

# Megiddo Message

January/February, 2007

**THE LORD IS  
MY FORTRESS;  
MY GOD IS A MIGHTY ROCK  
WHERE I CAN HIDE.**

**-PSALM 94:22 NLT**





# CURE FOR EGO PAIN

(Hurt Feelings)

**H**ow do you deal with the hurts of life? I'm talking about the hurt that comes from a perceived wrong, when someone criticizes my work, or fails to recognize me, or tells me the plain truth I don't want to hear. My survival instinct tells me to lash out and fight back. How dare them to hurt me! I demand an apology!

**egotism: an exaggerated sense of one's own importance**

Then comes the feeling of wanting to hurt back with the "silent" treatment. This will really get them. I'll just isolate

myself and let them feel bad for what they have done. Let them sweat about it a few days. Trouble is, you don't know if that hurts them "enough."

Next step is to gossip about it. Let others in on my pain. They need to know how badly I was treated, especially those who feel similar to how I feel about things.

Ever been there? Done that? It takes a strong will and genuine spiritual maturity to apply Jesus' advice and say, "I am going to 'love [those I perceive as my] enemies.' I am going to 'do good to those who...[I think] persecute' me."

Is that really possible? It is!

Whoever wants to live with any degree of inner peace must learn to deal with hurt feelings. I am calling it ego pain because the core of hurt feelings is the self-centered ego. No wonder God tells us to cut it back to size. "*Don't cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance*" (Rom. 12:3 Phillips Bible). The ego says, "I deserve respect, I deserve more, I deserve better, I deserve your attention." It is demanding respect of others instead of earning it, and being hurt when I am overlooked.

Ego pain is all about "me."

Signs of self-centeredness show when I exempt myself from observing accepted rules of courtesy. For example, you may open doors for me but "I" need not return the courtesy. You

**I CAN'T change others;  
I CAN change myself.**

may greet me pleasantly but "I" need not return the greeting. In chronic cases, the sensitive "I" has little respect for anything you do, because "I deserve it." The one suffering from ego pain may consume days and nights mulling over a grievance, as the offense grows bigger and bigger.

Ego pain is not something others do to me, but something

I do to myself because, in MY view, someone violated MY "rights." And the person who did it may be totally oblivious.

The whole Christian gospel focuses on loving, helping, and encouraging others, not on protecting our own ego. Jesus' said, "...Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you" (Matt. 5:44). He did not say we should make sure others love us, or treat us right, or bless and do good to us. He said, YOU "love," YOU "bless," YOU "do good." It's what "I" do for others, not what they do for "me."

May I suggest a few do's and don'ts to apply when you feel ego pain?

1. **Don't blame someone else for your hurt.** Take responsibility for your own feelings and behavior. Overcoming your hurt feelings is something only *you* can do. Acknowledge that your ego was offended when someone rubbed you the wrong way.

2. **Don't be angry.** God's command is definite: "*Cease from anger, and forsake wrath; Do not fret—it only causes harm*" (Psalm 37:8).

3. **Don't let yourself feel, "Poor me!"** Be as firm as steel against self-pity and sensitiveness. The oversensitive person suffers in vain. Nothing is accomplished by silently brooding over some perceived offense. Nobody knows he has a grievance, much less what it is. Self-pity only makes it worse.

4. **Don't retaliate.** Don't even make a mean remark under your breath. Bite your tongue before you do that! The Bible says, "*Repay no one evil for evil*" (Rom. 12:17 NCV).

5. **Don't mull over and over the problem. Let it go.** The Bible says, "*Those who love Your law have great peace, and nothing causes them to stumble*" (Ps. 119:165 NASB).

6. **Realize you can't read other people's minds.** You don't know what the other person was thinking. You cannot say, "I know it was intentional" because you *don't* know. Perhaps they were thoughtless or inconsiderate, but you don't know it was intentional because you cannot read their mind.

7. **Empathize.** Be understanding of others. Say to yourself, "Possibly they don't understand." Realize the other person may be tired to exhaustion, or may be overwhelmed by some personal problem too painful to even express. Or the other person may be reacting to serious time pressures in his or her life. The effort to understand them will help eliminate the hurt you feel.

8. **Suspect yourself.** Say to yourself, "I could have misread that person." Or "I may be too sensitive."

9. If you still think someone has wronged you, **go to that person with a meek and Christ-like spirit** (Gal. 6:1). Go with love, not retaliating; seeking a solution, not an ego-boost. Emphasize your own spiritual defects, not theirs.

continued on page 27





# How Strong Is Your Wall?

**I**n this age of diversity, we have an instinctive dislike for walls. In the words of the poet Frost, "Something there is that doesn't love a wall."

Walls suggest defense, security, protection. Ancient population centers (cities) needed walls to protect their people, and the people of neighboring unwalled villages often arranged to find safety inside the nearest walled city. As long as the wall was strong and in good repair, those inside the wall had a reasonable chance of survival, depending on the strength of the wall. Should an enemy attack, it first had to find a way over, under, or through the wall. Often the weakest point was a gate.

In a parallel sense, Christians need strong spiritual walls. We use walls of various types to create a safe environment for our children until they are able to build their own defenses. A sturdy wall may safeguard us from the attack of a foe we are not prepared to fight in hand-to-hand combat.

We also need walls to protect our emotions, our resolves, and our principles.

All of this makes the proverb meaningful: *"A person without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls"* (Prov. 25:28 NLT). A broken wall meant the city lay open to attack. As the proverb says, a person without self-control is like a city without a wall—wide open to attack.

Isn't a wall perceived as a barrier? Doesn't it look unfriendly? Isn't it even walling out certain relationships? Isn't it shouting, I've shut you out of my life, I don't want you?

Exactly! The life that is committed to serving Christ is not open to just any external influence. Christ would have us shut out those philosophies that pull away from Him, those interests that detract from Him, those pleasures that dishonor Him. That is why the Bible says, *"Come out from among them and be separate"* (2 Cor. 6:17-18), and *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world"* (1 John 2:15).

This is where a strong wall of self-control can be of great

benefit. And when this wall of defense is reinforced by the Word of God, when there is an *"it is written"* ready to meet every attacking temptation, that life is virtually impenetrable.

Looking back on your own life, can you think of a time when a simple "no" would have kept you from a host of unwanted consequences? Maybe it was the wrong relationship, or the wrong investment, or a wrong choice. Maybe at that moment your emotions, or your affections, or your desire for pleasure or praise, were out of control. There was a hole in your wall, and the enemy entered.

The Biblical word translated "self-control" or "temperance" comes from a root word that means "to hold back, ... close up, ... detain, ... prevail, ... refrain, ... restrain, ... retain, ... stay, ... stop, ... withhold." Isn't that the function of a wall? To be self-controlled is literally to be able to hold one's self back, to detain, restrain, or withhold. When our self-control is in place, our naturally sensitive hearts and minds are to an extent protected from outside foes. Negative ideas, cutting remarks, even words intended to hurt may ram the wall, but they will not get through if our defense is strong.

Is your wall solid, or is there a little break, a place where you tend to give in over and over again? Whether it be a tiny, barely noticeable breach or a gaping hole, the unguarded opening can allow destructive thoughts to get in and good intentions to drain out. Perhaps the thinking goes like this:

*I studied hard for this test, and I really do know the answers. I think I left that cheat sheet in my purse .... I need a piece of candy ....*

*I'm running late tonight. So instead of stopping to cook a proper meal, I'll just eat this bag of chips ...*

*Good spiritual walls are an important factor in our survival as Christians.*

*continued on page 5*



# Megiddo Message

January/February, 2007  
Volume 94, No. 1

## EDITORIAL

- 2 Cure for Ego Pain** by Gerald R. Payne

## ARTICLE

- 3 How Strong Is Your Wall?** by Ruth E. Sisson

## AWESOME DESIGNS

- 6 Designed to Survive: Emperor Penguins**  
by Patricia A. Fleming

## ARTICLES

- 8 The Good and Bad of Jealousy** by Samuel Newray  
**9 Faithful, Praying Daniel**

## BIBLE STUDY: THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

- 10 Meeting with the Jerusalem Elders, Continued**  
(Part 31) by Ruth E. Sisson  
Paul the Prisoner • Full-Scale Riot • Intending to Kill

## KNOW YOUR BIBLE?

- 15 How Are They Alike? • Where Was/Were**

## YOUTH IN CHRIST

- 16 Learning the Hard Way** by J. Calvin Reid  
**17 Kevin's Prayer**

## POEM

- 18 Our Almighty Father** by Melva Walton

## BACK COVER POEM

## Recipe For Gossip

FRONT COVER: LOWER ANTELOPE CORKSCREW CANYON, AZ

The **Megiddo Message** (USPS 338-120) (ISSN 0194-7826) is published bimonthly by the Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619. Telephone: 585-235-4150. Periodicals postage paid at Rochester, New York.

**Publication Staff:** Ruth E. Sisson, Editor; Gerald R. Payne, Executive Editor. Art and design by Margaret A. Tremblay; Subscriptions Manager, Donna R. Mathias.

**Subscription Rate and Renewals:** One year (six issues) \$5.00. Send to Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619-1697. Or call 585-235-4150. **Note:** For the protection of our subscribers, we do not sell, rent, lease, publish or distribute our mailing list.

**Address Changes?** Be sure to notify promptly of any change in your address. Please include your old mailing label and your new address. Send to Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, New York 14619-1697. **Postmaster:** Send all changes of address to Megiddo Church, 481 Thurston Road, Rochester, NY 14619.

URL: [www.megiddo.com](http://www.megiddo.com)

E-mail address: [megiddo@megiddo.com](mailto:megiddo@megiddo.com)

**Manuscript Policy:** Unsolicited manuscripts for publication are not accepted.

The **Megiddo Message** is the official organ of the Megiddo Church, Inc., founded in 1880 by L. T. Nichols. Publication was begun in 1914. Maud Hembree, Editor-in-Chief (1914-1935); Ella M. Skeels, Executive Editor (1935-1945); Percy J. Thatcher, Editor (1945-1958); Kenneth E. Flowerday, Editor (1958-1985); Newton H. Payne, Editor (1985-1997).

The **Megiddo Message** is available in microfilm from Bell & Howell Information and Learning, Serials Acquisitions, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106.

**Indexing:** The **Megiddo Message** is indexed annually, in December. Combined indexing available, 1944-1996.

**Bible Quotations:** Unidentified quotations are from the King James Version or the New King James Version. Other versions are identified as follows: NEB—New English Bible; NIV—New International Version; NASB—New American Standard Bible; RSV—Revised Standard Version; TLB—The Living Bible; JB—The Jerusalem Bible; Phillips—The New Testament in Modern English; Moffatt—The Bible, A New Translation; NRSV—New Revised Standard Version; NLT—The New Living Translation; NCV—The New Century Version; NJB—New Jerusalem Bible.

## MEGIDDO MEANS...

"a place of troops" (Gesenius' Hebrew Lexicon); "a place of God" (Young's Analytical Concordance). Megiddo was and is a town in Palestine, strategically located, and the scene of frequent warfare. In the spiritual parallel, it is a place where soldiers engaged in spiritual warfare gather to renew their strength and courage (2 Cor. 10:4-5).

## WE BELIEVE...

- ♦ in God, the Creator and sustainer of the earth, the world, the universes, and all life, in whom we "live, and move, and have our being."
- ♦ in the Bible as our only source of true knowledge about God and His purposes and plans for His creation and for the salvation of humankind.
- ♦ in Jesus Christ, the Son of God and our Perfect Example, who was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin; who ministered among His brethren, was crucified, resurrected, and taken to

heaven and seated at the right hand of the Father, crowned with immortal glory, and who shall shortly return to be King of the whole earth.

- ♦ in the Holy Spirit, the openly manifest power of God, which God bestowed at various times and in various ways to reveal His knowledge to humankind, to support His spokesmen, to confirm His utterances, and to demonstrate His supreme power and authority.
- ♦ in life as the gift of God, and in our sacred responsibility to use it for God and His coming Kingdom.
- ♦ in humankind as providing the raw material from which shall be selected and developed a superior, God-honoring people upon whom God will bestow the blessings of immortal life in His soon-coming Kingdom.
- ♦ in ourselves as capable, with the help of God, of applying to our own lives the precepts and principles taught in the Word of God, in this way perfecting that high quality of moral character which God has promised to recompense with life eternal in His heavenly Kingdom on earth.

- ♦ in the promise of God, that Jesus Christ will soon return to rid the earth of all sin and suffering and inaugurate an eternal and worldwide Kingdom of peace and righteousness, until God's will is done here as it is now done in heaven.

## THE HERALD AND THE KING

OUR PLANET will soon witness the greatest events in its history. For centuries God has been silent. But that silence will soon be broken by the arrival of Elijah the prophet, who comes to herald the Second Advent of Jesus Christ. "*Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord...lest I come and smite the earth with a curse*" (Mal. 4:5-6).

Then shall follow the King of kings and Lord of lords, to begin His momentous work of transforming our world into the glorious and eternal Kingdom of God.



*Our credit card balance keeps creeping higher and higher. But right now Jamie really needs a better soccer outfit, and Shauna wants a pair of new shoes. And that flat-screen monitor is a real bargain...*

*I planned to get up earlier this morning so I could have time with my Bible, I'll hit the snooze button just once ...*

With each indulgence, the gap in the wall around our lives grows bigger, until there is effectively no wall at all. Another temptation comes, and we give in again, saying to ourselves, *Whatever. One more won't make any difference. The hole is too big to fix anyway.*

There is a dramatic lesson in the fall of the city of Constantinople in the 15th century. Protected by an intricate series of walls and ditches, Constantinople was a well-fortified metropolis that had stood as the center of the Byzantine Empire for a thousand years. But this time, the Ottoman Turks laid siege to the city and finally succeeded in entering in spite of those enormous walls.

How did they do it? According to history, there was a tiny opening at the base of the wall at the level of the moat, known as the Kerkopoporta. Formerly an emergency exit, it was blocked by debris and falling rubble caused by the Turks ramming the walls. During the Turkish siege, as the story goes, some Greek soldiers who were helping defend Constantinople had an idea. They decided that a large body of troops could pass quickly through this concealed entryway and make a surprise attack on the Turks outside the city. So they dug out the rubble and reopened the Kerkopoporta, posting a small guard there.

As the Turks attacked at various points around the city, Constantinople's defenders had to move here and there to repel the attackers who were throwing ladders up to scale the walls. The Greeks had to abandon their surprise counterattack idea, and

*Keep your  
spiritual wall in  
good repair—it is  
for your life!*

everyone forgot about the gate.

Not long afterward, a group of Turkish soldiers who were running down the dry moat outside the walls came upon the low-lying gate, and observed that it was not locked. Rushing through the gate, they killed the guards and hoisted a signal. Soon a thousand soldiers had followed them into the City. Constantinople was doomed.

Over the centuries many armies had come against the walls of Constantinople. The Byzantines inside were often outnumbered and outgunned. But getting through the wall had proved almost impossible—until someone discovered the small unlocked gate. A crack in the wall, and a whole empire came crashing down.

What is the lesson? Lock that gate! The smallest opening in the wall of our self-control is too large to neglect. Never think, *it's only a little thing... once more won't make any difference!*

Making excuses for our failures only makes the hole larger.

Remember the proverb: *"A person without self-control is as defenseless as a city with broken-down walls."*

When we lack self-control, we can't say "No" to the "friend" who is dragging us down; or we can't say "No" to our hurt feelings; or we can't say "No" to a game or a TV show or a movie that wastes our time and dishonors God—and so our spiritual lives are open to destructive influences.



Self-control is the ability to keep the wall of our spiritual defenses in good repair by saying "No" to anything that is spiritually detrimental. When self-control is lacking and we use an excuse to conceal a serious gap in our wall, it might go something like this:

*I know I didn't answer kindly, but I wasn't feeling well.*

*If I had more time I would do such-and-such—when the real problem was with our priorities. We put secondary things first.*

*If I hadn't been so tired, I would have been in a better mood—*

Every time we compromise, we make a hole in our wall of defense, and soon there will be no wall at all.

What is the advice from the Word of God? *"I have hidden your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you"* (Ps. 119:11 NLT). What a mighty wall that will be!

Keep your spiritual wall in good repair, so that the thinking of the world around you does not dominate your mind. Find your goals not in this world but in seeking first the Kingdom of God and the righteousness that will fit you to live there (Matt. 6:33).

Watch out for the smallest break in the wall—it is for your life! MM





## DESIGNED TO SURVIVE: Emperor Penguins

by PATRICIA A. FLEMING

Using some amazing, unknown instinct or radar system, a pair of Emperor penguins have the incredible ability to return to the same frozen, windswept ice year after year to raise a lone chick.

he is incubating the egg and waiting for the female emperor penguin to return from feeding at the sea.

Like most penguins, emperor penguins look dressy in their black tuxedo suits, with black backs and white fronts. This color combination provides them with excellent camouflage when they are in the water. Viewed from below, their white bellies blend with the sun-lighted surface of the water. Seen from above, the dark colored feathers on their backs blend with the dark waters beneath them. Their black backs also help absorb any scant amount of warmth the sun may provide.

### Ready to cruise

There are many other features that make the penguins unique. When God designed the penguin, He created a very special bird. On land penguins are awkward, comical-looking creatures. Standing upright, they waddle as they walk because their short legs are set far back on their bodies. They often fall as they clamber over the broken ice jams along the water's edge. They even use their beaks and toenails to help them over some rough or icy spots. But in the water, they are champion swimmers. Their torpedo-shaped, perfectly streamlined bodies make them fast, efficient swimmers and divers. One researcher said that penguins have the most streamlined bodies ever gauged. They slice through the water with minimal resistance. For the emperor penguin, cruising speed is about 5 miles per hour, but they have been recorded swimming at speeds up to 15 miles an hour—eight times faster than a speed-racing human can swim! At this speed they are often able to outswim and outmaneuver their archenemy, the leopard seal.

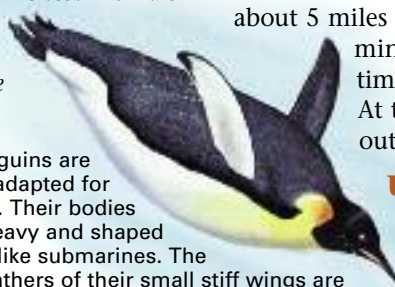
**I**n the total darkness of the Antarctic winter, a fierce blizzard is howling. The temperature has dropped to  $-78^{\circ}\text{F}$  and the wind is gusting up to 80 miles an hour. A colony of male emperor penguins huddle tightly shoulder to shoulder, heads down and backs to the outside of the “turtle,” as such a huddle is called. By some marvelous instinct the birds on the fringes slowly press toward the center, while the birds at the center move toward the edge. By taking turns at the warmed, protected center, most can survive the bitter storm. (Even during a blizzard, it can be  $60^{\circ}\text{F}$  at center of huddle.)

That these birds can survive at all in Antarctica's unforgiving climate is a wonder in itself. But an even greater wonder is that each male penguin is balancing on his feet an egg which he is incubating under a special flap of skin. Could a creature so well adapted to so harsh an environment be a chance product of evolution? No way! The emperor penguins, like every other living thing, are awesome testimonials to the design of an All-knowing, All-powerful Creator, the God of Heaven and Earth, who made *“the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them”* (Neh. 9:6).

### Master divers

Emperor penguins are the largest diving birds in the world. Standing three to four feet tall, they weigh about 60 to 90 pounds. Their bodies have three levels of protection. First, they are protected by a covering of long stiff feathers that are packed tightly together, about 80 feathers to a square inch. This layer is waterproof and wind-resistant. Beneath these hard, outer feathers is a second layer of thick down that insulates their bodies against the cold, also adding buoyancy when they are in the water. And finally, they have a thick layer of fat between their skin and vital body parts to further insulate them. This fat is the father penguin's only energy source during a 4 month long vigil while

Penguins are well adapted for water. Their bodies are heavy and shaped like submarines. The feathers of their small stiff wings are tightly packed and overlap—a coating of oil makes them waterproof.



### Underwater marvels

The penguin's wings are shaped like hard flippers, making them very efficient paddles as they “fly” through the water. Unlike flighted birds that have hollow, light-weight bones, penguins have solid, heavy bones. Why? Because they need the weight to dive deeply. In fact, these free-fall divers are among the ocean's wonders. Emperor penguins have been recorded going as deep as 1,766 feet and staying underwater for as long as 20 minutes. How can this be possible when the pressure at this depth is 40 times higher than on the surface? Here again the Creator designed the penguin with a special ability. The pressure in such deep waters crushes the air in the penguin's lungs to



one-fortieth of its original volume, making it hard for oxygen to circulate through its vital organs. It also forces nitrogen to dissolve in the blood. In humans and other creatures this often causes the painful condition called “the bends,” and humans become disoriented and have hallucinations. But recent research shows that penguins are able to shut off the blood flow to all but their most vital organs, such as its heart and brain. This reduces the chance that their blood will become contaminated with nitrogen and allows the penguins to hold their breath much longer. Their lungs also have the unique ability to allow the air they have inhaled to move outside the lung itself into an ingenious system of air sacs. When the penguins dive, since there is very little air in the lungs, no nitrogen bubbles can be forced into the penguins’ circulatory system.

Penguins have also been designed to conserve oxygen when they are under water. Their heartbeat slows, delivering less blood to the muscles, which saves the oxygenated blood for the vital organs. Meanwhile, the muscles draw from oxygen that was stored before the dive! Amazing? Can you imagine how this process just evolved without a Master Designer? Certainly the penguins didn’t design it for themselves!

### Master hunters

The cold waters of the Antarctic are teeming with life. And penguins have been designed to capture it. Speedy, agile, and equipped with a barbed tongue that helps them hold their prey until it can be swallowed, they are very efficient hunters. Their favorites are fish, squid and krill found just under the edge of the ice. It is when they are chasing prey that they dive deep. Emperor penguins have been known to travel a hundred miles on a single hunt.

While most of their time is spent in the water, penguins must spend time every day preening. Preening is necessary to keep their outer feathers waterproof. To preen, the penguins leap out of the water and onto the ice. Once they leave the water they run their bills through their

feathers to shake off the water clinging to them. Then using their bills they reach all the way back to the preen gland at the base of the spine to pick up the oily-waxy mix that they spread over and work into their feathers. This not only waterproofs them but prevents bacteria, algae and fungi from growing on them. Could centuries of penguins have learned how to manufacture this specialized oil? Not a chance!

### Wonders of survival

How does the penguin survive? Let’s go back to the colony of male emperor penguins enduring that harsh blizzard. They have been here since May when the days began to shorten and became colder and colder. Thousands of adult penguins have congregated at this particular site for years. Courtship and mating have taken place and the female has laid one egg. In a carefully rehearsed ritual, the mother has transferred the egg from her feet to the father’s feet (over ice and in frigid conditions—a near miracle of survival!). Then the father has carefully covered the egg with a specially designed flap of skin under his belly. (For the chick to hatch, that egg had to be kept warm despite blizzards, and below  $-60^{\circ}$  F temperatures, and more than 100 mph winds.) Then the starving mother, who has lost about one-third of her weight since leaving the open waters, has left the rookery with the rest of the mothers to go on the long trek back to the open water to feed. This trek could take weeks, as the ice at the water’s edge by this time (mid winter) has frozen much farther out into the sea.

Once at the open waters, the mother penguin feeds for about 2 months, becoming plump once again. Then on a spe-

Three-quarter grown chicks, along with a few adults, look for their parents to return with food. Chicks are hungry all the time, but they cannot go to the sea to hunt until their feathers are fully grown.



Anticipation is high among the penguin fathers who watch for their well fed mates to return after two months at the sea.



(above center) A newly hatched chick gets a meager meal from the father—survival rations until the mother returns with food from the sea.

(above right) A father penguin still incubating the egg. He balances the egg on his feet and keeps it warm for six very cold weeks under a special flap of skin. The males huddle together for warmth through blizzard winds that may exceed 100 mph, and temperatures that may drop to  $-80^{\circ}$  F.

Female Emperor penguins lay their eggs during the coldest months of the Antarctic winter.



Penguin chicks love to explore



(above) An egg that will never hatch.



cific day she starts the long journey back to the rookery with the other females. In the meantime the chicks will have hatched. The exhausted and starving males, who have had nothing to eat for 4 months, will have lost half their body weight. Yet they may still manage to regurgitate a thick oily substance from their stomachs to feed the newly hatched chick at least once or twice to keep it alive until its mother returns.

The timing of the females' return is critical, because the males have used up their reserves and the chicks will die if not nourished.

When the mother penguins arrive, the rookery comes alive with squawking and calling. It appears that the arriving females recognize their mates by these cries. The reunited couples again prepare to switch roles—this time to transfer the new chick from the father to the mother.

Again there is much bowing, flapping and squawking as they transfer the new chick from father penguin to mother. Soon the mother penguin gives her chick its first substantial meal, and the starving father leaves to seek food in the open water.

Awesome! How is it all possible? Only the Almighty Creator could orchestrate such a delicate process to keep the species alive.

The parents take turns caring for their chick until it is big enough to be left alone. Then both parents go to the water to



A chick perched on its parent's feet until it can walk on its own.

feed for shorter periods, returning regularly to feed the voracious appetite of the rapidly growing chick.

Since the thick layer of down that protects the young chick from the cold is not waterproof, the young penguin is not ready for the water until it is fully feathered.

Finally, the three-quarters grown chick is ready to take the plunge. Is it a coincidence that the open water is now within a couple hundred yards of the rookery?

When the young finally enters the water, it is on its own and remains there for 3 or 4 years, before returning to that particular breeding spot to find a mate and raise a chick of its own. Penguins have been known to live up to 40 years—a very long life considering the perils of their existence.

What an awesome God we serve! He has made everything that is on the land, in the sea and in the air by His mighty power. These illustrations of His power and wisdom remind us that everything is under His control. He has left nothing to chance.

*You alone are the Lord; You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and everything on it, the seas and all that is in them, and You preserve them all.*

*The host of heaven worships You. —Neh. 9:6 MM*

Sources:

<http://www.absoluteastronomy.com/encyclopedia/p/pe/penguins.htm>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/penguins/index/html>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/penguins/divers/html>

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/nature/penguins/flightless/html>

[http://www.penguins.info/FRAMES/Algemeenframe\\_eng.html](http://www.penguins.info/FRAMES/Algemeenframe_eng.html)

<http://www.antarcticconnection.com/antarctic/wildlife/penguins/index.shtml>

All photos are public domain

## THE GOOD AND BAD OF JEALOUSY

by SAMUEL NEWRAY of Ghana, West Africa

**J**ealousy is usually defined as an act of envying and resenting another's success. This jealousy is intolerant of rivalry or unfaithfulness. A person may be jealous of another's material possessions, personal wealth, social status, or achievement and success in life. Jealousy is an envious spirit that can even lead to murder. It was because of jealousy that Cain killed his brother Abel (Gen. 4:4–8) because God had rejected Cain's offering and accepted Abel's.

Jealousy is destructive. Job 5:2 says, *"For wrath kills a foolish man, and envy slays a simple one."*

Jealousy is a powerful enemy. Proverbs 27:4 (NLT) says, *"Anger is cruel, and wrath is like a flood, but who can survive the destructiveness of jealousy?"*

The Apostle Paul, warning the Christians in Galatia, said, *"Let us not become conceited, or irritate one another, or be jealous of one another"* (Gal. 5:26 NLT). Paul knew the heart of these people, and how destructive jealousy was, and he did not want the Galatians to become jealous of each other.

Jealousy can cause rash behavior. In Acts 7:9, Stephen told about the sons of Jacob, how they were very jealous of their brother Joseph and sold him into slavery in Egypt. But God was with him.

When people are jealous, whatever one intends to do for them, they become envious. The story is told of a certain boy

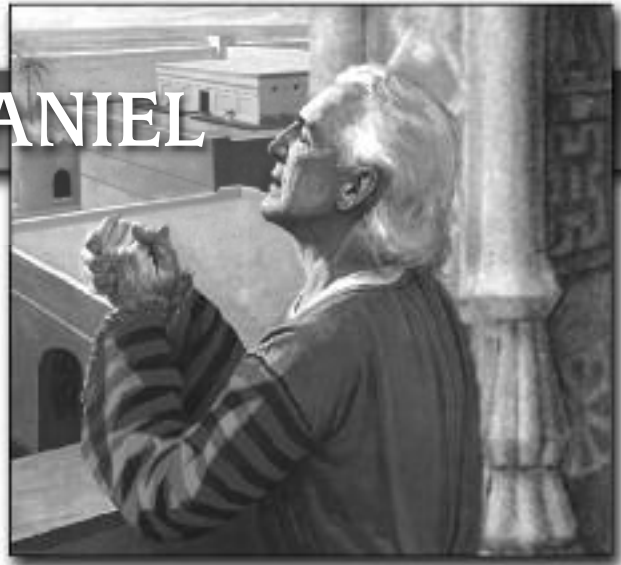
in West Africa who left his village to seek a better quality education in the city. When he had completed his college degree, he managed to travel to the USA for his Masters degree. This boy, according to the story, was the only boy to be successful among all of the boys in the entire chiefdom who started school with him. Because of his success, the people of his village, whose children were not able to obtain his level of education, became very jealous.

Upon returning from abroad, the young man was immediately appointed minister. At the Christmas holidays, as is customary in Africa, he purchased many gifts for all the people in his village. To show his love to his people, he decided to pay a visit to his home village, to see what he could do to benefit them. But his generosity and love for his people soon turned fatal, when he met his untimely death through food poisoning barely two days after he had arrived in the village. He was poisoned simply because he was more successful than the other boys in the chiefdom.

Jealousy is destructive. Those people wanted what he had. But not being able to have it, they conspired to kill the one who had it. James 4:1–2 (NLT) says, *"What is causing the quarrels and fights among you? Isn't it the whole army of evil desires at war within you? You want what you don't have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous for what others*



# FAITHFUL, PRAYING DANIEL



So these governors and satraps thronged before the king, and said thus to him: "King Darius, live forever!

All the governors of the kingdom, the administrators and satraps, the counselors and advisors, have consulted together to establish a royal statute and to make a firm decree, that whoever petitions any god or man for thirty days, except you, O king, shall be cast into the den of lions.

Now, O king, establish the decree and sign the writing, so that it cannot be changed, according to the law of the Medes and Persians, which does not alter."

Therefore King Darius signed the written decree.

Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went home. And in his upper room, with his windows open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down on his knees three times that day, and prayed and gave thanks before his God, as was his custom since early days. —Daniel 6:6-10

**T**he Prophet Daniel was not a super human with powers unattainable to the average man. He had the same temptations we have: temptations to conform, temptation to run. He could have failed just like any of us. He could have compromised.

But he didn't, even when faced with the prospect of hungry lions ripping him apart before doing him the favor of killing him. So what gave Daniel his courage?

Daniel was already in the habit of prayer. He didn't stimulate his mind by sitting motionless and trying not to think

*have, and you can't possess it, so you fight and quarrel to take it away from them. And yet the reason you don't have what you want is that you don't ask God for it."*

All of the above is the bad side of jealousy. But there is a good side. In Exodus 20, verse 5, the Lord God warned the children of Israel from sharing their love for Him with any other god, because He is a jealous God. God's jealousy is His demand for our wholehearted attention, which He deserves. He must have total, undivided faithfulness from His people. This is very different from human jealousy.

The Apostle Paul tells about another kind of jealousy that is good. It is the constructive jealousy that promotes, that builds up, edifies and strengthens. Paul said he had this kind of jealousy for his Corinthian brethren, when he told them, "*For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy; for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ*" (2 Cor. 11:2). This godly jealousy is full of love, and wants only the best for the object of its love. Note that he said, "*I am jealous over you,*" not *of* you. To be jealous *of* someone is to feel resentment for him, that is, dislike or envy. To be jealous *over* one is to be on their side, ready to defend whatever is in their best interests.

As children of God, let us not have any of the destructive jealousy, because it will destroy us. Let our jealousy be the godly type that helps to build one another up spiritually, with brotherly love and kindness. MM

about anything. The Bible says that "*He prayed as he had done previously.*" He walked with God daily. His was not a crisis only relationship. This prayer was not a 911 call.

God hears the prayers of His children. "*For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers*" (1 Pet. 3:12). We can derive tremendous strength from knowing that the same God who met the needs of His people yesterday will meet them today.

Then, Daniel trusted in the sovereignty of God. Verse 10 says: "*He got down on his knees.*" He had a worshipful, submissive attitude. He was submitting to God's authority, trusting Him for whatever might come.

Then, Daniel unashamedly asked God for help. He had no intention of turning his back on the God of heaven just because the new law forbade him to pray to any except to the king. He needed Almighty God's help more than ever. Yes, he had been enjoying the king's favor; now everything looked black. But he would trust in his God.

Daniel probably did not receive the exact type of help he anticipated. He probably asked that the edict be overturned or that God change Darius' decision. He may even have asked for courage to die with dignity for the glory of God. At this time, Daniel was well along in years; he had been in Babylon for most of the 70 years of captivity Jeremiah had prophesied.

But God showed Daniel that He still had work for him to do. His time was not up yet.

It was not Darius' change of heart that changed the situation and saved Daniel. The king was powerless to reverse his decree. Only God saved Daniel. God does not always provide the sort of help we anticipate, but nothing thwarts His will.

At the first sign of dawn, the king hurried to the lion pit. In anguished tones he called out to Daniel: "*Daniel, servant of the living God! Has your God, whom you serve so faithfully, been able to save you from the lions?*" Then Daniel said, "*May your majesty live for ever! My God sent his angel who sealed the lions' jaws; they did me no harm, since in his sight I am blameless; neither have I ever done you any wrong, Your Majesty*" (Dan. 6:20-22 NJB).

Sovereign Lord, thank You for Daniel's life and example. When I am tested, help me to remember Daniel. More than anything I want to be faithful to You. MM



# FAITH *in Action*



by RUTH E. SISSON

## Acts 21:20–25 (NLT)

20 After hearing this, they praised God. But then they said, "You know, dear brother, how many thousands of Jews have also believed, and they all take the law of Moses very seriously.

21 Our Jewish Christians here at Jerusalem have been told that you are teaching all the Jews living in the Gentile world to turn their backs on the laws of Moses. They say that you teach people not to circumcise their children or follow other Jewish customs.

22 Now what can be done? For they will certainly hear that you have come.

23 "Here's our suggestion. We have four men here who have taken a vow and are preparing to shave their heads.

24 Go with them to the Temple and join them in the purification ceremony, and pay for them to have their heads shaved. Then everyone will know that the rumors are all false and that you yourself observe the Jewish laws.

25 "As for the Gentile Christians, all we ask of them is what we already told them in a letter: They should not eat food offered to idols, nor consume blood, nor eat meat from strangled animals, and they should stay away from all sexual immorality."

## MEETING WITH THE JERUSALEM ELDERS, CONTINUED

 Read Acts 21:20–25

When the Jerusalem elders heard about all that Paul had been doing, *"they glorified God"* (21:20). Of course! How could they belong to the Church and not be stirred by the sincerity and earnestness of the new Gentile members!

But as exciting as Paul's success stories were, at least some of the Jerusalem elders had been waiting their turn. They had other matters to talk about.

Much as they recognized the importance of Paul's work and the new members from the Gentile community, something else was equally on their mind. Luke joins the two thoughts with the word *"and,"* indicating that their concerns were equal in weight and meaning to Paul's successes.

1. What issue did the Jewish brethren address to Paul? (21:20–21)  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What concern did the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem have about the Apostle Paul? (21:22) \_\_\_\_\_
3. What solution did the Jewish elders propose to Paul? (21:23–24)  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. What did they feel Paul's action might accomplish? (21:24)  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Why might the Jerusalem elders have asked Paul to pay the fees for the vows of the young men at the temple? (21:24). \_\_\_\_\_
6. What was the attitude of the Jerusalem elders about imposing Jewish laws on Gentile converts? (21:25) \_\_\_\_\_

Apparently four young men who were Christian Jews had gone to the tem-



ple to take a Nazarite vow. Was their vow suggested by the Jewish elders at this time because they knew that Paul was coming? Or was it merely coincidence? We are not told. In any case, the Jewish elders saw the vows of the young men as an opportunity for Paul to placate the overzealous Jews in the Church who looked on Paul as a religious anarchist. These Jews were slandering Paul, saying that he was teaching Jews to forsake the Jewish customs.

The rumor was false, but Paul was in a difficult spot. To comply with the request could cause his Gentile friends to stumble. Not to comply could confirm the Jews in their already negative view of him and hurt the Gentile cause going forward.

Of the two evils Paul chose the first, perhaps thinking the Gentile friends were stronger than the Jews who were shackled by years of adherence to empty formalities. Old customs die hard.

Paul complied with their request. Whether his actions allayed any suspicions, we are not told—apparently Luke did not consider the detail important enough to record. But Luke uses the rest of his book to show how the character of the great Apostle grew under the sufferings that resulted.

By going through the ceremonies of purification himself, Paul showed the whole assembly of believers that he did not reject the customs of their fathers as wrong, that the slanderous reports about him were false, and that Paul believed a Jew could still live and practice as a loyal Jew. At the same time, Paul was teaching that observing Jewish laws and customs did nothing toward one's salvation.

## PAUL THE PRISONER

 Read Acts 21:26–30

7. Near the end of Paul's time in the temple, what happened? (21:26–28)

From this point forward, the Bible record of the Apostle Paul is the record of Paul the prisoner.

8. Who was responsible for stirring up the crowd against Paul? (21:27) \_\_\_\_\_

9. Why were "Jews from Asia" in Jerusalem at this time? (20:16) \_\_\_\_\_

The instigators were Jews from cities like Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe in the Roman province of Asia. Only a few years previous these same Jews had vigorously opposed Paul's preaching and ministry among the Gentiles in their towns. Now they were in Jerusalem celebrating Pentecost, and it is likely that, seeing Paul in the temple, they thought this was the perfect time to get rid of him. Furthermore, in Jerusalem where there was a concentration of Jews, they would have no problem finding plenty of supporters for their cause.

Paul's capture at this time was a direct



From the Word

### The Nazarite Vow

The Nazarite vow was instituted in the time of Moses (see Numbers 6). The man or woman taking the vow was to let his/her hair grow long, to not touch a dead body, and was not to eat any fruit of the vine (wine, grape juice, vinegar, grapes or raisins) for 30 days. At the end of the vow they were to shave their hair and bring a costly offering that they had vowed to the priest.

To keep peace in the Jerusalem Church the elders asked Paul to join with four men in the temple who were in the process of taking this vow, and to pay the expense of their offerings.

Why would the Apostle Paul join these young men in completing a Nazarite vow? Recall that he also was a committed Jew, and only a few years earlier had taken a vow himself while in Corinth (Acts 18:18).

### Acts 21:26–30 (NLT)

26 So Paul agreed to their request, and the next day he went through the purification ritual with the men and went to the Temple. Then he publicly announced the date when their vows would end and sacrifices would be offered for each of them.

27 The seven days were almost ended when some Jews from the province of Asia saw Paul in the Temple and roused a mob against him. They grabbed him,

28 yelling, "Men of Israel! Help! This is the man who teaches against our people and tells everybody to disobey the Jewish laws. He speaks against the Temple—and he even defiles it by bringing Gentiles in!"

29 (For earlier that day they had seen him in the city with Trophimus, a Gentile from Ephesus, and they assumed Paul had taken him into the Temple.)

30 The whole population of the city was rocked by these accusations, and a great riot followed. Paul was dragged out of the Temple, and immediately the gates were closed behind him.





**Spiritual Myopia**

Did the Jewish Christians realize how shortsighted they were in clinging to an empty, out-of-date ritual? Did they realize they were criticizing one who was doing the job Jesus had assigned, that of taking the Gospel to the Gentiles? Were they willing to acknowledge that sincere Gentile Christians could be just as fully recognized by God and just as eligible for salvation as sincere Jewish Christians?

Or did these Jewish believers still think that adhering strictly to their rituals would draw God's attention and win His favor?

Spiritual shortsightedness has plagued people who knew God in every age. The Israelite nation had the same tendency. Even knowing how God had miraculously delivered them from Egypt, had brought them through the Red Sea, and given them the land of Canaan, still they repeatedly fell into the emptiness of meaningless rituals, outwardly professing allegiance while *"their heart is far from Me"* (Matt. 15:8).

It is so much easier to go through a series of actions than to cleanse and reform the inner life.

The Jews in the time of Paul, even though many probably assented to Paul's preaching that Christ had brought an end to the Law, were still slow to let go of the ancient, outward customs. Paul, in essence, was saying that observing them was not wrong, but they should be focusing on the deeper meaning the law symbolized, because the most perfect observance of Moses' law could not take away sin (Heb. 9:9; 10:1, 4); mere outward observance would do nothing toward their salvation.

How much better if those same believers had been willing to forget their Jewish blood and get squarely behind the noble Apostle who was pointing the way to Christ and His coming Kingdom!

Part of the issue was religious pride, and religious pride changes slowly. As long as the temple in Jerusalem stood, it would be a symbol of their loyalty to Moses and his law. It seems that only after Herod's temple was demolished (AD 70) would these Christian Jews' sense of loyalty to their customs give way.

result of his complying with the special request of the elders of the Church. Paul could easily have held a grudge against the leaders of the Jerusalem Church from this point forward as he struggled with the hardships of being a prisoner. But Paul was too big a person to be bitter. Rather, he took every opportunity in his confinement to encourage and inspire those around him.

It is also noticeable that when Paul wrote letters to his beloved churches, he spoke of himself as the prisoner of Christ, not a prisoner of the Jews or the Roman state. Like Jesus, he realized that the authorities would have no power over him, were it not within the will of the God he served (John 19:11).

**Full-Scale Riot**

The Jewish ringleaders had a method. They stirred up a mob, and let the mob do what they wanted done. That way, they were not to blame.

Now the whole city was ablaze with hatred and religious furor, and Paul was the focus of it. They dragged him out of the Court of the Women, where the temple police, expecting that he would be murdered, slammed the gates to protect the more sacred parts of the temple from being profaned by his blood.

What did the Jerusalem Church do at this point? Nothing is said about their intervening in Paul's behalf. Apparently they felt silence was their best course. And perhaps, in their defense, they could have done nothing but make matters worse. Roman law was focused only on keeping order, not trying to solve differences among hotheaded Jews.

10. What pretext did the Asian Jews use to justify their violent behavior against Paul? (21:29) \_\_\_\_\_

The accusation was only a pretext, based on a rumor. Rumors thrive on half-truths, prejudices, and outright lies. But they can have deadly consequences.

Having seen Paul with a Gentile named Trophimus, the hateful Jews jumped to the conclusion that Paul had taken this Gentile into the temple, which was strictly against Jewish law. It was only too convenient to make this assumption, as it conveyed the accusation they wanted to make against "Paul the Friend of Gentiles." In the eyes of loyal Jews, a Gentile's presence in the temple defiled their holy place. Gentiles were permitted into the court of the Gentiles but no further. So serious were they about this law that the penalty for a Gentile to pass beyond the court of the Gentiles was death. (This penalty was a Jewish ordinance and not part of Moses' law.)

Acting on this assumption, they felt justified in seizing Paul and drawing him out of the temple, and might have beaten him to death had not the Roman authorities intervened.

Although the assumption that Paul had taken a Gentile into the temple was false, it was occasioned by Paul's relationship with Gentile Christians, which he would not compromise.

11. What was Paul's official commission from Jesus? (Acts 22:21; 26:17) \_\_\_\_\_

**Intending to Kill**

Read Acts 21:26-40

12. What was the intention of those who seized Paul? (21:31) \_\_\_\_\_
13. What was the concern of the Romans when they saw the city in an uproar? (21:31-32) \_\_\_\_\_
14. How do we know that they were beating Paul? (21:32) \_\_\_\_\_



15. What action did the Roman authorities take? (21:33) \_\_\_\_\_

16. By taking Paul a prisoner, what were the chief captain and his forces actually doing? (21:33) \_\_\_\_\_

Suddenly the mob who were intending to kill Paul (21:31) were in serious trouble. Overlooking the temple court was the Fortress of Antonia, and in that fortress a Roman commander was stationed who had between 600 and 1000 soldiers at his instant command. Immediately the commander ordered at least two hundred soldiers to quiet the riot with a show of force (21:32). As it was the time of a prominent Jewish feast, the Romans were likely on alert. Jewish crowds had caused trouble before.

At the sight of the commander and the soldiers, the mob “*stopped beating Paul*” (21:32), and so saved his life. Paul’s tormentors knew better than to resist Roman authority.

17. Did the Roman commander who rescued Paul set him free? (21:33)

What did he assume? (21:38) \_\_\_\_\_

The Roman officer immediately concluded that Paul was some vicious outlaw, and chained him. Chaining a prisoner to a soldier was a common practice among the Romans. This commander took extra precaution and chained Paul between two soldiers.

From this point forward Paul was a prisoner. This part of his career would take him ultimately to Rome, and make it possible for him to give us a large part of our New Testament.

18. When the Roman commander tried to find out from the Jews what they had against Paul and what was the cause of the tumult, what did they learn? (21:33–34) \_\_\_\_\_

#### Acts 21:31–40 (NLT)

31 As they were trying to kill him, word reached the commander of the Roman regiment that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

32 He immediately called out his soldiers and officers and ran down among the crowd. When the mob saw the commander and the troops coming, they stopped beating Paul.

33 The commander arrested him and ordered him bound with two chains. Then he asked the crowd who he was and what he had done.

34 Some shouted one thing and some another. He couldn’t find out the truth in all the uproar and confusion, so he ordered Paul to be taken to the fortress.

35 As they reached the stairs, the mob grew so violent the soldiers had to lift Paul to their shoulders to protect him.

36 And the crowd followed behind shouting, “Kill him, kill him!”

37 As Paul was about to be taken inside, he said to the commander, “May I have a word with you?” “Do you know Greek?” the commander asked, surprised.

38 “Aren’t you the Egyptian who led a rebellion some time ago and took four thousand members of the Assassins out into the desert?”

39 “No,” Paul replied, “I am a Jew from Tarsus in Cilicia, which is an important city. Please, let me talk to these people.”

40 The commander agreed, so Paul stood on the stairs and motioned to the people to be quiet. Soon a deep silence enveloped the crowd, and he addressed them in their own language, Aramaic.



#### **Did Paul Compromise?**

By publicly endorsing a Jewish practice, was Paul compromising? Was he rejecting Jewish laws on one hand and observing them on the other?

Paul knew that observing Jewish customs had no value so far as salvation was concerned. As he explained to the Corinthians, “*Circumcision is nothing and uncircumcision is nothing, but keeping the commandments of God is what matters*” (1 Cor. 7:19). At the same time, Paul was not teaching the Jewish believers to go against the customs of their fathers. He knew that these customs were God-instituted and were not “wrong.” They were, in fact, at the core of their social and family system. Even though these cultural practices were not required when they chose to follow Christ, they still were not quickly dropped. Their customs still could be viewed as symbols by which the loyal Jew expressed his dedication to God.

Although there is no way to know for sure, it seems that Paul was not wrong in accommodating the request of the elders. Why?

1) Paul himself had previously taken a Nazarite vow at Corinth (Acts 18:18). He did not do this under any pressure, but apparently wanted only to express his own personal consecration to God.

2) When he gave his defense before Felix (Acts 24:17–18), he referred to this incident, associating himself with Jewish practices.

3) By participating in the Jewish vows, Paul confirmed one of the principles of his ministry. To help others he would do anything short of compromising his own convictions to obey Christ. It was a gesture of goodwill and fellowship toward other Jewish believers. He had written to the Corinthians, “*to the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might win Jews; to those who are under the law, as under the law, that I might win those who are under the law; to*

*those who are without law* [not accountable to Jewish law but still under Christ’s law], *that I might win those who are without law; to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. Now this I do for the gospel’s sake that I may be partaker of it with you*” (1 Cor. 9:20–23).

4) Taking a Jewish vow, or observing any other Jewish custom, did not relate to salvation. This was discussed throughout his Epistles—to the Galatians, Corinthians, Thessalonians, and Romans. It was as if he said, I am not trying to tear down the Jewish customs. The Jew has the right to be loyal to custom and practice the Jewish laws if they choose to do so, but don’t stop there. If you want salvation, you must go on and be loyal to Christ, and live by His teaching.

5) After this incident, Paul asserted that he had not done anything that violated his own conscience (Acts 23:1).





Did you know...

### No Farther!

The outer court of the Temple was called the Court of the Gentiles because it was as far as Gentiles could go. A Gentile who would proceed farther was considered defiant, and faced the death penalty. This is the punishment the enraged Jews were attempting to inflict on Paul when the Roman soldiers rescued him.

Court of the Women

An Entrance to Court of the Women



Archeologists have found two of the inscriptions once placed at the entrances to the Court of the Women. They read in the Greek language, "No foreigner may enter within this barricade which surrounds the temple and enclosure. Anyone caught doing so will have himself to blame for his ensuing death."



Insight

### Falsely Accused

Suffering under false accusation seems to be part of standard curriculum for serious followers of Christ. Jesus Himself had His share when His persecutors, unable to accuse Him justly, called on false witnesses to testify. And what did Jesus tell His disciples? "If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you" (John 15:20).

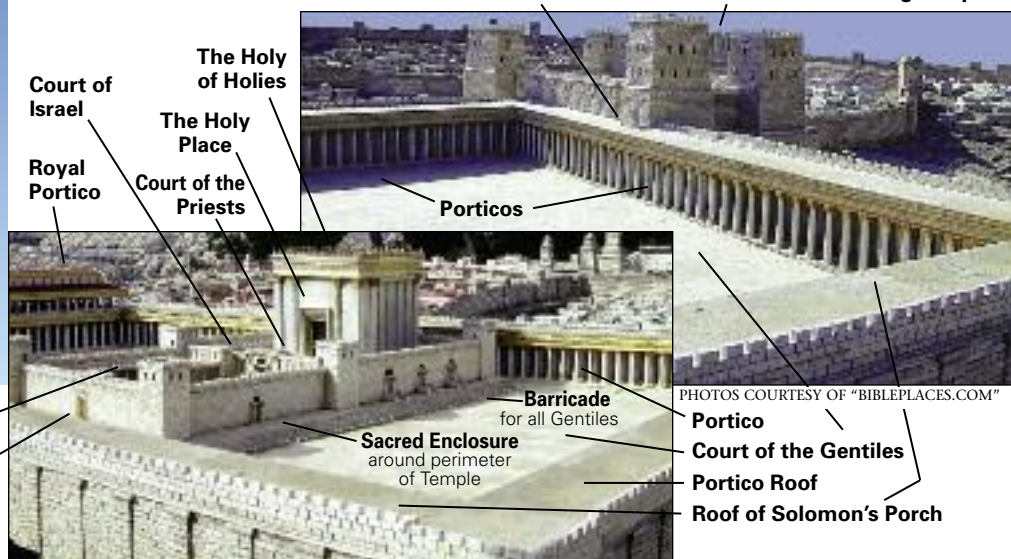
As far as we know, the Jews who accused Paul of bringing a Gentile into the temple and defiling it did not even attempt to find out the facts. It may have been a convenient lie. In any case, the accusation said what they wanted it to say! And only a little while later, Paul was the victim of another false accusation when the Roman commander assumed he was "the Egyptian" who had stirred up a rebellion with 4000 assassins! (Acts 21:38).

Have you ever been falsely accused? Think of Paul, and follow his advice: "Copy me as I copy Christ" (1 Cor. 11:1 Moffatt). "When they hurled their insults at him [Christ], he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats" (1 Pet. 2:23 NIV).

Remember, an accusation is nothing to fear, so long as it is false.

Stairway directly from Fortress down to Court of the Gentiles

ANTONIA FORTRESS  
Roman Garrison overlooking Temple



PHOTOS COURTESY OF "BIBLEPLACES.COM"

Model of HEROD'S TEMPLE First Century Jerusalem  
(Holyland Hotel Model of Jerusalem)

Here is another example of mass hysteria. Everyone was shouting something different and all at the same time. Most of the people probably did not know Paul or what was happening; they simply joined the noise and excitement of the riot.

Since the Roman commander could not be sure of the issues, he ordered his soldiers to take Paul into the barracks.

19. What action of the soldiers showed how violent the people were?

(21:35) \_\_\_\_\_

20. What were the people shouting as Paul was carried up the stairs of the fortress? (21:36) \_\_\_\_\_

21. What action of Paul shows that he was looking for every opportunity to promote Christ's cause? (21:37) \_\_\_\_\_

22. What about Paul's question surprised the commander? (21:37) \_\_\_\_\_

23. What had the commander assumed about Paul's identity? (21:37-38) \_\_\_\_\_

24. What does Paul say about his identity in his defense to the commander? (21:39) \_\_\_\_\_

Tarsus was an important city of eastern Asia Minor, and a well-respected university city, with schools in the same class as those of Athens and Alexandria.

Imagine Paul's courage, in the midst of the beatings and shouting and mass confusion, to ask permission to speak for his cause! Some people would have been looking for revenge on the people who had treated him so abominably. But there was no revenge in Paul's heart, nor was he pitying himself as a captive chained between two soldiers. Wherever Paul was, he was Christ's representative, and when he saw an opportunity to speak for Christ, he asked for it.

25. When the commander gave him permission to speak, where did Paul stand? (21:40) \_\_\_\_\_

26. In what language did Paul begin to speak? (21:40) \_\_\_\_\_

27. What was the response of the people when he began to speak? (21:40) \_\_\_\_\_

MM

to be continued



## How Are They Alike?

What does each group of six items have in common?

1. Stealing, coveting a friend's possessions, lying, worshiping idols, misusing God's name, killing someone

(Hint: God gave these at Mount Sinai.)

2. Barnabas, Epaphroditus, Luke, Silas, Timothy, Tychicus

(Hint: Who was their friend and fellow traveler?)

3. Mary, Peter, Gideon, Joseph, Mary Magdalene, Zacharias

(Hint: Who visited these people?)

4. Bread, gate, light, shepherd, truth, vine

(Hint: who compared himself to each of these?)

5. Blood, hail, darkness, flies, frogs, gnats

(Hint: God sent these on Egypt.)

6. Agabus, Moses, Deborah, Huldah, Miriam, Nathan

(Hint: What ministry did each have?)

7. Abiathar, Ananias, Eleazar, Ezra, Jehoiada, Zacharias

(Hint: What office did each hold?)

8. Sheep, Fish, Valley, Fountain, Water, Horse

(Hint: What was each?)

9. Ehud, Ibzan, Jair, Othniel, Shamgar, Tola

(Hint: What type of work did each do?)

10. Duration of the great flood's rainfall, time Moses was on Mount Sinai, time the spies spent exploring Canaan, time Elijah went in the strength of that meat length of Christ's post-resurrection ministry, length of Christ's wilderness temptation

(Hint: The duration of each.)

## Know Your Bible

### WHERE WAS/WERE?

1. Ezekiel when God's message first reached him?
2. David and Jonathan the last time they saw each other and renewed their covenant?
3. Moses' father-in-law prince and priest?
4. Gamaliel's seat of learning?
5. Jesus when He "sweat as it were drops of blood"?
6. The disciples when, in great fear, they awakened Jesus from His sleep?
7. Moses' two sons born?
8. Gideon when an angel appeared to him?
9. The ten tribes when they renounced the house of David and transferred their allegiance to Jeroboam?
10. The Israelites when they made their first camp after crossing Jordan?
11. Absalom when he proclaimed himself king?
12. Samuel when he anointed David king?

#### ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ABOVE

##### HOW ARE THEY ALIKE?

1. Part of the Ten Commandments; things God forbids (Exodus 20:1-17)
2. Paul's companions (Acts 13:2; Phil. 4:18; 2 Tim. 4:11; Acts 15:40; 20:1,4)
3. Angels visited each (Judges 6:11,12; Matt. 1:20; Luke 1:26,27; John 20:11,12,18; Acts 12:7; Luke 1:13)
4. They represent Jesus (John 6:35; 10:9; 8:12; 10:11; 14:6; 15:1)
5. Plagues (Exodus 7:19; 9:23-25; 10:22; 8:21,2,16)
6. Prophets (Acts 11:27,28; Deut. 18:15; 34:10; Judges 4:4; 2 Kings 22:14; Exodus 15:20; 2 Samuel 7:2)
7. Priests (1 Sam. 30:7; Acts 23:2; Exodus 28:1; Ezra 7:11; 2 Kings 11:15; Luke 1:5)
8. Jerusalem gates (Nehemiah 3:1,3,13,15,26,28)
9. Judges (Judges 3:15; 12:8; 10:3; 3:9,31; 10:1)
10. 40 days (Genesis 7:17; Exodus 24:18; Num. 13:16, 25; 1 Kings 19:8-9; Acts 1:3; Luke 4:1, 2)

##### WHERE WAS/WERE?

1. In Babylon by the River Chebar (Ezek. 1:3)
2. In the woods of Ziph (1 Sam. 23:14-18)
3. In Midian (Ex. 2:15-16)
4. In Jerusalem (Acts 5:28, 34 ff.)
5. In the Garden of Gethsemane (Matt. 26:34-46; Luke 22:39-44)
6. In their boat on the sea of Galilee (Luke 8:22-26)
7. In Midian (Ex. 2:16-22; 18:2-4)
8. Threshing wheat with a flail in the winepress (Judges 6:11)
9. Shechem (1 Kings 12:1-20)
10. Gilgal (Joshua 4:19-20)
11. In Hebron (2 Sam. 15:7, 10)
12. Bethlehem (1 Sam. 16:1-4, 13)





## LEARNING THE HARD WAY

**M**eet Archie Kingfisher! Archie is in a good humor this morning. But such has not always been the case. He knows now that losing your temper does not pay. But like quite a few other little birds, Archie had to learn the hard way.

As you know, the Kingfisher family lives on Riverview Avenue. Next door on one side are the Cranes, and on the other side are the Snipes.

A few days ago one afternoon, Archie, Sammy Snipe and Jerry Crane flew up the river on a fishing trip. They had good luck and before long were on their way home, each with a nice fish in his bill. Archie was particularly proud of his; so proud in fact, that he sailed over close to Sammy and said, "Mine is the biggest."

As he did so, out of his bill of course slipped his fish and down *kerplunk* into the river. Archie was right behind it, diving as fast as he could in an effort to reach it before it touched the water. But all he got was a mouth full of water and a good ducking. He was not hurt, of course, but my, how mad he was! When he arrived home he was crying and sputtering so much his mother could hardly understand what he was trying to say.

"Now, now, Archie," she said as she spread him out in front of the stove to dry. "Losing one fish is not bad. There are plenty more in the river. You can go back tomorrow afternoon with Sammy and Jerry and catch another one. But losing your temper is very, very bad. My little son," she continued, "remember when you are angry you cannot think straight and you cannot see straight. You must learn to control your temper. If you do not, one of these days it will get you into trouble."

Like a great many little birds I know, Archie heard what his mother said but did not pay much attention. He just kept on sulking, which made him feel quite miserable inside. And with his lower bill stuck away out, his face looked quite horrible.

But he had almost forgotten to be mad by the next afternoon when he started up the river to fish again with Sammy and Jerry.

"Archie," said Sammy, "you were one funny sight yesterday afternoon when you dived after your fish."

Jerry added, "I'll never forget the expression on your face when you came up out of the water." Then both of them laughed.

Of course they were just teasing, but Archie did not like to be teased and all of a sudden he was angry again.

"I'll fish by myself," he exploded. "I don't care if I never see you two birds again." And with that he started off in another direction just boiling inside. That explains what happened next.

He had flown only a little way from his friends when he spied a nice big fish swimming slowly down the river.

"Here's my chance to get even with those two smart fellows," he muttered, and without taking a second look dived straight toward the fish!

When he came to, he was lying flat on his back with Sammy and Jerry standing over him, dashing cold water in his face.

"What happened?" he asked as he opened his eyes. "That is what we want to know," said Sammy. "You dived straight down toward this cake of ice on which we are floating."

"I saw a fish," said Archie.

"It must have been this piece of paper frozen in the ice," said Jerry.

Sure enough, right beside where Archie lay was an icy piece of paper about the size, shape and color of a fish.

Well, fortunately Archie was not hurt very much. His collision with the cake of ice only knocked his breath out of him—and let us hope, also his ugly temper!

After resting a little longer he was able to fly back home with Sammy and Jerry. His mother thought it best not to lecture him this time, because as he came in the door he said, "Mother, I know now what you meant when you said 'when you are angry you can't think straight and you can't see straight.'"

So she spread him out in front of the stove again, rubbed his chest with camphorated oil and said nothing.

We are all glad Archie learned his lesson, but it is too bad he had to learn it the hard way, isn't it? *MM*



*When he came to, they were dashing cold water on his face.*

The above stories are reprinted with permission from *Bird Life in Wington* by J. Calvin Reid. Published by Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, MI.

## KEVIN'S PRAYER

Three-year old Kevin was heading for bed when he announced to his father, "I don't want to pray tonight." His father didn't scold him or shame him or try to force him to say his prayers. Although Kevin was very young, his parents wanted him to learn how important prayer is and wanted him to make praying his own.

So Dad gently lifted Kevin onto his lap and said, "Kevin, I would like to tell you why I say my prayers."

And Dad told him why he prayed. "I pray because I want to talk with my Heavenly Father because I want His help all day long. I also want to thank Him for a nice warm home, and a loving wife, and a little son Kevin. I want to thank Him for the food we had to eat today so I don't have to go to bed hungry. I want to thank Him for my nice warm bed and the good night's sleep I'm looking forward to. I want to thank Him for all the things I'm looking forward to doing tomorrow. I want to thank Him for being there to protect me from accidents and danger and hurts so that I can come home after work and be with my family. Oh, I just have so many, many, many blessings to thank Him for... You know Kevin; God is also my Heavenly Father, so I want to be a good and obedient child."

"Now Daddy, I want to say *my* prayers, 'cause I have blessings too," declared Kevin and he jumped down from his father's lap.

Father and son knelt together by Kevin's bed. Eagerly Kevin began, "Dear Daddy God, thank you for Mommy and Daddy and Pepper. Thank you for candy—I like Reese's Peanut Butter cups best of all—Pepper likes them too. Thank you for my wagon. You know God, I got a booboo on my knee and it hurts. Can You fix it? I don't like going to bed like Daddy. Ah, ah, I didn't want to talk to You 'cause I was naughty today. I'll talk to you again tomorrow. Amen."

Dad was teaching Kevin that there are things we don't avoid doing just because we don't feel like doing them at the moment. He also wanted Kevin to make prayer a habit—a choice that would be part of his life. Prayer for Dad was more than a personal responsibility—it was a priceless relationship that gave life strength and purpose and he wanted the same for Kevin. **MM**



## IS IT RIGHT?

*Do nothing that you would not want to be found doing when Jesus comes.*

Ever wonder whether a thing is right or not? Try asking yourself: "If the Lord should come this moment, would I like to have Him find me doing that?"

It is amazing how that simple question clears things up.

A woman who lived by this teaching was shopping in a small country store. Several young people were just standing around doing nothing. Knowing she was a Christian, they began ridiculing her. "We hear you're expecting Jesus to come back," they jeered.

"That's right," she replied brightly.

"Do you really believe He's coming?" they asked.

"Absolutely," she answered.

They said, "Well, you'd better hurry home and get ready. He might be on the way!"

Facing them, she said, "I don't have to get ready—I aim to keep ready!"

## ORDER NOW...

to get your *Megiddo Message 2005 and 2006*, all 12 issues in one hardbound volume.

Volumes will be mailed by April 15, 2007.

Orders must be received by March 20, 2007.

Price: \$20.00 (Includes postage and handling)

Address orders to: **Megiddo Church**  
481 Thurston Road  
Rochester, NY 14619-1697



## *Our Almighty Father*

*In the still of the winter when all is asleep  
Except when the birds make an occasional peep,  
When the trees are all stripped of their beautiful leaves  
And the branches are swaying in winter's cold breeze...*

*I sit here and muse on our Father above,  
The God of all mercy and comfort and love;  
How He's planned for His children both mighty and small,  
And promised to help them, and hear when they call;*

*He knows who will serve Him, and who will be true,  
By following Jesus be made over new.  
His blessings are more than the sands on the shore,  
And to all the faithful He has promised much more.*

*As users of all that our God has supplied,  
Oh, how can we thank Him, our God up on high,  
And give Him all honor, and true worship bring  
To our Almighty Father, our Lord and our King?*

—Melva Walton



**T**his year the members and friends of the Megiddo Church will welcome the beginning of the sacred New Year on the evening of Tuesday, April 17, extending through Wednesday, April 18, Bible time being measured from "evening to evening" (Lev. 23:32). The ancient Hebrew pattern, according to the law God gave to Moses, was to begin the New Year with the month "Abib," which is the month beginning with the first new moon following the spring equinox (March 20, this year). The first new moon occurs this year the evening of April 17.

This day has double significance as we commemorate the beginning of the sacred year and also the birth of our great coming King.

We extend an invitation to our members and friends to join us for this sacred season. The anniversary of the Lord's Supper will be on Sunday evening, April 29, and the Resurrection on May 2.



*If you doubt the propriety of doing a thing, give yourself the benefit of the doubt and don't do it.*

The biggest obstacle many of us stumble over is our own fault.

*All things being equal, a Christian will make spiritual progress exactly in proportion to his ability to command himself. Some Christians look to the passing of the years to mellow them and make them more Christ-like. But a crooked tree does not straighten with age; neither does a crooked Christian.*

An excuse is usually a thin skin of falsehood stretched tightly over a bald-faced lie.

*A wise man learns by the experiences of others. An ordinary man learns by his own experience. A fool learns by nobody's experience.*

Failure inevitably overtakes those who have the power to do without the will to act.

*It should be a great comfort to know that God still has His hands on the steering wheel of the universe, and that His plan includes our tiny planet.*

God has not called us to prove the gospel—  
He has called us to practice it.



No one can become a Christian on his own terms.

Better to forgive and forget than to hate and remember.

What have you done today that nobody but a Christian would do?

---

## CURE FOR EGO PAIN

(continued from page 2)

10. **Become more positive.** Look for opportunities to be kind and spread cheer. Instead of being hurt, feel sorrow for those who show animosity and unkindness.

11. **Don't rely on others for emotional support.** Let's face it—people are going to fail at some point and let us down. Remember, our purpose is to please God, not our ego.

12. **Practice thinking of others and not yourself.** When you are hurt, that means you are thinking of yourself. Try to apply the Bible principle, "*Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too*" (Phil. 2:3-4 NLT). A hurt feeling (ego pain) is "all about me." Focus on others and their needs, not your ego.

A preacher once said, "Dead men never get offended."

13. **Show kindness to the one who has offended you.** Stroking your ego to make it feel better will solve nothing. An act of loving kindness to the one who offended you may do wonders. Paul says it in these words: "*...in so doing you will heap coals of fire on his head*" (Rom. 12: 20). If you show kindness to the one who offended you, even if he does not realize he wronged you it may help him be kinder and more considerate. And you are promoting Christian love and harmony; isn't that better than nourishing your ego?

Practice these, and soon the ego pain will be gone and you will find a new freedom. You will be free to serve God and others with happiness and delight. Now your life no longer revolves around your ego. Now you set your sights on greater things, on serving God and others, and preparing for a glorious future with no end! ♦





## RECIPE FOR GOSSIP

- 1. Take a harmless event.*
- 2. Add an ugly motive.*
- 3. Stir in your own opinion.*
- 4. Add a suspicious tone.*
- 5. Put in a generous measure of "they say."*
- 6. Add imaginary details to heighten the taste.*
- 7. Sprinkle well with spice of rumor.*
- 8. Heat slowly over the flame of envy.*
- 9. Serve secretly and as often as possible to any takers.*

—Selected