

The Advocate of Truth





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Thomas Jefferson and the Barbary Pirates

by Gary Mills



In the late 1700's the United States had a real problem with pirates. The Barbary states of North Africa were working in league with bands of pirates in the area. The Barbary pirates attacked merchant ships along the main trade route around the north coast of Africa, stealing their cargos and holding passengers and crew for ransom. The Barbary states demanded tribute from other countries for "protection" from the pirates. By 1800 the United States had paid over \$2,000,000 in tribute to these nations, which is a huge amount for the time.

In 1801, the leader of Tripoli demanded even larger payments, and so Thomas Jefferson sent the United States new Navy to fight the pirates. The slogan of this campaign was "millions for defense, not one cent for tribute".

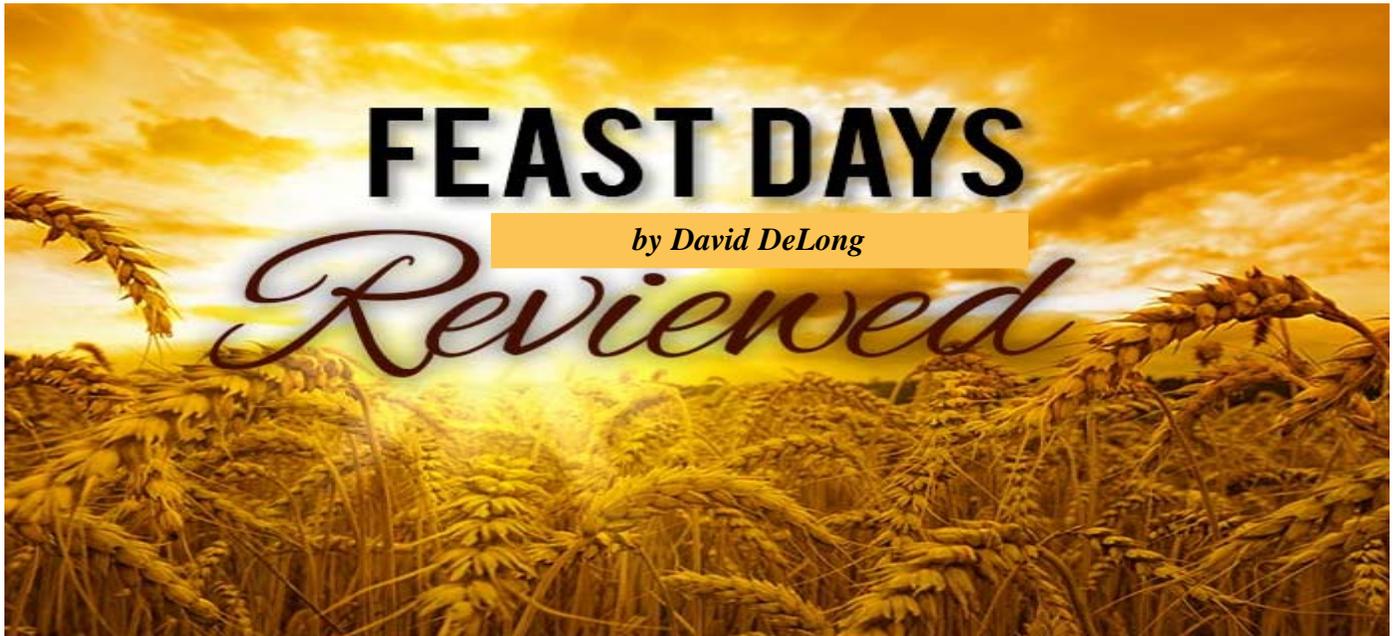
Ever since Adam and Eve there has been a continuing war between good and evil. We either defend and revere God or pay tribute to Satan. The tribute that Satan wants is for us to fall away from God. Paying tribute to Satan will not protect you from the wrath of God. What we pay to God is love and obedience. Jesus gave us the ultimate example of this. Because of love Jesus paid the greatest payment possible, giving his own life to save us from sin.

The holy Bible is a manual for our spiritual warfare against Satan. In Romans 12:21 we read "Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good". We are told how we can go into battle against Satan in Ephesians 6:11,12 "Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."

Paul goes into greater detail of what this armor is in Ephesians 6: 13-18 "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints".

Devastating battles between good and evil take place throughout our life. Without faith in God and hope of eternal life, our lives would have no true purpose. It has been said the Bible is a window to eternal life. Without the Bible life would be like a window painted black, shutting out the light. Life would be like a door that leads to nothing.

We need to be like Thomas Jefferson was against the Barbary pirates and put all of our efforts into defending and obeying God. "Millions for defense, not one cent for tribute" is a great saying to remember. We should give not one cent for tribute to Satan, instead dedicating our efforts to God.



Why we should not keep the feast days - There are a number of Christians who say that we must keep the feast days of the Levitical priesthood. Is this a true belief? I emphatically believe that we should not keep them and here are a few reasons why I believe this.

First, here is how the Old Testament in the Bible describes how the feast days are to be kept. In Leviticus chapter 23 we find: "These are the feasts of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons. In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the Lord's passover. And on the fifteenth day of the same month is the feast of unleavened bread unto the LORD: seven days ye must eat unleavened bread...And ye shall count unto you from the morrow after the Sabbath, from the day that ye brought the sheaf of the wave offering; seven Sabbaths shall be complete: Even unto the morrow after the seventh Sabbath shall ye number fifty days; and ye shall offer a new meat offering unto the LORD. Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave loaves of two tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; they are the firstfruits unto the LORD. And ye shall offer with the bread seven lambs without blemish of the first year, and one young bullock, and two rams: they shall be for a burnt offering unto the LORD, with their meat offering, and their drink offerings, even an offering made by fire, of sweet savour unto the LORD" (verses 4-6, 15-18)."

The offerings that must accompany the feast days

prohibit one from doing the feasts correctly. We know we should not offer animal sacrifices to the Lord today. Jesus is our sacrifice and he replaced the Old Testament animal sacrifices. Many people who keep the feast days do them as they please without giving a regard for the sacrifices and meat and drink offerings which were required to be kept on the feast days as described in the Old Testament. There is no alternate way to keep them.

Second, in the Old Testament there was a designated place which the Lord chose for the feasts to be kept. We read in Deuteronomy 16:5,6: "Thou mayest not sacrifice the passover within any of thy gates, which the LORD thy God giveth thee: But at the place which the LORD thy God shall choose to place his name in, there thou shalt sacrifice the passover at even, at the going down of the sun, at the season that thou camest forth out of Egypt." Also, we read in verse 16: "Three times in a year shall all thy males appear before the LORD thy God in the place which he shall choose; in the feast of unleavened bread, and in the feast of weeks, and in the feast of tabernacles: and they shall not appear before the LORD empty". That place was Jerusalem. People who keep the feast days today do so in any place that they choose, not where the Old Testament says to keep them.

Third, when Jesus died on the cross the vail in the temple was rent in two from top to bottom. This tearing of the vail was done by the Lord, not man. We read in Matthew 27:50,51: "Jesus, when he had cried again with

a loud voice, yielded up the ghost. And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent". This then would make it impossible for the high priest, on the Day of Atonement, to go from the holy place in the temple, through the veil, and into the most holy place of the temple, seeing there was no more a separation between the two compartments in the temple.

Fourth, while we keep the Holy Sabbath day, this is not one of the Old Testament feast days. There is a difference between keeping the feast days and keeping the 7th day Sabbath. When we go to the book of John we see a contrast between the feast days and the Sabbath day. In John 2:13 we find: "And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem". Also, in chapter 5:1 we read: "After this there was a feast of the Jews; and Jesus went up to Jerusalem." Similarly, in 6:4 we see: "And the passover, a feast of the Jews, was nigh." In 7:2: "Now the Jews' feast of tabernacles was at hand." In almost every place in John, when a feast day is mentioned, it calls it a feast of the Jews. With the Sabbath day, it is never called a feast of the Jews. For instance, we read in John 9:13,14: "They brought to the Pharisees him that aforetime was blind. And it was the sabbath day when Jesus made the clay, and opened his eyes." Sabbath day is simply called the Sabbath day.

The weekly Sabbath was instituted at the end of the original creation week as described in Genesis. The weekly Sabbath predates the original sin of Adam and Eve and was not intended to be sacrificial. The Sabbath is part of God's moral 10 Commandment law. It is a separate study but we should continue to keep God's Ten Commandments today. Even if sin had never entered the world we would still be keeping the weekly Sabbath day along with the other Ten Commandments.

In conclusion, the annual Holy Days were not included in the Ten Commandments. Moses delivered two laws to the children of Israel. The Ten Commandments were written by God Himself in stone. Exodus 31:18: "And he gave unto Moses, when he had made an end of communing with him upon mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written with the finger of God." The Ten Commandments were intended to be permanent. The feast days are part of the Levitical Priesthood and were done away with when our Lord Jesus was sacrificed.

Coming Home

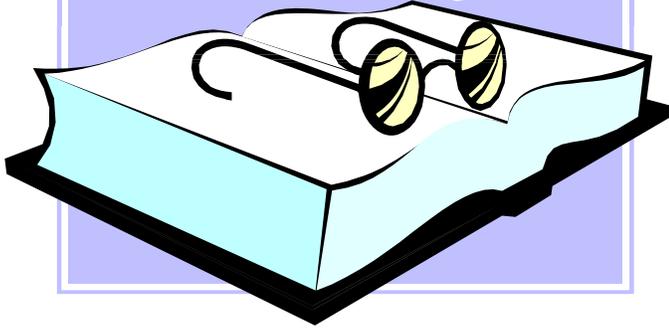
by Angela Smith

*Satan is so smart,
He really knows how to pull me down.
One day I'm passionate about my Father,
The next lying face first on the ground.
How did I get to this awful place,
When just yesterday
I was beholding His beautiful face.
So much doubt that confuses my mind.
Like walking around in a dark room,
With no light I can find.
But although I'm in the dark,
I know where there's great light,
It's found in my heavenly Father,
Who constantly has me in His sight.
And no matter how I turn my back on Him,
He will never turn from me.
Even when Satan has me blinded,
So the truth I cannot see.
Now I choose to take hold of the gentle hand
That didn't want me to let go.
Revealing to me my power over the enemy,
Is what He wants to show.
After knowing Him intimately
How could anyone doubt,
That the Redeemer truly lives,
And it's Him we can't live without.
Please forgive me Father for allowing Satan
To take me so far from Your heart.
Give me peace and joy,
That today I may make a new start.
Put inside my soul the passion that once burned
To tell others of Your love and what I've learned.
I know You are real, no matter what they say.
Now grant me joy and contentment
As You welcome home Your child gone astray.*



BIBLE

Study



QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Taken from **The Home Instructor Part I** - If you'd like to receive a hard copy of this book, send request to The Church of God Publishing House P.O. Box 328 Salem, WV 26426 or call 1-304-782-1411.

Part 12 - THE SEVENTH PLAGUE

QUESTION: Into what is the seventh vial poured?

ANSWER: "And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air" (Revelation 16:17 first part).

QUESTION: What is pronounced?

ANSWER: "And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done" (Verse 17 last part).

QUESTION: What happened then?

ANSWER: "And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great" (verse 18).

QUESTION: What is the cup called?

ANSWER: "And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath" (verse 19).

QUESTION: What happens to the islands and mountains?

ANSWER: "And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found" (verse 20).

QUESTION: How is this plague described?

ANSWER: "And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent (75 to 125 lbs): and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great" (verse 21).

QUESTION: Just before the day of the Lord (millennium), how will Jerusalem's spoil be divided?

ANSWER: "Behold, the day of the LORD cometh, and thy spoil shall be divided in the midst of thee" (Zechariah 14:1).

QUESTION: How many nations will be gathered against Jerusalem, for what purpose, and with what result?

ANSWER: "For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity, and the residue (rest) of the people shall not be cut off from the city" (verse 2).

QUESTION: What will the Lord do then?

ANSWER: "Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle" (verse 3).

QUESTION: Where will His feet stand, and what will happen?

ANSWER: "And his feet shall stand in that day upon the

mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave (divide) in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west, and there shall be a very great valley; and half of the mountain shall remove toward the north, and half of it toward the south" (verse 4).

QUESTION: What will the Israelites do?

ANSWER: "And ye shall flee to the valley of the mountains; for the valley of the mountains shall reach unto Azal: yea, ye shall flee, like as ye fled from before the earthquake in the days of Uzziah king of Judah" (verse 5 first part).

QUESTION: When Christ comes to fight, who will be with him?

ANSWER: "and the LORD my God shall come, and all the saints with thee (him)" (verse 5 last part).

QUESTION: After the battle is over, what will Christ be?

ANSWER: "And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one" (verse 9).

QUESTION: Under the seventh angel what is declared?

ANSWER: "And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation 11:15).

QUESTION: What will the 24 Elders do?

ANSWER: "And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God" (verse 16).

QUESTION: What will the Lord take at this time?

ANSWER: "Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God

Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned" (verse 17).

QUESTION: In verse 18, what all is included?

ANSWER: "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" (verse 18).

NOTE: From God's wrath to the final destruction of the wicked is one thousand years.

QUESTION: What will be opened at this time?

ANSWER: "And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail." (verse 19).

QUESTION: When was the temple in heaven closed, and for how long?

ANSWER: "And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled" (Revelation 15:8).

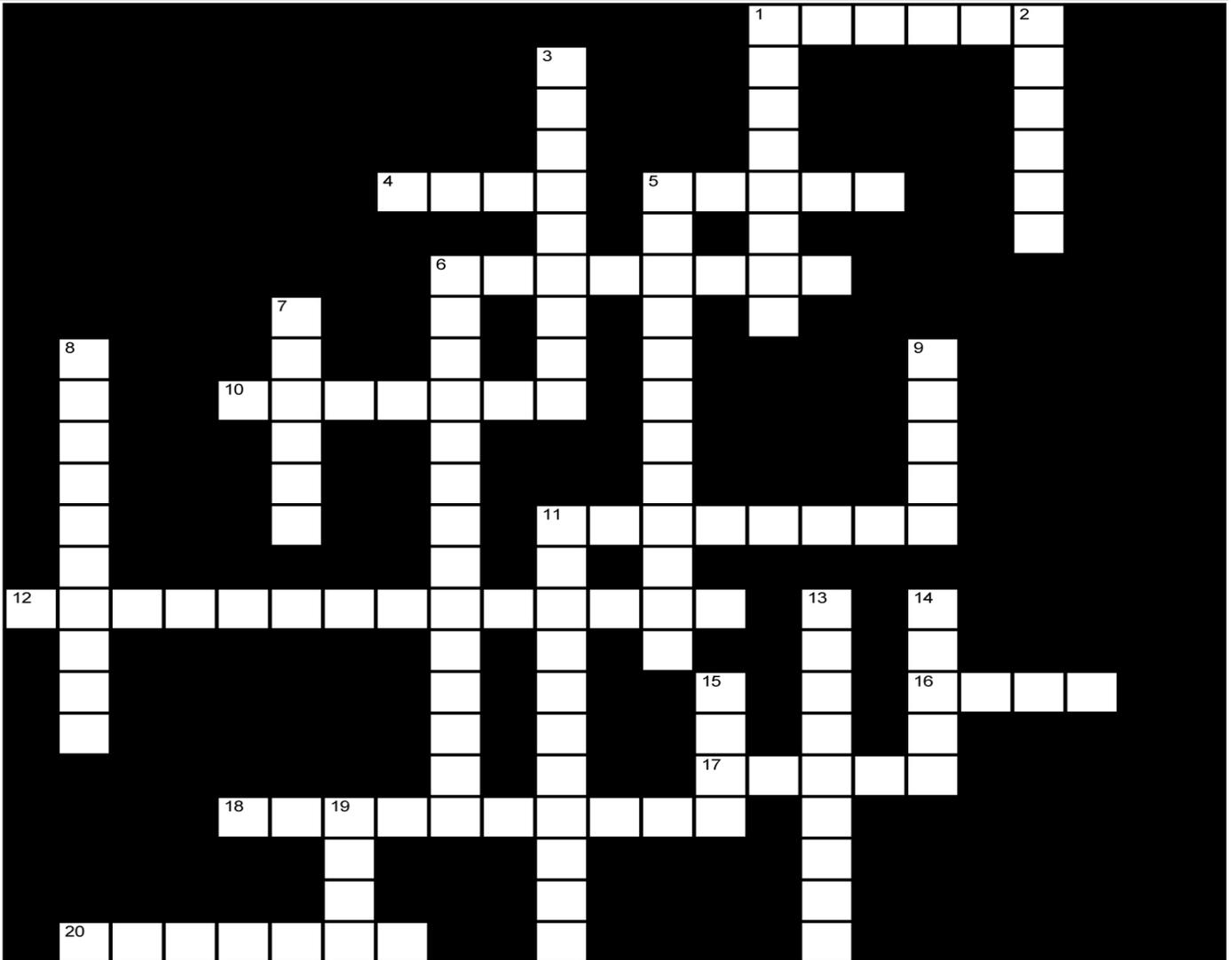
NOTE: Here we see that the temple is closed to man, that is to his prayers for the period of the seven last plagues. When the temple is opened again the seven last plagues are finished and the reign of Christ has begun. The coming of the Lord in the warring phase (which is this seventh plague) puts an end to the battle of Armageddon which had its start in the sixth plague.



Test Your Bible Knowledge

Books of the New Testament

Fill in the blanks with the book from the New Testament which expresses the thought in the clues below. Hint: Number in a book would take up one space. For instance II Peter would be 6 spaces. II would take up one of the 6 spaces.



ACROSS

1. Prepare for Christ's return through godly living.

4. Cling to Christ in godliness and avoid immorality.

5. Christians should know the truth and guard against false teaching.

6. The Church needs to combat false teaching and worship properly.

10. Christ is superior.

11. We should forgive others as God has forgiven us.

12. Persecuted believers should persevere in the faith.

16. Jesus shows Himself as Son of God and calls people to follow Him.
17. Leaders in the church must be above reproach.
18. Christ is supreme over all things.
20. Jesus is the King promised in the Old Testament. He calls people to be righteous.

DOWN

1. Hold to the truth of Scriptures.
2. Righteousness is found through faith in Christ.
3. Jews and Gentiles who believe are united in Christ.
5. Paul urges the church to recognize his apostleship and unite with him in ministry.
6. While waiting for Christ's return, live to please God.
7. Even though a Christian suffers, there is hope in Christ.
8. God is in control. Jesus will return.
9. Christians should show hospitality.
11. Be imitators of Christ in action and attitude.
13. Salvation is by faith in Christ alone. Godly living follows through the power of the Spirit.
14. Acts of Christian love should accompany faith in Christ.
15. Through the power of the Spirit, the kingdom of Christ is spread.
19. Jesus emphasizes repentance and shows concern for the poor and needy.

Answers found on page 14

PURIFICATION

Psalms 46-49

*Following God is the key to our future,
We won't survive without His grace and His help,
Soon the world will not exist as we know it,
By just His voice, the earth will begin to melt.*

*He'll remove the deserts and the mountains
Out onto the midst of the deepest sea,
The waters will become rough and troubled,
Throughout the earth man will try to flee.*

*Many trust in their wealth and their riches,
In their mind they think it's all going to last,
But like the fool and the brute who will perish,
All they've gathered will become part of the past.*

*God is building an eternal city,
With a foundation made of pure gold,
But what man has built from nature,
Will just crumble and continue to get old.*

*Their way will be their own folly,
And worldly knowledge will rule the day,
They'll rely on science to solve problems,
And posterity will approve all they say.*

*Yet Scripture tells a much different story,
Only Jesus has power over the grave,
As you know you can't take anything with you,
Nothing you own will ever help you be saved.*

*He shall choose our inheritance for us,
After all He gave us our first breath,
For God is our God for ever,
He will to us even unto death.*

*God's Holy Spirit has to be in us,
And we must live by the words of the Lord,
So we can stand on the sea of glass with Him,
While He purifies the rest of the world.*

Pat Evans

PARADOXES IN THE BIBLE

Something like contradictions by Moises Torres M.

A paradox is a “fact or expression apparently contradictory to logic”. Human logic tends to dualism and polarization, “or this, or the contrary”. But nevertheless, the Bible’s logic, even though it is not contradictory, presents numerous paradoxes.

1. How can someone rejoice in afflictions?

“Wherein **ye greatly rejoice**, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations: That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ” (I Peter 1:6-7).

2. To us, a loss is gain.

“But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the

righteousness which is of God by faith: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death” (Philippians 3:7-10).

3. Joy in the midst of sorrows.

“As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and, behold, we live; as chastened, and not killed; As sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things” (II Corinthians 6:9-10).

4. Blessing for damnation; weep with them that weep; recompense to no man evil for evil.

“Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men” (Romans 12:14-17).

5. Justified by faith, without the works of the law.

“To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but **by the law of faith**. Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law” (Romans 3:26-28).

NOTE: Here we found that faith has its own law. In other words, *or is by faith in the Son of God, or no one can be justified by God*. The Pharisees boast about the works of the law, they always wanted to exhibit before everyone else, but they never accepted the Son of God as their Messiah. They didn't have faith in Him but in themselves and in their works. Faith shows its law, you either believe in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and show it through the works of faith to be saved, or you never will.

6. Faith without works is dead.

“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only” (James 2:20-24).

NOTE: This may seem a contradiction to the previous declaration in number 5. Nevertheless, James here talks about works of faith, or fostered by the faith in God. “Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect?” Therefore Faith has its law and also its works, works of Faith.

7. By which law was the boasting of the Pharisees invalid or excluded?

“Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith” (Romans 3:27).

8. Free from all men, but servant unto all.

“For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you” (I Corinthians 9:19-23).

9. He that finds his life, shall lose it.

“He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it” (Matthew 10:39).

NOTE: In Proverbs 26:4-5, we find a type of paradox with certain parallelism. “Answer not a fool according to his folly, lest thou also be like unto him. Answer a fool according to his folly, lest he be wise in his own conceit.” In the first instance: do not argue with the fool in his own terms, so you won't fall to his level and become a fool as him; in the second one, try to make him understand wisdom so he can see his foolishness. So the fool can stop believing he is wise.

GODS Words

Uplifting.

Uprooting my problems.

An uproar from heaven.

Big ups to the Father.

Whenever I'm down His words bring me up.

And whenever I'm happy it's all an up & up.

He was always with me during my upbringing.

So at any occasion I'm up singing.

Praises.

GOD gets the utmost respect.

Poetry By Brother Derrick Shaw, Jr.

Dallas, Texas Church

The Rechabites

By Richard Santiesteban

The story of this unique group of people which can be found in Jeremiah 35 belong to the Kenites who accompanied the children of Israel. The Kenites can be traced back to the time of Moses' father-in-law Jethro (Judges 1:16) all the way to the time of Jeremiah. The father of the Rechabites is Jonadab son of Rechab.

The Rechabites were an extremely loyal group of people and answered only to the traditions that Rechab imposed on them. The traditions of the Rechabites were as follows:

- * Not allowed to drink wine nor strong drink
- * Not to live in houses
- * Not to sow seed
- * Not to plant vineyards

They were nomadic and only dwelt in tents living according to the principles and values imposed by Jonadab who was the son of Rechab.

Now the Lord wanted to test His people by using this unique group of people by instructing Jeremiah to advise the King of Judah, Jehoiakim to invite them to a party. The unusual request by the Lord was to actually invite them inside one of the chambers of the Lord to drink wine.

The Rechabites honor the request and attend this unusual

meeting not knowing exactly what to expect. As the Rechabites enter the chamber, Jeremiah sets before them pots full of wine along with cups to serve themselves wine. Jeremiah then instructs them to drink the wine. Imagine this, the Lord invites this group of individuals into His house to have a drink of wine. What do you think they do? The grapes from Jerusalem were amongst the most fertile in the region which made the best wines known all over the area. Do they give in to such a temptation?

The answer is in Jeremiah 35:6-7 which they simply state: "We will drink no wine: for Jonadab the son of Rechab our father commanded us, saying, Ye shall drink no wine, neither ye, nor your sons for ever: Neither shall ye build house, nor sow seed, nor plant vineyard, nor have any: but all your days ye shall dwell in tents; that ye may live many days in the land where ye be strangers."

The Rechabites charge further by stating that they "obey" the voice of Jonadab the son of Rechab our father in all that he has charged that included their wives, sons, and daughters.

The Lord, already knowing the outcome of this meeting, speaks to Jeremiah and tells him to ask His people this question: "Will ye not receive instruction to hearken to my words...?" Now, the next statement that the Lord makes, He does it with extreme emotions and hurt that He is feeling from His very own people. He says, The

Rechabites unto this day obeyed their father's commandment: "notwithstanding I have spoken unto you, rising early and speaking; but ye hearkened not unto me." The Lord goes further to say that he has sent prophet after prophet instructing them to turn from their evil ways and amend their doings. Yet, they keep whoring after idols and serving strange gods and refuse to listen to the living God. The Lord imposes a curse on His people.

The Lord closes this story by telling the Rechabites that Jonadab shall not want a man to stand before him forever. This is a reward for their obedience to their father. Some have looked at this as a lesson learned to obedience towards their parents which is the 5th Commandment explaining that their days may be long on the land which the Lord giveth thee. We should all benefit from the Rechabites obedience and Israel's failure to obey the Lord's commands and repent from their evil ways to meditate on the Lord's instructions that He has for us all.

Remembering a special moment for Brother Richard Santiesteban at his ordaining service and obtaining his role as Member of Board of Seven.



We are all made in the image of God

By Alfonso Telesca

One of the clearest commandments of God is Thou shalt not kill. Yet we still try to justify certain types of killing. Let me explain. Many Evangelical Christians in this world believe in the death penalty for criminals yet in the same breath are opposed to abortion. Many stand firm in supporting wars that are not ordained by God, justifying the defense of democracy, property or belief. Many believe that killing in self defense is justified. This article's goal is to show that no killing is justified according to the Word of God.

I would like to begin by referencing the Church of God (7th Day) point of doctrine #19. "We stand opposed to carnal warfare. Matthew 26:52; Revelation 13:10. The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but spiritual (II Corinthians 10:3-5; Ephesians 6:11-18)." This point of doctrine is based on the simple commandment in Exodus 20:13 "Thou shalt not kill." In God's view there is no justifiable homicide. It doesn't matter if it is taking a life in war, taking the life of an unborn child in an abortion, taking a life in revenge, or any other type of killing of a human being. Jesus clarified this for His followers in a time when the Old Testament "eye for an eye and tooth for a tooth" was still in effect. He came to bring a new dispensation through His life, death and resurrection. Yes there was a time during the Levitical order when punishments by death and wars were ordained by God and other acts of homicide were allowed in the Old Testament. But even during those times there were provisions made for Israel (Numbers 35), for those who killed unknowingly or without intention, something known today as manslaughter. They were to be given refuge in certain cities so that the "avenger" wouldn't kill them before getting an audience or trial before the congregation. Jesus shows us a different way according to the verses in our doctrinal points and others found in

the New Testament. He has required that we leave all vengeance up to the Lord, that we not take up a “sword” to participate in any type of killing.

In the U.S. today we continue to be in the middle of a time full of killing and hate from within. We as children of God should make an examination of where we stand in light of the events that we are surrounded with. There has been killing of citizens against citizens, citizens against law enforcement and killing of law enforcement against citizens. All these issues have created controversy that has exploded and caused more divisions among us. Let’s be clear; we cannot be in support of the killing of a human being, whether it be a police officer or a citizen and whether either one of them is good or bad. Our world has a bad track record when it comes to killing and violence, and much of it is associated with religion and race. Throughout the ages ethnic cleansings have occurred in other countries and they all stemmed from the fact that one population did not share the same race, lineage or belief system of the other. There are exceptions when Israel found themselves having to do this, but these wars were righteously ordained by God himself, the Creator of life. The killings that have come later have been ordained by sinful men who have had unrighteous intentions. We find that in our country, we have not experienced exactly that, but we have still experienced much violence. At the root of all this violence is hate. We see what the Lord tells us about hate in 1 John 3:15: “Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer: and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him.”

As the Church of God (7th Day), we enjoy the fact that we have brothers and sisters from many different races and countries. When we have the privilege to gather with one another, the fact that they look different from us does not bother us and we embrace our brethren just as or better than our own family. This example should inform our opinion on how to deal with the issues of race. Our Lord Jesus Christ was our best example. He lived in a time where there was a clearly divided line due to race. A person that was of mixed race, in this example someone who had Israeli blood and gentile blood, was considered less than human. But Jesus didn’t see it that way in the case of the Samaritan woman. Jesus interacted with her and preached to her the gospel, as we can see in John

4:5-43. Later on the opportunity was fully given to the gentiles to accept salvation as in the case of Cornelius and his family, Acts 10:28-35. -- Galatians 3:26-29, says “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” We must be cautious not to allow these practices of hate to enter into the church, whether it be by family traditions or personally held beliefs as Matthew 15:3 tells us, “But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” (It is sinful!)

-- Colossians 2:8, “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.” This sin breeds anger that in turn is expressed in more sin and that is exactly what Satan wants to do, divide and conquer! His goal is that we antagonize each other as a church and as a nation

-- Romans 12:19-21, “Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.”

Answers to Test Your Bible Knowledge Books of the New Testament Crossword Puzzle - on page 8

*Across: 1.II Peter 4.Jude 5.II John 6.I Timothy
10.Hebrews 11.Philemon 12.II Thessalonians
16.Mark 17.Titus 18.Colossians 20.Matthew*

*Down: 1.II Timothy 2.Romans 3.Ephesians 5.I
Corinthians 6.I Thessalonians 7.I Peter 8.Rev-
elation 9.III John 11.Philippians 13.Galatians
14.James 15.Acts 19.Luke*



Spiritual Vision

"...Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest" (John 4:35 last part).

Men occupy places of prominence in the affairs of the world according to their vision. A man visualizes an idea until he sets about to make it a reality. If a person sees nothing in the materials of nature, he will become of the world's drones, or shall we say, one of the world's blind slaves of destiny. A man sees an engine in a teakettle, and from that vision has emerged a great railroad network; another sees a radio in a labyrinth of wires, and he had invited the nations of earth to our sitting room; another sees an angel in a marble slab, and he becomes a great sculptor; another sees a television in the complexion of the radio, another sees a crowning language in the clouds, and he becomes a great orator; another sees a hero in a child, and he becomes a great philanthropist; another sees the sublime in nature, and he becomes a noted artist; another sees God in the trees and flowers, and the majesty of the mountains and he becomes a poet, an author, or minister, and through his prophetic declarations and perception of nature's God will turn many to righteousness.

The man who can see nothing but the black earth with its tares and brambles is just a restless mole with no eyes and sees beyond his own little burrow. To him life is just a drudgery in the workshop of the world; a bundle of desires prompted by instinct, which has been placed in a bit of clay, destined to be rescued to its chemical elements - a life that exists by instinct and maxims of experience, which has gained for itself a small company that

calls him "friend." Beyond that a blank mystery.

Another man lifts up his eyes and beholds a connecting ladder between heaven and earth, and on its rungs the angels of God ascending and descending, and he becomes the proclaimer of God's most beautiful truths as described in the world of inspiration.

Man is a living being, not just a particular refined matter. He holds a close relation to our life, especially the life of God in whose image he has been created. And so man cannot live for himself. Man's true existence was to the end that he might glorify God. So whatever man's undertaking, whether it be duty or pleasure, the pleasant or the trying experiences in life, each is of value only in so far as they add to man's growth spiritually.

The gospel of Jesus opens before our spiritual vision the object of life, so that we can see in the world about us the possibilities of those sunken in sin, if they could only be turned to God. This was Christ's perspective of man's future. This is so clearly brought out in our text.

In this setting we have Jesus at Jacob's well in Samaria. A number of Samaritans were coming out of Sychar. They had been attracted by the words of the woman. "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did..." Curiosity brought them together. Jesus is the same as we see today, when a new exhibiting model is placed in a store window. Perhaps we could see no promising future in these men. The disciples did not. The Samaritans were of a mixed race, half Jew and half Canaanite. And their worship was as mixed as their blood. Their morals and social standing were rather low. Human nature could not expect

much form such men. But to the eyes of Jesus it was different. He saw men as they really were; their possibilities through the regenerating love of God the Father. And so He addressed His disciples, who could see naught but the sordidness in their lives; "...Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

Wherever Jesus saw men whose souls yearned for something better, looking eagerly for a saving knowledge of divine truths, He looked beyond the disguise of human depravity and beheld the real man. Most people would have drawn away from that poor Samaritan woman. She was ignorant, superstitious, degraded. Surely there could be nothing good accomplished in speaking to her! Yet notice the attitude of Jesus. He showed no superiority, no haughty condescension. He recognized her spiritual tendencies, the secret yearning of her heart. First He awoke the latent desires in her breast, then He brought to her that blessed balm. He spoke to her as if it were by virtue of human rights. No loftier truth was ever uttered by the Saviour of mankind than the words, "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst..." (John 4:14).

In every lesson taught, Jesus opened to man the avenue of life, the highway that leads to life eternal. And the particular truth that would reach each special listener, or group of hearers, was ever brought out by Him.

As His eyes were cast about for someone to carry on when His earthly mission would be finished, He beheld Peter and his brother Andrew, together with James and John. In those fishermen he saw fit material for a crop of workers to take over. He saw in the sinful woman that washed His feet with her tears, not the miserable outcast creature, but a soul washed of this sin, and her ability to understand the deepest mysteries of grace. He saw Levi, the despised tax-collector, the poverty of spirit which hungered for a better life, that would make him a true disciple, capable of writing the first gospel. He saw in Paul of Tarsus, the conscientious Pharisee, the religious zealot, his profound conviction, his untiring enthusiasm, and a tireless scholar, which would make him a true missionary apostle.

With the disciples go the vision of the "fields...white already to harvest". They went everywhere preaching the gospel, raising up churches with men to carry on while they reached out farther, so that in a single generation, Christ had been preached from the Atlantic on the west

to India on the east; from Ethiopia on the south to the British Isles on the north.

Paul looked across the Aegean Sea and saw the shores of a new field of operation. With this mental picture, and the wonderment regarding the inhabitants beyond, he went to sleep. In vision there stood before him a man of Macedonia, with a plea which has been the watchword of Christian missions ever since, "come over and help us." And so through his love for those who sit in darkness, Paul could not content himself until he had reached the remotest bound of Europe - Spain, England, France, and wherever men roamed with hearts yearning for purity of soul - there we find traces of Paul's labors which are felt even to this day.

It was God who sent that vision to Paul. God saw the worth of souls in that place. So Jesus met Paul in the person of a fellow man, and in that vision Paul was impressed with the worth of the souls of fallen man. Whenever men are groping with benumbed souls, feeling the weight of woe, and where sin has left its trail, there we hear the call through God's loudspeaker, which appeals to the tender love of the Christian worker. It may be the soul of a naked savage, or a civilized outcast, yet there we see a possible child of God. Jesus died for him, and if he accepts salvation's call, his soul may be washed in the blood of the Lamb. Let us remember that Jesus shall see the travail of His soul and be satisfied, but not until every effort has been exerted to turn sinners to Him. And I think that with tears He will utter the sad words, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still..." (Revelation 22:11).

It is a vision of the lost world that has prompted all our missionary efforts. It is a sense of the heathen dying without hope that has stirred men in all ages to surrender the pleasures of home and friends, to go to the heathen lands.

The vision of God-fearing men in all ages has been the incentive behind the most beautiful chapters ever written and the annals of the Church of God. The heroic lives of men and women in every age and clime still stirs the breast of mankind with the same ardor born of divine love.

It matters not where the hearts of mankind cry out for a better life. Christ is the "propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but for the sins of the whole world. All are included so long as he is a descendent of Adam.

It is the power of this spiritual vision that can see the

future; see the white fields, where life is the poorest and the most unpromising that we see jewels for the diadem of our Saviour. It is in this vision that we see the hope of a home in the new earth, where the qualities of mankind has vanished though the changing of the ultra rays of the glorious light flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, that spurs us on in the struggle for the conversion of souls lost in sin.

The goal to win men and women, boys and girls for whom Christ died, has caused some to give up their lives. The Apostle Paul wrote in II Corinthians 11:21-28: "I speak as concerning reproach, as though we had been weak. Howbeit whereinsoever any is bold, (I speak foolishly,) I am bold also. Are they Hebrews? so am I. Are they Israelites? so am I. Are they the seed of Abraham? so am I. Are they ministers of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more; in labours more abundant, in stripes above measure, in prisons more frequent, in deaths oft. Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep; In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren; In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches."

Like the Apostle Paul and other true saints of God, we also need to give our lives completely to the Lord, doing whatever and wherever He directs us. We also all need a spiritual vision, which is actually the vision of the Lord, to help fulfill His work here upon the earth. May God give each of us that vision along with the strength and wisdom to accomplish it.

The annual Church of God Youth Retreat was held in the hill country around San Antonio from July 24th through July 29th. A total of 40 Youth participated in the event. The theme of the retreat was P. U. S. H. (Pray Until Something Happens) and throughout the retreat the Youth learned how to deepen their connection with God through prayer.





THE CHURCH AROUND THE WORLD

Congregation at the San Antonio, Texas Church





We want to continue to remember in prayer our church in Myanmar as they continue to have great difficulties with the civil war there and also are having a very hard time with Covid.



LESSON I

6:47.

FIVE THOUSAND FED

Scripture Reading: Matthew 14:14-21.**Golden Text: Matthew 14:21.****"And they that had eaten were about five thousand men, beside women and children."**

1. What did Jesus do when He saw the great multitude? Matthew 14:14.
2. Why did the disciples want to send the people away? Matthew 14:15.
3. What did Jesus say to them? Matthew 14:16.
4. How much did they have to feed the people? Matthew 14:17.
5. What did Jesus do with the loaves and fishes? Matthew 14:18-19.
6. How much was left after they all had what they wanted to eat? Matthew 14:20.
7. How many people did Jesus feed? Matthew 14:21.

NOTE: You can find this story also in Mark 6:30-44; Luke 9:10-17; John 6:1-14.

LESSON II

CHRIST WALKS ON THE SEA

Scripture Reading: Mark 6:45-56.**Golden Text: Mark 6:49.****"But when they saw him walking upon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cried out".**

1. What did Jesus tell His disciples to do, and where did He go after they went away? Mark 6:45-46.
2. When even was come, where was the ship? Mark

3. What did He see the disciples doing in Mark 6:48? How did Jesus come unto them?

4. When they saw Jesus walking upon the sea, what did they suppose He was, and what did He say to them? Mark 6:49-50.

5. Did He go up to them and into the ship? What happened to the wind? Mark 6:51.

6. What was wrong with their hearts? Mark 6:52.

7. When the ship came to shore, did the people know Jesus? Mark 6:53-54.

8. When they heard who Jesus was, what did they bring unto Him? Mark 6:55.

9. Did those who even touched the hem of His garment receive healing? Mark 6:56.

LESSON III

JESUS GOES TO A WEDDING

Scripture Reading: John 2:1-11.**Golden Text: John 2:1 (first part).****"And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee..."**

1. Where was the marriage? John 2:1.
2. Who went with Jesus? John 2:2.
3. What was the trouble at the wedding? John 2:3.
4. What did Jesus do while there to help? John 2:7-8.
5. What had Jesus done to the water? John 2:9.
6. What did the governor say to the bridegroom? John 2:10.

7. How many miracles had Jesus done before this? John 2:11.

LESSON IV

HEALING THE NOBLEMAN'S SON

Scripture Reading: John 4:43-54.

Golden Text: John 4:51.

"And as he was now going down, his servants met him, and told him, saying, Thy son liveth."

1. Where was Jesus at this time? John 4:43.
2. Who was the father of the sick boy, and from where was he? John 4:46.
3. What did he ask Jesus to do? John 4:47.
4. How did Jesus answer him? John 4:48.
5. Did Jesus heal his sick son, and did the man believe Jesus? John 4:50.
6. What message did his servants bring him as he neared home? John 4:51.
7. What did he ask his servants, and what did they answer? John 4:52.
8. What did this prove to him? John 4:53.
9. How many miracles did this make for Jesus since He came to Galilee? John 4:54.

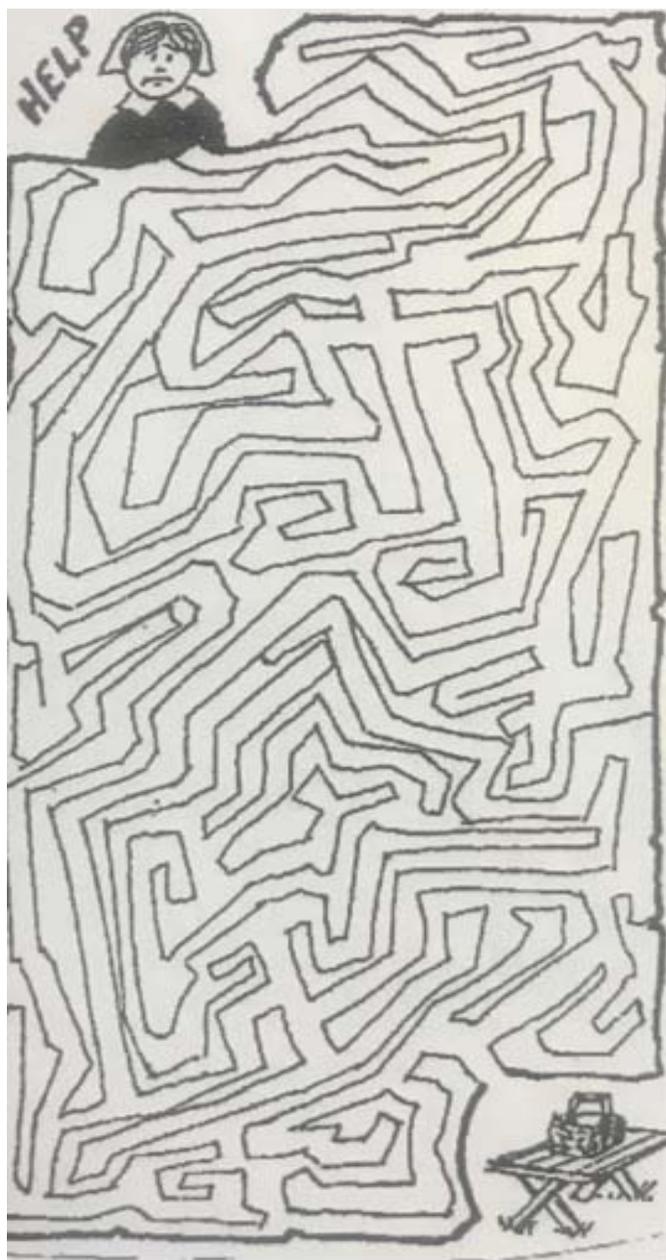
NOTE: A miracle is a mighty act by the power of God.

HAIR RAISERS - answers on page 23

1. Who hung by his hair in the oak?
2. Who had his hair cut for a vow?
3. Who lost his strength when his hair was cut?
4. Who was covered with red hair?
5. Who wiped Jesus' feet with her hair?
6. What color hair goes with leprosy?

*We walk in darkness
 God will seek us
 We must make a choice
 Jesus welcomes us if we confess.
 Who are we?
 Answers on page 23.*

Mini Maze - Please help the Pilgrim get to the Thanksgiving Day picnic.



The Box With The Golden Key

By May Stanley

Joy looked puzzled as she read the familiar handwriting on the white envelope Mother had handed her. "To Joy On Her 14th Birthday" was written on the envelope. "Mother, where did this come from?" she asked. "Uncle James has been in India for a year now."

"Uncle James gave that envelope to me before he left," Mother said, smiling. "He said that I was to give it to you on this special day."

"I wonder what it could be?" Joy's forehead wrinkled in a frown as she stared at it.

"Open it, silly," her younger brother Ricky told her. "You will never find out by looking at it."

Joy laughed. "Might be a good idea," she said, ripping open the envelope. As she pulled out the letter something shiny fell into her lap.

"A little gold key!" She gasped, turning it over in her hand. Eagerly, she read the letter out loud.

"Dear Joy,"

"I am sorry that I cannot be with you in person today. But I have a treasure box for you. This little golden key will open it if you follow directions carefully. First, go to my former room next to Ricky's. You will find a small black box in the top bureau drawer. It contains the first clue. God bless you, and may the treasure bring much happiness to you."

"Uncle James."

Joy jumped up. "Come on, Ricky. What are we waiting for?"

Quickly she ran to Uncle James' room and opened the top bureau drawer. Ricky was close at her heels.

"O look, Ricky!" she said as she pulled a black box from the drawer. "Let us see what is inside."

Eagerly she reached in and pulled out a bit of paper. It read, "this is the clue to the treasure; May it bring you joy without measure. Next you will hunt in a place out in front, where in summer you find lots of pleasure."

"Where is that?" Ricky asked. "I do not get it."

Joy thought for a moment. "He could mean outside in front of the house - maybe the porch." She dashed down the stairs. "Come on. Let us get a garden trowel to dig in the stone urn by the steps. That will be our first try."

"It is a good thing it is too early for Mother to have anything planted out here yet," Joy said breathlessly as she dug in the hard dirt in the stone urn.

"I cannot find anything here."

Ricky had been peering under the porch steps and other places he thought likely. "I have not found anything either," he said.

Joy looked around her. Suddenly her face brightened. "The summer house! Let us inspect the summer house! It follows the clue."

Ricky ran after her as she headed across the front yard for the little summer house where they often played in the summer, shaded from the heat.

Joy began to search everywhere: behind the benches, under the old table, in a hole under the steps. Vines covered the summer house, and she began to explore there. Little by little she worked her way upward. Near the top of the trellis, where the vines grew thickest, her finger struck something hard and unfamiliar.

"There is a box here," she called to Ricky.

"Push that bench over here, please. I cannot reach it."

She stood on the bench and tugged. The box was overgrown by the vine in such a way that she could not budge it. She pulled the vines apart one at a time, until finally the box loosened. A thrill tingled through her as she got it down.

She felt disappointed when she looked at it. It was just an ordinary tin box. She began to tug at the lid. Rusted through, it broke off in her hand. There was some colored cellophane inside. She opened it and another note fell into her hand.

"It is another clue," Ricky said, looking over her shoulder.

With fingers that trembled, Joy removed the wrapper, and read,

"take a little stroll out to the road,
Turn right, half a mile from your abode:
Take with you a shovel,
And gird near the hovel,
By the tumble down porch there is a toad."

"That sounds corny," Ricky said, "What does all that mean?"

"I do not know either," Joy told him. "But let us follow the clues one by one. First we will get a shovel. Then we will go out to the road, turn right, and start walking. That part is clear anyway."

After they had walked a ways, Ricky asked, "Joy, what is a hovel?"

"A hovel is a tumbled down old shack, I think."

Suddenly she stopped. "O Ricky, that is it! I think I know were Uncle James meant. It might be that old shack that sits back off the road. Come on, let us run!"

As they came suddenly upon the place, Joy stopped. She would not admit it to Ricky, but the place did look a little scary with its boarded up windows and weeds all around.

"Do you really think this is the place?" Ricky asked. "M-maybe it is somewhere else."

"Yes, I think this is it." Joy's voice trembled a little, "Come on, Ricky, and be sure not to drop the shovel."

As Joy pushed bravely through the weeds and brambles to the shack, she noticed how dead and brittle they seemed to be.

"Here we are," she said. "I guess nobody has been here for a year. I do not even see a porch. The clue said it had a tumbled down porch. Come on, let us look at the back."

"This sure is thorough going," Ricky panted. They both had to stop several times to untangle themselves from the weeds and burrs. Once Joy looked around in the high grass for Ricky but could not find him.

"Ricky!" she screamed frantically.

"Ouch!" Ricky's voice was so near her it made her jump. He pulled himself up. "I stumbled over that rabbit hole; phew, I hope we soon find that treasure."

Ricky poled among the high grass near the porch. Joy saw some large stones nearby.

"O Ricky!" she cried to her startled brother. "Here is a big, cold dead toad!"

"Well, what do you know about that," Ricky said, "I thought something bit you. It is an iron toad."

"I guess you did, the way I screamed!" Joy walked back to where she had found the toad. "See that bare spot? That is where the toad was sitting. Let us start to dig there."

"All right, I got the shovel, and I will start." Ricky pushed it into the soft earth. Joy let him dig until she saw he was getting tired. Then she took her turn.

"Did you hear that, Ricky?" She dropped to her knees and reached in the hole. "It seems to be a metal box. I will have to dig a little more."

Finally, Joy had the metal box on the ground before her. She took her gold key and turned it in the lock.

"It--it is a package--all wrapped in oilshine!" Joy cried. "O Ricky, this must be the treasure at last!"

Impatiently, she tugged as the wrappings. When she finally got the gift unwrapped, she gasped with pleasure. "A Bible! A beautiful Bible in white leather and with gold edges! So this is the treasure!"

"Aw, I thought it would be gold or precious jewels, or something like that." Ricky was clearly disappointed.

"O Ricky, this treasure is better than that kind of one. Listen to what Uncle James has written on the flyleaf: 'But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also' " (Matthew 6:20-21).

"Say, that is right," Ricky said. "That is why we love Jesus more than anything in the world. Say Sis, your Bible is a beaut."

Joy hugged it tightly to her as they started back through the underbrush. "I love it more than anything I own. And it was lots of fun to find it on a treasure hunt."

Answers to HAIR RAISERS on page 21.

1. Absalom - II Samuel 18:9
2. Paul - Acts 18:18
3. Samson - Judges 16:17
4. Esau - Genesis 25:25
5. Mary - John 12:3
6. Yellow - Leviticus 13:30

Bible riddle - The Wicked - I Chronicles 28:9

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*"Pray without ceasing. In every thing give thanks: for
this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"
(I Thessalonians 5:17-18).*

