

Christ and Thirty Pieces of Silver

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Prophecy - Zechariah 11:12-13 Fulfillment - Matthew 26:15, Matthew 27:3&9

In the entire Bible there are only five references to “thirty pieces of silver.” It is interesting to note that two are found in the Old Testament and three are in the New Testament. Though the Old Testament passage from Zechariah seems to have no direct connection to Christ, the New Testament references of Matthew are clearly and indisputably linked to Jesus. Judas betrayed Christ for thirty pieces of silver. Neither Mark, Luke nor John mentions the amount Judas received for the betrayal. They do call to our attention the fact that he received a significant sum of money from the Jewish authorities.

Although the Old Testament references do not speak directly of our Saviour, they have been viewed by many as a “Messianic Prophecy.” The obvious connection is found in the amount of money specified both in the Old and New Testaments. In addition, there is a connection to be made because Zechariah addressed the subject of shepherds, which is repeatedly used to depict the work of Christ Jesus. Thus, the prophetic words of Zechariah seem to have been fulfilled by Christ as recorded in the Gospel of Matthew. It certainly seems more than coincidence that the exact number of silver coins is mentioned in both places. Surely there is a connection and we will explore it in this chapter.

We begin by considering the passage found in Zechariah.

The passage is about someone who asked to be valued or a price assigned to the worth of what he does. They weighed or counted out thirty pieces of silver. Then he took the thirty pieces of silver and gave them to the potter. Interestingly, as we look at Matthews’ gospel, we notice that Judas and the Jewish leaders had agreed upon the

same price for the betrayal of Christ (Matthew 26:15). Later Judas realized he had done wrong and returned the money. The men with whom he discussed the matter had no concern for his predicament. They refused the return of the money because it was considered “blood money.” Since they could not put it in the Temple treasury, Judas threw down the silver coins and later hanged himself. The Jewish leaders decided to use the money to buy a field in which to bury strangers and they called it “the potter’s field.” Notice there is a double connection between the passage in Matthew and Zechariah. In both passages *thirty pieces of silver* and the *potter* are mentioned. It appears that God intended for us to make a connection between the two.

If there is a connection to be found between the two passages, it is to be found in Christ alone. Although the passage in Zechariah makes no mention of Christ, both references in Matthew are clearly and indisputably about Him. They deal with His betrayal, which led eventually to His crucifixion and death. So there must be some connection to Christ in Zechariah’s prophecy.

A close study of Zechariah’s account reveals that the eleventh chapter is primarily about shepherds. Early in the chapter God condemns the shepherds of that day and through His prophet commands them to “Feed the flock of the slaughter” (verse 4). Later God says “I will feed the flock” (verse 7). Some may argue as to whether God or Zechariah would feed them, but in either case the flock is Divinely fed.

Then in the final verses of the chapter God condemns the “foolish shepherds” (verse 15).

All these references are about shep-

herds, good and bad. The entire chapter focuses on shepherds and God’s interest in the flock. Surely there is a message here, and if we carefully extract it as though it is buried treasure, our hearts will be enriched. To do so, we must understand that in the light of the failures of earthly shepherds, God said, “And I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock” (Zechariah 11:7). God actually did become our Shepherd, in the Person of Jesus Christ. In the New Testament there is an abundance of references where Christ is presented as the Divine Shepherd. Apparently, God designed this simple connection between the Old and New Testaments to focus our attention on His only begotten Son as our Shepherd.

Let us consider a few Scriptures that will hopefully open our eyes of faith to this wonderful truth about Jesus. The first we will consider is found in John, chapter ten. It would seem doubtful that a believer could read that chapter and miss the fact that Jesus is portrayed as a shepherd. In fact Jesus said in John 10:11 “I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep.” Shortly thereafter He adds, “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine” (John 10:14). Later in the chapter Jesus said, “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand” (John 10:27-28). It seems perfectly clear that in our redemption, Christ viewed Himself as our “good Shepherd.”

But, there is more evidence to give this idea credence. In Hebrews 13:20, He is called the “great Shepherd.” In I

Peter 2:25 He is identified as the “Shepherd and Bishop of our souls,” and He is also referred to as the “chief Shepherd” in I Peter 5:4. Why this repeated allegory? Because, as God chose us and gave us to Christ, He adopted us into the family of God as was predestinated (Ephesians 1:4-5). Therefore He died for us and shed His precious atoning blood that we might have the riches of His grace (Ephesians 1:7). In God’s plan of redemption, Jesus is to be viewed as a devoted Shepherd Who is defending His sheep and protecting us from eternal damnation. Just as shepherds of those days often stood between the flock and a predator, so Jesus as our Divine Shepherd stood between us and Satan, our enemy, who wanted to devour and destroy us (I Peter 5:8). God is so good to us! Even in prophecy, He provided a trail of money (thirty pieces of silver) which leads our hearts to view our Lord Jesus Christ as our Shepherd.

Now, if we have grasped this glorious connection, there is even more we can learn about our Divine Shepherd. We need to be aware that ancient shepherds often **led** their sheep. They not only led them to food and water, but also away from many threatening dangers. As our Shepherd, Jesus also leads us as His people. In John 13:15 Jesus said, “For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.” As our Shepherd, He will never lead us astray. He will always lead us in the “paths of righteousness for his name’s sake” (Psalm 23:3).

If we live in sin and rebellion to God and His Word, it is not because the Shepherd has misled us, it is because we have failed to follow Him in the path of truth. If we sin, we are at fault and our failures can never be blamed upon our Shepherd. Like natural sheep, we sometimes go astray just as in Isaiah 53:6. He said, “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” So let us lovingly and obediently follow this

blessed Shepherd, Who is worth far more than thirty pieces of silver.

Even though Zechariah and Matthew mention the thirty pieces of silver, there is a similar sum mentioned in the Book of Exodus. Exodus 21:32 says, “If the ox shall push a manservant or a maidservant; he shall give unto their master thirty shekels of silver, and the ox shall be stoned.” One noticeable difference is clear; thirty pieces of silver is changed to thirty shekels of silver. While the word change does occur, we need to understand that the shekels are coins or pieces of silver. So, it appears that again the reference is likely connected to Christ. However, now we view Him as a Servant as well as a Shepherd.

In the Exodus passage, civil laws and judgments were given to assist people with problem situations. It deals with an ox goring someone and killing them. If a servant was injured, the price which must be paid amounted to thirty shekels of silver. Strangely enough, the amount again connects us to the passage in Matthew. Apparently, when Judas wanted money to betray Christ, the servant’s price was offered. So what does that tell us as we connect it to Christ? God wants us to see His Son, not only as a Shepherd, but also as a Servant. Truly, Jesus was a servant to God and man. Just as all of us have various roles and titles which identify us, so did Christ. Many titles are given to Him for He revealed Himself as “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). He also told us that He is “the resurrection and the life” (John 11:25) and “the true vine” (John 15:1). Clearly, He is seen as more than just “the light of the world” (John 8:12). Even so, He is Shepherd and Servant.

Jesus served our heavenly Father by leaving heaven and coming into this world. He said, “For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me” (John 6:38). He came to accomplish the Father’s will by saving us from the penalty of sin; yet in doing so He also be-

came our Servant. In fact Jesus said, “For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth” (Luke 22:27). Like a servant waiting tables, so our Lord became the Servant of God and man. Paul said, “But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:7). Jesus also took the *position* of a servant when He washed the disciples’ feet (John 13:1-17) and He took the form of a servant when He went to Calvary and there took our sins upon Himself (I Peter 2:24) and died for us (I Corinthians 15:3). Indeed, while on earth, Jesus became a servant to God His Father and to us as His chosen people.

Oh, what a debt we owe Him! Since He **served** us, surely we ought to lovingly and unceasingly serve Him. Psalm 100:2 says, “Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing.” Isn’t He worthy of our best? Have you truly been able to see Christ as Servant as well as Lord and Master (John 13:13)? If so, nothing we do for Him should seem too great a sacrifice. All the years of tireless service in His church will seem far too small a gift to give Him. Peter said, “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light” (I Peter 2:9). Does Peter describe you? Not unless you are showing forth His praises! Hopefully, the Scriptures have enabled you to see Jesus Christ as our Shepherd and Servant. May Jesus be praised in all that has been presented, with no injustice to the truth of God’s holy Word. May the Holy Spirit, Who inspired all Scriptures (II Timothy 3:16-17), use these humble thoughts for the honor and glory of Jesus Christ and encourage us to **follow** Christ, our Shepherd, more perfectly as we endeavor to **serve** Him with all our hearts.

The Increase of the Widow's Oil

by Elder W. A. Mullis
Deceased

"Now there cried a certain woman of the wives of the sons of the prophets unto Elisha, saying, Thy servant my husband is dead; and thou knowest that thy servant did fear the Lord: and the creditor is come to take unto him my two sons to be bondmen.

And Elisha said unto her, What shall I do for thee? tell me, what hast thou in the house? And she said, Thine handmaid hath not any thing in the house, save a pot of oil.

Then he said, Go, borrow three vessels abroad of all thy neighbors, even empty vessels; borrow not a few.

And when thou art come in, thou shalt shut the door upon thee and upon thy sons, and shalt pour out into all these vessels, and thou shalt set aside that which is full.

So she went from him, and shut the door upon her and upon her sons, he brought the vessels to her; and she poured out.

And it came to pass, when the vessels were full, that she said unto her son, Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed.

Then she came and told the man of God. And he said, Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest." (II Kings 4:1-7).

There are two great lessons that can be brought out in these Scriptures. The first one is the providential care of God in the lives of His people. David said in Psalms 37:25, "I have been young and now am old, yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." I would understand the "righteous" here to be the practical righteousness that belongs to the people of God who have walked in obedience to the commandments of God. There is an imputed righteousness by which the people of God shall be justified

for a home in heaven, and there is a practical righteousness by which the people of God shall be justified to enjoy the blessings of God upon this earth. (Please study Deuteronomy 6:24-25 and James 2:20-21). The second great lesson is that which is manifest in the lives of God's children when they prove their faith in God by their works of obedience. When faith and obedience (or works) are joined together, God is glorified and we are blessed; but faith without works is dead! Faith alone would never have brought the blessing of God in the lives of those two widows! They had to obey the commandment of God's servant (which was the commandment of God) in order to see the power of God fulfilled in their lives.

This certain widow woman had a problem and realized she needed help. She must have had faith in God and confidence in His servant to have come to him for help. This servant of the Lord gave her instructions which were of the Lord and she had faith sufficient to follow these instructions. Let us notice some things that were characteristics of this widow woman. She was not only a woman of great faith, but she possessed these characteristics of humility and obedience. Surely it had been the custom of this woman to live an humble and obedient life for God granted the righteous desires of her heart. (See Ezekiel 14:7-8). When she received the instructions from this man of God, she obeyed. She was a doer of the word, and not just a hearer. Many of God's people are hearers but not doers. Can we say, honestly, that this is the custom in our lives? Or have we heard the instructions preached from God's word and then turned our backs upon these instructions, following our own ways and ideas? God had taken her husband in death, but He had not

utterly removed His lovingkindness. God was the light of her life; her salvation; and the strength of her life. When she had enquired of the servant of the Lord, he asked her what she had in her house and she answered, "not anything in thy house, save a pot of oil."

To many of God's people this small amount of oil would not have been sufficient to do that which needed to be done, therefore the instructions that Elisha gave her would have been utterly ridiculous. We know it would have been ridiculous to some, because even in our day some say it is ridiculous to think that they could live on ninety percent of their income; therefore they refuse to bring their tithes and offerings into God's storehouse, and they fail to receive the blessings that this widow received, and fail to see the power of God manifest in their lives.

The servant of the Lord told her to borrow vessels of all her neighbors, empty vessels, not just a few, but many! Please notice that she was then to go into her house with her sons and close the door. According to the Scripture, this widow did not question the wisdom of the instructions; she only went and obeyed! When Jesus was at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, and the wine was all gone, Mary said to those servants, **"Whatsoever he saith unto you, do it."** (John 2:5). These would be wonderful instructions for God's people to begin practicing in our day. It would do more for the Church of God, for our lives, for our homes, and for our nation than anything else on earth. When she and her two sons were in the house and had closed the door, she began to pour from that little pot and completely filled all these empty vessels. Why close the door? God does nothing to be seen of men, and has taught us that we are to do

likewise. (See Matthew 6:1-6).

In verse 6, we read: "Bring me yet a vessel. And he said unto her, There is not a vessel more. And the oil stayed." Then in verse 7: "Go, sell the oil, and pay thy debt, and live thou and thy children of the rest." Not only had that

little pot of oil brought forth enough to pay the debt, but there was enough left for her and her two sons to live. Oh ye of little faith!! How ashamed we Primitive Baptist should be. God is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is able to do exceedingly abundantly

above all that we ask or think. (Ephesians 3:20). Yet so many think God is not able to bless us as He did this widow. How dishonoring the sin of unbelief is!

Grow in Knowledge

1. "Whoso keepeth the law is a wise son: but he that is a _____ of riotous men shameth his father."
2. "Whoso robbeth his father or his mother, and saith, it is no transgression; the same is the companion of a _____."
3. "I am a companion of all them that _____ thee, and of them that keep thy precepts."
4. "For my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, _____ be within thee."
5. "He that walketh with _____ men shall be wise: but a companion of fools shall be destroyed."
6. "Thou that swellest in the _____, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it."
7. "I will _____ thee, and thy companions with thee."
8. "Shall the companions make a _____ of him? shall they part him among the merchants?"
9. "She shall be brought unto the king in _____ of needlework: the virgins her companions that follow her shall be brought unto thee."
10. "Yet I supposed it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my _____, and companion in labour,..."

A Hidden Message

by Walker Lee (10 years old)
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Ezekiel 16:6 says, "And when I passed by thee and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live, yea I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, live"

The Lord helped me to write on this because it stayed in my mind when Brooks Strickland, a member of the Waycross primitive Baptist church, explained this verse to me.

Imagine a new born baby, covered in blood, helpless out in a field, with no mother to care for her. When the Lord was passing by, the Lord saw that baby lying there. In that field, she was

helpless and covered in blood. God saved the girl, clothed her, and gave her silver and gold. She turned into a beautiful woman. He raised that baby up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. She turned into a beautiful lady, and then she turned into a whore. She turned away from God. She rebelled against God, then God left her the same way he found her. By this time, she had her children.

This story is similar to the story of our nation. We have turned away from God and need to turn back. Abortion, divorce and remarriage without scriptural grounds, and homosexual mar-

riages are some examples of how this nation has turned away from God, His word, and His way. My Daddy told me that there are even some parts of the nation that do not even allow parents to spank their children. There should only be one man for one woman, and anyone who spares the rod, is spoiling the child.

Just like that baby, our nation grew up with God's teaching, and then turned away from God. We are like that baby, helpless and polluted. We need to turn back to God.

"I have never once feared the devil, but I tremble every time I enter the pulpit."

John Knox

Things to Remember

The word of God repeatedly tells us specifically to **REMEMBER** certain things. Take your concordance and look up the word REMEMBER. Study those verses. For the next couple of years, the Lord willing, we will have an article each month on a verse telling us to Remember something. Please memorize that text each month, study the article, and discuss with your family the importance of remembering that lesson for the month. Consider carefully each month WHY God said to remember that point of truth. Look at other Scriptures which relate the same truth! Then **THINK ON THESE THINGS!** (Philippians 4:8).

Remember Miriam!

by Elder William M. Mullis
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From time to time, the Word of God tells us to REMEMBER what God did unto certain people. We are to remember how God dealt with them, because God changes not, and He is not a respecter of persons (Malachi 3:6; Acts 10:34)! In other words, God has preserved His record of His dealings with His people for us **today**, that we may know how He will deal with us. If we remember **how** God chastened Adam and Eve for transgressing His command, we will fear being cast out like they were! If we remember how God chastened Moses for striking the rock rather than speaking to the rock, we will be reminded of the seriousness of not doing exactly what God commands. If we **remember Lot's wife**, we again will **learn** from her disobedience. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime, were written for our LEARNING." (Romans 15:4).

May we all give more attention and diligence to remembering and meditating on the TRUTH that God is a jealous God and it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God! (Exodus 20:5; Nahum 1:1- 15; Hebrews 10:30, 31)! "Whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth." (Hebrews 12:6)! With those thoughts in mind, let us now give attention to remembering what the Lord our **God did unto Miriam!**

This 24th chapter of Deuteronomy is full of warnings to the people of God. There is instruction and warning about divorce, about taking pledges, about

being fair in paying people and helping the poor, about justice and charity. So there are many different areas which could be studied in this chapter. The one matter we want to emphasize and examine is found in verses 8 and 9. Please look closely at these two verses, and beg God to impress a great lesson upon all of our minds!

"Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that you observe diligently, and do according to all that the priests, the Levites shall teach you: as I commanded them, so ye shall observe to do.

Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam by the way, after that ye were come forth out of Egypt!" (Deuteronomy 24:8,9).

These two verses are inseparably connected! The seventh verse warns the people of God to TAKE HEED in the plague of leprosy that they (1) **OBSERVE** diligently, and (2) **DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT THE** priests, the Levites teach. And then the ninth verse says REMEMBER what the Lord God did to Miriam. Let's go back now in history to see what the Lord did to Miriam, and REMEMBER WHY GOD did such a thing to her. Please turn back to Numbers, chapter twelve, and read the account there of the conflict between Moses, Aaron, and Miriam. Remember that those were the children of Amram. Many years earlier, you recall the scene where Moses was born, and after three months was put into an ark of bulrushes and placed in

the river. It was Miriam, Moses' older sister, who watched Moses until the daughter of Pharaoh came.

But now, in Numbers, chapter 12, after Moses has become the law-giver and leader of Israel, we find an occasion where Miriam and Aaron rebel against their brother Moses. Listen to the haughty words of Miriam and Aaron as recorded in Numbers 12:2, "Hath the Lord indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spoken also by us?" There was the beginning of GREAT TROUBLE for Aaron and Miriam, especially for Miriam. The following verses describe how the anger of the Lord was kindled because Miriam had spoken against the one God had chosen as the natural and spiritual leader of Israel. God had chosen Moses to teach, lead, and exhort the children of Israel in the way they should go. His burden was heavy, as we read in Numbers 11:10-15. Moses finally cried out in desperation, "I am not able to bear all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me. And if thou deal thus with me, KILL ME, I pray thee, out of hand, if I have found favor in thy sight, and let me not see my wretchedness." (Numbers 11:14, 15).

Everyone seemed to be speaking against Moses because of the hardness of the way. They complained about everything and blamed Moses for the sufferings and leanness in the wilderness. The people complained fiercely about the manna which God

was giving them to eat, and we read in chapter 11 that God sent quail from the sea, "And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague." (Numbers 11:33). And many of the people died! Now, as chapter 12 begins, Miriam and Aaron began speaking against Moses! We see Miriam is stricken with leprosy, and she became white as snow!

Brethren, we cannot imagine the horror felt by Miriam and Aaron as she was stricken with leprosy by God. It was the most feared disease of that day, and resulted in one being banished from the people! There is no mention of treatment or remedy for the disease. It was identified by the rising of scabs and white shining spots. Also, there was the rising of quick raw flesh. One with the disease was rendered unclean and had to be cast out, or quarantined. It was believed that only a miracle could bring about one being cleansed of this dreaded disease.

So now we are told to "**Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam.**" God caused Miriam to be leprous!!! Immediately, Aaron said unto Moses, "Alas, my Lord, I beseech thee, lay not the sin upon us, wherein we have done foolishly, and wherein we have sinned. Let her not be as one dead, of whom the flesh is half consumed when he cometh out of his mother's womb. And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, Heal her now, O God, I beseech thee. And the Lord said unto Moses, If her father had but spit in her face, should she not be ashamed seven days? Let her be shut out from the camp seven days, and after that let her be received in again. And Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days: and the people journeyed not till Miriam was brought in again." (Numbers 12:11-15).

The punishment of Miriam was twofold! First, she was stricken with leprosy; second, she was shut out from the camp seven days! She suffered

hell as her body was in pain! She was afflicted with a disease which made her unclean; and she was separated from all of her loved ones who could give her comfort and consolation.

REMEMBER WHAT THE LORD THY GOD DID UNTO MIRIAM!!!

Now, let us look back to the REASON God punished her so severely! Miriam had spoken against the man of God! Miriam had exalted herself, and her thoughts, and her ideas to be just as important as the one God had chosen to speak to the people.

Please consider this prayerfully! There is an important lesson for us today! Let us at this point go back to the scripture in Deuteronomy, chapter 24 and listen closely to verses 8 and 9: "Take heed in the plague of leprosy, that thou observe diligently, and DO ACCORDING TO ALL THAT THE PRIESTS THE LEVITES SHALL TEACH YOU: AS I COMMANDED THEM, SO YE SHALL OBSERVE TO DO. REMEMBER WHAT THE LORD THY GOD DID UNTO MIRIAM!"

The command in verse eight is to TAKE HEED, and OBSERVE DILIGENTLY, AND DO all that the priests shall teach you. Then verse 9 says remember Miriam. Remember that Miriam spoke against the messenger of God: Moses. And remember what God did to Miriam for speaking against the messenger of God!

It seems that respect for authority is decreasing daily in America! Parents are not respected! Law enforcement officers are not respected! And the messengers from God are not respected! Why? One reason is because **we have forgotten Miriam!!!** We have forgotten to remember what the Lord our God does to those who treat His servants and messengers with contempt!

When a minister of the gospel preaches for the people of God to REPENT and turn away from the gods of this world to the one true and living God, many begin to rise up in contempt, supposedly against the man of God! But, the Scriptures show that the

real rebellion is against God!

On one occasion, Jehoshaphat warned Judah and Jerusalem of the importance of **believing God and His servants!** He said, "HEAR ME, O JUDAH, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem; Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established; believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." (II Chronicles 20:20)!

In the church today, God has His ministers preaching the gospel, and warning the people about the great danger of being carnal-minded. The messengers of God are greatly concerned about the people of God who are fulfilling the lusts of the flesh and are so apathetic about the way of righteousness! The ministers of God are today weeping like Jeremiah as he saw destruction coming upon Israel. Because of disobedience, Israel was cut off! Jeremiah lamented, cried, and wept because he had warned over and over of the coming destruction. BUT ISRAEL DID NOT BELIEVE THE PROPHET OF GOD! SO ISRAEL DID NOT PROSPER! Israel did not remember what the Lord God did unto Miriam when she spoke against the messenger of God! Israel spoke against the true prophets who warned of destruction and followed the false prophets who spoke of prosperity!

EVEN SO IT IS TODAY IN AMERICA! The true servants of God are warning about the wrath of God which is about to be poured out upon our nation, while the false prophets give false hope to a people who are **not seeking the Lord with all their hearts!**

The false prophets are not confronting the people with their covetousness, greed, idolatry, drunkenness, adultery, and general worldly-mindedness! The people have, for the most part, refused to use the word of God, calling it outdated. Some go so far as to actually state that the standards of the Bible cannot be followed today. Many have substituted their own feelings and ideas for the TRUTH of God!

FOR EXAMPLE, there are women standing in pulpits today suppos-

edly preaching the word of God. The Bible says in I Corinthians 14:34,35, "Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church!" And we read in I Timothy 2:11,12, "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But **I suffer not a woman to teach**, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence!"

Another example of not following God's word concerns church discipline. Most churches today will allow a person to remain a member, although guilty of drunkenness, or covetousness, or adultery, etc. Yet the word of God declares that one must walk close to God in order to be a member of the church.

We read in I Corinthians 5:1,2,5,6, 11-13; "it is reported commonly that there is fornication among you, and such fornication as is not so much as named among the Gentiles, that one

should have his father's wife...And ye are puffed up, and have not rather mourned, that he that hath done this deed might be taken away from among you. To deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?... But now I have written unto you not to keep company, if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner; with such an one no not to eat. For what have I to do to judge them also that are without? do not ye judge them that are within? But them that are without God judgeth. Therefore put away from among yourselves that wicked person."

What has happened to God's laws about women speaking in the church? What has happened to God's standard for church discipline? What has happened to the command to **visit**? What has happened to the command to **study God's word daily**? **The commands are still there!** But the people

have exalted themselves as Miriam did! The people think they can walk in their own way, **ignoring the messenger and message of God!**

Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam!

Please turn to Hebrews 13:7,17. "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have SPOKEN UNTO YOU THE WORD OF GOD: WHOSE FAITH FOLLOW, considering the END of their conversation! "Now listen carefully to the 17th verse: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you!"

Have you been exhorted to visit the sick and shut-ins? Are you doing what God has commanded? Have you been exhorted to study God's Holy Word daily? Are you doing it?

May God help us all to **REMEMBER what the Lord our God did unto Miriam, and remember why He did it!!!**

Paradoxes of Prayer

*I asked God for Strength
that I might achieve.*

*I was made weak,
that I might learn
humbly to obey.*

*I asked for health,
that I might do greater things.*

*I was given infirmity,
that I might do better things.*

*I asked for power,
that I might be happy.*

*I was given weakness
that I might feel
the need of God.*

*I asked for all things,
that I might enjoy life.*

*I was given life,
that I might enjoy all things.*

*I got nothing that I asked for--
but everything I had hoped for.*

*Almost despite myself,
my unspoken prayers
were answered.*

*I am among all,
most richly blessed.*



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For Sermons and Prayer Requests



Serving Jesus!

by Elder Don McWilliams
Deceased

I have often wondered how we would react if Jesus came to visit us. For that matter, what about a minister, deacon, or someone you consider walks close to God? "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares;" (Hebrews 13:2). What a great blessing we are in danger of losing if we don't open our hearts and homes for God's people. Jesus said, "inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matthew 25:40).

"...think on these things."
(Philippians 4.8)

*Please read the following poem and
think about serving Jesus.*

IF JESUS CAME TO YOUR HOUSE

If Jesus came to your house
to spend a day or two--
If He came unexpectedly,
I wonder what you'd do.

Oh, I know you'd give your nicest
room to such an honored Guest,
And all the food you'd serve to Him
would be the very best.

And you would keep assuring Him
you're glad to have Him there--
That serving Him in your own home
is joy beyond compare.

But--when you saw Him coming,
would you meet Him at the door
With arms outstretched in welcome to
your heavenly Visitor.

Or would you have to change your
clothes before you let Him in,

Or hide some magazines, and put
the Bibles where they'd been?

Would you turn off the radio
and hope He hadn't heard,
And wish you hadn't uttered that
last, loud, hasty word?

Would you hide your worldly music
and put some hymn books out?
Could you let Jesus walk right in,
or would you rush about?

And I wonder--if the Saviour
spent a day or two with you,
Would you go right on doing
the things you always do?

Would you keep right on saying
the things you always say?
Would life for you continue as
it does from day to day?

Would your family conversation
keep up its usual pace,
And would you find it hard each
meal to say a table grace?

Would you sing the songs

you always sing and
read the books you read
And let Him know the things on
which your mind and spirit feed?

Would you take Jesus with you
everywhere you'd planned to go,
Or would you maybe change
your plans for just a day or so?

Would you be glad to have Him
meet your very closest friends,
Or would you hope they'd
stay away until His visit ends?

Would you be glad to have
Him stay forever on and on,
Or would you sigh with great relief
when He at last was gone?

It might be interesting to know the
things that you would do
If Jesus Christ in person came to
spend some time with you.

By Lois Blanchard

Answers to Grow in Knowledge

1. Companion - Proverbs 28:7
2. Destroyer - Proverbs 28:24
3. Fear - Psalm 119:63
4. Peace - Psalm 122:8
5. Wise - Proverbs 13:20

6. Gardens - Song of Solomon 8:13
7. Answer - Job 35:4
8. Banquet - Job 41:6
9. Raiment - Psalm 45:14
10. Brother - Philippians 2:25

"The battle over the Ten Commandments monument I brought into Alabama's Supreme Court is not about a monument and not about politics. The battle is not even about religion, a term defined by our founders as 'the duty we owe to our creator and the manner of discharging it.' Federal Judge Myron Thompson who ordered the monument's removal, and I are in perfect agreement on the fact that the issue in this case is:

'Can the state acknowledge God?'

Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore
Former Chief Justice of Alabama

The Need To Be Loosed - To Be Set Free

by Elder Parker H. Sye
Forsyth, Georgia

Please read Luke 13: 10.-17.

In the above reference Scripture passage we see Jesus doing something that He always did on the Sabbath - "... teaching in one of the synagogues." "And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself." (V. 11).

This woman which had a "spirit of infirmity" was "bowed together", which physically indicates a dislocation of the vertebra of the spine. But the inspired writer, Luke, gives Satan a prominent place here and shows us that the woman's calamity had a deeper root than physical. It was indeed a spiritual calamity that this woman was representative of, "a spirit of infirmity." And Jesus said: "...whom Satan hath bound..." (V. 16). She was "... bowed together and could in no wise lift up herself." Think about this in the spiritual sense. What an expressive picture this is of man's spiritual condition because of sin: bowed down, held captive in the bonds of iniquity by Satan - UNABLE to look up into the face of God, and without strength to remedy his evil plight.

David describes this fallen condition of man in Psalm 40:12: "For innumerable evils have compassed me about: mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me." The person here described was UNABLE to recover himself from this pitiful condition and therefore, in need of help to be loosed, to be set free. Oh beloved, we were born to be free! But sin put us into a condition of bondage with a death sentence. And we

would have stayed there except for the grace and mercy of God through His Son. Paul said in Romans 5:6,8: "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." ... "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

In God's foreknowledge He knew man (Adam) would disobey Him, be cast out from Him, and die. So God planned in the Covenant of Grace, before time, to choose a people out of all of Adam's fallen race who had been polluted in their own blood by sin, to be saved, redeemed, and given life eternal through the sinless blood of His only begotten Son - the Lamb slain from before the foundation of the world. We know of these teachings, these truths, which are found in many places in God's Word. However there is a beautiful passage in Ezekiel 16:6 which describes man in his total depravity and degradation. It also describes God's grace (unmerited favor and love) in salvation toward His elect people. "And when I (God) passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live."

The Bible teaches us that the wages of sin is death! And all mankind has sinned and is depraved - polluted in their sinful blood. But to those chosen in Christ, God, in grace says, "Live"! The One who is Sovereign over all His creation says, "Live"!

Paul describes the natural state of man and the state of grace in Ephesians 2:1-9 (please read). God according to His sovereign will and purpose, foreknew and chose a people out of His unmerited love. He quickened them from Spiritual darkness to Spirit-

ual light. He raised them up to see Him with a Spiritual eye, and to sit with Him in heavenly places.

The Psalmist said in Psalm 40:2,3: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock (Christ) and established my goings. And He put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God." And then in verse 5, the Psalmist goes on to speak of the fact that "Many, O Lord my God are thy wonderful works which Thou hast done and thy thoughts to usward: that cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: If I Would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Yet how little we think upon Him.

Not only did God send His Son to die for our eternal sins that we might have hope of eternal life, but also that we might be SET FREE - LOOSED from the pitfalls of Satan to live and enjoy the abundant life in the Spiritual Kingdom of God. This was prophesied in Isaiah 61:1-3, and Acts 10:38 tells us "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: Who went about doing good and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with Him." Remember that our text says in Luke 13:10: "And He (Jesus) was teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath." He was always there because He delighted to do the Father's will. Again, David speaks of our Lord Jesus in Psalm 40:7,8: "Then said I, I come in the volume of the Book it is written of me, I delight to do Thy will O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." Jesus goes on to say in verses 9,10: "I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O Lord, thou knowest. I have

not hid Thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy salvation I have not concealed Thy loving- kindness and thy truth from the great congregation." Here we see the faithful, obedient Son of God doing what was prophesied He would do, having been anointed by the Father: "...to preach good tidings unto the meek, to bind up the brokenhearted, **to proclaim liberty to the captives**, and the opening of the prison **to them that are bound**... that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, **that He might be glorified.**" (Isaiah 61:1 and 3)

Notice that Jesus' teaching was to "them that are bound", of which this woman in the lesson was descriptive.. Also notice that even when we are freed, loosed from bondage of eternal sin, we can be bound by other things from which we need to be freed: anxiety, fear, greed, immorality, and also from man's religion which contradicts the free grace of God and God's standards of righteousness and morality! Man's religion cannot give freedom, peace, and Spiritual rest. So we see the necessity to be free, loosed from error, to knowing the Truth. How sad so few of God's dear people study God's Word with open minds that they might come to KNOW the Truth. Jesus is the Truth! We must know Him in that Truth and acknowledge that He alone is the Truth. He alone is without sin and can set us free and cleanse us of sin and the guilt of sin; NOT MAN with his add-on religion that keeps us in bondage to the law and denies the righteousness of Christ Who alone can save, and denies glory due alone to Him! If you fail to know God and Christ - the Truth of His Word, your lamp will go out -- your light.. So don't ignore truth for truth is NEVER your enemy. Jesus said in John 8:31,32: "if ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Loose you from bondage of error).

Jesus warned of the false teachers

in His day. Our modern society has evolved to say "truth" is conformity to one's being or nature (what sounds good to you), and whatever ideology you choose to pattern your life after is good, provided you are sincere. The Bible answers this false perception by saying: "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." (Proverbs 14:12 & 16:25). Man's ways lead to bondage, not freedom. It is, therefore, vitally important to us individually and collectively, within our homes and churches, to stick to the Truth of the matter in every aspect of our lives. We must carefully scrutinize what is set before us, and if it is presented as "Biblical", be as the noble Bereans and "search the Scriptures daily, whether those things are so." Only then can we expect to remain "free indeed"!

Having spent most of our time on the "spiritual" side of this lesson, I now need to spend a little time on the other side of the text which deals with the "physical" part of man. As the lesson opens and Jesus is teaching in one of the synagogues on the sabbath, we are told: "And, behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity eighteen years, and was bowed together, and could in no wise lift up herself. And when Jesus saw her, he called her to him"...(verses 11 and 12a).. Of course He SAW her. In His omniscience He sees us all! He saw the woman at Jacob's well in Samaria and felt compelled to go to Samaria so He could deal with her and loose her from her ignorance of spiritual truths, to the joy of true worship of Himself, and to repentance which was followed by witnessing to others. And then Jesus SAW the woman of faith who had an issue of blood for 30 years, and He went to her town to loose her of her torment. He sees US wherever we are and in whatever our condition of life may be as God has allowed us to be in that condition or placed us there according to His will and purpose, which may or may not be known unto us... Remember, God placed a THORN in

the Apostle Paul's flesh - the Scripture says: "...to buffet him." Paul had been blessed with spiritual blessings above measure when he was made to ascend into the third heaven and saw things not lawful to utter. So God placed a thorn in his flesh — "A messenger of Satan" to buffet him lest he would think of himself above that which he should.

We notice in verse 13 of our text that after Jesus laid His hand on the woman (having pronounced her loosed from her infirmity, 12), the Scripture tells us: "and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God." Our nature desires to glory in self. God allows Satan to buffet our vain natures so we glory only in the Cross of Christ for our salvation/deliverance. That was Paul's experience. The experience of the woman in our text was different, and so is yours and mine.

We learn in our lesson once again of the compassion, mercy, and blessing of Christ upon His children, especially when they exercise great faith and believe that He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. This woman was a woman of great faith! How do we know that? In two ways: First: She "was bowed together and in no wise could lift up herself." And somehow she made it to the synagogue! How often many of God's people will have a little sniffle, or company is coming, or the fish are biting, or some other multitude of excuses, and many just can't get to church today.

Remember Jesus said: "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart (Psa. 40:8). Jesus also said: "If you love me you will keep my commandments." Do we really love the Father and His son? Do we delight to DO the Father's will?

SECONDLY we can say this woman was a woman of great faith because Jesus said so! He said in verse 16, that she was a "daughter of Abraham." Abraham was the father of faith of all them that believe, and we are to "Walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham." (Rom. 4:12b). Abraham knew the truth that God gave salvation

not to the children of the flesh, but of the PROMISE. The promised seed, the elect, Spiritual Israel, was made spiritual by the grace of God and set apart for a holy purpose. This woman walked in the faith of Abraham, **and knowing what Jesus would do for her (die on the cross for her)** she was constrained by His love to worship Him. So Jesus, seeing her great faith and love for Him, exalts her in His love, mercy, and grace and in deep compassion **sets her free** - LOOSED her from the affliction of the body! She had been a long, long time having that spirit of infirmity, and being bowed together without the ability to lift up herself. Sometimes it takes awhile.. But remember it's God's time. And God does ALL THINGS well! David said:

"Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart." (Psa. 73:1).

Now what was the reaction of this woman when she was made straight by the miraculous power of Christ?" She glorified God! She fulfilled the purpose of her existence.

Why are there so few like this woman? The answer is because few have a heart for God, His Son, His Word of truth, His church, and serving God to His glory. Why? Because they choose the other way of living their lives - their way - a way that seemeth right unto a man. They choose the wide gate and the broad way rather than the strait gate, and the narrow way (God's way) which leadeth to life abundant. Jesus said,...

"and few there be that find it." So few

are loosed from anxiety, and fear, and the pitfalls of Satan **that would** give them the abundant life in Christ and would put a new song in their mouths and hearts even in the midst of the trials and perplexities of life.

So we need to make a choice to draw near to God in obedience and in faith, believing in His promise that He will draw near to us and bless us - loose us, and set us free. And then our desire will be to glorify Him in our bodies. "For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. What good witnesses we will be to our children, to others in the church, and to all with whom we have to do.

SOME THINGS WE CAN KNOW! BLESSED ASSURANCE!

I. We should seek godly knowledge:

THINGS WE SHOULD KNOW!

II Peter 3:18

John 17:3

John 7:16,17

John 8:31,32

II Peter 1:5

Proverbs 2:3-5

Proverbs 15:14

III. Some sobering certainties!

Numbers 32:23

I Timothy 6:7

Ecclesiastes 12:14

II. THINGS GOD SAYS WE CAN KNOW!

I John 3:2

I John 3:14

I John 3:19-21

Job 19:25-27

Romans 8:28,38,39

II Corinthians 5:1

I Kings 8:56

Jeremiah 9:24

Hosea 6:3

Psalms 4:3

Matthew 10:42

John 4:41,42

IV. Some things we do not know!

A. There are some things God has not revealed to us- Deuteronomy 29:29

B. We do not know what we will do- I Cor. 8:2; James 4:13-17.

C. Other Scriptures:

1. I John 3:2

2. John 16:12

**"It is a poor sermon that gives no offense;
that neither makes some hearers
displeased with themselves nor with the preacher."**

George Whitefield

**"If there is no controversy in your ministry,
there is probably very little content in your preaching." Al Mohler**

Changing The Law of The Land!

by Bro. Richard Lee
Waycross, Georgia

In Daniel 3:13-15, we read where King Nebuchadnezzar had just learned that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not fall down and worship the golden image as he had commanded. He was giving them another chance, thinking that maybe they didn't understand. In verse 14, the king asked them, "Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? (v15) now, if ye be ready that at what time ye hear the cornet, flute, harp, sack but, psaltery, and dulcimer, and all kinds of musick, ye fall down and worship the image I have made; well: but if ye worship not, ye shall be cast the same hour into the midst of a burning fiery furnace; and who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?"

This was the end of his speaking for a time. We can see that the king had challenged God, as well as Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. I'm sure he expected that this would scare them into submission because he had just made it clear that he had power over the lives of these men. The king's threat had no impact on these three bold men of God. They were unwavering, were of a single mind, and were set for the defense of the gospel (Philippians 1:17).

Their answer is in verses 16-18. "O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. (v17) If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. (V18) But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."

To say this to the most powerful man in the world took great faith, confidence, understanding and trust in God. But they stood firm, did not

move, were not wishy washy, but made it clear that unto death, they would not worship a false god. Please read Daniel 3:19-25 to see Nebuchadnezzar's judgment on these three men of God.

In verse 26, the king called the men, who were unharmed by the great fire, so he could speak to them, and called them the "servants of the most high God." In verse 27, we read where all the rulers of the great kingdom, Babylon, gathered around and "saw these men upon whose bodies the fire had no power, nor was a hair on their head singed, neither was their clothes changed, nor the smell of fire had passed on them."

In verse 28, King Nebuchadnezzar said "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who hath sent his angel, and delivered his servants that trusted in him and have changed the king's word, and have yielded their bodies that they might not serve or worship any god except their own God."

The part of the story that struck me as being so important was the stand that Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego took! It was such a strong testimony to a most powerful God that it changed the king's word. In verse 15 the king asked, "Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hands?" In verse 28, however, he said, "Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego who hath sent his angel and delivered his servants that trusted him..." The king went on to make a decree that anyone that spoke against their God would be killed.

In the stand that these men took, we see how the power of God was displayed. Was the fire really hot? The king was so full of fury that he had the fire heated up seven times hotter than it should have been heated, so hot that it slew the most mighty men in the

kings' army that had bound Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and threw them into the furnace.

God's power has no restrictions, no boundaries, and no limit. I see the power of God first in making them able to stand firm and not compromise. A natural man could not have stood where these men stood without the power of the Holy Spirit. Because of the Spirit of God, their confidence did not waver. Philippians 4:13 says, "I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me." God's Spirit was leading them in this case, and Christ did strengthen them! The king even said in verse 25, "Lo, I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the son of God." God's Spirit was manifest as a man, the angel spoken of by Nebuchadnezzar in verse 28, who was with "his servants that trusted in him" while they were down in the burning fiery furnace.

We must ask the question of ourselves: have we ever been servants of God who trusted him enough that we would not compromise on His word? Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego stood against the whole world and the law of the land. Because of their stand, that law was changed!

Through this record of history, I can see that I am more often like the others that knew the image was not a real god, but would not stand against it. We are more often likely to go along with the majority than to be like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. I see these three entering at the strait and narrow way, being led unto abundant life.

I hope we as servants of God could be guided into a place where we are of a single mind to follow God's word completely, unwavering, and are able to change the corrupt laws of our land.

Blessing in Believing

by Bro. David B. Durrence
Waycross, Georgia

As we read and consider the “Word of God”, we see how those that believe the promises of God and rejoice in them are greatly blessed! God always performs, or brings about His promises. However, often times God’s people doubt or question the promises of God instead of believing and rejoicing in them, and they miss the fullness of the blessing that God has in store for them. Let’s consider the record of God’s promise to Zacharias concerning his wife Elizabeth bringing forth a son. **“They were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. And they had no child, because that Elisabeth was barren, and they both were now well stricken in years” (Luke 1:6,7).**

Zacharias and Elizabeth had been praying to God for a child and God heard their prayers! The Lord sent Gabriel, an angel of the Lord, to bring Zacharias the good news! God had heard his prayers and Elizabeth would conceive and bring forth a son, whose name would be called John, who would later be called, John The Baptist. The angel of God told Zacharias how his son would bring him great joy and how John would be great in the sight of the Lord. **(Also read Luke 1:15-17).** But, Zacharias doubted the promise of God because he was old, and Elizabeth was well stricken in years; and she was barren and unable to bring forth a child. Zacharias was like many of us today: he had forgotten that **“with God nothing is impossible”**.

Because of his unbelief, he was made to be dumb, and unable to speak until the child was conceived and then born. God had ordained His promise to Zacharias and He did perform it. Imagine, if you can, what

a joy and blessing that he could have experienced had he been able to tell others of the blessing that had been bestowed upon him by the upcoming birth of a son. Unbelief is a major problem that affects many of the people of God today as it did the children of Israel in the Biblical days.

As we continue reading this 1st chapter of Luke, we find a good example of someone who received a promise from God, sent to her by the same angel Gabriel. She believed and rejoiced at the promise of God. This woman was not barren like Elizabeth; but it would still take a miracle from God because Mary was a virgin and had not known a man. Gabriel told Mary that she was highly favored, and blessed among women; and that God was with her **“and, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:31-33).**

Mary did not completely understand what all the angel of God had told her, but she said to the angel **“Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word” (v-38).** Mary believed that **“with God nothing is impossible”**. With haste, Mary arose and went to see her cousin Elizabeth, and told her the good news about the promise that God had sent to her through the angel Gabriel. The scripture records these words that Elizabeth said concerning Mary: **“blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord” (v-45).**

We see here that Mary believed Ga-

bral, the angel of the Lord, when she was told that she, who had not known a man, and was a virgin in every way, would bring forth a son in her virginity. She believed God’s promise and she rejoiced because she was favored by God. Mary had faith that what the angel of God had declared unto her would come to pass. She believed it so strongly that she was willing to commit herself to the will of God and she told the angel, **“Behold the handmaiden of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word”**. She was so happy and without doubting! She believed God’s promise, and she was so confident that it would come to pass that she went with haste unto the house of Zacharias, to tell her cousin Elizabeth of the good news.

When was the last time that you read about the promises in God’s Holy Word and were so happy and full of belief that you went with haste and told others what God was doing for you. Do you believe so strongly that you believe it and confess it without hesitation. It is so important to the child of God to believe, trust, and obey. Remember the angel Gabriel told Mary, in Luke 1:37, **“For with God, nothing shall be impossible”** and remember what Elizabeth said to Mary, **“And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord”** (Luke 1:45).

We, as the people of God, fail to receive so many blessings from God because of unbelief! We often try to reason things out as though God is a mortal being instead of the immortal God that He is. We sometimes forget that God is not like man and that nothing is impossible with God. After all, God is the same yesterday, today and forevermore. God is the same God

that spoke this world into existence; the same God that said let there be light and there was light; the same God that formed man from the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. God does not change to suit the current environment in which we live. Luke 18:27 reminds us that "The things which are impossible with men are possible with God. Nothing is impossible with God, **NOTHING!**"

Even when we can remember that all things are possible with God, we often don't take God's promises seriously, and we don't believe them. In the 17th chapter of the book of Matthew, there was a time that the Apostles could not cast out a devil from a lunatic child,

and they asked Jesus why they could not cast out this devil. **"And Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief: for verily I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you"(Matt. 17:19,20).** In Mark 9:23 Jesus said **"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth".**

When Jesus was walking on water and Peter saw Him, and Jesus bid Peter to come unto Him, Peter believed that which is impossible with man! Peter believed he could walk on water, and he did. Then something changed. Peter saw the boisterous waves, and

he doubted. Peter remembered that he was not supposed to be able to walk on water. It was humanly impossible, and he began to sink. Jesus reached out, and caught Peter's hand, and saved him that day! Jesus said to him, **"O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?"** Jesus often rebuked his Apostles and said to them, **"O ye of little faith".**

Brethren, God may never send His angel Gabriel to us with a promise from God, but God has given us the inspired, written Word of God, and it is full of the promises of God to those who will be faithful to God and believe. Be a faithful believer in God's promises, and there shall be a performance of those promises which God has made.

The Heart of the New Testament

In **Matthew** He is the **King of the Jews (2:2).**

In **Mark** He is the **servant of God (10:44, 45)**

In **Luke** He is the **perfect Son of Man (9:56)**

In **John** He is the **perfect Son of Man (9:56)**

In **Acts** He is the **ascended Lord (1:9-11)**

In **Romans** He is **our righteousness (3:21-25)**

In **1 Corinthians** He is the **firstfruits from the dead (15:20)**

In **2 Corinthians** He is the **One who was made sin for us (5:21)**

In **Galatians** He is the **One who set us free (2:20,21)**

In **Ephesians** He is the **One who Blesses (1:3).**

In **Philippians** He is the **joy bringer 3:1,3; 4:4)**

In **Colossians** He is the **pre-eminent One (1:18)**

In **1 Thessalonians** He is the **returning Lord (4:13-18)**

In **2 Thessalonians** He is the **world's merciful judge (1:7-9)**

In **1 Timothy** He is **our mediator (2:5)**

In **2 Timothy** He is the **bestower of Crowns (4:8)**

In **Titus** He is **our great God and Savior (1:3,4)**

In **Philemon** He is the **Equalizer 1:16**

In **Hebrews** He is the **rest of faith (4:8-11)**

In **James** He is the **Lord of Sabbath (5:4)**

In **1 Peter** He is the **theme of Old Testament prophecy (1:19-21)**

In **2 Peter** He is the **longsuffering Savior (2:21)**

In **1 John** He is the **Word of life (1:1)**

In **2 John** He is the **target of the anti-Christ (1:7)**

In **3 John** He is the **personification of truth (1:1-4)**

In **Jude** He is the **believer's hope (1:24)**

In **Revelation** He is the **victorious Lamb (5:6)**



**"Real preaching is not marked by its beautiful diction,
or literary polish, or Cleverness of expression,
but Operates "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power."**

Arthur Wallis

Bible Reading Calendar for October

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
1	Isaiah 19,20,21	Eph. 2
2	Isaiah 22,23	Eph. 3
3	Isaiah 24,25,26	Eph. 4
4	Isaiah 27,28	Eph. 5
5	Isaiah 29,30	Eph. 6
6	Isaiah 31,32,33	Phil. 1
7	Isaiah 34,35,36	Phil. 2
8	Isaiah 37,38	Phil. 3
9	Isaiah 39,40	Phil. 4
10	Isaiah 41,42	Col. 1
11	Isaiah 43,44	Col. 2
12	Isaiah 45,46,47	Col. 3
13	Isaiah 48,49	Col. 4
14	Isaiah 50,51,52	I Thess. 1
15	Isaiah 53,54,55	I Thess. 2

DATE	MORNING	EVENING
16	Isaiah 56,57,58	I Thess. 3
17	Isaiah 59,60,61	I Thess. 4
18	Isaiah 62,63,64	I Thess. 5
19	Isaiah 65,66	II Thess. 1
20	Jeremiah 1,2	II Thess. 2
21	Jeremiah 3,4	II Thess. 3
22	Jeremiah 5,6	I Timothy 1
23	Jeremiah 7,8	I Timothy 2
24	Jeremiah 9,10	I Timothy 3
25	Jeremiah 11,12,13	I Timothy 4
26	Jeremiah 14,15,16	I Timothy 5
27	Jeremiah 17,18,19	I Timothy 6
28	Jeremiah 20,21,22	II Timothy 1
29	Jeremiah 23,24	II Timothy 2
30	Jeremiah 25,26	II Timothy 3
31	Jeremiah 27,28	II Timothy 4

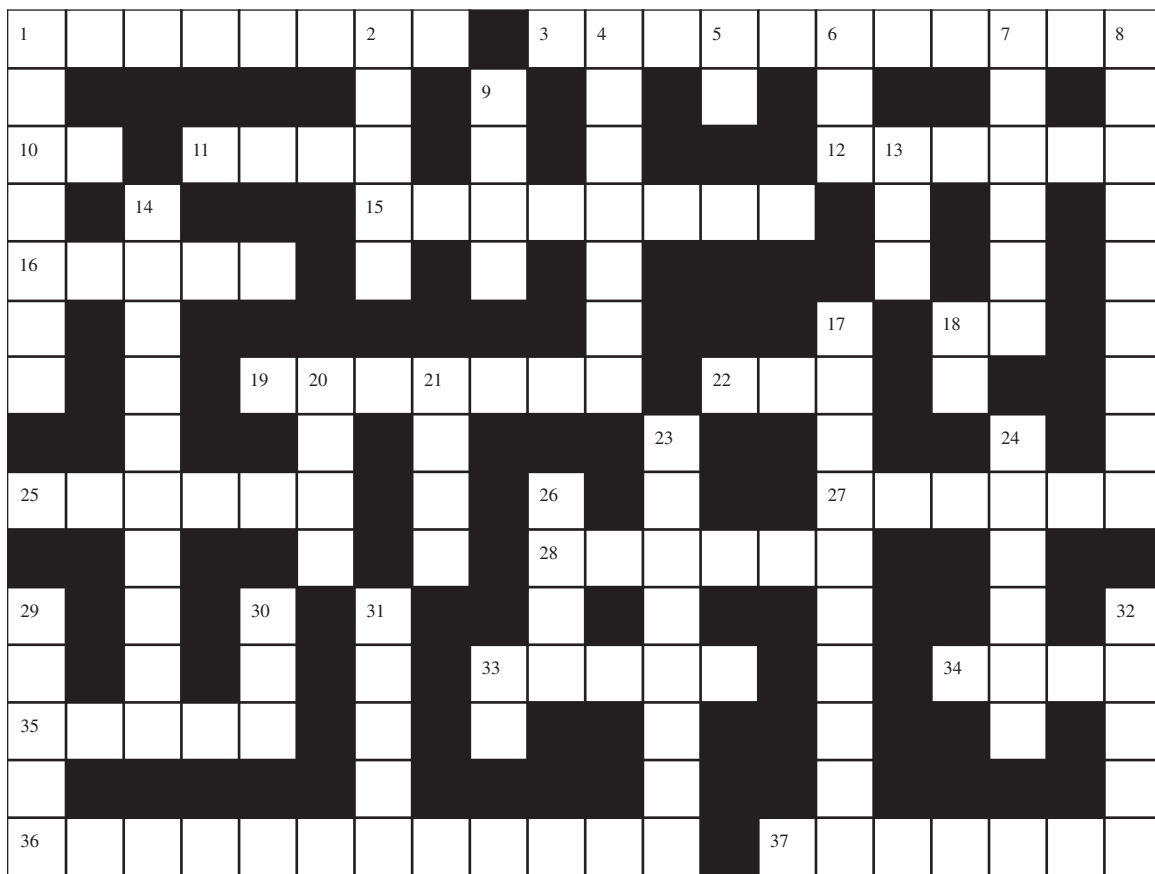
ANSWERS TO CROSSWORD PUZZLE SEPTEMBER 2013

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Crossword Puzzle

ACROSS

1. "...therefore ye sons of Jacob are into _____. 3. "...Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be _____;..." 10. "But I keep under _____ body, and bring it into subjection:..." 11. "_____ them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves:..." 12. "For in many _____ we offend all..." 15. "...that we through _____ and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." 16. "...Therefore put away from _____ yourselves that wicked person.": 18. "His mother saith unto the servants, whatsoever he saith unto you, do _____." 19. "...even as Christ _____ you, so also do ye." 22. "But them that _____ without God judgeth..." 25. "For I am the Lord, I _____ not;..." 27. "And when he was accused of the chief priests and _____, he answered nothing." 28. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in _____." 33. "... lest that by an _____ when I have preached to others, I myself should be castaway." "34. "I am not able to _____ all this people alone, because it is too heavy for me." 35. "He that is slow to _____ is better than the mighty;..." 36. "Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with _____;" 37. "If any man offend not in word, the same is a _____ man, and able also to bridle the whole body."



DOWN

1. "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I _____ you." 2. "Remember what the Lord thy God did unto Miriam _____ by the way, after that ye were come forth out of _____." 4. "Let the women learn in _____ with all subjection." 5. "Remember them that are in bonds, _____ bound with them;..." 6. "_____ not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof." 7. "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are _____...if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." 8. "By this shall all men know ye are my _____, if ye have love one to another." 9. "...and he that ruleth his spirit that he that take a _____." 13. "And Esau ran to meet him, and embraced him, and fell on _____ neck, and kissed him: and they wept." 14. "_____ one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have quarrel against any:..." 17. "For godly sorrow worketh _____ to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." 18. "_____ your patience possess ye your souls." 20. "Remember them which have the rule _____ you;..." 21. "Your glorying is not _____..." 23. "For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our _____;..." 24. "...know ye not that a little _____ leaveneth the whole lump?" 26. "And I say also unto _____, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;..." 29. "Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy _____, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." 30. "But I suffer not a woman to teach, _____ to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." 31. "I have been _____, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." 32. "This is the first and _____ commandment." 33. "...Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto _____."