True Followers of God

The Lamb is not going to go somewhere that He has already plagued. Revelation 18:4-5 says: "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities." The Lamb leads the true followers of God. These are they who were redeemed from among men, redeemed from human religion and creeds. Men oftentimes exalt that which is an abomination to God. They exalt their human creeds, their doctrines, their headquarters, their activities, and their buildings. Read the words of Jesus written in Luke 16:15: "Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God."

The latter part of verse 4 of our Scripture text reads, "These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God." What does that mean? They were the first to come out, and the first to represent the body of Christ. These are they that believed and practiced holiness. The Bible lets us know there was no guile found in their mouths. God's people are to teach and practice holiness. The Bible says in Luke 1:75 that we are to live "In holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life." God wants you to be steadfast and unmoveable, not unsettled. God does not want you to be tossed to and fro. Some things will always stir you or can cause

you to be tempted to get miffed. How patient should you be? Just as patient as God is with you, however patient that is. How patient has God been with you? When you got a little touchy, did God just cut you off and leave you alone or did He work with you? Was He long-suffering and patient with you? Did He try to get you to come around? First Thessalonians 3:13 reads, "To the end he may stablish your hearts unblameable in holiness before God, even our Father, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all his saints."

Are you a true follower of Christ? I want you to consider what Jesus said in John 10:28: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." Jesus promised three things to those who were faithful. First, He said, "I give unto them eternal life." Second, He said, "They shall never perish." In other words, they will have life without end. Third, He said, "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." This is a life that is secure. Jesus promised to those who follow Him the life of eternity dwelling within. He let us know that His followers would know the splendor and magnificence of the life of God, have life without end, would dwell with the Lord forever, and have security of life.

Compromising Spirits at Work

Child of God, even with things failing all around, you can have the security of being in the hand of Jesus Christ. I am going to quote a statement made by a writer after about fifty years of preaching in the evening light, or the sixth seal. He said, "Compromise began to surface, and with that compromise, numbers were more important than the working of the Spirit of God." Some people are thrilled if they can draw some away from another congregation. Well, they just want numbers. God wants us to have quality instead of just quantity.

The writer went on to say, "Organization began to set in, and camp meetings were structured by a ministerial assembly." Ministers got together and formed their camp meetings. All had a voice in it. What happened? Just as it is happening today in many places, Revelation 8:1 says, "And when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven [this is not speaking of the Heaven where God lives, but rather it is speaking of silence in the church] about the space of half an hour." The ministers became silent concerning the message.

What happens when ministers become silent on the message? The people begin to come in with earrings, finger rings, shorts, and slacks (on women). To them, there is no wrong anymore. They actually try to use the Word of God to justify their compromising position. They just go along with whatever makes people comfortable. Well, the flesh will work very hard to get comfortable; and when the flesh goes to work, it will never be satisfied. When silence comes, boards and committees come in. Also, pulpit committees come in: "We don't want that guy down here preaching." They throw their influence to the pastor, who is not really a pastor; he is just a speaker: "We don't want him. Get So-and-So. He's a crowd raiser." Well, that is just what he is, a crowd raiser. He could preach in the Church of God or in the Baptist Church, and you would not know the difference. Boards and committees instead of the Holy Spirit cannot produce holiness.

Today God commands of us no less than He commanded of the morning-time church. He is looking for people who will continue to live as He directs. Can this be said of you? Are you as sold out to the Lord as those of yesteryear? I am afraid that some have gotten an attitude that is going to take them to hell.

Some can hardly stand certain people. It is going to destroy them. You see, they are not going to hurt

the people they cannot stand. Those who cannot stand others are going to change in their spirits. If others are wrong, God will take care of them, just as God took care of King Saul. David had enough sense not to be Saul's executioner or judge. He could have very easily run Saul through with a sword, and Saul would have never know until he went into eternity. David knew that since God put Saul in the position he was in, He could take him out. David was not going to touch him. He knew that God is the One who puts men up and puts them down.

Friend, are you sold out to the

Lord? Do you still have the fervency that you once had in your experience or has something shorted it out? When it comes to electricity, just a little dirt can short out a circuit. If you do not stay close to the Lord, dear one, you are going to be affected by things that upset you. The people back in the morning-time church had great power with God. They cast out devils and healed bodies. Paul went in and debated with those in the synagogues, and he had great power with God. Then, however, you read about a falling away, because some gave heed to seducing spirits.

It is time to draw really close to the Lord. As God looks down today, instead of saying, "These are they," in many instances, He is saying, "Who are these?" Hebrews 13:8 tells us, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." You do not have to worry about God being the same; He will always be the same. The question is, are you the same as you once were in your experience? Won't you allow the Spirit of God to search your heart?

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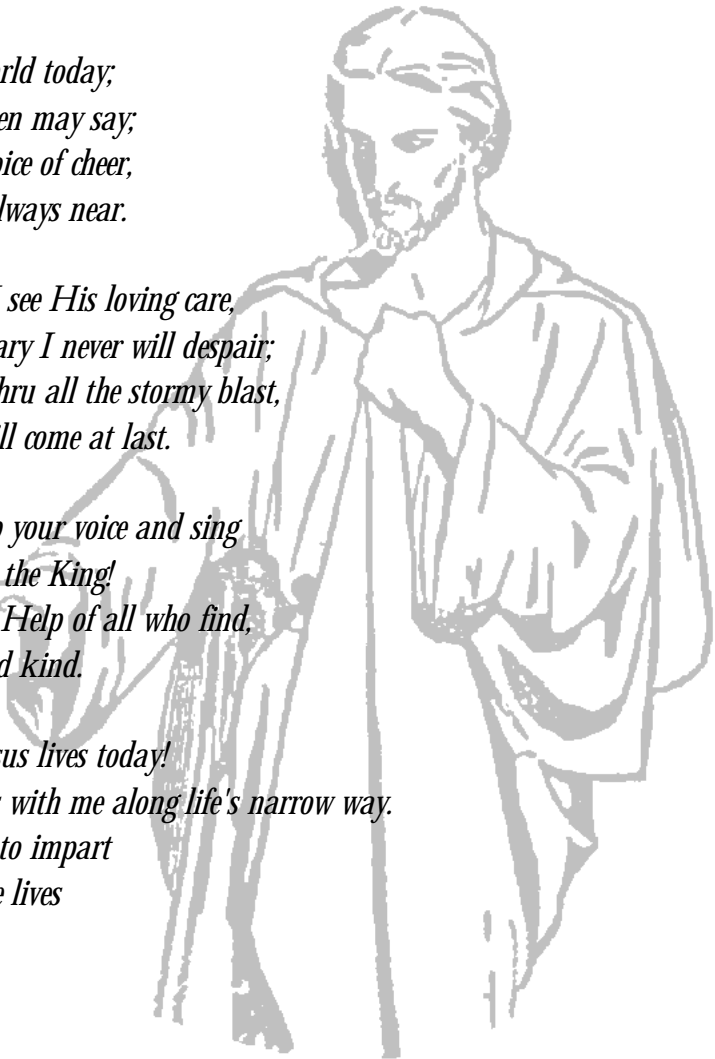
He Lives

*I serve a risen Saviour, He's in the world today;
O know that He is living, whatever men may say;
I see His hand of mercy. I hear His voice of cheer,
And just the time I need Him He's always near.*

*In all the world around me I see His loving care,
And tho' my heart grows weary I never will despair;
I know that He is leading, thru all the stormy blast,
The day of His appearing will come at last.*

*Rejoice, rejoice, O Christian, lift up your voice and sing
Eternal hallelujahs to Jesus Christ the King!
The hope of all who seek Him, the Help of all who find,
None other is so loving, so good and kind.*

*He lives, He lives, Christ Jesus lives today!
He walks with me and talks with me along life's narrow way.
He lives, He lives, salvation to impart
You ask me how I know He lives
He lives within my heart.*



Isaiah 66:1 Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?

2 For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD: but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word.

3 He that killeth an ox is as if he slew a man; he that sacrificeth a lamb, as if he cut off a dog's neck; he that offereth an oblation, as if he offered swine's blood; he that burneth incense,

as if he blessed an idol. Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.

4 I also will choose their delusions, and will bring their fears upon them; because when I called, none did answer; when I spake, they did not hear: but they did evil before mine eyes, and chose that in which I delighted not.

5 Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.

6 A voice of noise from the city, a

voice from the temple, a voice of the LORD that rendereth recompense to his enemies.

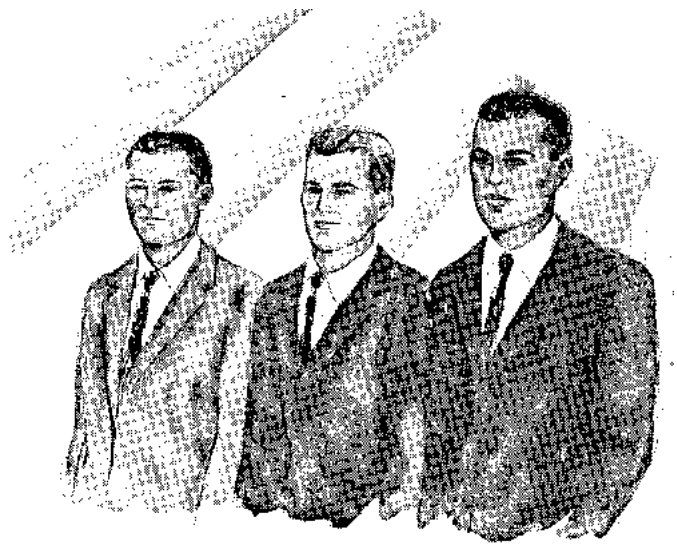
7 Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child.

8 Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.

9 Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? saith the LORD: shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.

“Let the Lord Be Glorified”

Part 1 of 2



Brother Allen Polston

A Man's Life Consists Not in the Abundance of What He Possesses

Although Isaiah recorded this Old Testament prophecy approximately twenty-nine hundred years ago, it is very up to date today. In verses 1-2 of our Scripture text, the Lord made plain what He was looking to discover. God was seeking something particular. God inspired the Prophet Isaiah to say that the Lord was looking to a certain kind of man: "But to this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." Since the Lord gave a description of what He was looking for, we do not have any excuses. Yet

today He is looking for a man, a woman, a boy, or a girl who is poor and of a contrite spirit and who trembles at His Word. Friend, are you the kind of individual for whom God is looking?

Our Scripture text reads in verse 1, "Thus saith the LORD, The heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?" In this verse God asked the question, in so many words, "What is it that you possess that makes you feel worthy of My consideration of you?" Friend, what do you have that you feel is worth causing God to consider you? No doubt, people could come up with

many things, but God just wiped all of that away at the beginning of verse 2 when He said, "For *all* [that does not leave out any] those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the LORD."

None of us has a superior position over others in time past as far as our accumulated value, worth, and possessions. Our Scripture text dispels any false ideas that something you possess makes you worthy of the Lord paying you a visit, or coming down and communing with you. As far as the material possessions of this world are concerned, nothing makes you worthy. You do not merit God's bestowments and endowments upon you by the things

that you possess.

Jesus said in Luke 12:15 that a man's life does not consist in the abundance of the things that he possesses. That is essentially what the Prophet was saying in our Scripture text. However, I thank God that He did not leave us without a clue concerning what He is looking for. God is so good to us. He tells us exactly what we need to know and gives us the power to do it.

God destroys the notion that many people have: "Because of who I am and because I possess this, I am a Christian." That is a false notion that is prevalent in our world today. People say, "Well, the Lord has really blessed me, because I made thousands of dollars this year." Thank God for everything you have made, but just because you have been blessed materially does not mean that the Lord is on your side. I can think of several financially successful people who do not have God in their hearts.

You need to get away from the notion that because things are going well, God is pleased with you; that is not necessarily so. If you have not been through some trials in a year or two, you should start wondering about your spiritual condition. In my field of labor, I frequently meet people who live ungodly lives, yet they claim that since they have a boat and a car and take four weeks of vacation a year, the Lord is blessing them; then in the next breath, they curse and swear and carry on as they light a cigarette.

Friend, if you can take four weeks of vacation a year and have many material possessions that you enjoy, that is wonderful. However, those material things that you have are not really what God is looking for. That ought to be an inspiration to you, so that you do not seek after worldly things. You must put the things of God first.

The Key to Spirituality

In those verses of our Scripture text, we can see that the kind of

individual that God looks upon is one who is poor and of a contrite spirit and who trembles at His Word. God was dismissing the notion of possessions being the key to spirituality. God is saying: "What big accomplishment or big commendation do you think you have brought about in your human ability? What grand and glorious thing do you think you possess that is the key to spirituality?" Friend, it is not found in those things.

The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4:7, "For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?" The problem with many people is their thinking that material possessions and worldly successes are linked to spirituality. Paul made it plain that it is not, by asking those questions. Child of God, it is good to consider questions such as, "Where am I?" and "Where is my life heading?" If you are unsaved, you should ask yourself some questions: "Where is my life going? Where am I going to end up if I stay on the road that I am traveling?"

The devil tries to get people so busy with the affairs of life that they have no time to consider eternity. Deuteronomy 32:29 states, "O that they were wise, that they understood this, that they would consider their latter end!" I have actually seen people come to the worship services and sit down and get out a book to read or pass notes rather than listen to the message. For the short time that you are in the church services, you should focus on the Gospel and the needs of your soul. Friend, you have a soul, and one day you are going to be in eternity. One old song asks the question, "Where will you be a million years from now?" It would behoove you to take time to consider that question. You need to think on something besides the normal routine of life. Consider where you are spiritually and the course that you are taking.

People may think that God is blessing them because they can boast of great things, but that may not be true at all. God is not looking on people for those reasons. I am not taking away from your thanking God for supplying your needs. It is in order to bow your head to ask God's blessing and to give Him thanks before you partake of meals. However, if you begin to think that what you possess makes you spiritual, then you are on the wrong track.

In our Scripture lesson, God said, "For all those things hath mine hand made, and all those things have been . . ." (verse 2). God is looking upon one who is poor and of a contrite spirit and who trembles at His Word. If you fit this description, then God is looking your way, because He wants to take you further along. I am so glad that the Christian life is not boring, as some may suppose. It is filled with glory, Truth, and encouragement. It is filled with things that take us deeper and higher into heavenly places. As you study God's Word and attend the services and good, old-fashioned camp meetings, these things can be real blessings to your soul. It is wonderful when God blesses us spiritually.

Do All to the Glory of God

Saved young person, do not let the devil and his devices fool you into thinking that you are missing something grand and glorious. I have been in sin, and I have been saved. I want to stay saved by the grace of God. I do not want to go back to the life of sin. If you could see the reaping that one must suffer from living in sin, you would not want to return to the life of sin either. The devil does not show you those who are suffering in the hospital beds, the jail cells, and the gutters and alleys in which people end up. He does not show you those who have been bruised, broken, and beaten from having been in fights.

You may ask, "Why does God

want me to be poor and of a contrite spirit and to tremble at His Word?" The answer is that God created you for His pleasure. You are not here to build up an earthly kingdom for yourself or to build up your popularity. Revelation 4:11 says, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created." You are living because God wants you to bring glory to Him. He has made the way good, and He has given you many things to enjoy along the way. However, in doing so, He wants you to use your time and talents to bring glory to Him. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

According to our Scripture lesson, God is not interested in your genealogy, because it would not bring glory to Him. Also, He is not interested in listening to you boast of what you have accumulated or of your accomplishments, because that is not the reason you are here. You are here to bring glory to God. He wants to get pleasure from the way you live and the things with which you are affiliated. He wants it all to work together so that, as the world looks on, it will bring glory to Him.

The devil is working overtime so that the sinful things of this world might get glory. He wants to bring glory to the drunken lifestyle, the party life, the promiscuity of young people, the adultery, and the fornication. Nevertheless, God has something better in mind, and that is to bring glory to Him, for He is worthy. If you begin to list the things that you can do and the things that you have accomplished, it takes the glory away from God.

Giving Heed to Seducing Spirits

In our Scripture lesson in verse 5, we find the statement, "Let the LORD be glorified." However, when you read the entire verse, you can see that it really was not that way at all.

Verse 5 states, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified." Those brethren hated one another and cast out one another, yet they were saying, "Let the LORD be glorified." God was not getting any glory out of that; in fact, it was just the opposite.

You may ask, "How could it be that people would say, 'Let the LORD be glorified' and it not be so?" The answer is that it was a deception. Isaiah 66:4 calls it "delusions." True saints of God are not interested in out-and-out sin, because they know that the result is departure from God. Although the devil does try to work through all manner of sin and we all are tempted, he works around the church in deceptive ways. He is not working so much to get you to head down to a liquor store, but he is working to deceive you through seducing spirits. He is working to get you under a delusion, because often that is the only way he can get hold of those who are sold on the Truth. Often the devil slips in unawares and begins to work in deceptive ways. That is how he can lead souls away from spiritual Jerusalem; yet they say, "Let the LORD be glorified" when it is not so at all.

When people give heed to seducing spirits, they are convinced that they are doing the Lord's work and bringing glory to God, yet in reality they are doing the opposite. John 16:2 tells us, "They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service." Jesus spoke those words, and we know that those things came to pass. It happened in the life of Paul before his conversion. He had Christians imprisoned and killed and thought he was doing God service until God began to prick his heart. Jesus said, "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks" (Acts 9:5). The Word of God tells us that people would work contrary to sound Bible teaching and think they were doing the will of God.

We read in Romans 10:3, "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." God said they, being ignorant of His righteousness, went about and started making up their own ways and calling them God's way. That is the way the devil is working in religious circles today. People are ignorant of God's divine way, so they fill in the gaps with their own thoughts and their own practices. When that begins to take place, they get further and further away from God. They do not handle things God's way or live as God would direct them. That is what Romans 10:3 was dealing with.

The Way of Holiness

Friend, you do not need to take on your own way of doing things, because God has a way to take care of His church. God has a way of ruling and reigning over His people. God's people do not need to have meetings to vote on what should be preached. God has a way of taking care of that. Jesus said, "I am the way." Isaiah 35:8 says, "And an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." God's way is a divine way. God has a way of handling affairs. He has a way of bringing people to a place of conviction so that they can see that they are lost and on their way to a fiery place in hell for eternity.

God has a way of bringing understanding to people to show them exactly what they need to do and how they ought to live. God directs through the preaching of the Word, through Bible study, and through prayer. You do not have to worry about His having things covered. Paul said that he had declared the whole counsel of God, letting us know that God has a great

amount of counsel for us concerning the way to do things. When Jesus said, "I am the way," He was saying, "Love is the way." I have gone through many things, and no doubt you have too. I like the song that says, "When nothing else could help, love lifted me." Thank God, love is still the way. It is still lifting people out of sin and working out problems and situations. Love through Jesus is still the way that God has provided. God has a way for everything that we encounter.

You may ask, "What if people are completely ignorant of God's way? What if they have never heard the Gospel?" Well, that question was asked in Romans, Chapter 10, but Paul answered it by saying, "They have heard." The Word has gone into all the earth. People were not deceived because they had not heard or because they had not read what the Prophets wrote. The reason they were under a deception was due to their disobedience and gainsaying.

Friend, just a little refusing of God can lead you down a long and winding trail and separate you from the precious Spirit of God, holiness, and Truth. Just a little refuting of what God has made known to you can lead you a long way from the Lord, and eventually away from Heaven. Paul said their deception was not because they had not heard. Just a little disobedience will take people down a road where they either go out into deep sin or create their own ideas concerning what is right. Either way, they will end up in a lost eternity.

I am dealing with these things so that you might look into your own life, past and present, to see if you have refused the known will of God. If you have, then you ought to forsake that way and repent of it. It is not worth it. A little disobedience might bring you temporary pleasures, but it will also cause you to go far away from God if you do not deal with it. You cannot allow even a little disobedience in your life. You must

come right back to that place of disobedience and deal with it in order to move forward with God.

Overstepping Your Conscience

The individuals in Romans knew better than to do things that were not right, yet they did them anyway. When you face situations, you need to ask yourself, "Is this of God?" God will be faithful to your soul. Doing something or being a part of something that you know is against the will of God will lead you away from the Lord. When God brings to light those things that are against His Word, then you should not continue in that way. I repeat, a little disobedience will take you far away from God.

If you allow something to continue when God has warned you, your conscience will become seared, and you will no longer realize what is right and what is wrong. You will end up as the people in Romans, Chapter 10, who had come to the place where they could no longer discern what was right and what was wrong. They started creating their own ideas of right and wrong. Even if everyone else has gone that way, the Bible makes it plain that you are to be obedient. You are to follow God with all your heart. Even if the multitude is doing something, when God is against it, you need to stay out of it. Numbers do not make any difference in the sight of God. Jesus said in Matthew 7:22, "*Many* will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not . . . done many wonderful works?" Jesus said in Luke 6:46, "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" In other words, Jesus was saying, "Why do you call Me Lord, yet you know that you are disobedient?"

We find in our Scripture lesson that individuals were saying, "Let the LORD be glorified," when no glory was being given to God. Thank God, there is a way to bring glory to God. There is a way that

you can please God.

The devil works to deceive people into thinking they are bringing God glory, when, in reality, they are falling short of the glory of God. Just a little disobedience, a little straying from what you know you ought to be doing, will bring this about.

I remember as a young person when I first said, "Okay, I will take just a sip of that." When I first began to give in to that, there was a strong feeling of knowing that it was not right. However, the next drink was not as hard to take as the first one. Friend, when you take the wrong road, it will not be long until you feel that you are having a good time. Disobedience takes you far away from God. When you overstep your conscience, it will not be hard for you to say a few bad things about the man of God. You know that you should not say that kind of thing. You know that you should not run down the church or the pastor, but the next time it will be a little easier, especially if you get a little recognition out of it from someone. Then it will not be long until that disobedience will separate you completely from the blessed, old Truth.

How to Bring Glory to God

God created you to bring glory to Him in all that you do. Saint, when you go shopping for clothes, you need to keep the thought in mind, "I need to make sure that what I wear brings God glory. I need to make sure that my clothes are not too tight, too low, too short, or too sheer." When you furnish your home, are you bringing glory to God? In all that you do, you should bring glory to God. You should want Him to be exalted. You should live so that when other people look on you, they will not think that you are seeking attention for yourself. Your life should cause others to think about something besides the world. Your life should point them to God.

You should not be one who talks

about the things of God but does not live a godly life. That is what we find in our Scripture lesson. Again, verse 5 says, "Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified." Brethren were saying, "We are doing the will of God. Let the LORD be glorified," yet they had hatred in their hearts. When people have hatred in their hearts, how can they say, "Let the LORD be glorified"? Individuals who have hatred in their hearts for their brethren are unacceptable in God's eyes.

I love all people. I do not hate anyone. God changed my heart one night at an old-fashioned revival. He took the hatred out and put His love in. Sadly, many people are bound with hatred. In our Scripture lesson, it was among brethren. It usually does not hurt too much if a drunkard makes fun of you or if an out-and-out sinner mocks you a little because you are living a godly life. On the other hand, it does hurt you when one who claims to be a brother has hatred in his heart against you; that crushes you. Why? Because it is one whom you once embraced, shook hands with, and glorified God with. It is someone who once stood with you, lifting his hand in praise as you sang the good, old Gospel hymns. When someone like that turns on you and hates you, that is a hurtful thing. If you allow a little disobedience in your life, soon you will be far away from God.

This is what was happening in our Scripture text. Again, verse 5 reads, "Hear the word of the LORD, ye that tremble at his word; Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let the LORD be glorified [thank God, that was not the end of the story]: but he shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed." God does not forsake His people. The Psalmist said in Psalm 37:25, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." God will not forsake His

own. He will stick closer than a brother. If you tremble at the Word of God, I want to encourage you. God is on your side. He is standing beside you, looking out for you. Anyone who has hatred in his heart for you, though it might be a blow, will "appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed."

"He That Endureth to the End Shall Be Saved"

The people of our Scripture text went through a time of hurt, and they got under a burden. The end result is found in verses 7-8 of our Scripture text: "Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things?" There is no bringing forth of children without some travail. In essence, the writer was saying, "Who has heard of bringing forth children without travailing, or suffering?" That is something that you do not hear about. Even with the greatest advances in technology, there is usually still some travailing.

What was the Lord trying to tell us? When individuals who tremble at God's Word go through hurtful times, times of disappointment and discouragement, it brings them to their knees. It causes them to go through some travailing, but through it all, God will not forsake His people. He never has, and He never will. When God's people begin to get under a real burden, children will be brought forth. Souls will get saved, people will be healed, and others will get spiritual help. God can turn a situation that might have been discouraging into a profitable thing to those who endure.

Jesus said in Matthew 10:22, "And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved." God has something for His people. Saint, it does not matter who has wronged you, God has something for you. However, you must first get

under a burden. When people get under a burden, they are ready to work, pray, visit, study God's Word, and do things that they were not doing before.

In our Scripture lesson, people who were unprofitable, those who had allowed disobedience to work in their lives, were removed from the picture. Those who were committed to live for God and had purposed in their hearts to make Heaven their home were strengthened and encouraged and brought along spiritually. There is a way to bring glory to God, and it is by being obedient and doing all that He has called you to do with all your heart. Saint, you need to get under a burden, work for God, pray, and help build up the precious Kingdom of God.

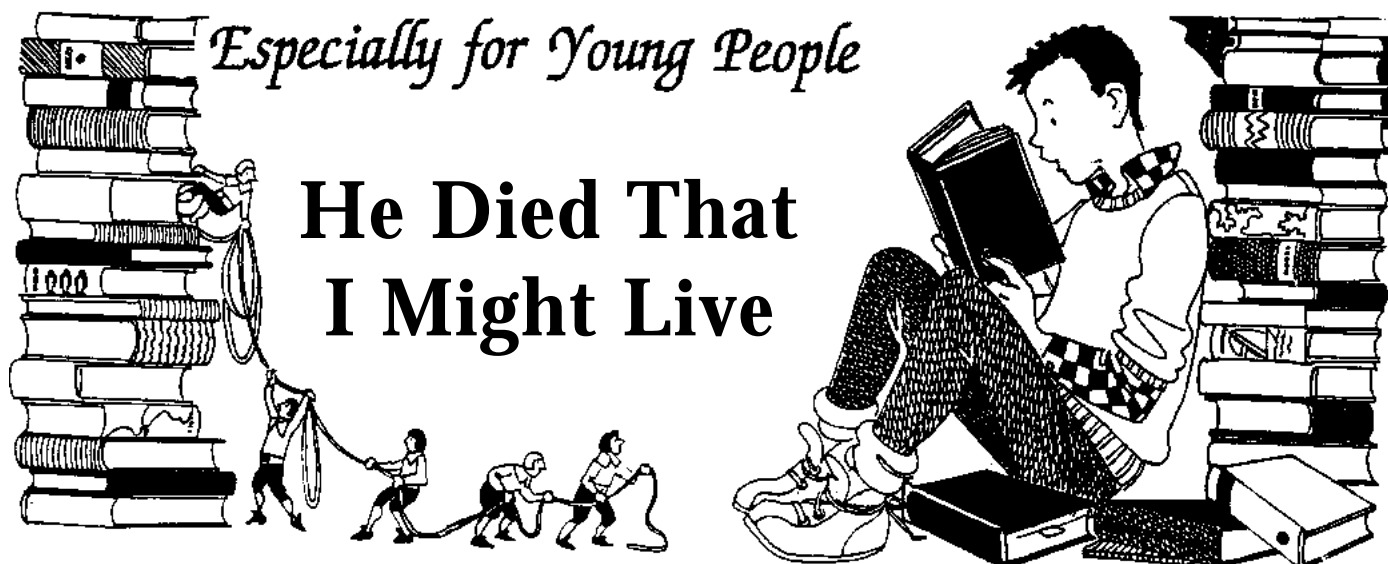
I enjoy living for the Lord. While the devil is doing many things to try to turn people around, God is going to have a church. In Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, "I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." God has grace, strength, and help for His people.

If you are unsaved, your condition is leading you away from what you know is right. The way to bring glory to God is to first repent of your sins and then find your place in the work of God. What a blessing it is!

Saint, let us work together and build up the Kingdom of God. Some people let disobedience work. They might even get to the place where they hate you, but do not allow that to cause you to give up the race. If anything, let it cause you to become more strongly tied to God. He has help and strength for you. Thank God, with His help you can bring glory to Him.

Friend, if you are not bringing glory to God, you need to let God help you. If you are lost, why go on any longer in that condition? Won't you be obedient to God and let Him help you?

(Cassette C-4567E)



On June 22, a beautiful, sunny Friday morning, my heart was broken and the sunlight dim to my tear-streamed eyes. My darling son, Jimmy, age five, had gone to the mail box to see if we had a letter from Grandma. As he was returning, he was suddenly struck by a car and killed. I was watching him, but beyond my control he was hit, face first, his body catching on the grill, and the car dragging him 150 feet up the hot pavement.

The impact was so strong, his little shoes were knocked off his feet. I ran, screaming, to his lifeless body as the blood lay in a thick puddle, coming from his badly torn head. Only a gasp—and he was gone. With a grief-stricken heart, I looked toward Heaven and begged, "O God, please spare his life. Don't let him die. I love him so!"

Before this tragedy, Jimmy's daddy had been wonderfully converted. Sad to say, I professed to be saved but never really knew the joy of having sins forgiven. As a youngster, I went to the altar, and several times after that, but looking back, I can see how deceived I was. The Word says that "old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new" (2 Corinthians 5:17). The "old" things of the world had not passed away in my life because I failed to turn to God and obtain a *real* experience (Matthew 3:11).

Again, I went to the altar, as my husband and others prayed that the Lord would open my blinded eyes (Acts 26:18). This step to the altar was good, but I failed to surrender my all to the Lord. I wanted to leave a new person, but that meant laying aside all the filth of this life. These weights that bound me, I had already seen, but could not seem to turn loose. I was bound by the devil to the tobacco habit—this damning habit to health and soul. I wore the devil's makeup and cut my hair, wore short dresses, halter tops, shorts, and jeans. I could see no harm in the ungodly television or the lustful romance magazines. All of this I held onto, and I believed the devil when he told me I was saved. What a shame!

The enemy would whisper, "You can love Jesus and not give up everything; it's not what goes in that defiles." The devil is a liar and the father of lies. I was sick in body. I had low blood and a very nervous condition with no peace. There is none outside of Christ, for He saves, sanctifies, and heals. Satan had me chained, but prayer had wrought Holy Ghost conviction on my soul.

As I lay in bed one night, wishing I could be saved, I suddenly saw Jimmy in a casket. Tears flooded my eyes, and I rushed to his room to see if he was all right. Yes, he was asleep, so sweet and peaceful. Push-

ing this warning away, I fell asleep, making myself believe nothing would happen to him.

Weeks after this experience, I awoke again, everything dark and still. I can still hear his scream now, "Mama, will you ever get old?" By this time, I had quit wearing shorts and cutting my hair. Even before my husband was saved, it was no more movies for us, vile as they are. However, without Jesus abiding in my soul, the desire for those things was still there. I feared to look godly as the Bible teaches. What would people say? Even my own kinfolk would not understand. I did not realize that if I would get saved, the Lord would give me grace to die to opinions and to people.

Little Jimmy enjoyed attending church; he would talk of Jesus and say many encouraging things to his dad. The thoughts of heavenly things stayed upon his little heart. One day he gave the plate his grandmother had given him to his sister Ann. Shortly before leaving to get the mail that day, he asked me, "Mama, can you do with only two children?" Then he smiled at me and said, "I feel like traveling on."

On that morning, the morning after the cry in the night, Jimmy—the dearest treasure I had on earth—was suddenly taken to be with Jesus. Words could never express how I loved him. The all-wise God knew

how to humble my sinful heart.

It may be that you feel God's call today. Others may not know the fears you have hidden, but Jesus knows your every thought (Luke 12:2; Jeremiah 17:9-10). Someday you must yield your all to Him or die and go to a burning, everlasting hell, where every soul goes that fails to repent and be converted.

From the time Jimmy lay on the hot road, I saw my need of salvation. All the way to the hospital, my husband and I prayed. He knew God, and in a humble way prayed, "Lord, if it by Thy will . . ." The Lord knew best. Bless His name! He knew it was best not to raise Jimmy up, but to save my soul, valued more than the world. Returning from the hospital, the last glimpse of his battered body before me and his last words, "I feel like traveling on," ringing in my ears, I walked into my parents' home and confessed, "I'll live for Jesus no matter what anyone thinks, even if you all turn against me."

Days following, I would pray, "Lord, search me. I want to be wholly, completely Yours." Yes, the

devil was still around to accuse me, to torment me, and to blame me, but the difference was that I now knew my need and was humble before God. I had been ignorant to His conviction, but oh, the sorrow, I was suffering because I failed to pray through.

Finally, I knelt alone with God and complete victory and assurance filled my soul. Bless the Lord! As I prayed, the room swirled in light, and there was Jesus, with hand outstretched. He was real because I wanted Him so and knew He had saved my unworthy soul. I saw Him on the cruel Cross, blood dripping from His nail-pierced hands for all my sins, ugly as they were. With all my sins forgiven, I found such joy and peace. I continued to hunger and thirst after all His righteousness and purity.

Jimmy's daddy is now preaching the glorious Gospel. What joy it is to work together, to go into the highways and hedges and bid the lost to come to Him. A saved experience will cause you to lose all desire for the world, the lust of the flesh, lust of the eye, and the pride

of life. A new creature in Christ, I speak as one who has tried both ways, you will be glad that you turned to Jesus. The peace and joy in knowing that He saves from all sin, sanctifies wholly, and can heal our bodies is wonderful! It is a persecuted way, because the world loves it own. "His grace has brought me safe thus far and grace will lead me home."

Are you saved this hour or do you feel condemnation, doubts, and fears? Do you desire to go to Heaven and yet feel the bondage of sin? Turn to Him now. He can rid your soul of that dark blot. I trust you will, and someday hear the final, "Well done!"

I praise Him for what has been mine to suffer, that some day I can go home, where we will never grow old, to be with Jimmy again; but my greatest desire is to look upon the Savior's face, who was so long-suffering with me, the One, bless His Name, "who died that I might live."

Selected

Static

"Nearly time for that program," Joe exclaimed, going to turn the radio dial.

"Squawk, squeek, ee-eee-eee," responded that instrument in a rising series of shrill notes.

After maneuvering buttons and dials for a long time, with no clear reception resulting, Joe commented, "Static," and turned away disappointed. Interference in the air waves kept Joe from hearing the program at all.

If we want to hear God speak to us, we have to keep a clear channel. If we want our own way about something, like static, it will hinder us from learning God's will. Even when we study the Bible, the static of self will interfere with our understanding its message.

Love for worldly things will set up a disturbance that will hinder us from getting in touch with God. The "cares and riches and pleasures of this life" (Luke 8:14) will dim out the voice of God. We must get everything out of the way, forsake all to follow Christ (Luke 14:33) in order to have clear communications. When we are wholly submitted to God's will, He can speak to us, and we will hear what He says. Nor can God hear us speak to Him, if there is static interfering. Here is how to send out a clear message to God: "Whatever we ask we receive from him, because we keep his commandments and do those things that are pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:22).

Selected

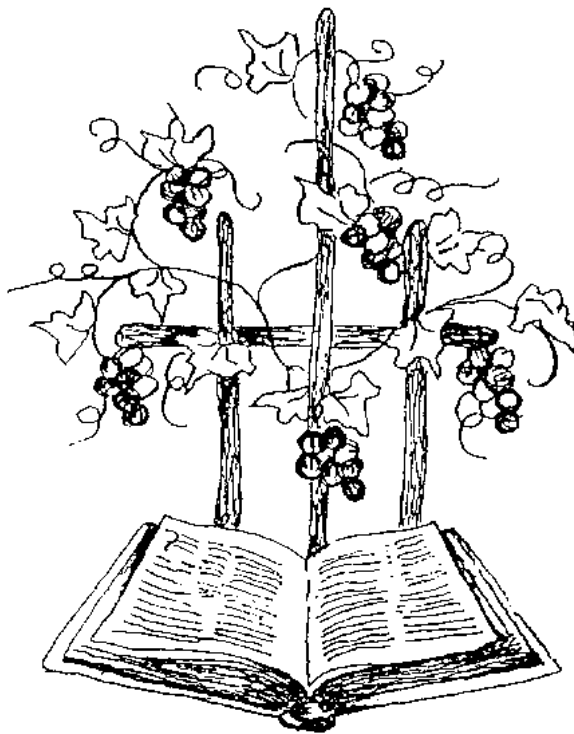
Isaiah 55:1 Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk

without money and without price.

2 Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not?

hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness.

The Things You Cannot Buy With Your Money



Brother E. David Stegmeier

The Secret of Contentment

Jesus said in the latter part of John 10:10, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly [or in the fullest measure]." Friend, are you really enjoying life? Are you really happy? No one enjoys life more than the saints of God. Are you living life to its fullest? It is your privilege to be contented and happy.

Some individuals have said that if they could live in a different area, had a different husband or wife, had more money, could attend a different congregation, or had a different pastor, then they would be contented and happy. However, that is not true. What they need to do is give up self and their own ideas and accept God's way. Only then will

they be fully contented, happy, and fulfilled.

In Noah's time only he was fully contented with God and His way. Of the hundreds of thousands of people who left Egypt, only two were contented with God's way and made it to Canaan land. Only two people were contented with their lot in life as God intended people to be. If you are unhappy, you need to be honest with yourself. The reason you are discontented and unhappy is that you are struggling with your own self-will. A child of God is truly contented, satisfied, and fulfilled.

D. S. Warner wrote a song entitled, "My Soul Is Satisfied." Verse 1 and the chorus read: "*All this world, its wealth and honor, Cannot sate the human breast; [Nothing in this world can satisfy*

the cravings of the soul. If you will not give up self, you are making yourself miserable and keeping yourself from being contented, fulfilled, and happy with life.] *But when filled with God, our Father, Ev'ry want is fully blest. My soul is satisfied, My soul is satisfied; I am complete in Jesus' love, And my soul is satisfied.*" I am satisfied with Jesus, and I am satisfied with life. Are you? Did D. S. Warner suffer? Yes, he suffered tremendously.

D. S. Warner wrote in verse 2, "*All my soul can wish forever, I do find in Christ replete; Ev'ry blessing and the Giver In my peaceful bosom meet.*" I can relate to that, and I agree with him fully. I do not crave for the things of this world. The only thing that I desire is to see my loved ones saved and my community won for

Jesus Christ. I have enough of this world's goods. If I had to, I would be content to live in a tent as long as I had Jesus, if that were what God wanted for me. The Lord fully satisfies my every desire. Friend, you can have the very Giver of every blessing within your bosom each day. You can have the Giver of every good and perfect gift right in your heart.

The first half of verse 3 reads, *"Is thy life bereft of comfort, And thy heart a cheerless spot?"* Friend, have you been robbed of comfort? Do you have a desire within you to have joy? If you do, God has these things for you. Are you a cheerful person? What would your husband or wife say if he or she were asked to testify for you? What would your children say? Are you a contented, happy person? Are you contented and happy with your companion, your children, your boss, the church, and your pastor? The latter part of verse 3 reads, *"Say not Christ is in thy desert For we can believe it not."* Your life does not have to be as a desert; it can be beautiful. If your life is as a desert, it is because you and your own will are keeping Christ from satisfying the longings of your heart.

Verse 4 reads, *"Can a bird drink up the ocean, Thirsting still from shore to shore? Or the God of all creation Leave thy heart yet craving more?"* The answer to those questions is no! I enjoy living. Do you really enjoy living? You may feel that you need to have a little larger house, a little more money in the bank, or a different husband or wife; but that is not true. You need to be changed; that is the reason for the lack of contentment in your life.

Verse 5 says, *"Would my soul could more encompass Heaven's glory, willed to me; Oh, the love of God, so precious! 'Tis a deep and shoreless sea."* When I sing that song, I can almost feel the heart's craving of Brother D. S. Warner. Friend, you can have more of the love of God, the peace of God, the contentment of God, the joy of God, and the attributes of God, if you so desire. You can be

happy, contented, and free. No one can keep you from receiving these blessings, except you.

Riches That Money Cannot Buy

When I was in basic training in the military service, one morning we had to go out on what they called a "police call." It was not an enjoyable detail. We had to go around and pick up cigarette butts and all kinds of dirty things. That morning I was singing and having a good time, and a sergeant came up to me and said, "Stegmeier, what makes you so happy?" I replied, "I know Jesus Christ."

Friend, you need to be honest. Are you truly happy? Most people today are not really honest. They blame this one or that one for their own unhappiness, but the real reason for it is their lack of submission to God and His will. Dear one, if you are in a congregation where Truth is preached, yet you are unhappy with the congregation and your pastor, then you are hindering yourself from enjoying God's blessings. If that is the case, you would not even be happy under Moses' leadership, Jesus' leadership, or any one of the Apostles' leadership. All the Apostles except John met with violent deaths. If you wrestle with your own thoughts and the thoughts and ideas of others, you need to give yourself to God; then you can enjoy life to its fullest.

There are things that you cannot buy with money. How rich is God? I am going to brag on the Lord. The Apostle Paul wrote in Philippians 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." God is the richest one in the world. We are unable to calculate how truly wealthy God is; there are not enough digits out there. God, through the Psalmist, said in Psalm 50:10-12: "For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains: and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry,

I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof." No bank in the world could hold all the riches that God possesses.

Money is very important to people today. If we were to devise a list of the most important things to people, no doubt, money would be first on their list. Not long ago, some people surveyed a group of graduating seniors and asked them, "What do you want most out of life?" Most of them said, "Money."

Jesus said in Luke 12:15, "Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth." Some of the wealthiest people in the world are the most discontented and dissatisfied. I have pastored for many years, and I have noticed that the richest people are usually the most unhappy people. The more you possess, the more vexed you are. Happiness and contentment are not contingent upon worldly possessions. The things of this world cannot satisfy the soul.

Our Scripture text says in verses 1-2: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." People are so concerned about their shape today. However, your soul is one area of your being where you can eat all you want, spiritually speaking. When we come to the Church of God, we have a real smorgasbord. Your soul can eat and get as fat and flourishing as you want it to. When I go to the house of worship, I like to eat at Father's table.

The Greatest Invitation

Another translation of our Scripture text says: "Is anyone thirsty? Come and drink—even if you have no money! Come, take your choice

of wine and milk—it's all free! Why spend your money on food that does not give you strength? Why pay for food that does you no good? Listen, and I will tell you where to get food that is good for the soul!" People who are fat in their souls are contented with life and have peace of mind. When you serve the Lord, life is a joy and the worship services are a thrill.

This is the greatest invitation that has ever been given. Someone may ask, "Would you like to have an invitation to go to the White House or to see the Queen of England?" Not really. I never even think about it. I have had a few invitations in life that I have turned down; but the invitation to accept Christ as my Savior and Lord was one that I accepted, and I have never been sorry. It has been the greatest invitation that I have ever had, and I am thrilled with it. All are invited, and the invitation comes personally from God. The only qualification needed is that you are thirsty and that you want something more than this world has to offer. The beggarly elements of the world cannot bring you contentment.

All are invited to come to the Living Water. Jesus said in John 7:37-38: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water." To whom is this invitation given? The Bible says everyone can come and buy.

Solomon said in Proverbs 23:23, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." You may ask, "How can I buy the Truth? How can I buy this experience?" When you give up self and all your own ideas and give yourself completely to God and His plan for your life, then you can buy the Truth and gain this rich experience. God will never take advantage of you. He will bless your life. He can help you to have a fulfilling, contented, productive life.

After you have given your heart and life to God, then you ought to give yourself to the man of God in

the service of the Lord. You may say, "Oh, he will take advantage of me." A true man of God would never take advantage of you. A true pastor would never ask his congregation to do something that he would not do, neither would he ask them to do something that is against biblical principles.

You may ask, "As a man of God, what do you want people to do?" I want them to get saved, live a clean life, be a good husband or a good wife, be a good father or a good mother, be a good employee or a good employer, and attend the house of worship. These requirements are biblical. You should attend the house of worship every time the church doors open, unless you have an emergency or you are too ill to attend. Also, you ought to tithe your money and give offerings and support the work of God, both physically and spiritually.

Priceless Possessions

Proverbs 23:23 says, "Buy the truth, and sell it not." You can buy this experience by giving up your own ways and your own ideas. You must part with everything that the Word of God condemns. You should be willing to do that. What are some of these things? First, you must part with any relationship with family or friends that hinders your relationship with God. You must be willing to be unpopular, if need be. You might have to part with some worldly possessions, some worldly pleasures, and some of your own ways. No price can be put on the gift of salvation. Christ purchased this wonderful gift with His own blood. You and I did not have to pay anything for it. If any of us have any value, it is because of God; in ourselves we are nothing. Whatever we can do does not amount to anything on our own. If we do anything worthwhile for Christ, it is because He enables us to do it.

Sinner friend, you need to come and accept that which has already been purchased. As I said earlier,

money is very important to people. Nevertheless, Jesus said in Matthew 6:19, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal." Some people who profess to be Christians are continually laying up treasures on earth. Have you ever seen a U-Haul trailer being towed behind a hearse? I never have.

Most of the things that we see in life—the houses, the lands, the cattle, the automobiles, and fine apparel—can be purchased with money. A price tag can be placed on everything tangible in life. However, many things that we may possess in life should never be sold, yet some do. People sell things that God has given. If the price is great enough, some sell their virtue and honor. These things can never be regained.

Some have sold their good names. You should be extremely careful of how you act, because once you lose your good name, you may never regain it. We are living in a day when people make something out of nothing. People have given up honesty, self-respect, and godly principles. I do not want to give up one godly principle. I am convinced that if I give up one, I will lose the respect of God; that is something you cannot buy with money. The respect of God means more to me than the respect of any other individual.

Some have given up standards of conduct and their clean consciences. Acts 23:1 says, "And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Once you lose your clean conscience, money cannot buy it back. Many people drink and do all kinds of things to smother their gnawing, guilty consciences. Nevertheless, when they come back to their senses, their consciences are still there to gnaw them again. Money cannot buy some things.

Sometimes people give up their good family relationships, and no

amount of money can regain it for them. Money cannot purchase the gift of salvation. One cannot purchase the Holy Ghost with money. In the New Testament you can read of one named Simon the Sorcerer who thought he could, but he was mistaken. I have found in my life that the more of my time, my desires, my ways, and my likes that I give up to God, the more of the Holy Ghost I possess.

The Way to Find Rest for Your Soul

Friend, you would be further up the road if you would quit wrestling with yourself. Sometimes self is too important. Perhaps you have too much pride. You may think too much of yourself. Simon's desire was a selfish desire. He wanted to bring glory to himself and not to God, but he was mistaken, just as so many are today. You cannot purchase spiritual things with money.

A leading minister of the Southern Baptist movement was found guilty of embezzling millions of dollars. He asked for mercy and said, "I will go with this all my life. I am ashamed." He lost his good name. Even if he could have given back all the money that he had stolen, he could never purchase a good name. He will face that guilt and shame for the rest of his life.

Many times money is used in the wrong way. Often people say, "Money talks"; however, so often the things it says are deceiving. Money cannot bring happiness, peace of mind, contentment, or fulfillment in life. Money cannot give you a truly fulfilling marital relationship. It cannot buy a happy home with precious little children.

No amount of legal tender can bribe the death angel when he comes knocking at your door. When the death angel comes for you, it will all be over. Your money cannot purchase a home for you in Heaven. God does not care about your money. He is wealthy.

In closing, I want you to read the

invitation of Jesus Christ. He said in Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." He was not speaking of laboring physically. I enjoy working, and I believe that most men really enjoy working. However, if you are laboring under the gnawing conscience of guilt, that is something you cannot get rid of unless Jesus Christ takes it away. Sin is heavy.

One man who was incarcerated had committed murders, but he had never been charged with them and had never confessed them. When he got saved, those murders loomed in his mind, and he was extremely heavy laden. When writing to radio and television ministers, they told him nearly the same thing: "Whoever it is you are writing about (he did not give his name), tell that person that he is forgiven, and it is under the blood." He said that sufficed for a while, but those murders loomed up again, and he just could not handle it, so he told the prison chaplain what he had done. The prison chaplain said, "Ssh, you are saved. It's under the blood." Again, his conscience was appeased momentarily, but his crime loomed up again. He said that he could not live with himself until he wrote to the State District Attorney and told him what he had done. He said that undoubtedly he is now in prison for the rest of his life. Also, when it happened, the state had reinstated the death penalty, and he thought he was going to go to the death chamber.

Friend, the only thing that can get rid of a guilty conscience is Jesus

Christ. That prisoner was heavy laden, but now, spiritually speaking, he is as free as a bird. His body is still in prison, but his spirit is free.

Dear one, I ask you to be honest. You do not have to be miserable another moment. If you are unhappy, neither conditions in this world nor a physical condition is causing your unhappiness. Also, it is not the fault of a congregation, your pastor, your husband or wife, or anyone else. You are the one, and God knows it. Jesus said in Matthew 11:28-30: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest [from all your struggles and problems]. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy [I have not found the way of God to be difficult; it is wonderful, fulfilling, thrilling, and exciting], and my burden is light."

You do not need any money to come to Jesus Christ. You need to come just as you are. One songwriter wrote, "*Just as I am, poor, wretched blind,— [What do I need?] Sight, riches, healing of the mind, Yea, all I need, in thee [Jesus] to find, O Lamb of God, I come, I come.*" You need to be sincere and do as the songwriter said. To come to God, you must put away human reasoning. Won't you lay it all aside and come to Jesus just as you are? You need to give up your miserable self, and then He will accept you just as you are and give you what you need to have a fulfilling, rewarding, and contented life.

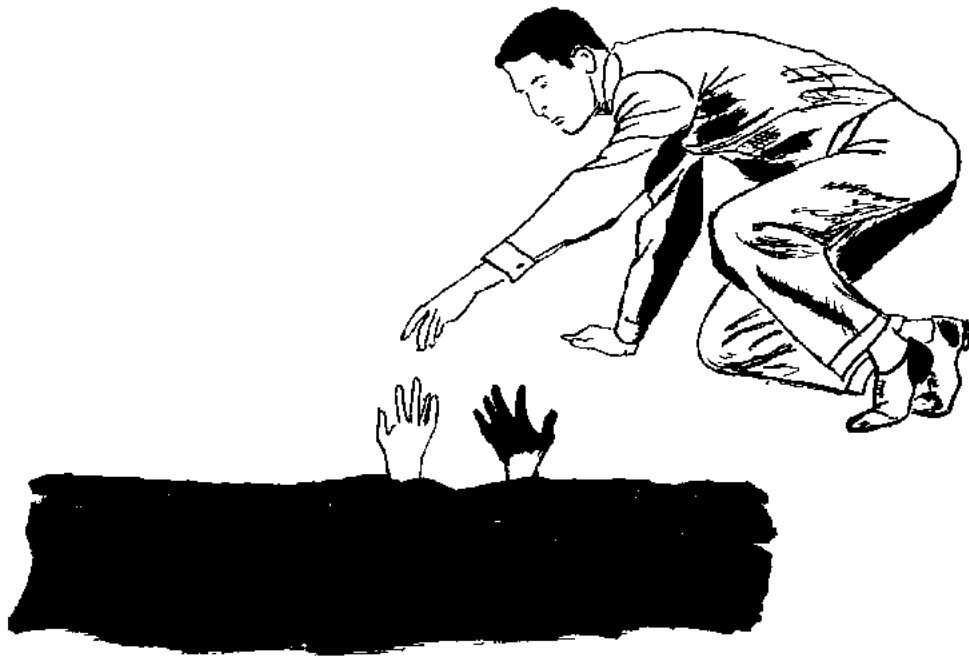
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UNCHANGING TRUTH

**PEOPLE CANNOT CHANGE TRUTH,
BUT TRUTH CAN CHANGE PEOPLE.**

Romans 8:9 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

Quicksand



Be Vigilant

Many things in the world lure people into things they thought would be impossible for them to get involved in. If you do not have the Spirit of God to lead you, you are guided by other spirits. Many spirits are out in the world today, such as lustful spirits, worldly spirits, deceitful spirits, and lying spirits. To live godly in this sin-cursed world, you must have the Spirit of God living within your heart.

Our Scripture text is plain and simple. Too many are merely going through a form of worship. Whenever religious services are going on without the Spirit of God, it will be

dead. God must be present to direct the services. It is not going to work without the Spirit of God. Sad to say, there is too much show going on.

Saint of God, if you get to the place where you are going through nothing but a form, you have lost the Spirit of God. That does not happen overnight. You do not awaken one morning and realize that you are no longer Spirit led. The enemy works a little at a time, until you have lost out completely. Why does he not do it all at once? If he were to do that, you would probably notice. Therefore, he works gradually, until the Holy Spirit is totally gone, and then you will wonder what hap-

pened. Well, it happened back down the road, but you failed to do anything about it.

Friend, you should not take the good things of God for granted and rest on past blessings. That is what the enemy wants you to do. He will try to get you to rest on the things that happened a long time ago, and then you will fail to keep your eyes focused on what God wants to do for your life. These are things that you need to do to make Heaven your home one of these days. You cannot rest on things that you have accomplished in the past. You must have an up-to-date experience of salvation. It should be more current than your daily newspaper.

The enemy can get you so caught up with thinking of how things used to be. The important thing is what is going on today. Thank the Lord for past blessings that He has given and for ministers who have stood and preached the Truth in the past. However, you need to walk with God daily. Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." What Christ did for people in the past, He can do for you and me today, and He will do the same for people in the future!

The enemy wants you to believe that Jesus has forgotten about you and that He does not care about you. Satan will work on you to convince you that the saints of God do not care, but true brothers and sisters in Christ care about one another.

The enemy will put things in front of you that appear to be good, but you had better watch closely. You need to pray to the Lord that you make the right moves. Too many people are making decisions and moves without consulting God. Those moves may seem to be good on the surface, but will they stand under the pressures of life? Where are you anchored? You must let the Lord have control of what you do. Satan has so many devices and tricks up his sleeve, and if you are not alert spiritually, he will pummel you so hard and fast that you will not know what hit you.

Beware of Satan's Devices

We read in 2 Corinthians 2:11, "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices." The enemy will make the wrong pathway appear to be pleasant, but he will put pits of quicksand along the way to hinder your walk.

What is quicksand? It is a deep, wet bed of sand subjected to pressure by water below, and usually incapable of supporting the weight of a person or an animal. Therefore, the one who gets caught in it starts to sink, and he sinks faster as he begins to struggle. You

need to stay away from spiritual pits of quicksand and always keep your spiritual eyesight focused on things ahead of you.

In this walk with the Lord, you must be alert. You cannot walk with the Lord with your eyes closed. You must be aware of what is going on around you. If something is not of God, you need to stay away from it. If you sense that the Lord is displeased with something, you ought to stay away from it.

Too many people want to investigate things on their own. They say, "I know the Lord told me to stay away from it, but I want to check it out and find out about it for myself." Friend, if the Lord says no, do you need any more proof than that? Are you trying to change God's mind? People who start investigating seem to take the attitude, "I know how to handle it," but before long it handles them and they are gone. You are not so spiritual that you can handle things on your own.

Sad to say, many men and women no longer have a love for the Truth in their hearts. Their love of Truth has been replaced by worldly things, nominal religious things, and things they thought they would never get involved in. Some people take their boats to the lakes on Sundays instead of attending worship services. Where is their love? There is nothing wrong with boating, but why is it that people want to go on Sunday? If you let boating take the place of being in God's house, then you have a problem.

The best way to stay out of quicksand is to stay away from it. The problem with quicksand is that it looks very similar to other ground until you step in it. If you were to study about quicksand, you would find that it is not a type of sand, but rather a flow condition within the sand. It is similar to men's and women's hearts who are without God. Whenever there is an upward flow of water through the sand, the sand becomes agitated and the grains of sand lift away from one

another, and there is a separation. As I was thinking about this, the Lord gave me this thought. We were made to serve the Lord, and anything that a person does contrary to that displeases God. You are not going to prosper in your soul by going your own way. If you are going to prosper spiritually, you have to go God's way.

Are You Building on Shifting Sand?

Ephesians 2:10 says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." If you go against the Word of God and do what you want to do, you will not prosper. Therefore, you need to realize that the things of this old world cannot be equal to the things of God. The things of this world and the Word of God cannot mix; there is a separation. Many people try to mix the things of the world with the things of God, but their lives are not prospering. You cannot prosper by trying to hold onto the world and Jesus too.

Many people are working hard to do things that they know go against what God wants them to do, yet they think they are going to prosper. On the contrary, without God they are not going to prosper. Nothing is going to be brought together when you try to serve God and hold onto the world at the same time. Something has to go; a shifting occurs. Without God your life is going to be built on shifting sand, and you will not have stability in your life. Your stand for the things of God is unstable when you try to hold onto the things of the world. You will not see things the way you use to.

Some say, "Oh, we are living in a different age now." We are not when it comes to the things of God; God's Word is still the same. There is but one true way, and it has not changed. I thank the Lord that saints of God can come together and wor-

ship God. I remember attending camp meetings thirty years ago. The Spirit that I felt thirty years ago is the same Spirit that I feel today. If you do not feel that same Spirit, another spirit has gotten hold of you, because the Spirit of God does not change. Has a spirit gotten hold of your life that is not of God? You must be careful. You need to allow the Spirit of God to check your soul. The Spirit of God will be honest and true to your soul. He will not lead you down the wrong path. God will be true to you, but you must also be true to Him. This is not a one time move in which the Lord does it all for you. You must labor to meet the Lord's conditions. You cannot hold onto your way and the Lord's way at the same time.

Second Corinthians 6:14 says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?" Now, that is plain and simple. Thank the Lord, we do not have to be in darkness. We can have spiritual light. Christian friend, where would you be if the Lord did not speak to you? You would not desire to be in heavenly places with God's people, listening to Heaven-sent messages and listening to heavenly singing. When you were in sin, you were in darkness and you had no desire to go God's way. You did not want to do the right things for the Lord. You need to stop and think about the goodness of God. If you are able to breathe, walk, and have the right use of your mind, you need to thank God. You should not take the things of God for granted.

Having the Mind of Christ

Without the mind of Christ, you cannot see the things of God and you want to do sinful things. When you have the mind of Christ, you want to do Christlike things. It makes sense that when you have a heart change, you want to do godly things.

Many people cannot understand why the people of God dress modestly, why the sisters have long hair, and why the men wear long trousers in the heat and the humidity. As saints of God, we want to dress as God's Word says we ought to dress. We do not want to dress as the world does. People in the world should be embarrassed by the way they dress.

The church should set the standard for the world. The world needs to dress as the saints of God dress. Worldly people cannot understand why the sisters do not wear makeup, why they wear long dresses, and why the men do not wear earrings and studs in their ears, around their eyes, or in the tongue. Friend, if the Lord had intended for you to have a hole above your eyebrow, He would have put one there, but He did not. When a person decides to pierce his head or his body, he is going against what God created him for.

Church of God people still dress as saints of God should. They want the preached Word just as it is. They do not want it sugar-coated; they want it straight. The true Church of God does not let down the standard. True saints of God want the Truth to go forward. They love it just the way it is. Those who have lowered the standard have gotten caught in the devil's quicksand. Some say, "I don't want to measure to the Bible standard concerning the hair." Too many want to argue and question the standard. Nevertheless, it is a God-given standard. Men ought to look like men and women ought to look like women. There are women today who wear their hair shorter than many men do.

Many individuals point a finger at the pastor and say, "That's just *his* idea." No, it is God's plan. You need to be careful that you do not start questioning things that God has already revealed to you. You could become deceived. Also, you had better be careful of what you say about God's man. Some people just spew off about things and then say,

"Well, I am entitled to my opinion." We should keep our opinions to ourselves. We do not know who might be listening to what we say.

Lay Aside Every Weight

Are you near quicksand today? Are you watching for it or have you already stepped in it? Saint, you need to be on your guard. The enemy will try to lure you into a pit of quicksand, spiritually speaking; therefore, you must be watchful and alert. Ephesians 6:11 reads, "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil." The devil is stirred. He does not want you to prosper in the things of God. He does not want you to attend revivals or camp meetings. He will put obstacles in your way to keep you from attending the services. He will say things such as, "This is the only time you have available to paint the house" or "You need to trim the bushes" or "This is the only week you have off for vacation."

We are near the end of time, dear one. The enemy is working overtime to try to knock you out of the Christian race. Are you going to give him the satisfaction of doing that? I hope not. You need to be on your guard and ready to face the enemy. You should not turn your back and run. You need to stand against him and say, "You are not going to push me around. I am one of God's children. I rebuke you in the name of Jesus."

Too many people have come in contact with quicksand. Many people who did not intend to be there were caught unawares. Rather than giving in to what the Lord wanted them to do, they struggled against it. The Lord told them, "I want you to do this," but they said, "Oh, I don't want to do that"; then they sank spiritually because they failed to do what God wanted them to do.

When you have the weight of sin upon you, you will sink even faster. The weight of sin is a terrible load to carry, but you do not have to carry

that load, friend. It is your choice. You cannot blame others for your actions. You must accept full responsibility for what you do. The courts are backlogged with cases where people say, "Well, I did not really mean to do that. When I was younger, a certain thing happened in my life that caused me to do that." Nevertheless, everyone is responsible for his own actions.

Hebrews 12:1 says, "Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Christian friend, you are in a race. If you are going to run this race effectively, you must get rid of the weights that slow you down. What is slowing you down and hindering you in the race with Jesus Christ? You cannot struggle against the Word of God and come out on top. You will go down every time when you struggle with the Word of God.

I have never in my life seen so many people today who want to go their own way instead of God's way. The way they see their lives, they think everything is just fine. However, if you do not have God in your life, it makes no difference how much of a disguise you put on your face, things are not fine. You have a void in your life when you do not have Jesus Christ in your heart. Friend, you were made to serve the Lord. A vital element is missing in your life when you do not have Jesus Christ.

"Forget Not All His Benefits"

Many people are so deceived in thinking that as long as they have a little money in their wallets and in their bank accounts, they are doing well. However, all it takes is sudden sickness to wipe out a bank account completely. Without God you are not doing fine spiritually. Some people think, "As long as I have my home, my car, and my clothes, I am doing fine." All it would take is for

the Lord to allow a tornado to come their way and it would wipe away all their possessions. Without God you are not doing fine. You might own little of this world's goods, but if you have God in your heart and soul, you have everything. Many people are too focused on material goods. They have to put a dollar amount on what their lives are like, but that is not where true happiness is found.

Sad to say, our society measures success by how much money one has in the bank. Without God giving people the right use of their minds and physical abilities, they would not be able to go out and earn a living. We have to stop and realize just Who is in control. It is not the president, the governor, or the mayor. God is in control. Too many people only want God to be their co-pilot. Well, they need to move over and let God be their pilot. If God were merely the co-pilot, people would be telling Him what to do. He needs to pilot your life. You need to let Him be in control of your life and let Him make the decisions. You should let God give you divine direction.

Psalm 103:1-2 says: "Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." What benefits there are in serving God! When most people look for a job, they want to know what the benefits are. Look at the many benefits that you have in serving Jesus Christ. What about your "health benefits" in serving Jesus Christ? You get eternal life when you serve Him. What about your "optical benefits?" Your spiritual eyesight is much better with Jesus, because you can see things clearly. You can see things on a higher plane than you once did.

When one truly gets saved, his life changes." One should not get up from the altar thinking, "I *think* I got saved. One should have a definite change in his heart and life when he gets up from an altar of prayer. If a change has taken place, that person

will no longer want to go out and do the things he used to do or keep company with his old worldly friends. His habits have changed. When they say, "Let's go bowling," he says, "I want to go to church." When they say, "Let's go to a movie," he says, "I want to go to the revival meeting."

Your "dental benefits" are much better when you serve God, because you feast on the good things of the Lord. You are not going through the garbage cans of life looking for your next spiritual meal. Too many people are going through the spiritual garbage cans looking for their meals. Why would one search through Babylonian garbage cans when he knows he can get his soul fed at the Church of God? I do not need to go to Babylon to get fed. If you feel that you have to go down to Babylon to get fed, something is wrong.

In true Church of God worship, you can get your soul fed; but you have to be willing to be fed. Too many people do not want to open up when it comes to the things of the Lord. Some say, "He just doesn't feed my soul anymore." Well, it is hard to feed one who is dead spiritually. It is also very difficult to feed one who refuses to open up and let the Lord work in his life.

Are You Struggling With Quicksand?

Friend, you need to open up and let the Lord work in your life. You would be amazed at what the Lord would do for you if you would take your hands off your life and let the Spirit of God direct your pathway. God is no respecter of persons. God has a work for you if you will open up your life and let Him work. We all are going to face eternity and the Judgment one of these days. You cannot go to the judgment bar of God and say, "Well, I am a special person, God. You have to see it my way." No, you must see it God's way. True saints want it God's way. They want the pastor to lay out the

Truth just the way it is.

Why do people get themselves in such a condition that they no longer want the man of God to preach the Truth? Some people would much rather believe a lie than to hear the Truth. Why is that? They are struggling in spiritual quicksand. Friend, are you struggling with quicksand? You do not have to. You do not have to struggle with the standard or God's man. Many are struggling in quicksand and are almost ready to go under. Others have already gone under. Friend, the Bible standard is not too difficult to abide by. It is for your protection. The reason some have problems with the standard is that they struggle with it; then it gets them into a quicksand pit, and they slowly sink. Some have sunk so low that it seems nearly impossible for them to get out of that pit. Dear one, do not get too close to those who are flailing away in the enemy's quicksand. If you start rubbing shoulders with those who have already gone away from Truth, they will reach out and try to pull you down with them.

When speaking of those in Babylon, some people say, "Well, I know many good people down there. I know I could go down there and help them." You need to stay away from Babylon; that is a spiritual quicksand pit. It takes the Lord to call those people out of there. Many dear people have gotten caught in spiritual quicksand pits, and they flail around and think they are all right when they are not. The Lord will let those people in Babylon see their true condition if they are honest. He said, "Come out of her, my people." Some honest-hearted people are in Babylon, and they are seeking. The Lord will deal with those who are honest. He will allow them to see the falseness of that form of worship.

The true Church of God has no business mingling with Babylonian worship. If you are a true saint of God, you will not want to mingle there, because it is false. Why would

you want to get mixed up in false worship? You should not want to get involved with what God has said is contrary to His Word. God hates it. You should not want anything that God hates. You might as well go out and play with a keg of dynamite as to do that.

"The Hold of Every Unclean and Hateful Bird"

Revelation 18:1-3 states: "And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." That is false worship, something that God has put His finger on, and you should not want to mess with it. It is the hold of every unclean and hateful bird. If you get too close to those unclean and hateful birds, that same spirit could get in you. Therefore, you need to stay away from it.

Someone may say to you, "We are having a songfest or a sing-spiration this weekend. Why don't you come on over?" Too much of that is showmanship. You need to stay away from it, lest it affect you. God hates the system of Babylonian worship.

Dear one, you should not think that you are so spiritual that Babylon cannot affect you. Too many have said that, and where are they today? They have partaken of the cup of her fornication. The Church of God is something that God has established.

People are sick of nominal religion today. That is the reason it is difficult to get good people to

come to church. Those false systems of worship are a far cry from the true Church of God worship.

Many have lost their love for the true Church of God message. They thought it would never happen to them, but it did. You need to pray every day that you will stay in the center of His will, because you could become lukewarm and let down on what God has established for your life. You cannot go around and pat Babylon on the back and spend time at her prayer breakfasts, songfests, or whatever else may be going on there. Babylon is nothing more than a snare of the enemy. Many have been affected by her. If you could see inside the hearts of those in Babylon, you would see hateful attitudes, spirits of envy, backbiting spirits, disobedient spirits, rebellious spirits, jealous spirits, and gossiping spirits.

The tongue is the deadliest of all blunt instruments. The tongue has gotten more people in trouble than all the bars and nightclubs throughout this nation of ours. We read in James 3:8, "But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison." Some people seem to thrive on other people's misfortunes. They cannot wait to tell of other peoples's misfortunes and to let others know what is going wrong in people's lives. If nothing is going on at the time, some will even make up something. They are false witnesses and talebearers. The Lord despises that. Proverbs 13:3 says, "He that keepeth his mouth keepeth his life: but he that openeth wide his lips shall have destruction."

Spiritual quicksand pits harbor hateful attitudes. There is no gray area when it comes to sin. One sin is just as black as any other sin. I do not read anything at all about degrees of sin in the Bible. Sin will harden your heart so much that you will show no remorse for what you do wrong. Friend, sin will take you lower and lower if you fail to move when the Holy Spirit speaks to you. It will cause you to harden your heart against the things of God. You

will become so hardened that you will not feel sorry for the life that you have lived, for the lives you have affected, or for the loved ones you have left behind.

Are You Hardening Your Heart?

Hebrews 3:7-8 reads: "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness." What a shame it is to sit in a Church of God congregation and harden your heart toward the things of God. How many times has the Lord knocked on your heart's door and you rejected Him? When you do that, you are hardening your heart. The next time there is an invitation, you might feel that tugging a little, but it will not be quite as strong as it once was. After a period of time, the hardening becomes so strong that when the Lord speaks to you again, you will not feel a thing. Friend, you do not want to be found standing on the outside looking in one of these days. You should not want to keep rejecting the mercies of the Lord. If you do, one of these days you will wish that the Lord would whisper to you one more time.

I want to ask you some questions: Are you struggling? Do you seem to feel that you just cannot get anywhere with the Lord? Could it be that you are mired in one of the enemy's spiritual quicksand pits?

Earlier in the message I mentioned that literal quicksand is not really a type of sand, but it is a condition in the sand. Likewise, when you do not have God in your heart and soul, you are in a lost condition. Are you building your life on a firm foundation or are you doing what *you* want to do? Too many people want to go their own way. You need to do what God wants you to do. Friend, you will not get very far when you decide you are going to do things your way. If you are ever going to make it through the portals of Glory, you must go God's way. Your reasoning, your thoughts, and your ideas about how you should live must be laid aside for God's way. What does the Lord have to say to you?

As I was reading and studying about quicksand, I learned that it might appear to be solid ground, but its behavior is more that of a pool of water: it has no foundation and no stability. With Jesus Christ you have a solid foundation; you have something to build your life upon. Why are so many people taking their own lives today? They feel that they do not have anything to hold on to. They have lost all hope, and they do not have anything that they can build their lives on. Friend, when you do not have Jesus Christ in your life, you are like a ship without a rudder, or a car without a steering wheel. If more people in this sin-cursed world could only see that they need to

build their lives upon the Rock, they would have stability in their lives. When your life is not built upon the Rock, your life is on the rocks. You must build your life upon the Rock to be victorious. Psalm 31:3-4 states: "For thou art my rock and my fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me, and guide me. Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me: for thou art my strength."

When people get into quicksand, they struggle. Dear one, you do not need to struggle. You can get out of that condition. I read that many times all a person in literal quicksand needs to do is relax, and he will float to the surface; yet ones struggle with it. Spiritually speaking, some struggle with the Word, the Bible standard, and sometimes with God's man. You do not have to struggle. Let God be in charge of your life today. It is not worth spending eternity in hell because you struggled against these things.

Are you in a spiritual quicksand pit? Ask the Lord to come into your heart and life. He will be right there to help you, lead you, guide you, and establish your goings. He will set you on the Rock, never to sin again. Are you tired of struggling? All you need to do is turn your life over to Jesus Christ, and you will not need to struggle any more.

(Cassette C-4659A)

The Wonder of the Empty Tomb

The ancient world boasted of seven wonders: the pyramids of Egypt; the hanging gardens of Babylon; the temple of the goddess Diana at Ephesus; the lighthouse at Alexandria, Egypt; the Colossus (a huge bronze statue) in the harbor at Rhodes; the statue of the pagan god Zeus at Olympia, Greece; and the tomb of the Persian king Halicarnassus.

Of all these ancient wonders, only the pyramids are still standing. All the others have crumbled, along with the ancient world powers whose accomplishments they memorialized. But another wonder from the ancient world is still very much alive today. This wonder is more significant than all seven of these ancient landmarks put together. This is the wonder of the empty tomb of Jesus at Jerusalem.

When the body of Jesus was placed in the tomb, the forces of evil seemed to be victorious at last. But Jesus was raised on the third day. His resurrection proved that He was more powerful than sin and death and all the other negative forces that Satan uses against us.

Wonder of wonders, Jesus lives! And His dynamic power is available to all who place their faith and trust in Him.

[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]

the fruits thereof." Of what nation was He speaking? John the Baptizer said in Matthew 3:7-8: "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." If the literal Jews get in the Kingdom of God today, they must get in the same way every one else does: they must bring forth fruits for repentance. God has taken it away from old literal lineage and has given it to a nation bringing forth the fruits of repentance. A transition occurred when the new covenant was implemented, and it went from a literal nation with a literal birth to a spiritual nation with a spiritual birth. Matthew 21:43 says, "Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you [the literal Jews], and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." What are the fruits? They are the fruits of repentance.

What is the nation? It was a new nation. Galatians 6:15-16 says: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule [being a new creature], peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." The New Testament Israel of God is made up of new creatures, and as many as walk according to this rule are new creatures.

Let us study to learn where the word "Israel" originated. In Genesis, Chapter 32, when Jacob wrestled with Christ and a conversion took place, his name was changed from Jacob, which means "supplanter or trickster," to Israel, which means "power with God or prevailed with God." Everyone who is a new creature has prevailed with God. Old things passed away, and all things became new. When individuals become new creatures, they walk according to a new rule, they have power with God, and they are the

New Testament Israel of God. Romans 2:28-29 states: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God."

When Jesus Christ came, a transition took place. The Apostle Paul stated in 2 Corinthians 5:17 that "old things are passed away." He was actually speaking of the Old Testament economy, of how the Old Testament economy passed away and a new and living way came in, a better covenant with a better sacrifice, with better promises. That was the new covenant of which he was speaking.

Our lesson text is not speaking of an antichrist, the reestablishment of Jewish sacrifices, or a tribulation period as dispensationalists suppose. It rather serves as a time line to give clear understanding of when old Israel came to their end as a favored people, or the people of God.

There are other indicators of that change. One other indicator is Gabriel. He appeared at the beginning of the seventy weeks in Daniel 9:21, which states, "Yea, whiles I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel. . . ." Gabriel came to give Daniel the vision, to give him the prophecy that the seventy weeks, or the four hundred ninety years were going to commence. We read in Luke 1:19, when Zacharias was in the temple, "And the angel answering said unto him, I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee." He spoke to him about the birth of John the Baptist, which was the herald to announce the coming of the Messiah and the ushering in of the seventieth week. Gabriel appeared at the beginning, or the commencement, of the seventy weeks, and he again appeared toward the end when the seventieth week was ready to commence.

The attributes spoken of throughout this prophecy are not something

for some future point in time, but they are realities that Jesus Christ came to bring and did bring in His first advent. Old Israel as a people would not receive those. Because Christ came to His own and His own received Him not, old Israel was broken off, and a new branch was grafted in. That new branch is a nation made up of people who are new creatures, who walk according to this rule. Now there is a new nation, a new Israel. Those whom Galatians 6:15 says are new creatures can enjoy the work wrought by our perfect Sacrifice and enjoy the seven perfect attributes of the plan of atonement that He brought in His first advent.

Jesus said in John 8:32, "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." What does Truth free you from? The blood of Jesus Christ His Son *cleanses* us from all sin, but thank God, Truth will set you free from error, or false teachings. You can have an understanding so that you can enjoy the benefits of what Jesus came to bring as a present reality. You do not have to be duped by religious teachers who teach that you cannot enjoy them, because they are here for you now. With the understanding of Truth, you will no longer look for Old Testament worldly sanctuaries as Hebrews, Chapter 9, talks about. You will no longer seek literal temples and tabernacles, but you will see a spiritual Israel and new creatures walking according to a new rule, living and walking in newness of life. This is the reality and experience that the prophecy pointed to what would be realized with the advent of the Messiah, and thank God we are privileged to enjoy it today.

Brother Earl R. Borders

**WHEN IT SEEMS
HARDEST TO PRAY,
WE SHOULD PRAY
THE HARDEST.**

Upcoming Meetings

KENSETT, AR

April 11-14

REVIVAL: Kensett Church of God, 409 S. E. Second Street, Kensett, Arkansas
Evangelist: Bro. Aurelius Raines, Chicago, IL
Service times: Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 6:00 p.m.; Sun. 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Calvin L. Foster
Telephone: (Home) 501-742-3961 or (Church) 501-281-5072

KENSETT, AR

May 23-25

REVIVAL: The Kensett Church of God, 409 S. E. Second Street, Kensett, Arkansas
Service times: Fri. 7:00 p.m.; Sat. 6:00 p.m.; Sun. 11:00 a.m. & 6:00 p.m.
For more information contact: Pastor Calvin L. Foster
Telephone: (Home) 501-742-3961 or (Church) 501-281-5072



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***Spring Camp
Meeting***
June 15-22
Two Services Daily
10:00 a.m. 7:00 p.m.
The first service begins at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday.

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