

The Advocate of Truth

Jesus Debates

The Grace of God

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Walk in the Truth



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The Lord's Supper service will be Sunday evening, April 13th, 2014 after sundown (Roman time) which is the beginning of April 14th (Bible time).



Jesus Debates with the Rulers of Israel

by Gary Mills

In the New Testament we read that Jesus had many interactions with the spiritual rulers of Israel. The spiritual rulers of Israel at that time handled their interactions with Jesus much like politicians we see in our current news today. They tried flattering Jesus and then twisting His words in an attempt to trick Him. It is interesting to see how Jesus went about answering the questions of the spiritual leaders of Israel.

We can read about one interaction they had in Matthew 22:15-17. "Then went the Pharisees, and took counsel how they might entangle him in his talk. And they sent out unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, neither carest thou for any man: for thou regardest not the person of men. Tell us therefore, What thinkest thou? Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?" The Pharisees were hoping Jesus would say to not pay taxes to Caesar so they could have Him arrested.

Rather than try to get into a long debate, Jesus instead gave a short, simple answer. Matthew 22:18-21 informs us: "But Jesus perceived their wickedness, and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Shew me the tribute money. And they brought unto him a penny. And he saith unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Caesar's. Then saith he unto them, Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's."

Jesus was saying, in effect, don't worry about the

material things of this world. Follow the laws of the land as long as they don't violate the law of God. Give Caesar his money. Be more concerned about giving God your spiritual works.

The Apostle Peter said basically the same thing in I Peter 2: 13-25. "Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live

unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

Paul said that the important thing is to live our lives the way God told us to, keeping His commandments. We are not to get caught up in the politics of men. I Corinthians 3:18-23 reads: “Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death,

or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.”

It is always amazing how Jesus can take an issue that can be very confusing to man (Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not?) and give such a simple answer (Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar’s; and unto God the things that are God’s). The Pharisees had no answer for this simple statement. Matthew 22:22 says: "When they had heard these words, they marvelled, and left him, and went their way."

We should remember that the things of God are not beyond our understanding. The answer always seems to boil down to keeping God’s Ten Commandments and having the faith of Jesus.

Principles and Reasons

The Grace of God

By Moises Torres M.

1. How is the grace of God defined?

The grace of God is the opportunity or free gift given by God to man to repent and be forgiven to have a hope for salvation.

2. Did God stipulate first a certain condition or ask something of man so that he could extend His grace to man?

No, in no way! This grace came as a free gift from God. Man did not have to repent first or pay anything to receive this grace or chance for vindication. “For the gifts and

calling of God are without repentance” (Romans 11:29). This grace was extended to man immediately after the fall of man in Eden.

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).

3. Through whom was this grace of God manifested?

NOTE: THE GRACE OF GOD WAS MANIFESTED AND MADE VISIBLE THROUGH HIS SON JESUS CHRIST.

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God” (Romans 3:24-25).

“But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous” (Romans 5:15-19).

“Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began” (II Timothy 1:9).

"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)" (Ephesians 2:5).

“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man” (Hebrews 2:9).

4. Is faith necessary to have access to this grace of God?

“Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans 5:1-2).

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).

We must accept by faith this opportunity that God has

extended to all men. “Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all” (Romans 4:16).

5. Do we have any concession to sin or to break the commandments of God by being under grace?

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Romans 6:1-4).

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid” (Romans 6:14-15).

NOTE: A wrong and common thought is that people can cover their sins under the grace of God; this is a big lie and something which is completely out of sense. People who break the moral law of God are fallen from the grace of God and do not have any chance for salvation.

6. Are we justified by law or by grace?

“Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace” (Galatians 5:4). Nobody can boast saying he is justified by doing the works of the law; in such a case his faith is in the law and not in the grace of God manifested in the Lord Jesus Christ. The law of God is a guide for the believer and was given to make us know what sin is, but the law does not save anybody and does not have power to raise the dead. It is God only who saves the believer, all those who accept His grace.

“And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work” (Romans 11:6).

“Moreover the law entered, that the offence might

abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 5:20-21).

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

7. Must we grow in grace?

"But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (II Peter 3:18).

"Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus" (II Timothy 2:1).

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord" (II Peter 1:2).

8. What is the gospel called that we testify to the world?

"But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God" (Acts 20:24).

9. Does this grace include the redemption of the children of God at the return of the Lord Jesus?

"Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 1:13).

NOTE: The grace of God brings to light many blessings that will be brought to the children of God at the return or revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ: salvation, redemption, eternal life, being transformed to the likeness of His fashion, a new dwelling place, the New Jerusalem, living with the Lord forever, etc.

10. What happens to those who offend this Spirit of grace?

"Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?" (Hebrews 10:29).

JONAH AND THE FISH

There was a Hebrew named Jonah,
God gave him a task he must do;
He must warn the great city of Nineveh
Of what He intended to do.
But Jonah set sail to Tarshish,
Where he hoped the Lord couldn't see;
But God had his eye upon Jonah,
And his hiding just wasn't to be.
For as soon as the ship left from Joppa,
A great tempest arose in the sea;
Even hardened sailors were frightened,
Such a storm they never did see.
They cast lots to find out the reason
They were being buffeted about;
And the lot fell upon Jonah,
It was his fault, there was no doubt.
And so they laid hands upon Jonah,
Tossed him into the wild sea to drown;
But God had this great fish there waiting
To gobble poor Jonah right down!
For three days and nights he waited
'Midst the things that fishes do eat;
Then decided the job he'd been given
Was not such a terrible fate.
Then God told the fish to go over,
And spit him out on dry land;
And God was right there waiting
In case he decided to run.
But when they had warned the great city,
The people did all change their way;
For as soon as the warning was given,

They fell to their knees to pray.
But Jonah wanted the city destroyed,
And it pleased him not one little bit;
So he left the city behind him,
And down on the ground he did sit.
A shade from a gourd vine rose over him
By his booth, where he sat on the earth;

The shade of the vine to protect him
While he pouted for all he was worth!
And the sun beat down on Jonah's head,
And God spared the people of Nineveh,
And Jonah still wished to be dead!

By Betty Whetstone
--From Jonah, Chapters 1 through 4



"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23). In last month's article we studied Part I of the fruit of the Spirit: love, joy, and peace. In this article we will study longsuffering, gentleness, and goodness. Being a disciple of the Lord requires that we bear much fruit in our lives (see John 15:8). This means we must abide in Jesus.

LONGSUFFERING

According to Strong's Concordance, in Galatians 5:22, the Greek word for "longsuffering" is "makrothumia", and it means forbearance, fortitude, and patience.

Longsuffering, thankfully, is one of the attributes of God. Moses, when referring to the Lord, said in Numbers 14:18: "The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation." We know that the Lord is longsuffering for a wonderful reason: so that everyone will have a chance to repent and serve Him. We learn of this in Romans 2:3-4. "And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Some people mock at

the Lord's delay in sending punishment upon the earth. However, the Apostle Peter warned: "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance...And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you" (II Peter 3:9,15).

The Apostle Paul was well aware of the Lord's longsuffering in his own life

Indeed, the Apostle Paul was well aware of the Lord's longsuffering in his own life. After all the persecution he had done to the Church of God, he wrote to Timothy: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief. Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting" (I Timothy 1:15-16). Furthermore, Paul realized that he must have longsuffering to endure the many trials that came upon him. When writing again to Timothy, Paul explained: "But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, longsuffering, charity, patience, Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured: but out of them all the Lord delivered me. Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (II Timothy 3:10-12).

Paul emphasized to ministers, himself included, the importance of enduring hardships in the ministry. To the Corinthian church ministry he exhorted: "Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed: But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses,

In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left, By honour and dishonour, by evil report and good report: as deceivers, and yet true; As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things" (II Corinthians 6:3-10). Yes, ministry in the Church of God can be very taxing. But with the Lord's help through longsuffering, a minister can persevere.

However, not only do the ministers need longsuffering in their lives, everyone else in the church needs it as well. Paul had this thought in mind when he counselled the Ephesian church. He wrote: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:1-3). We all need the fruit of the Spirit of longsuffering when dealing with others in the church. Someone is bound to offend us, perhaps without even meaning to; another may willfully hurt us with gossip or other malicious talk. We must forbear each other in love. We must endeavor "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Paul wrote to the Colossians that they must be strengthened in the area of longsuffering and patience. "That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God; Strengthened with all might, according to his glorious power, unto all patience and longsuffering with joyfulness" (Colossians 1:10-11). Notice that the saints in the church at Colosse were admonished to be "fruitful in every good work", which included "patience and longsuffering". They were to have joyfulness in their lives as well. Patience and longsuffering seem to be at odds with joyfulness. Yet, these fruits can, and must, be strengthened together through God's power.

There is something that every disciple of the Lord must do in producing fruit. Each one must "put on" these vari-

ous traits as if they were a suit of armor. Paul further counselled the Colossian brethren by writing: "Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye" (Colossians 3:12-13; see also Ephesians 6:11-18). Putting on patience and longsuffering will help us to forgive those who have trespassed against us.

In the Lord's exquisite plans, He has made it so that not only do we have patience through tribulations, but those very tribulations can actually add to our patience. Paul, in writing about the disciple's faith, grace, and hope, exhorted us in Romans 5:3-5: "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." The patience, therefore, that a saint has developed in his or her life is described in Revelation 14:12: "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus."

GENTLENESS

In Strong's Concordance the Greek word for "gentleness" means, "moral excellence in character", and also refers to "goodness" and "kindness". The wisdom which comes from God, and thus is a part of His character, is described in James 3:17-18: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." We see here that the wisdom of God is full of good fruits and it includes being peaceable and gentle towards others.

The Lord exemplifies this gentleness in His dealings with His people. In Psalm 100:1-5 God's people are likened to the sheep of His pasture. In Isaiah 40:10-11 we are shown the care that the Lord has for His flock. "Behold, the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and

his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

It is this gentleness of the Lord that creates in us a desire to serve Him

It is this gentleness of the Lord that creates in us a desire to serve Him. God's goodness brings forth thankfulness in our hearts, and a love for Him which is expressed in obedience to His Word. David showed his gratitude toward the Lord after being delivered by Him from his enemies. This gratitude is partly found in II Samuel, chapter 22. David acknowledged that the Lord's salvation is directly related to His gentleness. Verse 36 reads: "Thou hast also given me the shield of thy salvation: and thy gentleness hath made me great."

Christ portrayed His Father's gentleness toward people when He was upon the earth. Paul referred to this gentleness when he admonished the Corinthians: "Now I Paul myself beseech you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ..." (II Corinthians 10:1). We discern Christ's gentleness when He wanted the little children to come unto Him. We see it when John leaned upon Jesus' bosom at the Lord's Supper. And, we are shown that gentleness in the love that Jesus expressed toward repentant sinners (see Matthew 19:13-15; John 13:23; Luke 19:1-10).

Paul and his companions exhibited Christ's gentleness to the Thessalonians. He told them: "But we were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children: So being affectionately desirous of you, we were willing to have imparted unto you, not the gospel of God only, but also our own souls, because ye were dear unto us" (I Thessalonians 2:7-8). Paul taught that a servant of God must be gentle. "And the servant of the Lord must not

strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient" (II Timothy 2:24).

Furthermore, Paul instructed Titus to teach Christians to follow the way of Christ in their actions. "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work, To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, showing all meekness unto all men" (Titus 3:1-2). Peter took this attitude one step further by writing that a servant should obey masters who are not, themselves, gentle. "Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward" (I Peter 2:18).

GOODNESS

The goodness of God is always associated with His longsuffering and gentleness. The many attributes that He exhibits could actually be summed up under the heading of "God's goodness". God is good! When Moses wanted to see God's glory, the Lord showed Moses His goodness. We read of this event in Exodus 33:18-19 and 34:5-6: "And he said, I beseech thee, show me thy glory. And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the LORD before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy...And the LORD descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth" (see also verse 7).

David, when writing Psalm 31, addressed God's goodness in verse 19: "Oh how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee before the sons of men!" This thought is further expressed in Psalm 33:5: "He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD." Once again David exulted in God's goodness: "Why boastest thou thyself in mischief, O mighty man? the goodness of God endureth continually" (Psalm 52:1). One part of God's goodness is His willingness to forgive us of our sins. David expressed this sentiment when he wrote Psalm 25:7-8: "Remember not the sins of my youth, nor my transgressions: according to thy mercy remember thou me for thy goodness' sake, O LORD. Good

and upright is the LORD: therefore will he teach sinners in the way." Because of God's goodness, He will always be faithful to provide those who trust Him with their needs. "Oh that men would praise the LORD for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men! For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness" (Psalm 107:8-9).

We can sum up these thoughts about God's goodness in Psalm 103:1-5: "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: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." No wonder that God's people should be filled with joy at the goodness of their God! When Solomon dedicated the Temple to the Lord he prayed: "Now therefore arise, O LORD God, into thy resting place, thou, and the ark of thy strength: let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness" (II Chronicles 6:41). The people did rejoice, too, as we learn from chapter 7, verse 10: "And on the three and twentieth day of the seventh month he sent the people away into their tents, glad and merry in heart for the goodness that the LORD had showed unto David, and to Solomon, and to Israel his people."

The goodness of God, being a part of the fruit of the Spirit, must be displayed in the lives of God's children as well. This goodness, of course, comes from the Lord for the glory of Christ. Paul informed the Thessalonians: "Wherefore also we pray always for you, that our God would count you worthy of this calling, and fulfil all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power: That the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and ye in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ" (II Thessalonians 1:11-12). To the Roman saints Paul had words of praise: "And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another" (Romans 15:14).

Because of the Lord's goodness to us, and as we display that goodness to others, we can declare the words of David when he wrote Psalm 23:6: "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever."



The Swelling of the Jordan

From "The Advocate of Truth" (August, 1979)

I would like to call your attention to words found in Jeremiah 12:5. "If thou hast run with the footmen, and they have wearied thee, then how canst thou contend with horses? and if in the land of peace, wherein thou trustedst, they wearied thee, then how wilt thou do in the swelling of Jordan?"

Jeremiah was called of the Lord to be a judgment prophet. His message was one of disaster and captivity to come to the inhabitants of the land. The judgments of God were to fall heavily on a disobedient and idolatrous people. His message was not conducive to a friendly reception. Persecution began and continually became stronger and stronger. But Jeremiah did not fail in fulfilling his God-given commission.

On this passage a commentator says: "If the 'beginning of sorrows' has so affected you, what will be your distress when Divine wrath overflows the sinful land as the periodical swellings of Jordan cover its banks?"

Another writes: "If you are so faint and impatient under the opposition of your own poor friends and neighbors at Anathoth, the place of your birth, how wilt thou bear through when all the rulers of Judah shall persecute you, and even your own relations and fellow priests stir up the common people to destroy you?"

We are glad to find as we read the history of Jeremiah that he did not faint or fail to give the message God had bidden, even when fierce persecution arose against him, as long as he could reach the ear of the people. He did not fail at the swellings of Jordan.

Let us pause for a moment to note the significance of the expression, "The swelling of Jordan", for underneath all such Scripture phraseology there is a hidden meaning.

Turning to Joshua 3:15 we find it stated that the river Jordan overflows all its banks at the time of spring harvest. This swollen condition of the river is caused by the melting of the snow on Mount Lebanon sending the water down in great quantities from above. The Israelites faced this condition when they were ready to cross into the Promised Land, and would have been dismayed had not God undertaken for them and held back the waters, and made a way for the people to pass over on dry land. So the seeming impossible was overcome through the intervention of God in their behalf.

They had fainted and murmured before at the difficulties of the way but God had undertaken for them, and brought them through, and now with the Promised Land in sight and the swollen river between them and the land of their promised possession, the last great difficulty presented itself. But the God who had led and provided for them all the wilderness journey did not forsake them, and the memorial stones erected as a monument to the work of God bore witness to the coming generations that He was faithful to His people. The swellings of Jordan did not overwhelm them. They landed safely on Canaan's side according to God's good promise.

Now turning to I Chronicles 12:15 we find an account of how the mighty men of war came to assist David and effected the crossing of the Jordan in the first month when it had overflowed all its banks. They let no difficulty stand in the way of their reaching David to support him in his need.

In our text verse we have three comparisons: running with the footmen; contending with horses; and an ordinary condition against those things that come, as in an

imposing flood of waters.

The thought is this: if there has not been sufficient strength to bear the lesser adverse experiences of life, how shall the greater ones be endured? If failure and discouragement sweep us off our feet in the lesser difficulties of life, how shall we stand when the overwhelming floods of life's most strenuous experiences come? Men go down in the severest tests because they have failed in the lesser ones. Those who are not swept off their feet by great national and spiritual upheavals are the ones who have found a sure anchorage in the lesser storms of life. Those who have endured great persecutions for their faith have endured because they have steadfastly refused to give up to the lesser ones. Endurance in such experiences is not something spasmodically achieved. It is the outcome of a definite course of life.

Someone was recounting to me instances of the persecution of Christians in Scotland in the distant past. He said a woman was secured where the rising tide would envelop her and cause her death, and her daughter was placed where she could watch her, that she might recant, but she stood firm for her faith. Another instance was that of the shooting of a woman's husband before her eyes, and the persecutor asking her, "What do you think of him now?" Her reply was, "More than I ever did before."

There is something back of such instances more than a sudden resolution; there has been a determined life purpose to face whatever came in the strength of God, and God had been faithful all along the way.

The Christian virtues are not acquired at the particular time when there is the greatest demand for them. An amazing display of patience is the result of the cultivation of it through many times of its exercise in little, trying circumstances. The forgiving spirit manifested in the face of great injustice comes from failing to harbor unkind and revengeful feelings at minor slights and unkindnesses. To endure great earthly misfortunes, unperturbed, indicates that all one's times have been placed in the hands of God. A minister once suffered severe loss of his belongings by fire, and his attitude was a surprise to some who thought it almost one of indifference to the situation because he was not overmastered by sorrow at the loss. But he was sustained because he knew that his heavenly Father did all things well and would provide for his future needs, and He did through the kindness of friends in many ways.

Too often we anticipate the swellings of Jordan, or think they are upon us, when instead of the melting snows of affliction we have only experienced an April shower, and the waters that threatened to rise appreciably swiftly recede and all is calm again.

The real preparation to meet the exigencies of life is to meet the lesser experiences with an undisturbed fortitude; then when an increased supply of grace is needed it will be given in answer to prayer.

The swellings of Jordan need not be a barrier to fortitude. God has never allowed a trusting child of His to be swept down stream by the current of adverse circumstances. His restraining hand has stayed the onrushing forces of evil and made a way for a safe passage for the one who would walk in the way of obedience.

He'll make the crossing with you, troubled soul,

As you pursue your pathway to the goal;

"Lo, I am with thee, be thou not afraid,"

He says to reassure and give you aid.

Though Jordan's banks o'erflow He'll safely take

You o'er and Canaan's landing you will make.

The swellings of Jordan may come in the mental, physical and spiritual realm. The weary brain may not be able to cope with the problems it is facing; the physical being may be at the point where there must be renewal or flesh will fail to meet the demands upon it; there will be times when the spiritual pulse may beat weakly and intermittently, but there should not be despair. Then the soul needs to remember how Christ met every adverse condition and was more than conqueror. Even in the last great decisive conquest He was a mighty Victor, and will give victory to His disciples in every hour of need.

Christ has brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel. He has given assurance because He has passed through the gateway of the grave and banished its terrors for the believer. Every step of the wilderness journey has been thitherward. Why then should there be hesitation for the final step ushering from the grave to the New Jerusalem?

The great Apostle Paul had passed through all the swellings of Jordan in his life experience, and drawing near its close he sees only a calm passage ahead into the sleep in Jesus Christ and awaiting the first resurrection. He anticipated entering the New Jerusalem after all the conflicts of earth had subsided and serving Him who had

redeemed him in a fuller, richer life.

Faint not nor fear among the little trials here,
For you may pass through each experience,
Be fitted for the change when you go
To dwell with Him who keeps you from all fear.

Let not the fear of the swellings of Jordan keep you from experiencing the fullness of life God intends for you, or deter you from the progress He desires you to make in your Christian life. Trust Him to work the miracle as conditions make it necessary, as He did for the Israelites of old. He is able.

Walk In The Truth

Reprinted from an article by Bond Tennant

In his third epistle the Apostle John was writing to his beloved brother in Christ, Gaius, whom he loved in the truth. Many believe that John was a very old man when he wrote his three epistles. We do know that Gaius was younger in the truth than John. A characteristic of John was to express his warm love toward the brethren in the truth. This he did toward Gaius. He loved him truly. But most important he loved him in the truth. Gaius had embraced the truth and he lived the truth! Gaius was in the truth and the truth was in him. He was walking in the truth, living in accordance with the truth, not standing still but making progress, advancing in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. See II Peter 3:18. This must have been a great encouragement to the aged Apostle John.

Perhaps Gaius had come into the truth through the ministry of John. John was always encouraged and happy when he saw or heard of anyone progressing in the truth. In his previous epistle (II John) he wrote to a certain elect lady and her family. (Some have suggested that the apostle, in referring to the elect lady, was really referring generally to the church, but this is not necessarily so.) John greeted the family affectionately. He also loved them in the truth. In verse 4 he wrote: "I rejoiced greatly that I found of thy children walking in truth, as we have received a commandment from the Father." The elect lady had the happy experience of having her children walking in truth. It was always a pleasing experience for John to see younger ones following the Saviour.

In the first verse of the third epistle, John commended Gaius for his devotion to the truth and his general correctness in his Christian life. John writes more about the practical and generous hospitality in verses 5-7. "Beloved, thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest to the brethren, and

to strangers; Which have borne witness of thy charity before the church: whom if thou bring forward on their journey after a godly sort, thou shalt do well: Because that for his name's sake they went forth, taking nothing of the Gentiles." Yes, Gaius had a reputation amongst the brethren for his hospitality toward visiting brethren, including those who were previously unknown to him. They all had testified to John that they had been received with courtesy and love. We believe that John had something to do with sending forth pilgrim brethren to assist and encourage the church in various places. Scripture does not tell us where Gaius resided, but wherever it was he was glad to receive visiting brethren and to assist them in every way possible.

As a contrast to the loyalty of Gaius, the Apostle John had to contend with one Diotrephes who was in the same church. Diotrephes refused to receive the brethren and forbade those who would do so. He even put them out of the church! In verse 11 John gave Gaius encouragement and advice. "Beloved, follow not that which is evil, but that which is good. He that doeth good is of God: but he that doeth evil hath not seen God."

Then verse 12 tells of another brother with a good report. "Demetrius hath good report of all men, and of the truth itself: yea, and we also bear record; and ye know that our record is true."

Perhaps Demetrius carried this short letter which contained recommendations to Gaius and to the brethren who were with him. Many evidently had chosen to take a stand with Gaius when Diotrephes acted wrongly.

What is our condition? Are we walking in the truth as Brother Gaius? Do we give hospitality to the visiting ministers and saints? If not let us begin NOW!



THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES

If you have any items of interest that you would like to submit to this segment, please send them to The Church of God Publishing House, PO Box 328, Salem, WV 26426-0328.

LABOR DAY 2013 CRISIS (CONTINUED FROM FEBRUARY ISSUE)

Honking Their Support

On Thursday during the lunchtime rush in front of the Galleria-area Burger King, many cars and trucks drove by honking to show their support for the protesters. With each honk, cheers erupted from the crowd of 100 waving signs that said, “We can’t survive on \$7.25” and “Fight for \$15.”

“It’s no longer a class warfare argument,” said Stephen Klineberg, Rice University sociology professor.

“It’s a recognition of the condition of the working world, and more people are saying it’s not acceptable,” said Klineberg, who has a wealth of data from three decades of annual surveys of Houstonians to gauge changes in their attitudes on the economy and other issues.

Earlier this summer, the Economic Policy Institute calculated that an annual income of \$63,600 is required for a family of two adults and two children to have an “adequate but modest living” in the Houston area (end of portion of article).

Comment

There really has always been inequality of living standards and wages among people, but, as the article pointed out, it continues to become worse. I am reminded of the song which begins “living below in this old sinful world, hardly a comfort can afford.” God’s children must

practice good stewardship of the things which they acquire.

There are many of God’s children who are living under the poverty level which is determined by the experts, and they do not envy those who have more than they.

Yes, it is easy for one to covet the living status of another. Children of God do not do this because they remember the words of Jesus when He said, “...Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man’s life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth” (Luke 12:15). The Apostle Paul wrote, “I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need” (Philippians 4:12). God’s children look after the physical needs of one another.

American Spying

Not too long ago, a man whose last name was Snowden leaked the fact that the NSA was spying on European and other countries. This caused an outrage toward the United States.

It is believed by many experts that spying is common among the countries. Friendly countries who are allies even spy on each other. This brings to mind the words of Jesus when He said, “Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment (spying) ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother’s eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?” (Matthew 7:1-3).

Health Hazard

I read that the smoke from wildfires is posing a growing health risk to many Americans although they live hundreds of miles away from the flames. The source said that about two-thirds of Americans lived in counties that two years ago contended with wildfire smoke linked to respiratory problems such as asthma, pneumonia and chronic lung diseases. It said that smoke drifts far downwind of fire perimeters, spreading health effects across state lines. Some of the most harmful components of wildfire smoke are fine particles which can lodge in the lungs and lead to a host of respiratory and cardiovascular problems. Particularly vulnerable are children, the elderly, pregnant women and people with heart disease and other conditions. In one case study, it was found that Southern California's 2003 wildfire season resulted in 69 premature deaths, 778 hospitalizations, 1431 emergency room visits and 47,605 outpatient visits.

Earth's Population

I read an article in the *Houston Chronicle* entitled **Population puts Earth at critical point** by Carolyn Lochhead. The following is a portion of the article:

For various reasons, linking the world's rapid population growth rate to its deepening environmental crisis, including climate change, is politically taboo. In fact, in the United States, Europe and Japan there is handwringing over falling birthrates, and government policies to encourage child-bearing.

But those declining birthrates mask explosive growth elsewhere in the world.

In less than a lifetime, the world population has tripled, to 7.1 billion, and continues to climb by more than one and a half million people a week.

A consensus statement issued last May by scientists at Stanford University, signed by more than 1,000 scientists, warned, "Earth is reaching a tipping point."

An array of events underway--including what scientists have identified as the sixth mass extinction in the Earth's 540-million-year history suggest that human activity already exceeds Earth's capacity.

Climate change is but one of many signs of

environmental stress. "The big connector is how many people are on Earth," said Anthony Barnosky, a University of California, Berkeley integrative biologist.

The world population is expected to reach 9.6 billion by mid-century. The United States is expected to grow from 313 million people to 400 million. Economies have expanded many times faster than population, vastly increasing consumption of goods and services in wealthier countries.

"The combination of climate change and 9 billion people to me is one that is just fraught with potential catastrophes," said John Harte, a UC Berkeley ecosystem scientist.

"The evidence that humans are damaging their ecological life-support system is overwhelming," said the report by the Millennium Alliance for Humanity and the Biosphere at Stanford University. "By the time today's children reach middle age, it is extremely likely that the Earth's life-support systems, critical for human prosperity and existence, will be irretrievably damaged" (end of article portion).

Comment

Many are worried that in the future the earth may not be able to sustain its future population. It is true that the earth is being polluted by its population at an alarming pace.

Regardless of what we may believe about climate change and global warming, the fact remains that there are danger signs, and the population is not helping matters by polluting the air which they breathe and destroying the land which is necessary for human life. I feel that the rapid increase of population on Earth is a sign of the times that we are living in the last days. God knows when the earth is really unable to sustain further population.

Revelation 11:18 speaks of them which destroy the earth: "And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth."

Does not the spilling of pollutants into the air, which is needed for man to breathe, and the misuse of the land, over which God expects good stewardship, fall under the heading of destroying the earth?

BIBLE

Study



Questions and Answers

Question: Do we have limits of freedom within the body of Christ?

Answer: The Bible says, “If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed” (John 8:36). We can say positively that there are no limits to the freedom from sin which is possible for us to experience. There are no limits to the possibilities of freedom from carnal nature because it is possible for the “old man with his deeds to be crucified.” There are no limits to the spiritual depths to which a Christian can go if he truly “hungers and thirsts after righteousness.” There are no limits to holiness, love, and usefulness in the hands of God except those we impose upon ourselves by our lack of surrender and dedication. But there are some limitations to our freedom as Christians to which we should give serious attention.

We are not free to bind our consciences upon others. A lack of charitableness at this point causes many of our problems. Sometimes problems arise due to a lack of understanding of what constitutes a conscience question. A conscience question is one where no moral principle is involved, one that is answered by our own sense of propriety rather than by the Word of God. The conscience is not always a safe guide. It is safe only when it is predicated upon the truth and is nurtured and inspired by it. It is possible to be sincere about a matter and yet be wrong. It would seem that many of our so-called

conscience questions are really matters of personal opinion, and there is a difference between the two.

Apostle Paul had much to say about conscience--both his and his brothers'. He said his conscience would allow him to eat meat offered to idols, but he would desist from partaking of it if his eating would cause his brother to stumble. Brotherly love will cause us to hesitate in binding our opinions, and even our convictions, upon others. However, we should be so in love with the truth of God that our conscience will be educated according to it, and our proclamation of the truth should be so clear that it would assist others in having clear and deep-seated convictions that are Scripturally correct.

A Christian should always consider his influence. This is something with which he dare not be reckless because it is one of the most useful tools with which he works. Every man is responsible for his influence. It is true false reports may injure it for a time, but such usually can be “lived down” by honest, straightforward, righteous living.

When we choose any goal for our lives, we follow the path that leads to that purpose. This means that we deliberately limit ourselves to accomplish this specific aim. And this channeling of time and resources demands limits.

Christians are not infallible; only God is. Therefore, we are not immune to temptation and the possibility of being defeated. It is a fact that we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. However, Satan is always

attempting to break that seal, and he is no respecter of persons. The Bible says, "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall." Both Peter and Demas are examples of that possibility. It is well for us to remember that we could be wrong about some things. It is good for us to keep a good reverse gear and always have it ready for use. Confession is good for the soul.

We are free as members of the body of Christ. However, each of us is only one part and not the entire body. Some folks seem to feel that they are the whole church. The truth is that they are not! They are only members of it. The Apostle Paul compares the church to the human body (I Corinthians 12). All parts of the body are necessary, and all should function according to their purpose. All the members are required to make the body complete. There is no place for arrogant independence in the Church of God. Christian unity is God's standard for His church, and He will not tolerate anything that makes for division. True unity is first an experience, then a practice, then a doctrine to proclaim to others.

We can have unity and still have a variety of personal ideas and ways of doing things. But the experience of sanctification does destroy carnality which is the seedbed out of which grows bad attitudes, strife, selfishness, and an independent spirit.

There are certain limits which some folk place upon themselves. Some of these are limits of spiritual depths, knowledge, progress, and cooperation. These limits should not be!

Question: Why must we display brotherly love?

Answer: Children of God must display brotherly love. Hebrews 13:1 admonishes us to, "Let brotherly love continue." There are plenty of commands to love. Let us consider some reasons why brotherly love is so important.

The first and foremost reason that brotherly love is a must is because it is a command of Jesus. "And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also" (I John 4:21).

Brotherly love is necessary because it is a sign to the world that we are children of God. "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another" (John 13:35).

Brotherly love is necessary because it binds us together. "And above all these things put on charity (love),

which is the bond of perfectness" (Colossians 3:14).

Sometime ago, a writer wrote that love is an "outer garment which completes and keeps together the rest, which without it would be loose and disconnected."

Brotherly love is necessary because it gives us assurance that we are accepted by God. "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us" (I John 4:12)

Question: What was the Jews' attitude toward sailing and the sea?

Answer: I once heard the statement that stated this, "Jonah took a cruise to Tarshish, instead of going to preach at Nineveh." A preacher once said that Jesus and His disciples sometimes went sailing on the Sea of Galilee to renew themselves and escape the press of the crowds. However, the Jews were not a maritime people. Instead, they associated the sea with danger, hardship, and the forces of chaos.

Genesis 1:2 pictures the earth as dark and void with water everywhere. In verses 6-10, God created a firmament which divided the waters below from those above. This made a dry place for humans and animals to inhabit. After that, it was only the hand of God that kept the waters from overwhelming His creation.

At the time of the Flood, God removed His protecting hand, and the waters covered the entire earth. The Flood was caused not simply by prolonged rain, but also by the breaking up of the foundations of the deep and the opening up of the windows of heaven. As before Creation, the seas are associated with a watery mess!

Though water in the form of rain many times connotes blessing in the Bible, water in the seas usually connotes hardship and/or danger. In addition to the Flood, the Bible depicts Jonah, who escapes drowning only by God's provision of a great fish. The Apostle Paul was shipwrecked three times (II Corinthians 11:25). Jesus' disciples were saved by a violent storm on the Sea of Galilee by His command to the wind and waves. (See I Kings 22:27; Psalm 24:1-4; John 2:3-7).

According to Revelation 21:1, John sees that there will be no more sea in the new heaven and earth. Therefore, there will be no watery chaos to trouble God's people.



Nigeria

Ministers during a camp meeting in Nigeria.





One of our ministers performing a baptism.



Instruments being played in Egi district.

LESSON I

LESSON II

AHAZIAH SUCCEEDS JEHORAM

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 22:1-12.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 22:3.

“He also walked in the ways of the house of Ahab: for his mother was his counsellor to do wickedly.”

NOTE: In our last lesson, we learned that Jehoram was king of Judah for eight years. He was the son of a good father, Jehoshaphat, but he caused the inhabitants of Jerusalem to commit evil. He finally died of a horrible disease. Now let us see who will succeed him as king of Judah.

1. Who was made king after Jehoram’s death? Who was he? II Chronicles 22:1.
2. How old was Ahaziah when he began to reign, and who was his mother? II Chronicles 22:2.
3. Did he do evil or good in the sight of the Lord? II Chronicles 22:3-4.
4. Against whom did Ahaziah go to war? Why did he go down to see Jehoram, the son of Ahab? II Chronicles 22:5-6.
5. What did Jehu do with those who ministered to Ahaziah? II Chronicles 22:7-8.
6. When they found Ahaziah who was hid in Samaria? What did Jehu and his men do to him? II Chronicles 22:9.
7. When Athaliah, the mother of Ahaziah, saw that her son was dead, what did she do? II Chronicles 22:10.
8. Whom did Jehoshabeath hide and why? II Chronicles 22:11.
9. How long was Joash hid in the house of God? Who then reigned over the land? II Chronicles 22:12.

**JEHOIADA RESTORES THE WORSHIP
OF GOD IN JUDAH
(PART I)**

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 23:1-11.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 23:8 (first part).

“So the Levites and all Judah did according to all things that Jehoiada the priest had commanded,…”

NOTE: Ahaziah had been reigning over the land and was a wicked ruler. Now we shall study about the reign of Jehoiada, the priest, to see how he rules the land and how he restores the worship of God.

1. Whom did Jehoiada take into covenant with him in II Chronicles 23:1?
2. What did these men do in the cities of Judah? II Chronicles 23:2.
3. All the congregation made a covenant with the king in the house of God. What did the king say unto the people? II Chronicles 23:3.
4. What did the king direct the people to do? II Chronicles 23:4-7.
5. Did the Levites and all Judah do according to all the things that Jehoiada had commanded? II Chronicles 23:8.
6. What did he deliver to the captains? II Chronicles 23:9-10.
7. Who was now made king? II Chronicles 23:11.

LESSON III

LESSON IV

**JEHOIADA RESTORES THE WORSHIP
OF GOD IN JUDAH
(PART II)**

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 23:12-21.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 23:16.

“And Jehoiada made a covenant between him, and between all the people, and between the king, that they should be the LORD’s people.”

NOTE: We studied how Jehoiada, the priest, strengthened himself and led the people to follow God. Joash is made king of Judah, and we will now find what happens to the wicked queen Athaliah.

1. What did Athaliah do when she heard the people praising the king? II Chronicles 23:12.
2. What did she see when she entered the house of the Lord? II Chronicles 23:13.
3. What did Jehoiada do and say concerning Athaliah? II Chronicles 23:14.
4. What did the captains do then to her? II Chronicles 23:15.
5. Jehoiada made a covenant between him, the people, and the king that they would be the Lord’s people. What did they do to the house of Baal? II Chronicles 23:16-17.
6. How did Jehoiada set the house of the Lord in order? II Chronicles 23:18-20.
7. Did the people now rejoice? II Chronicles 23:21.

**JOASH REIGNS WELL ALL THE DAYS OF
JEHOIADA**

Scripture Reading: II Chronicles 24:1-16.

Golden Text: II Chronicles 24:2.

“And Joash did that which was right in the sight of the LORD all the days of Jehoiada the priest.”

NOTE: We learned in our last lesson that Jehoiada restored the worship of God in Judah, and that Joash was made king. We shall study now to see if Joash keeps the kingdom in this condition or if he lets the people return to idolatry.

1. How old was Joash when he began to reign? How long did he reign? II Chronicles 24:1.
2. Did he do that which was right in the sight of the Lord? II Chronicles 24:2.
3. Joash directed to repair the house of the Lord. How did he plan to do this? II Chronicles 24:4-5.
4. Why did the king call for Jehoiada? II Chronicles 24:6-7.
5. What did they set at the gate of the house of the Lord? What was this to be used for? II Chronicles 24:8-10.
6. What was done with the collections in the chest? II Chronicles 24:11-13.
7. When the house of the Lord was finished, what was the rest of the money used for? II Chronicles 24:14.
8. How old was Jehoiada when he died? II Chronicles 24:15.
9. Where was he buried? Had good been done in Israel? II Chronicles 24:16.

DON'T COMPLAIN

“Mother, I wish I had a new bicycle,” said Tommy. “I never have anything or do anything I want to do.” He accented his speech by going out the door and slamming it hard. As if that would have made any difference to help the situation, his mother followed close behind him and marched him right back into the room and made him close the door ten times softly. Guess Tommy would remember to close it easier next time or he could count on shutting it easily ten times again.

About the seventh time Tommy was shutting the door, his ugly frown began to loosen into a half frown, then on the ninth shutting, a sheepish grin came over his face. You could see he was sorry he had slammed it.

“No, Tommy, you think you are mistreated. You think you get the worst of everything. But just you sit down over there and let me tell you a story that will change your mind. You have good health. You see all right, don't you?”

Tommy nodded rather ashamedly.

“You are able to speak--sometimes you mistreat yourself and everybody else by saying ugly things. You are all right, too--but sometimes you hear as if you didn't have any ears.”

“There was a girl born down in Alabama who was healthy just like you are. When she was nineteen months old, she became terribly sick. For a while she was not expected to live. She did live, though, but the long fever which she had left her a different child. She would be no longer able to hear her parents' voices. She wasn't able to speak. On top of his, she couldn't hear. Now close your eyes and see how you would feel if you couldn't speak, see, nor hear.”

“How sad her parents were. When the baby began to walk, she learned after much hardship how to find her way carefully from one room to another. Children like to ask questions, but she couldn't ask questions. They did have a faithful watch dog by the name of Belle who followed her around some. At other times, one of the servant's daughters was a playmate for her.”

“When the little girl was six years old, a kind doctor advised her parents to see the inventor, Alexander Graham Bell. When they met Dr. Bell, he advised them to write to

the Perkins Institution for the Blind in Boston.”

“Helen Keller's, for that was her name, first teacher Miss Sullivan, came to the home.”

“First, Miss Sullivan began her teaching by placing a new doll in Helen's arms then slowly spelling the word, 'D-o-l-l,' into her pupil's hand. Of course, she had to do this over and over again until Helen could grasp what she meant. She taught her how to spell water by taking her to the pump and letting the water run over her hand and spelling, 'W-a-t-e-r.'”

“After a few lessons like this, she soon learned to spell by running her fingers over slips of paper with raised letters.”

“Later on, she learned how to write in raised letters made for the blind.”

“When Helen was eight, she was taken to the Perkins Institution for the Blind. Wasn't Helen delighted to find there were others deaf, dumb, and blind like herself. Now she wasn't the only one. Helen was determined to learn the best there was for those who are deaf, dumb, and blind.”

“When Helen was twelve, she wrote a short story of her life. The next year she visited Niagara Falls and the World's Fair. She later graduated from Radcliffe College. She didn't complain because she didn't have this or that. She knew she had very little, but she made the best of what she had. She wasn't selfish in desiring to get an education for herself--no, she had a big desire to help others who had suffered as she had. She would help those who were blind, deaf, or dumb. She went about lecturing for the blind. In Isaiah, God tells us to strengthen the weak hands. That was her desire.”

Tommy never did forget the story his Mother told him. He is now a grown man and already has told this same story to his little son.

We also need to remember to be thankful for the things we have and never complain about what we do not have. God does not like us to be complainers.

“And when the people complained, it displeased the LORD” (Numbers 11:1, first part).

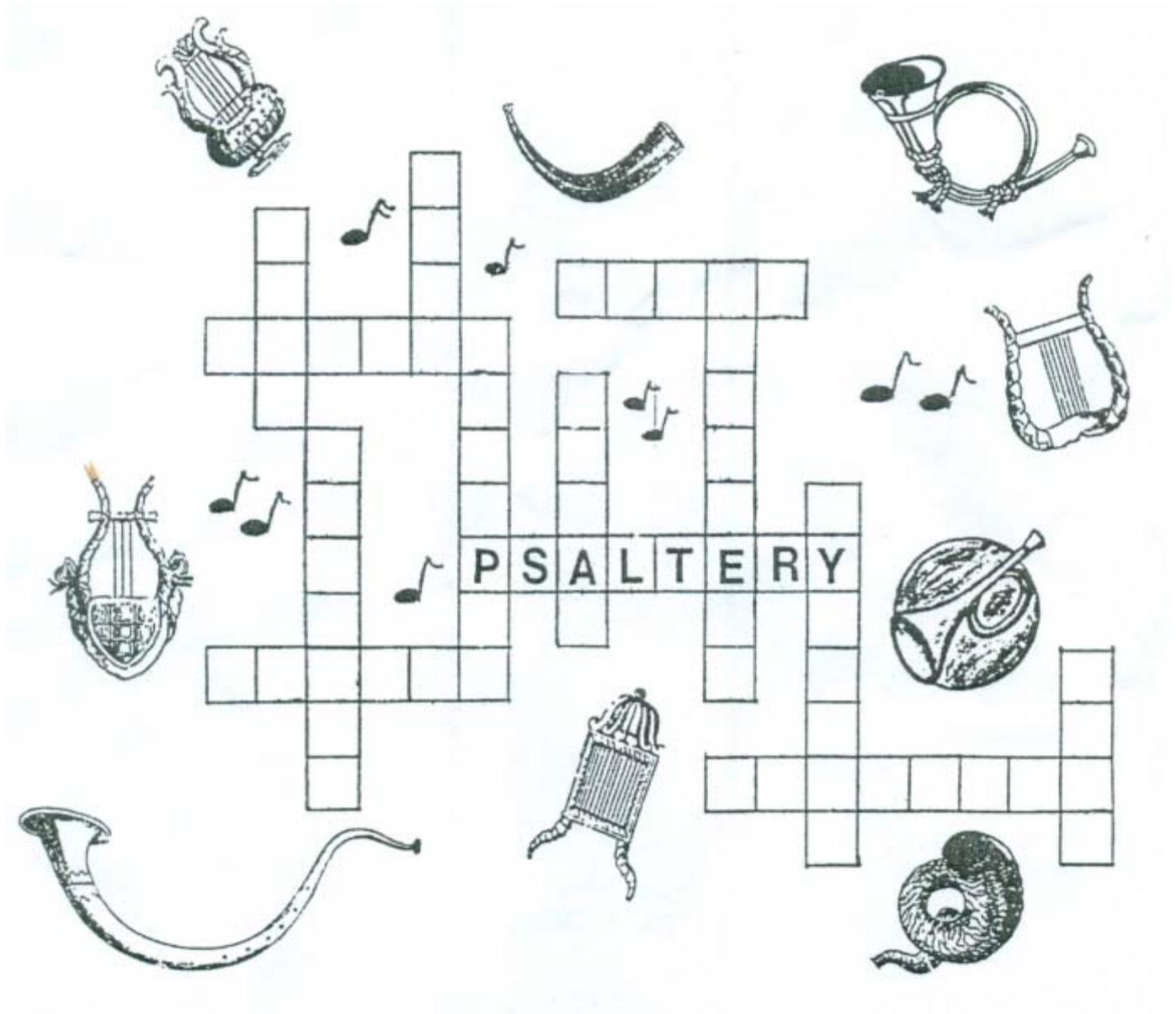
MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

People of the Bible liked music. They had many different musical instruments.

Fill in the blanks with thirteen musical instruments mentioned in the Bible.

There is only one way in which they will fit correctly, and each word is used only once.

- HARP PIPE VIOLIN FLUTE ORGAN
- CORNET TABRET CYMBALS PSALTERY TRUMPET
- SACKBUT DULCIMER TIMBRELS



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Spring

By David DeLong

A gust of windy Spring blows by
As if the earth had breathed a sigh;
New life is bursting all around,
Protruding from the warming ground,
Never making any sound,
But a silent cry;
A cry of praise to God on high,
The Wonder-worker who deserves
Our heart-felt worship and our soul,
The great Provider who preserves
His creatures under His control.

