

# Megiddo Message

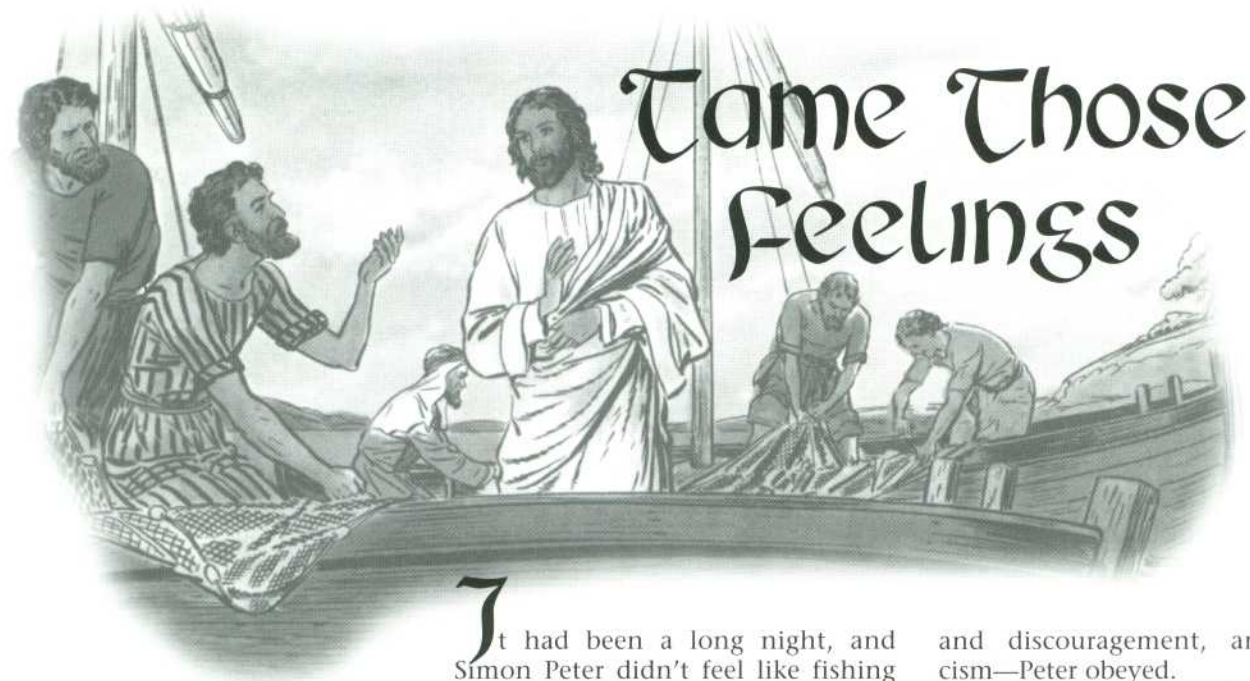


**P**RAISE GOD  
FROM WHOM ALL  
BLESSINGS FLOW!



November, 1995  
Vol. 82, No. 10





# Tame Those Feelings

**I**t had been a long night, and Simon Peter didn't feel like fishing anymore. He was discouraged because they had caught nothing for all their work. Why try anymore, when the fish just weren't to be found? Discouraged, they pulled their nets, and headed toward shore.

On the shore, a crowd had gathered, and Jesus had started preaching. Seeing Simon approaching with his boat, Jesus asked if He could use the boat for His pulpit. So Jesus boarded the boat, and Simon positioned the boat just far enough from the land so that Jesus had a good view of the people. Then Jesus sat down, and taught them from the boat.

At length, Jesus concluded His speaking, and Simon expected, of course, to take Jesus to the land, and

and discouragement, and skepticism—Peter obeyed.

Isn't there a lesson here for us? Haven't we all seen times when we didn't feel like doing what needed to be done?

None of us would say, "*Lord, I will obey whenever I feel like it.*" But do our actions ever belie our profession?

Jesus said, "*If ye love me, keep my commandments*" (John 14:15). The opposite is, If you do not keep My commandments, you do not love Me.

Christ will not force us to obey against our wills, but we must subdue our feelings. Obedience must come first.

Consider Abraham. When God called him, Abraham replied, "*Here I am*" (Gen. 22:1). But little did he realize what the message to him would be. Little did he know what God was calling him to do. Yet he was ready to obey. He was saying, in effect, "*Lord, I am ready to do as You ask,*" or "*Your command is My wish.*"

And what did God command Abraham to do? "*Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of*" (v. 2).

Can't we imagine how Abraham felt? But Abraham did not consult his feelings. His only thought was to obey God's command. In spite of his feelings, he obeyed.

How we feel about obeying God is a side issue. God calls us to act, not

**W**e will never be disappointed if we tame our feelings and let our obedience come first.

go home. But Jesus had another idea. "*Launch out into the deep,*" He said, "*and let down your nets.*" It was the last thing Simon wanted to do. "*Master,*" he responded, "*we worked hard all night and haven't caught anything, nevertheless, because You say so, I will let down the nets*" (Luke 5:1-5). In spite of his feelings—of weariness,

(Continued on page 27)



## 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 (II 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 of applying in 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 a new age is coming—is near—when the earth shall be filled with His glory, His people, and God's will be done here as it is now done in heaven.

## SOON-COMING EVENTS ...

### *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.

The Bible pictures all events, all men and all nations moving together toward this one God-ordained climax, when "the kingdoms of this world" will become "the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ" (Rev. 11:15), a kingdom in which all who live will enjoy the blessings of peace, equity and prosperity. When the task is complete, our earth shall be numbered among the heavenly, glorified worlds and filled with immortal inhabitants, bringing to reality the promise of our Lord in His prayer: "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

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# Megiddo Message

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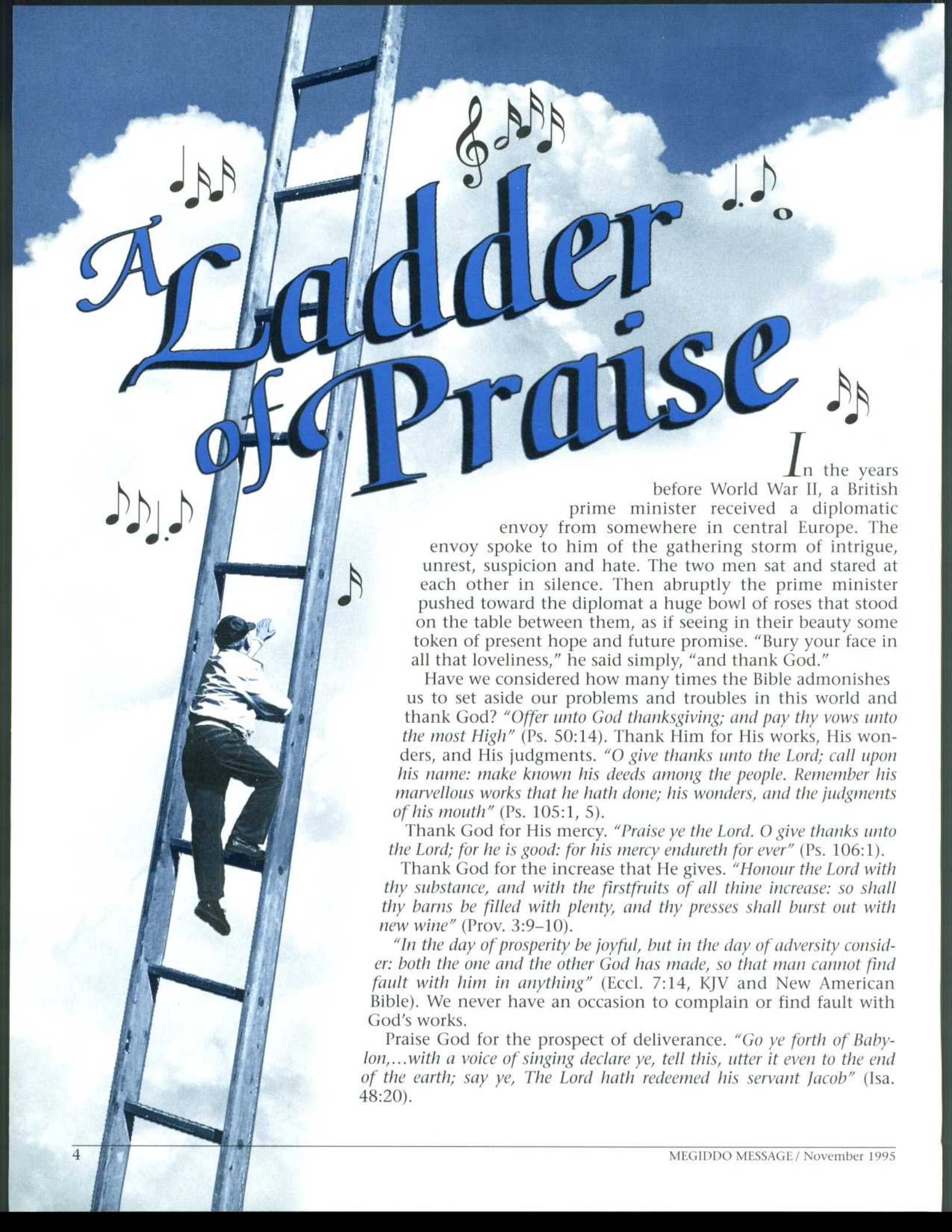
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# A Ladder of Praise

**I**n the years before World War II, a British prime minister received a diplomatic envoy from somewhere in central Europe. The envoy spoke to him of the gathering storm of intrigue, unrest, suspicion and hate. The two men sat and stared at each other in silence. Then abruptly the prime minister pushed toward the diplomat a huge bowl of roses that stood on the table between them, as if seeing in their beauty some token of present hope and future promise. "Bury your face in all that loveliness," he said simply, "and thank God."

Have we considered how many times the Bible admonishes us to set aside our problems and troubles in this world and thank God? "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High" (Ps. 50:14). Thank Him for His works, His wonders, and His judgments. "O give thanks unto the Lord; call upon his name: make known his deeds among the people. Remember his marvellous works that he hath done; his wonders, and the judgments of his mouth" (Ps. 105:1, 5).

Thank God for His mercy. "Praise ye the Lord. O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever" (Ps. 106:1).

Thank God for the increase that He gives. "Honour the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine" (Prov. 3:9-10).

"In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: both the one and the other God has made, so that man cannot find fault with him in anything" (Eccl. 7:14, KJV and New American Bible). We never have an occasion to complain or find fault with God's works.

Praise God for the prospect of deliverance. "Go ye forth of Babylon, ... with a voice of singing declare ye, tell this, utter it even to the end of the earth; say ye, The Lord hath redeemed his servant Jacob" (Isa. 48:20).



The apostle Paul would have us give voice to our thanks, speaking to *"yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Eph. 5:19-20).

*"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God"* (Phil. 4:6).

*"Giving thanks unto God the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light"* (Col. 1:12).

*"Rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving"* (Col. 2:7).

*"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful.... And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him"* (Col. 3:15, 17).

*"Continue in prayer, and watch in the same with thanksgiving"* (Col. 4:2).

*"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you"* (1 Thess. 5:18).

*"By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name"* (Heb. 13:15).

Can we ponder these texts, and wonder whether God wants His children to express their thanks—and more, to be thankful?

But it is not a sentimental feeling that is required; nor does the Bible try to cover up the grim and unpleasant experiences of life. It shows us how we can rise above the unpleasant and undesirable with a spirit of thankfulness which can keep the thought of God supreme whatever comes, and can see all things working together for good to those who truly love Him. By giving thanks to God in the midst of trial, we place ourselves in His care and realize we are not alone; we realize that He will be our strength and will never allow anything more than we can bear. Thus we bow in humble, willing, grateful submission to Him who does all things right, rather than feeling ourselves the victims of chance or fate. And when we let God be Master and Ruler in our lives, we can know that whatever the immediate outlook and suffering, the end will be glorious beyond anything we can imagine.

Oh, the rich and overflowing blessings that spring from thankfulness!

The same God who shows us how we can be thankful in the midst of life as it is, also shows us ourselves as we are—stubborn, rebellious, indifferent, self-centered, suspicious of the motives of others when we should be suspicious of ourselves—and shows us what thankfulness will do to transform us. There are hours dark as midnight when we see deep into our unregenerated hearts, and hope and God seem afar off; yet always, when there is within us a desire

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with God.*



for holiness, God is ready to encourage, strengthen and help us to get right again. At such times, as a token of present hope and future promise, something in His Word seems to say to us, "Bury your face in all this loveliness, and thank God." Thank Him not for what you are but for what you have the potential to become. But above all, *thank God.*

Our capacity to give thanks is our binding link with God. When we seem to have no other touch with Him, we can still give thanks. And as surely as we start counting our blessings that come from Him, we realize how deeply indebted and dependent we are. We are not self-sufficient in this world, much as we might like to think we are. We are not here because we deserved life, nor are we sustained by our own ingenuity. The processes and laws by which we exist are wholly God's design; and were He to take away so small a thing as the oxygen we breathe, we would all perish together in a matter of minutes. Realizing this should draw from our hearts the deepest feeling of humble gratitude to Him who is so great, so All-wise, so Omnipotent. When we feel disheartened, or discouraged, or disenchanted with our lives, if we just stop to consider what God has done for us in the past, what He is doing for us today, and what He has promised to do for us in the future—does not the thought of all this draw our hearts to Him in praise and gratitude?

A prominent religious scholar of this century writes of a time when as a youth he felt muddled and confused, "not knowing what to do with life nor what to make of it." His faith was sorely shaken, and he found himself even doubting whether God were real. However, he did not throw his religion away as so many do. Rather, he made a resolve to hang onto what remained of it by what he called "one thin thread of thanks." He thanked whatever gods there might be for everything he had and refused to whine or repine because there was so little in his life that seemed good. Instead of whining, he kept directing his mind to the good he could find. He determined that he would take "life for gratitude, not for granted," and he found in time that the "one thin thread of thanks" not only recovered for him the reality and radiance of faith but led him to a full and happier life.

We grow in grace as we grow in gratitude. In fact, we may think of our growth in grace in terms of the level of gratitude we have reached. Our gratitude must grow. Just as a newborn child cannot be grateful for life, so a beginner in the way of salvation cannot be truly grateful for the hope set before him. Gratitude comes with growth.

We see in the Bible different levels of gratitude, which may be arranged in an ascending scale. They are levels that we attain as we mature in the Divine life. We might call them a ladder of praise, in which every round "goes higher, higher."

Let us try to light up the rungs of this ladder with several texts of Scripture.

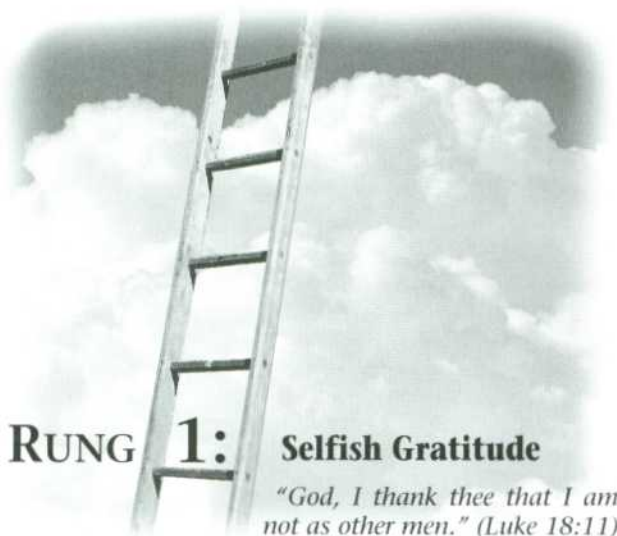




*"What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?" (Job 21:15).*

## GROUND LEVEL: The Complainers

At the very bottom of the ladder are those who have no thought or desire for God. They say to the Lord by their actions, *"Depart from us; for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have, if we pray unto him?"* (Job 21:14-15). They take life for granted, not for gratitude. Here are the murmurers, the grumblers, the complainers, who are satisfied with nothing, grateful for nothing, and—in the sight of God—good for nothing. God forbid that we should ever place ourselves among them.



### RUNG 1: Selfish Gratitude

*"God, I thank thee that I am not as other men." (Luke 18:11)*

The first level of praise, the lowest rung on our ladder, is found in these words: "God, I thank thee that I am not as other men are."

You will recall Jesus' parable of a Pharisee in the temple piously offering a prayer to heaven. "God, I thank thee," he began. Why? Why was he thanking God? Because he felt that he was *"not as other men, ... nor even as this tax-collector"*—who was bowing his head in shame and humiliation for his sinfulness, and crying out for Divine mercy of which he felt so unworthy.

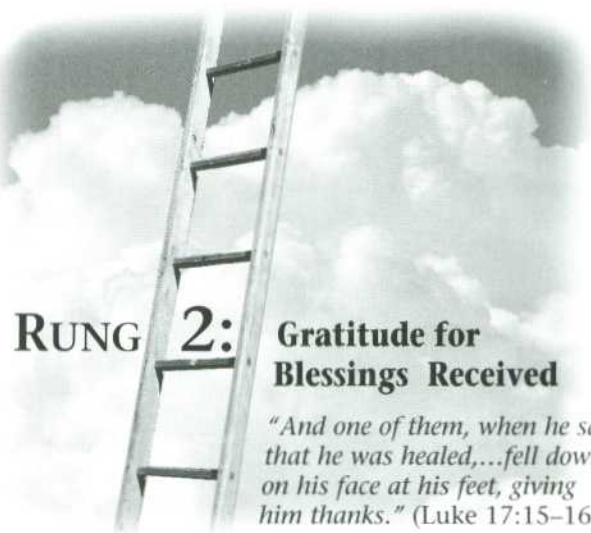
We doubt, of course, that the complacent Pharisee felt entirely satisfied with his life either; yet in a sense he was. He was satisfied because he had reached the low goal he had set for himself: to be better than someone else. We can visualize him walking among the upper class of the day, making the appropriate remarks at the appropriate times, well greeted by all and yet a friend of none. We call his attitude Pharisical; his righteousness a sham. Yet, bad as it was, it was better than grumbling. His prayer contained at least a measure of thankfulness. When he compared his lot to that of other people—extortioners, unjust, adulterers, publicans—he *did* have a great deal to be thankful for.

*"God, I thank thee that I am not as other men."* This is the lowest rung on the ladder of praise because it is passive; it will never go any higher. God does not condemn us for being grateful for the misfortunes we have escaped, but such was hardly the Pharisee's intent. "I feel so fortunate, when I compare myself with other people" could be a statement of sincere appreciation; but coming from the lips of the self-righteous Pharisee, it is a form of self-praise. What will happen to this Pharisee's gratitude when he sees others who enjoy better health, greater social distinction, higher positions, larger measures of this world's goods, and a keener devotion to piety? How much gratitude will he have to offer *then*?

No, thankfulness that comes from looking down upon others is not thankfulness at all. It is not that *"meek and quiet spirit"* which is *"in the sight of God of great price"* (1 Pet. 3:4). Nor does it find its highest satisfaction in pleasing God; when it pleases itself, it is satisfied.

What did Jesus teach His pre-eminence-loving disciples about this all-too-human trait? *"Whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant"* (Matt. 20:27). And what did the apostle Paul say about it? *"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise"* (2 Cor. 10:12). God does not honor His people for self-made distinctions. It is our duty to compare ourselves with the Divine standard, not with other men.

Lest we be tempted to stay on this low, comfortable rung on the ladder of praise, let us start climbing immediately. God does not even hear the prayers that come from this level. For our prayers to reach the throne of grace, we must climb higher. Our prayer, *"God, I thank thee that I am not as other men"* should be changed to one of genuine gratitude that says, "God, I thank thee for all that I am—thine is the glory."



### RUNG 2: Gratitude for Blessings Received

*"And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, ... fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks." (Luke 17:15-16)*

The second rung up the ladder of praise is illustrated by this text: *"And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, ... fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks"* (Luke 17:15-16).





*By giving thanks  
to God in the midst  
of trial, we place  
ourselves in His care  
and realize we are  
not alone.*

This was the time Jesus healed ten men of that loathsome, deadly disease, leprosy. And only one of them—and he a despised Samaritan—returned to say thank you. His thanks was better than that of the Pharisee. There was no slow, calculating, haughty statement in it of being better than someone else, but simply a spontaneous outburst of praise for a boon unexpectedly and miraculously received. The man had been cured of incurable leprosy. He had been granted an undreamed of favor from God. Therefore he gave thanks.

Sheer courtesy requires that we climb to this second rung. Nothing seems more rude or insensitive than an attitude of ingratitude. We do not mind helping others who cannot help us in return, but we do like them to have the grace to say thank you. It is told of a distinguished lawyer that in the course of a brilliant career he saved seventy-nine accused murderers from the death-penalty—and not even one of them thanked him. If mere men feel themselves deserving of thanks, how much more does God!

Of the ten lepers, only one thought enough of the Healer to return and say thank you. "Where are the other nine?" asked Jesus. But they had gone their thoughtless way, receiving the outer blessing and not taking time to turn back to obtain the greater healing Jesus could have given their *inner* lives.

What is the level of our gratitude? Have we partaken of God's bounty—and felt grateful, yet not approached Him to express our thanks and seek the greater blessings He holds in store?

### **RUNG 3: Gratitude for God's Goodness**

*"Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" (Ps. 107:21).*

When we have received special blessings, praise comes naturally; we are not likely to make the mistake of the nine lepers. But this is not the height of thankfulness.

This is only the second rung up the ladder. We want to go higher, higher.

The third rung is indicated by this text: "*Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*" (Ps. 107:8, 15, 21, 31).

So sang the Psalmist. All the way through the book of Psalms you feel that you are walking on a smoldering volcano of praise, which is liable to burst out at any moment into a great flame of gratitude to God.

Here is genuine praise. The men who wrote the Psalms praised God with their whole heart and soul. And for what? Not for material blessings and benefits such as we enjoy, because freedom, security, comfort and prosperity were not theirs. They had little of what we would call natural reasons for gratitude.

For what, then, did they thank God? They thanked Him for the visible demonstrations of Himself, His power, His creative ability; they thanked Him for His promises and the better hope He was setting before the children of men; for promised blessings that would be independent of time and circumstance. "*Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness,*" they exclaimed, "*and for his wonderful works to the children of men!*" (Ps. 107:21).

The Psalmist thanked God for the visible creation. He thanked God because he realized how dependent he was upon the Giver of every good; he was grateful for the gift of life itself, and for the provisions to sustain it.

The Psalmist thanked God for Divine providence, to know that if he was worthy, God would be with him, look out for him, and keep him safe from harm while he served Him. It was a simple yet profound faith. These men believed that God cared for His own, watched over them, protected them, guided them, and controlled their lives according to His wise and gracious purpose. Seeing signs of His providence in the creation gave them confidence. Seeing signs of His providence in history gave them hope for the future. They looked out, as we do, upon a turbulent, tottering world that threatened to commit suicide by its own folly and wickedness, but they stayed calm and serene in the confidence that above all the chances and changes of history abides the unchanging and eternal God, who directs all toward a predetermined triumph.

The Psalmist thanked God for hope. Whatever else he knew about God, he knew this: that in Him was the only hope of life beyond. God was kind, forgiving, merciful. And because He had worked in the past, David could be sure He would work yet more, doing more and more of those wonderful works in behalf of the children of men. To be saved from the misery of misfortune, saved from the bondage of sin, saved from the folly of his own passions, saved from the fear of death and nonentity—these



are life's supreme blessings, and the Psalmist had them; for all these he gave thanks. And in giving this thanks, he took a long step up the ladder of praise.

Are we standing firmly on this rung? Do we fully appreciate all the wondrous works of God in our behalf—past, present and future? He who has given to us so abundantly in this present life, and who has offered so much more for the future—are we becoming more and more grateful as we should?

Deep is the debt of gratitude we owe to God. "Oh that men"—including you and me—"would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!"

*We grow in grace  
as we grow in  
gratitude.*

take it, learn it, teach it to others.

But this is not all Jesus did. "After the same manner also he took the cup." Here is the symbol of His complete life-consecration, the full surrender, the relinquishing of His own will to do the will of His Father; for this, too, He gives thanks to God, and then passes it on to His disciples. This, too, is yours, He says; "drink ye all of it" (Matt. 26:27). Your surrender must also be completed; you likewise must drink. It is the cup of self-sacrifice, the cup of total commitment, the pouring out of one's very life-blood in consecration. And for this, too, Jesus gives thanks.

Think of the meaning in this simple act: giving thanks for that which symbolizes suffering and death; giving thanks for that which means obedience unto death, "even the death of the cross" for Jesus (Phil. 2:8); giving thanks for that final and supreme test that He knew would be His on the morrow. Here is a mind so in tune with the mind of the Father, so in harmony with His overarching purpose of wisdom, that He can make the event of sacrifice, shame and suffering an occasion for gratitude to God. Mortal hands can reach no higher rung on the ladder of praise than this.

It is easy to thank God when the cup is filled with pleasure and blessing. But when the cup is brimming with suffering and pain, sorrow and adversity, can we still give thanks for the cup? Are we strong enough to pull ourselves to this topmost rung on the ladder of praise?

The apostle Paul could do it. He said, "we glory in tribulations also: knowing..." what? "Knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed" (Rom. 5:3-5).

And this praise and joy is a rebounding happiness; for what gives more joy, or a deeper feeling of gratitude to God, than a day lived victoriously, a day spent concentrating our whole mind on the future and cutting loose from the things of the present? What gives greater cause for gratitude than to know that we are indeed making the surrender, the sacrifice of a living being, the severing of our own ways, thought-patterns and ideas? What gives greater joy than the sure knowledge that we are nearer our goal than we have ever been before, and that our prospects of living forever are indeed becoming more real? Should we not be anxious to thank God for *anything* that brings us this holy joy? Could anything make us more deeply grateful?

Perhaps the highest expression of this rung on the ladder of praise is found in the words of the Psalmist, spoken prophetically of Christ and also of each loyal follower of His who attains that supreme height. "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart" (Ps. 40:8). To find delight in any duty, any task, any enduring, any sacrifice, any suffering, simply because we are convinced that it is the will of God for us

## RUNG 4: Gratitude in the Midst of Trial

*"We glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope: and hope maketh not ashamed." (Rom. 5:3-5)*

We have not yet reached the highest rung on the ladder that we can reach. There is one rung higher, and it is found in these words: that "the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it.... After the same manner also he took the cup" (1 Cor. 11:23-25).

At once our minds recreate the familiar scene in the upper room. Jesus and His disciples are sharing their last Passover meal together until the time comes when they will eat it anew "in the kingdom of God" (Luke 22:16, 18).

On this the eve of His crucifixion, Jesus has told His disciples of many things—of glory, and joy, and hope, and peace. Now He enacts a solemn and meaningful ceremony which was to live as a sacred memorial among His disciples until He comes to His Kingdom. First He takes the bread, a symbol of the gospel He has been preaching and teaching among men, that Divine wisdom which He received from His Father; He gives thanks for it, and divides it among His disciples. By this simple act He entrusts to them the holy principles of heavenly knowledge that had been His. Now it is yours, He says;



and will bring us nearer to Him and to our goal—here is the spring of genuine gratitude.

The apostle Paul called it glorying *"in the cross."* *"God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world"* (Gal. 6:14). It was a cross that denied him the right to think or speak as he naturally would have done, or to pursue the goals which would have naturally attracted him. The sacrifice was a cross, and it brought about a crucifixion; but Paul rejoiced—because so far as the world was concerned any more, he was a dead man, who had nothing to offer it; and so far as he was concerned, he no longer had any desire for the world; Paul was lost to its attractions, its power, its influence. For this separation Paul praised God. *"Therefore,"* he could write, *"I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake"* (2 Cor. 12:10)—not for the sake of suffering but for Christ's sake. He did not glory because of the crucifixion itself, but because of the triumph which that cross borne to the end would bring him.

No longer was Paul bound by outward restrictions; he could call himself one of the *"circumcision of the heart,"* one of those who *"worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 3:3), bound to Him by a deep, inseparable bond of inner strength and common purpose. Nothing external mattered at all; his gratitude was for the experiences of his life—whether *"good"* or *"bad"* from a human point of view—if only they would bring him to life in Christ's Kingdom.

## RUNG 5: Gratitude for Immortality

*"Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great"* (Rev. 19:5).

This gratitude in trial is the highest rung on the ladder—until we are lifted to one higher. And this is the praise that will resound when *"this mortal"* shall *"put on immortality"* and death be *"swallowed up in victory"* (1

*Above all the chances  
and changes of history  
abides the unchanging  
and eternal God, who is  
directing all toward a  
predetermined  
triumph.*

Cor. 15:53–54). Here at last is the highest and best—praise which, once begun, shall continue through all the ages of eternity.

Here is the highest level of praise, higher than we can now imagine. It is the level on which saints and angels join in triumphant hallelujahs to the great God who has glorified them and blessed them with delights indescribable. It is the ringing song that the beloved John heard in vision. *"Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great"* (Rev. 19:5). It is the praise that shall arise as sweet incense to the throne of God when *"all the angels . . . worshipped God, saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever"* (Rev. 7:11–12).

Our founder, Rev. L. T. Nichols, delighted in painting word pictures of the wonders of that day. I would like to quote just a portion of one of his inspiring descriptions. *"We should be so energized by this wonderful aspiration that our whole being will spring forth and be used in preparing to become one of those lofty and stately forms that will ascribe 'blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might unto our God for ever and ever.' And as the great 'Amen' is pronounced, each heart will be so filled with ecstatic joy that there will be such a gusto that the happy Amen will break forth from every heart in such thundering tones that many a world on high will hear. And as they hear the gladsome sound, their joy will be increased, for they will realize that another world has been born into the celestial family of Him from whom all blessings flow.*

*"And then, as they listen, they will all return the echo with such magnified beauty and precision that every soul will bound with greater joy and pleasure as they listen so joyfully to the words, as it were 'a voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice and give honor to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.'"*

To think that the angels of God may someday speak these words in our honor! Let us never forget the joy that will surround the top rung on the ladder of praise, those praises that will resound when earth has become a part of heaven and all below is Paradise!

How can we possibly content ourselves with small measures and low levels of gratitude, when that which is ahead is *"exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think"*?

Oh, let us keep climbing, every round going *"higher, higher"* until we reach the top. And then—

*When we've been there ten thousand years  
Bright shining as the sun,  
There's no less days to sing God's praise  
Than when we first begun.*





# Find the Updrafts!

*Our faith is the  
only limit on  
how high  
our thoughts  
can soar.*

One day while I was waiting in a small parking lot near the ocean, I noticed many birds perched in some nearby pines. Occa-

sionally they would circle, then return to their roost. Others seemed to ride a small current of air upward, then descend just as quickly. Then they would glide, but as they glided they gradually lost altitude—until they started to flap their wings. If they wanted to climb, they had to put forth some effort.

It brought to my mind the time I had stood on a rocky ledge and watched an eagle plunge a thousand feet to catch its prey in the river below, then almost immediately take off for the heights. The eagle flapped its wings until it was caught in a strong updraft, then how it rose, hardly moving a wing, until it disappeared out of sight.

I thought of our Christian lives. How do we fly? Do we circle and perch, cautious not to over-reach our faith, like the small birds, or do we seek the strong updrafts of a great and mighty and Divine purpose that will take us to the highest heights of spiritual achievement?

Our faith is the only limit on how high we can soar—which tells us that if we are willing to utilize all our God-given powers and get into the updrafts that come from above, who knows what heights of holy living we can reach!

Let us find those strong updrafts of faith, those heavenly promises which encouraged and enlivened God's saints of old! Find the updrafts and keep in them. God's best rewards are reserved for those who fly highest. □



# Coming On Apace

*Sometimes we say  
That the time seems long to us who watch and wait  
For that "great Day,"  
As if the time loitered and the great Day came late.*

*Did you ever stay  
A moment, to think how the time is hasting away  
And we cannot hinder a moment as it flies;  
But one week dies  
And another comes, straight, straight on  
And is partly gone  
While we are pausing to think it has begun?*

*Time pauses never,  
The day of grace is shortening ever,  
At one unfaltering pace;  
And the day of decision  
Is traveling onward, with unswerving precision,  
And suddenly, or ever we are aware—  
That Day will be!*

*Blessed are they,  
Who with steadfast hope and faith can say  
With every rising sun,  
"Lord Jesus, come!"*

# Be What You Teach

Carlyle once received a letter from a young man asking him how to become a successful teacher. Carlyle replied, "Be what you would have your pupils be."

In teaching, whether it be of the youngest class in grade school or at the doctoral level in a great university, the role of the teacher is that of reproducing himself. To be successful, he must transmit his skills, his understanding, his insight, and his character to those who sit before him.

The great teachers are those who are captured by the facts they are presenting, so captured that they inspire enthusiasm in their students. They are consumed by them, and they have an all-consuming desire to have others consumed by them.

One cannot attempt to present truth in a detached, clinical manner. Truth must be understood, practiced

and experienced before it can be impressed on others.

Our Lord demonstrated this quality in His teaching. Not only did He teach *about* God, He showed that He Himself was a master of what He was teaching. Everything that He taught was from His Father, a firsthand relaying of the information He had received. He not only taught *about* the will of the Father but He demonstrated in Himself an impelling passion to do the will of God.

Because He practiced what He taught, and because He was the Son of God, He spoke with authority. The truth He presented compelled those who heard it to believe or disbelieve. There could be no neutral position. Those who heard Him could not casually say, "That was nice," and go their own way. They either loved, or they hated.

Sometimes they hated. More than

a few times the Pharisees were incensed by what Jesus taught (see John 8, also John 6). Occasionally, it captured one—like Matthew—who, after hearing Jesus, left a lucrative business to follow Him, to do something *really* worthwhile.

Would we be a teacher of the life of Christ? Then let us be possessed by the truth we wish others to possess. Like Jesus, we must *be* what we would teach. All other qualities or gifts cannot compare with that single requirement.

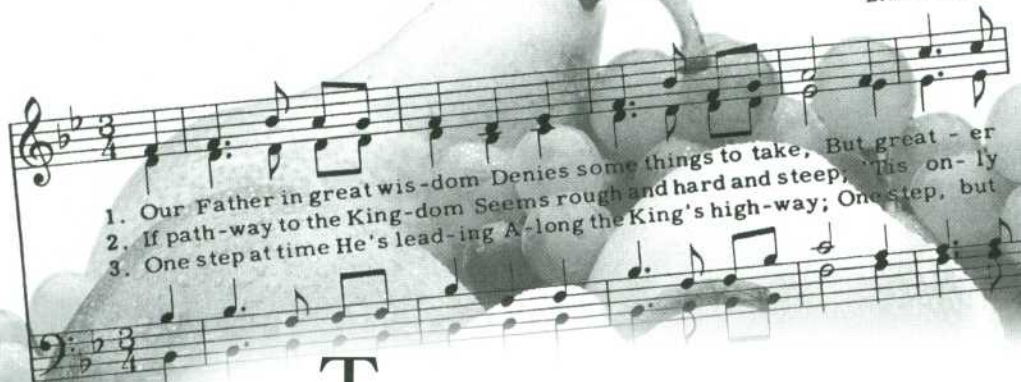
If we would be teachers, we must at the same time be learners, ever ready to increase our own storehouse of knowledge, always growing in the grace and knowledge of God, letting it change our thinking, our feeling, our doing, our very being.

Let us *be* what we would teach. This type of teaching is seldom misunderstood. □



## Sweeter As the Years Go By

SWEETER  
Lelia N. Morris



1. Our Father in great wis-dom Denies some things to take, But great - er
2. If path-way to the King-dom Seems rough and hard and steep, This on - ly
3. One step at time He's lead-ing A-long the King's high-way; One step, but

There is nothing stagnant or stand-still about that which belongs to God. It is ever increasing. The saints go from glory to glory.

Those whom Paul complimented were always "increasing in the knowledge of God." Those who are commended for their virtue are those who add—knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly kindness, charity. "For if these

things be in you"—that is not enough. These things must be in us "and abound"!

There is always motion, and it is always forward.

We sing about this same type of forward moving when we sing, "Sweeter as the years go by." Have we thought about what this means?

"More and more" is the pattern of our lives as Christians. When we first learned about the true way of salvation, we were impressed with the evidence. But as we go on, we find more and more evidence upon which to build our faith, so much more that at times it becomes almost overwhelming.

More and more is the pattern of our lives. As we grow in experience, we grow in comprehension. The more we take in of God's holy law of life, the more we are able to take in. The more we learn of the experiences of the people of God in other ages, the more we are able to appreciate.

More and more must also be the pattern of our personal progress in the divine life. As we practice right living, it becomes easier.

We find our lives more stable, more settled, more secure. Bonus benefits are accumulating. It is "sweeter as the years go by."

We know, some temptations will stay with us as long as we live. However, as we overcome certain aspects of our dispositions or inclinations, our tastes do change, our inclinations do get redirected, and we find that Christ-like living is more and more a possibility! The way to life actually becomes easier, and "sweeter," as one by one we are able to leave certain problems behind us.

This growth in the Divine life makes all of life a challenge and a delight. We know where we are going, and we know how to get there. We can do it, *of course we can*—because we have already done some very essential parts of it! Should we not encourage ourselves? As we add patience, we add peace. And as we add peace, we add happiness. And as we add happiness, we add a new dimension to our lives which the old self-indulgent manner of life could never know. As we discipline ourselves, as we learn to say a definite "no" to ourselves in things

*Our expectation is so vivid  
that nothing here can distract  
us from arriving at that  
glorious new home.*

not for our best spiritual interests, we find saying "no" in other areas becomes easier. It is another bonus benefit—"sweeter as the years go by."

The further we go, the more our appreciation grows.

Religion is not all feeling, but there is feeling and sensitivity, or there is no true faith. There is love, and delight, and sweetness.

This sweetness is not a tangible thing. It is much like



natural sweetness. One peach is sweet, another is sweeter. What is the difference? On the outside, the two peaches may look very much alike. The difference lies in what each has on the inside. So with the sweetness in our lives. It is determined by what we are doing *inside*, whether we are using the experiences of life as the bees use nectar—to make honey—or whether we are allowing them to harden and distress us.

Life is sweeter as the years go by—because of what lies ahead. The present, with all its comforts and pleasures, does not offer the satisfactions we seek, because it is so temporary. We live in the midst of change. Nothing we know is permanent. Every moment of our time, whatever its burden of pain or its thrill of joy, is fleeting.

There is an account of an Indian monarch who suffered many hours of discouragement. He desired a motto short enough to be engraved on his ring as a suitable reminder alike in prosperity and adversity. After many suggestions had been rejected, his daughter offered an emerald bearing this inscription: "This, too, shall pass away." And so, whatever it be of the present, it shall.

Our high and happy moments are wonderful, if only they could go on forever. We do not want sound health to be interrupted. We do not want our family circles broken. We do not want our friends to leave us, or our strength to fail. We do not want our privileges to be withdrawn or the sun of our successes to go down. But alas! Change is the law of our lives. We are powerless to stay its onward march. The present, however ideal, leaves us with longings unfulfilled—and a keener longing for the future.

The last two decades have brought human achievements beyond the farthest imagination of our grandparents—the development of atomic energy and nuclear power, space exploits which have placed men on the moon and brought them safely back to earth, the unbelievable powers of the laser beam, phenomenal advances in the

various fields of communication, and the technology which has made all these possible. Still, in all this, we find no lasting satisfaction. In fact, our feeling of distrust of the present intensifies as we see our proud civilization confronting problems which defy human solution.

We look out upon all the heathen splendor and pagan power of modern Babylon and see at the heart of it a fatal void. A deep and awful night hides at the very center of the bright achievements of modern culture. We see mighty structures erected not upon the Rock of Ages but upon the shifting sands of human standards and human philosophies. And we hear the message, as if whispered in our ear: "This too shall pass away."

But we are not melancholy. Our hearts are vibrant with expectancy. We have a nostalgia for the future. We are not at home; the present scenes are merely passing views of landscape en route. Our home is in the eternal Kingdom of God—our heart is there already. By faith we can already hear the angel choir, and feel the glory and bliss of immortal duration. Our expectation is so vivid that nothing here can distract us from arriving at that glorious new home!

Without this vision of the future, which God has given in His Word, life is meaningless and futile. But because as Christians we know something of Divine happenings which are just ahead, life is radiant with purpose and anticipation. Better times are coming! Life which will be glorious and satisfying and enduring is ahead! The darkness of the present does not discourage us; the future will be indescribably magnificent! Does anyone wonder that

we feel a nostalgia for the future?

That future will begin with the arrival of the King and His forerunner. The Second Advent of Jesus Christ was the hope which kept alive the early Church. And it is our hope today. Whether it will happen this week, this month, or this year, we do not now. But our hearts are bound up in its reality. Soon or late, it is coming. It may be yet today! It is the

*We are not at home; the present scenes are merely passing landscapes en route. Our home is in the eternal Kingdom of God—our heart is there already.*

inner longing and expectancy which keeps us living and looking forward.

As committed followers of Christ, we dare not forget it—"lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping." We cannot forget it because we have an obligation to fulfill *before He comes*. His words are ringing in our ears: "Therefore be ye also ready..."

And if we are ready, what lies beyond the moment of His arrival for us? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him" (1 Cor. 2:9).

Does not our longing for the future grow more and more acute as we think about those promises? And is it not sweeter as the years go by—as we draw nearer and nearer to the reality?

Oh, let this hope give such impetus to our life of service now that every day God grants us will be spent in earnest preparation. For soon, we shall see "the glorious appearing of...our Saviour Jesus Christ." For He is coming! □















lowed the advice of the apostle Paul and made "the very most" of our time (Eph. 5:15-16).

### Choosing—What We Look At

We have many options today in choosing what we look at. Every time we pick up a newspaper or magazine, or turn on the radio or the TV, we make a deliberate choice of what we listen to or look at. Here the choices can be frightening indeed. But one fact we must never forget: that it is much easier to get information *into* than *out of*



our minds. What we allow to come into our minds will stay, wanted or unwanted. In many cases, the radio and TV cater to the lowest levels of human desire, the carnal, the sensational. If not exceedingly careful of what we view—even of what we overview or sample—our firm resolve to do right will be weakened, and we will find ourselves thinking in another world—a "worldly" world—rather than in the realm of Christ or the world to come.

Many people use television for entertainment, but as Christian believers we need no entertainment. If our heart is set on living in the world to come, our time now is committed to making that goal a reality.

When it comes to choosing what we will watch, what we will listen to, what we will look at—let us realize that we are choosing what we will BECOME. Rather than turn on the radio or the TV and place ourselves in danger, we can just as easily use our tape recorder to play hymns, Bible recordings, and Bible School sessions. We make the choice. We are in command.

### The Choice-of-All-Choices

The really big choice we are making by all these mini-choices is whether or not we will be in the coming Kingdom of God. Do we want to be there? Of course we would all say "Yes!" Of course we want to be there! But do we want it enough to make the sacrifices God requires?

Choose, choose, choose. Choose, choose, choose. But by our choices—mini or major—we are determining our eternal destiny. Our obligations are many, but whatever we must do, we control what we think about, what we look at, how we feel, how we react. And according to these decisions God will judge us either worthy or unworthy of the eternal crown.

Let's resolve here and now to ALWAYS CHOOSE THE VERY BEST. How can we do better than that? Then we can look forward to sharing the eternal Kingdom with Christ and all His faithful ones. □

## Like Other Men

*"I'm glad I'm not like other men,"  
The Pharisee exclaimed, and then  
Continued to observe the letter,  
Which did not make him any better.  
He made long pray'rs three times a day,  
And of his goods a tenth would pay;  
Yet skipped the most important matter—  
To cleanse the inside of the platter.*

*"I'm not like other men you see,"  
The scheming banker said to me;  
"I take no part in things degrading,  
My income tax I'm not evading."  
He kept within the written law,  
But that was all the good I saw  
In him, yet some his goodness lauded,  
Forgetting widows he'd defrauded.*

*"I'm glad I'm not like other men  
Who give evasive answers when  
The candid truth, and plainly stated,  
Would really be appreciated."  
With these words one man gave his view  
Of what the rest of us should do;  
But it was quite another matter  
To listen to his candid chatter.*

*"From other men I'm different,  
For with my lot I am content.  
I see no need to fret and worry,  
And I am seldom in a hurry."  
Thus one remarked, who could not see  
That he was just ambition-free;  
He counted shiftlessness a virtue,  
And did not see where it could hurt you.*

*It is not hard to criticize  
The fault that in another lies,  
And judge ourselves as being better,  
If free from their enslaving fetter.  
But God, who knows the hearts of men,  
Will use another standard when  
His Son His throne on earth inherits—  
He will not judge by words, but merits.*

—Liot L. Snyder



# Elijah



## God's Man of the Hour



People will talk, and talk, and talk. Especially in a little town like Zarephath. And especially when things are going bad. What is the solution to the famine? Nobody really knows, and yet they have an idea. At least they are not willing to trust the gods of the land. What will the end be? And when?

### The Mystery At Zarephath

#### ACT I, SCENE 6

##### Characters:

- BAASHA—Resident of Zarephath
- ETHAN—Resident of Zarephath
- SHAREZER—Resident of Zarephath, neighbor to the widow
- SHAMMAH—Child of the widow of Zarephath
- ISHBAH—Young friend of Shammah, child of the widow of Zarephath

*Setting: A roadside in the territory of Sidon, outside the village of Zarephath. A tree relieves the parched, brown landscape. Ethan, Baasha and Sharezer enter, carrying field tools. They pause to rest in the shade of the tree.*

BAASHA: Well, another day's work. Looks like we might not get much for it, either.

ETHAN: Terribly dry, terribly, terribly dry. Never saw anything like it in all my life.

SHAREZER: I know my family isn't going to eat very good this winter on the crops I'm raising. In fact, we may not eat at all.



ETHAN: That last little shower didn't amount to anything, nor the one before it. What we need is a week of good, soaking rain.

SHAREZER: That's what we get for living too close to Israel.

BAASHA: Yes, it's even worse down there. Imagine it—not a drop of rain for two years! They've got famine conditions. People are actually dying from starvation, they say.

SHAREZER: What do you suppose is the cause of all this?

BAASHA: Religious trouble, I think. They say it's a battle between the gods or the priests or magicians, or something like that. I wish they'd get it settled and over with.

ETHAN: That's what I say. Why pick on us? We haven't done anything. We sacrifice to the gods and pay our priests. Why should we have to suffer for a quarrel away off in Samaria?

SHAREZER: It's not fair, not fair at all. But it's the common man—like you and me—that always gets stepped on and pushed around in this world. You'd find those priests down there—and everywhere—eating pretty fine every day, whether the people do or not.

ETHAN: You know, it wouldn't surprise me if they start picking up children for sacrifice to get rain, if this keeps up. It's been done before—and I've got four sons.

BAASHA: I sure hope the battle's over before it comes to that! I've heard my father tell about those sacrifices....I hear you've lost one of your neighbors, Sharezer.

SHAREZER: Yes, the widow's son. Too bad, too. A nice little lad, and the only one she had. Just a couple of years since her husband died, too. Pretty rough luck some people have.

ETHAN: Who's the stranger that's been staying with them?

SHAREZER: I don't know his name. Nobody seems to know much about him; he keeps out of sight most of the time. And the widow never talks about him. But he must be paying her pretty good board.

BAASHA: What makes you think so?

SHAREZER: Well, they were really getting down and out before he came. Didn't know where their next meal was coming from, so my wife said. We gave her a little grain a couple of times. But since the stranger came, they seem to be getting along all right.

ETHAN: Probably some rich man, maybe from Israel. But why in the world would he come to a God-forsaken place like Zarephath? Nothing ever happens up here.

BAASHA: Maybe that's why he came. The funny part of it is, nobody ever sees the widow go to the market to buy food anymore. Where does she get it?

SHAREZER: None of my business, but I'd surely like to know. I suppose they are burying the child today. Awful sad, terrible. I didn't have time to go over, but my wife was going to go again.

*(Shammah and Ishbah enter, carrying bundles of wood. The men stare in astonishment, until the boys are almost off-stage.)*

BAASHA: What in the world!!—why, that looks like the boy himself!

SHAREZER: It can't be. Why, he's dead. We know it. But who in the world is it? *(calling)* Shammah!

SHAMMAH: *(returning with Ishbah)* Did you want me, sir?

ETHAN: *(aside)* I can't believe my eyes. I can't believe my ears. Whatever—whatever—he answers to his name!

BAASHA: Say, Son, *(speaking directly to Shammah)* what's going on here, anyway? Aren't you the son of the widow up on the hill?

SHAMMAH: Yes, sir, I am.

ETHAN: Why, we heard you were dead, and here you are...

SHAMMAH: I was dead, so my mother says.

BAASHA: What are you talking about? Don't you *know*?

SHAMMAH: Not really, sir. I know I was very very sick, and lying on the bed, and then I don't remember anymore. But when you're dead, you don't know anything. It is just like going to sleep. That was yesterday, they say.

ETHAN: And then what?

SHAMMAH: Then I woke up, and I wasn't sick any more, not a bit. I wanted to go out with Ishbah, but they kept me in the house until today.

BAASHA: And you feel all right now, do you?

SHAMMAH: Sure, I feel fine.

SHAREZER: *(slowly)* There's something really really strange here. My wife was over there when the child died, and you can't fool her. She's taken care of plenty of sick people. And she's seen plenty of people die. I still can't put it together.

ETHAN: He just had a bad fainting spell, that's all. What brought you to, Son?

SHAMMAH: The man who lives at our house did it. When I woke up, he was sitting by my bed and holding my hand, and he said to my mother, Don't cry any more: he'll be all right now. And I was.

BAASHA: Who is this man, Shammah?

SHAMMAH: He's the great prophet, from Israel. He's wonderful. He can do anything. He talks to God, and God shows His power through him. That's what he tells us.

ISHBAH: His name is Elijah.

SHAMMAH: You're not supposed to tell that, Ishbah.

ETHAN: Elijah! Oh, ho! I'm beginning to see something. Isn't he the fellow the king of Israel has been trying so hard to get his hands on?

BAASHA: I think so. Too bad the boy had to let it out. He seems like a good man. What does he call his god, Shammah?



SHAMMAH: He worships Jehovah, not Baal. And so does my mother. And so do I.

ISHBAH: He tells us lots of nice stories about God and the angels, and of what happened in Israel and Egypt years ago. We like him.

BAASHA: No harm in that, but I still can't believe he's really a prophet. There's such a thing as magic, may be he's a good magician. But such things as bringing the dead back to life just don't happen.

SHAREZER: Well, my wife said the child was dead. And I believe her.

BAASHA: Your wife could be wrong. Don't you think so, Ishbah?

ISHBAH: No, I don't. If Elijah said he was dead, I believe it.

SHAMMAH: He can do more than that, too. If it wasn't for him, we wouldn't be eating at our house.

ETHAN: What do you mean?

SHAMMAH: Why, we were down to a handful of meal in the bottom of the barrel, and just a little bit of oil in a bottle. When that was gone, we would have starved to death. But Elijah came along about that time, and now there's *always* meal in the barrel and always oil in the bottle.

ETHAN: How does it get there?

SHAMMAH: I don't really know how, but God puts it there.

ISHBAH: Yes, and when there isn't enough at our house, his mother sends us food. I hope this prophet stays here always.

BAASHA: Can't say that I blame you, Son, if that's what is going on. Get us a prophet or two, will you? We have plenty of room at our house...*(alarmed)* But look, men, what are we—

ETHAN: Shhhhh!...You boys better run along home. They need that wood to get supper. Glad to see you're better, Shammah. But Ishbah, be careful not to tell anybody else about this man, or mention his name....*(Boys exit)* Now what were you going to say, Baasha?

BAASHA: We seem to have a secret on our hands. *(Ethan walks about in deep thought.)* What are we going to do with it?

ETHAN: Why, keep it, of course! We may not worship this man's gods, but I hope we are all decent human beings. I'll certainly never give him away!

BAASHA: But he has a huge price on his head, and we are all poor men, and getting poorer. Can we all stand the temptation? I know I can, but how about the rest of you?...I'll tell you what I think: its not only the decent thing to do, as Ethan says, but the best thing for us all. If we keep him here safe, he may bring good luck to our village. If we betray him, who knows what will come of us? It looks like his God can really do something!

SHAREZER: For my part, he's as safe as my own son and

daughter. I may be only a poor peasant, and can't read or write, but I do know how to be a good neighbor. Me—I've *seen* nothing, *heard* nothing, *know* nothing.

ETHAN: It's a promise. Let's all give our hands on it.

*(All shake hands solemnly.)*

## A Summons

### ACT II, SCENE I

After three and a half terrible years, it was time for Elijah to return to Israel, and so "*the word of the Lord came to Elijah..., saying, Go, show thyself unto Ahab; and I will send rain upon the earth*" (1 Kings 18:1).

So Elijah set out for the palace in Samaria, and whom should he meet on the way but Obadiah, the God-fearing servant of Ahab. Obadiah was out looking for grass, at the king's command, to keep the king's horses and mules alive. Obadiah recognized Elijah, and fell on his face before him, and said, "*Art thou that my lord Elijah? And he answered him, I am: go, tell thy lord, Behold, Elijah is here*" (1 Kings 18:1-8).

So reads the Biblical account. How might it have come about?

#### Characters:

MAHLON—a villager

HOPHNI—a villager

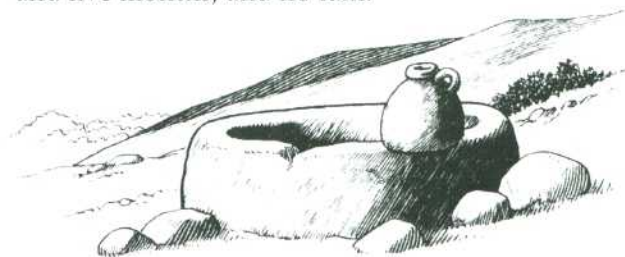
OBADIAH—God-fearing prefect in the court of Ahab

ELIJAH—Prophet of the true God

*Setting: The roadside well. Hophni and Mahlon are looking down the well. Mahlon drops a pebble into the well, and they both listen.*

MAHLON: She's getting pretty low. Hear how long it takes for that splash to echo back up to us?

HOPHNI: Tastes bad, too. But I'd say it's almost a miracle that there's any water left at this point. Three years and five months, and no rain.



MAHLON: The country can't take it much longer. Hardly anybody left around here now, and I don't blame them. I don't know why we stay.

HOPHNI: The food riots are getting worse all the time, too. They say they had another in Jezreel last week—several were killed, and a lot of broken limbs. If the people weren't so weak from hunger, there would be real trouble!

MAHLON: I guess they're having their troubles down at the palace, too. You remember Jonadab, who went there to work? Well, I see him once in awhile, and he



tells me plenty. Seems they're getting pretty desperate, with the starvation and trouble breaking out all over the country. Rainmakers from all over the world have been there and tried to break the drought, but with no success.

HOPHNI: Yes, and I hear the king is getting foxy. All these rainmakers promise rain—for so much in advance, but the king says, "No rain, no pay." He blames Elijah for it, but he hasn't caught him yet. If he did, I don't know what good it would do. If he killed him, which he probably would, he'd be killing the only man who knows how to bring us rain. That's the way I look at it.

MAHLON: The king has probably thought of that, too. But if Jezebel ever gets her hands on him—

HOPHNI: It was a bad day when she came to Israel, if you ask me.

MAHLON: Me, too. Jonadab says the priests of Baal are saying now that it's a bewitchment. The king says, "Well, if you know so much about the drought, why don't you break it?" *(Obadiah enters)*

OBADIAH: Good afternoon, men. *(Obadiah receives suspicious looks)* How are things going?

HOPHNI: Look at us—and then ask such a question!

OBADIAH: Is there any water in the well?

MAHLON: A little. *(Obadiah draws himself a drink.)*

OBADIAH: I've been sent out by the king to try to locate some grass for his horses. The need is really desperate. The cavalry horses and even the king's own chariot horses are in very bad condition. Do you happen to know of a watered spot where grass still grows?

HOPHNI: *(laughing bitterly)* Grass! What does grass look like? Say, mister, if I knew where there was some nice green grass, I'd be right there, eating it myself.

MAHLON: And if you've got a horse around here, you'd better keep an eye on it. We'd rather eat the horse than the grass.

OBADIAH: Are you suffering from hunger in this village?

HOPHNI: Do you think we're celebrating a feast? Everybody is hungry, everybody—except the priests, and you fellows at the palace.

OBADIAH: Aren't you getting grain from the government?

MAHLON: Yes, but how much? About half enough to keep alive. If you're from the palace, you go tell the king that if we don't get more relief, and get it on time, there's going to be serious trouble. Understand?

HOPHNI: The people are starving, and they mean business.

OBADIAH: I tell you, men, we're doing the best we can under the circumstances. You know we have to buy every bit of grain from Egypt and Syria, and our credit is just about exhausted.

HOPHNI: We heard that story before. Come on, Mahlon, let's get out of here before this fellow tries to put another tax on us. *(They leave, grumbling.)*

OBADIAH: *(leaning wearily on well)* A sad condition, sad indeed. I cannot blame them for feeling rebellious, but what can I do about it?*(sits down)* I hope the king is having better luck finding grass than I am. Couldn't feed a rabbit on the grass I've found today....

I'm tired, my old bones are not what they used to be. Looks like another bad season, and the ruin of Israel. Just as I told the king when they dedicated the temple of Baal, it's a terrible lesson.

But Elijah...I wonder where he is now? A long time since anyone has heard from him. He holds the key to the situation, perhaps he will appear soon. The king knows it, too...he has no faith in his priests. But he has committed himself to uphold them. If he tried to do anything different, Jezebel would probably have him assassinated. That woman—what a curse she has been to Israel! *(He dozes. Elijah enters, and touches Obadiah on the shoulder.)*

OBADIAH: *(Jumping to his feet, suddenly awakened)* What? Elijah? It can't be...But it is. Or am I dreaming?

ELIJAH: It is I, Elijah himself.

OBADIAH: *(embracing the Prophet)* O, my lord, my lord! How glad I am to see you. Where have you been?

ELIJAH: Never mind that. Jehovah has told me that there is work to be done. It is time that I should show myself to Ahab, and the Lord will send rain upon the earth. Go and tell the king that Elijah is here, and wishes to see him.

OBADIAH: But...but...but my lord, what harm have I done to you that you are sending me to my death? For I swear by God that the king has searched every nation and kingdom on earth from end to end to find you. And each time when he was told 'Elijah isn't here,' king Ahab forced the king of that nation to swear to the truth of his claim. And now you say, "Go and tell him Elijah is here!"

But as soon as I leave you, the spirit of the Lord will carry you away, who knows where, and when Ahab comes and can't find you, he will kill me. And yet I have been a true servant of the Lord all my life!

ELIJAH: "I swear by the Lord God of the armies of heaven, in whose presence I stand, that I will present myself to Ahab today."

OBADIAH: You know also that Ahab has been told that it was I who rescued a hundred prophets of the Lord when Jezebel ordered them slain, and since that time my life has hung on the king's favor. And now, my lord, your comings and goings are sudden and mysterious. Suppose I bring the king here, and the Lord has taken you elsewhere?

ELIJAH: Have no fear. I will be here. Have the king here tomorrow, at sunset.

OBADIAH: Right here?

ELIJAH: Right here.

*(To be continued)*



# One Worldwide Government

"In your preamble where you state that 'Megiddo is a way of believing and living' you indicate that all governments of the world will some day be joined to form one worldwide government. Would you please define how this will happen, whether Christ will be the head of it and whether the peoples of the world will voluntarily submit or whether this will be brought about by force."

Christ will indeed be the head of the new worldwide government. He was born to be king, and His kingship is to be the whole earth (Luke 1:32-33; Dan. 7:27). The prophet Zechariah foretold that *"The Lord shall be king over all the earth"* (Zech. 14:9), and the Psalmist that He *"shall have dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth"* (Ps. 72:7-8).

The nations of earth—so badly in need of one World Government to bring order out of existing chaos—will reject the Prince of Peace when He comes and will unite their forces to resist His righteous rule. The prophet Isaiah (17:12-14) was inspired to make this forecast and to predict the disastrous end of the conflict: *"Woe to the multitude of many people, which make a noise like the noise of the seas; and to the rushing of nations, that make a rushing like the rushing of mighty waters:...God shall rebuke them, and they shall flee far off, and shall be chased as the chaff of the mountains before the wind, and like a rolling thing [thistledown, marginal reference] before the whirlwind."*

The Revelator made a similar forecast: *"And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army"* (Rev. 19:19). But it will be a righteous war, a war to bring into subjection the evil forces which have gathered against the King of kings, as we are told in chapter 17:14: *"These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen and faithful."* None will suffer but those who will not submit. And the result will be a new world, with peace and prosperity universal.

For more details, send for our booklet, *These Things Shall Be*.

## ♦ What is the "mystery of iniquity"?

"Of whom was the apostle Paul speaking when he said, 'The mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed....'?"

A more modern English translation of this text (found in 2 Thess. 2:7-8) may be helpful. The Revised Standard Version reads, *"For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed."* Other translations are similar.

Who is the "lawless one"? and who is restraining him? In this chapter, the Apostle is foreseeing the approach of the great Apostasy, the time when all forsook the faith of Jesus and His apostles, when true religion was silenced and the power of darkness, the civil authority of Rome here identified as "the Wicked one," assumed control, when *"he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God"* (2 Thess. 2:4). Paul sees this mystery of iniquity already at work with its deadly influence in the church, contaminating pure doctrine with vain philosophies, belittling sound principles and substituting that which pleases the ear for that which purifies the heart.

But whom did Paul speak of as *"he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way. And then the lawless one will be revealed"*?

We recall that Jesus said of His disciples, *"Ye are the salt of the earth."* Among the important uses of salt is its use as a preservative. A second function is its ability to season. A very few grains of salt will savor a whole meal and change it from bland and unpalatable to a delight. That is why Jesus said, *"If the salt (His followers) has lost its savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is henceforth good for nothing"* (Matt. 5:13).

The followers of Christ were the "salt of the earth" and the preservative of the church; it is they who by their strict adherence to the teaching and principles of Jesus preserved it from decay and rottenness. Their doctrine, their teaching, their lives kept the church from complete apostasy and preserved true religion for a time, even after the majority had departed from the faith. In the same



way the Prophets of prior ages rebuked the waywardness of Israel and Judah and time and again turned the nation back to God and right. By defending the faith and upholding righteousness, they kept the professing church from utter apostasy and desolation. These men and women of God did this by exalting the word of God and translating it into living testimony. In this way they hindered or restrained the mystery of iniquity and workings of the Wicked one. Time and again they withstood the jeerings of atheists and overcame the opposition of science falsely so called. No mystery of iniquity, however determined to succeed, could rise to its full stature while any of these elect of God remained in the church system. But they could not remain long, for slowly, steadily, just as prophesied, the power of darkness wore out *"the saints of the most High,"* and *"cast down the truth to the ground; and it practised, and prospered"* (Dan. 7:25; 8:12).

Such "hindering" has occurred before in history. Did not the presence of Lot in the corrupt city of Sodom preserve that city from destruction until the one righteous man dwelling among them was taken out of the way? Can we not hear the angels as they urge Lot to depart from Sodom, saying, *"Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither"* (Gen. 19:22)? Is it not remarkable that, as long as God permitted Lot to remain in the city, even the angels were powerless to overthrow it?

In the antediluvian world, Noah and his family—all who would hear and believe—hindered the coming of the great Deluge. The flood did not come until all whom God wanted to preserve were safe inside the ark and His angel had shut the door.

Paul in this Epistle speaks of a day to come when he who hindered the working of the "Wicked one" will be taken out of the way, and after his removal, the whole religious system would become utterly corrupted.

### ◆ Was Jesus three days and three nights in the heart of the earth?

"I have somewhat of a dispute to make concerning the date of the resurrection of our Lord. I agree that the burial took place before sunset the day of the crucifixion (April 13, according to your 1995 anniversary date). Following this you say the anniversary for the resurrection is April 15. Can you figure three days and three nights between sunset of the 13th and sunrise of the 15th? Of course you can't. And please don't think this isn't important, for we read in Matthew 12:40 (KJV), '...so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.' On all other points I most wholeheartedly agree concerning this issue. I will be anxiously awaiting your comments."

If one were to stop with a surface reading of Matthew 12:40, your point on the "three days and three nights" would seem to be well founded. However, we are not safe in drawing any conclusions until we have examined all that the Biblical writers have to say on any given point.

First, if we take Matthew 12:40 to mean that Jesus was literally in the tomb three whole days and nights, we have a statement which in one sense is not appropriate at all; for Jesus was never in the "heart of the earth." He was placed in a rock hewn tomb, that was probably more like what we would call a vault today.

As for the record of the length of time involved, the gospels give two other statements of interest:

1) After Jesus had risen from the dead, the angels who spoke to the women at the tomb quoted the words of the Master that *"The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men, and be crucified, and the*

*third day rise again"* (Luke 24:7). Notice that there are three different events specified, which were to occur during the three days.

2) On the afternoon of the day Jesus was resurrected, two of His disciples walked to Emmaus, and *"Jesus himself drew near and went with them."* Recounting recent events, one of the disciples told of *"Jesus of Nazareth,"* how the *"chief priests and our rulers delivered him to be condemned to death, and have crucified him, [and]....to day is the third day since these things were done."* This was said, according to our understanding, near the close of Abib 15, and it was *"the third day since these things were done"* (Luke 24:20-21).

We might also give some thought to the meaning of the word "earth." The terms "heaven" and "earth" are used in Scripture with meanings other than the literal. For example, see Isaiah 1:2, *"Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: for the Lord hath spoken."* The Prophet was addressing people, as verse 10 clearly states: *"Hear the word of the Lord, ye rulers of Sodom; give ear unto the law of our God, ye people of Gomorrah."*

If we understand Jesus' being *"in the heart of the earth"* as His being in *"the hands of sinful men"* (Luke 24:7), we have harmony, because Jesus was in the hands of sinful men during parts of three days and nights. He was betrayed on the evening of Abib 13 (April 12 this year) and delivered by Judas into "the hands of sinful men"; was tried and crucified and buried before the close of Abib 13 (day of April 13), which gives us one night and a day. The night and day of Abib 14 (April 13-14) He lay in the tomb, which totals two nights and two days; and it was after the night of Abib 15th and a very small portion of the day before He rose from the dead. So the disciples could say in the closing hours of the 15th of Abib, *"Today is the third day since these things were done"* and the prophecy was fulfilled that Jesus was "three days and three nights" in the "earth" or "in the hands of sinful men." □

**M**en are powerless to overthrow what  
(or whom) God is protecting.



# Kindness Can Burn!

"I'll get even with that Linda!" Janet's angry young voice alerted me that there was trouble afoot. Something had gone wrong. I laid my pencil on the desk, folded my papers and went out to meet the girls in the vestibule. Janet and Brenda were just coming in from picking raspberries.

"I'll make her wish she'd kept quiet. I know how to make her smart!"

Brenda went into the kitchen and carefully set a basket on the table.

"What do you mean you'll get even, Janet?" I tried to interpose, casually.

"Linda told a lie on me—she's telling it all around school. Just because I studied harder and did better on the history test than she did. She says I cheated! Somehow I've got to get even with her!"

"I really wish you wouldn't, Janet," I pleaded with her.

"But Mom!"

"Getting even won't help anything, Janet," I persisted. "It won't help you, and it won't help Linda."

"But, Mom, it just makes me boil! Linda telling a story like that all around school. What will everyone think of me!"

"Janet," I put the question to her squarely: "Did you cheat?"

"No, I did not. And Linda knows it."

"Then you don't have to worry about anything Linda tells about you. If you did right, God knows and He will take care of it. Remember what Jesus said about what we should do when people speak evil about us falsely? Did He say we should get angry?"

Brenda had the answer. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."

I looked at Janet's flaming cheeks and into her flashing eyes. "When someone tells something about you that is false, you don't have to worry."

"So I'm supposed to just let Linda go on telling more lies about me!" Janet was belligerent.

"Leave her to God, Janet. If you try to get even, you'll be interfering with God's business and making more trouble for yourself."

"But Mom, you have no idea what it's like to have someone circulating a story about you. It just sets me off!"

"But Janet, what good does your anger do? It doesn't hurt Linda, and it *does* hurt *you*. See how unhappy you are right now. Janet, when you try to injure another person, even if just to 'get even,' you injure yourself more." I placed my hand on her shoulder. "What does God say about vengeance?"

"Well, er-r-r," Janet stammered.

"Help her out, Brenda," I suggested, nodding to Brenda who was listening intently.

"Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord."

"Come on in where it's cooler, girls," I invited, noticing the beads of perspiration on their faces. "I've had the air conditioner on a little this afternoon in the den. I've been trying to get a few letters written."

"Now Janet," I began when the girls were comfortably seated and enjoying a glass of cool lemonade that Brenda had found for each of us in the refrigerator, "Do you still want to get even with Linda?"

"Of course I do!" Janet's answer was emphatic. She was still feeling the effects of the lie Linda had circulated about her.

"Well, if you really want to get even, the Bible tells of a very sure way."

Janet looked surprised. She hadn't expected this. "What is it?" she asked.

"It is to heap coals of fire on her head. You know what that means."

Janet's face fell. She knew, we had talked about these coals of kindness only a few days ago, coals that make your enemy burn with shame for what he did.

"If I do something kind to Linda, for the wrong she did me, that won't hurt her any."

"You try it once," I urged. "Treat Linda kindly. Do her a real favor when you have a chance, and just see if she isn't ashamed and unhappy about the wrong she did you."

Janet leaned on an elbow, chin in hand, brow puckered. "I can't see for the life of me how a kind deed can burn when somebody has done you wrong."

"I'd like to see you give it a try, Janet. I've seen it happen, when coals of kindness burned up malice, or envy, or ill-feeling and left cold hearts warm and happy."

"Well," Janet started to speak and stopped. She was trying to think of what she might be able to do for Linda.

"You keep thinking, Janet. There's something you can do for Linda, and when you do it, you'll find *you* are happier too—because you'll be free from that desire to hurt someone else. Leave your enemy to God, Janet. Make it your business to be kind."


As the girls left the den to go back to their berry-picking, I thought of the many times I had been so eager to "get even" that I couldn't wait for God to administer the revenge. I wanted it right then and in my own way.

But I could also think of many times when that coal of kindness has worked, just as God said it would.

"Lord," I prayed, "help me to set up a coal yard. Love is so much stronger than hate!" □

*All of us could take a lesson from the weather: it pays no attention to unfair criticism.*





## Today Is Mine

*Today is mine, in which to work,  
In which to fight the foes that lurk  
In hidden places, that appear  
When I least think that danger's near.  
While yet today I breathe and live,  
I may my enemies forgive;  
And right the wrongs that oft I do,  
That I may be forgiven, too.*

*Today is mine, but who can tell  
If on the morrow I shall dwell  
In strength and health upon the earth,  
To still accomplish things of worth?  
Before the setting of the sun  
Some work remains that must be done,  
For ere there is another dawn,  
'Tis possible I may be gone.*

*Today is mine, a monument  
I'll make of it, a day well spent  
In drawing closer to my God,  
To walk the path by Jesus trod.  
I'll learn the art of being meek,  
To practice through the coming week;  
But lest I can not longer stay  
I'll practice being meek today.*

*I'll strive to be more kind today  
To those I meet along life's way;  
At home and as I go abroad,  
I'll try to glorify my God.  
The angry passions that would rise  
I'll curb today, the thoughts unwise  
I will dispel, nor longer wait.  
Tomorrow it may be too late.*

*I'll work tomorrow, if I may,  
But while it's mine, I'll work today,  
That it may be a steppingstone  
To heights that are as yet unknown.  
I will not wait and just lay plans,  
Consoled to think God understands;  
For should we meet, He soon would say,  
"My son, what have you done today?"*

—Liot L. Snyder



## It CAN Be Done

We must continue to make practical application of the Word in our daily lives. Having a head full of knowledge is not enough. We have to put that knowledge into action. As Jesus pointed out to Nicodemus, we must be born of the water before we can be born of the Spirit.

In saying we must be born of the water, Jesus was combining the first two steps in the way of salvation into one. This is understandable because throughout the Bible, knowing and doing are inseparable. It is useless to know the law of God if we are not making an attempt to live by it. Or, as James said, "*Faith without works is dead,*" as dead as a body without breath (James 2:20, 26).

Overcoming the old man takes time, but victory will come if we are diligent and relentless in our efforts. We cannot hope to reach perfection if we are not diligent.

The editorial, "God-owned Men" is really good. We should ask ourselves everyday, Am I living a life that would cause people to refer to me as a man of God? Some of us tend to stumble more than others, but we should never let our stumblings discourage us. Rather, we should learn from them and work harder to avoid repeating them.

We read of many different people in the Bible who left us a lot of different examples. The apostle Peter is often looked upon as one of the worst stumblers in the Bible, and with some

of the mistakes he made he could easily have been discouraged, and could have given up. But Peter kept on going to the finish line, even when it seemed he was taking a step backward for every two steps forward. And in the soon-coming Kingdom of God, he will no doubt stand as one of the greatest.

Tennessee

S. K.

## Be Thankful!

Thankfulness is a virtue we should cultivate. We are very dependent creatures; we depend on God for everything temporal and spiritual; we also depend on our fellow man: to those who grow the food we cannot, those who make our clothes and shoes, those who make the conveniences that save us so much labor, to those who provide services to us and many more we are grateful. Our Heavenly Father provides for us in all ways through our fellow man and through the bountiful earth He has created and the laws of nature He set in motion. For temporal blessings we are grateful, but the spiritual blessings are the ones that give our lives true hope. Those make the toil, the denial and energy we expend to get rid of sin from our lives worthwhile. The spiritual blessings give us hope for the day when we will no longer be faced with temptation or burdened with fear of pain and death.

If we did not have the future of Christ's rule to look forward to, this life would be quite discouraging. For

all the progress man has made in technology and medicine the world is still full of terrible things. The evils, the iniquity, the greed that governs so much of the world is not any better than it ever was. In fact it is more widespread. The only way the earth can be rid of such is through Christ and His army.

Things are really shaping up for His return, and how happy I will be when His promises begin to come to pass. Yes, I am truly thankful for the knowledge that gives me this hope and faith. It makes everything else worthwhile and makes me want to get ready faster. I'll keep thanking God for my many blessings and pray He'll send Elijah soon.

Texas

P. F.

## A Serious Responsibility

When we think of God's sure and precious promises, nothing whatsoever should be too hard for His chosen ones to do. We, who are the clay, must of necessity go through the moulding process as Jesus our perfect Example did. So may we not be stubborn and self-satisfied but willingly yield to the wonderful Potter's hand, for He knows what is best for us. Let our prayer be, Dear God, have Thy way, that we may be among the vessels which are valued and dedicated, a thing of use to the Master of the house that we may be fit for any honourable purpose.

South Wales

R. B.

## Romans 8:28

I have a mental file which I have marked "Romans 8:28." Into it go a variety of things. It contains some disappointments. It preserves the record of some accidents. It has a multitude of questions, large and small. In fact, most of its contents are things I can't understand.

But it also has some nice things in it. It has some unexpected windfalls. It has a general sense of purpose and direction far beyond anything I could have planned. Above all, it has an ingredient described as good, and perfect, and acceptable, and which covers every other item in it: the will of God.

There are several fine descriptions of this file in the New Testament, but the best is the one on the label: "*And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.*"

—Selected



What you did was not good enough if you could have done better.

*Procrastination is not only the thief of time; it is the grave of opportunity.*

Fill your mind with noble thoughts. Vacant minds, like vacant lots, are in danger of becoming dumping grounds.

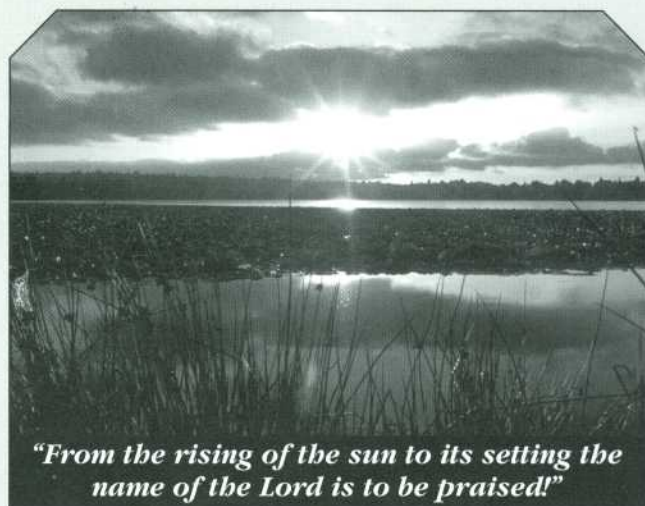
### YOU CAN!

*Believe that you can and you're well on the way  
T'ward completing the task begun;*

*Believe that you can—though hard the trail,  
And rugged the road you run;*

*Have faith in yourself. Just know that you can,  
And then be determined to do,*

*And let never a barrier, bar or ban  
Keep you from carrying through.*



*"From the rising of the sun to its setting the name of the Lord is to be praised!"*

If you are interested in the hereafter, remember that the HERE determines the AFTER!

*Don't let your trials become stumblingblocks. It may be that the obstacles you asked God to remove were only put there to promote spiritual growth. Use them as stepping stones to greater growth.*

## Tame Those Feelings

*(Continued from page 2)*

to feel. And if we allow our feelings to stand in the way of our obedience, we will be disobeying God.

Jesus did not ask Peter how he felt about going fishing that day. He said simply, *"Launch out into the deep, and let down your nets."* It was within Peter's power to obey, and Peter subdued his feelings and obeyed.

Very often, controlling our feeling is an integral part of our obedience. This is especially true in maintaining a right relationship with others. The words of the apostle Paul strike like an arrow aimed at the mark: *"Do not be bitter or angry or mad. Never shout angrily or say things to hurt others. Never do anything evil. Be kind and loving to each other, and forgive each other just as God forgave you in Christ"* (Eph. 4:31-32, NCV). How could we do it, if we could not overpower our feelings?

God has given us commands to govern every part of our lives: what we do, what we talk about, what we think, how we feel. All are part of our obedience to God. And we must not allow any to stand in the way of a full obedience.

Each command, whatever its nature, requires the consent of our mind. And we cannot give that without feeling like it. For example, the words of Jesus, *"Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength"* (Mark 12:30), require right feeling as well as right action. There is no way to show our love to God without heartfelt

(feeling), faithful (believing) obedience.

Our total commitment to God requires that we tame and control our feelings. This means changing our minds, changing our attitudes, changing the central focus of our lives.

Feelings are deep, a part of our very nature and the impulses God has placed within us. But if we focus all our effort on pleasing God, if we make His approval the highest goal in our life, then our feelings will as a matter of course be right. To obey will be the desire of our heart, and our thoughts and words will follow.

Visualize a spiritual railroad train. Knowledge is the steam engine, faith is the fuel, obedience is the power released when the fuel is burned, and feeling is the caboose. When feelings take control, we are letting the caboose pull the train. And it won't go very far.

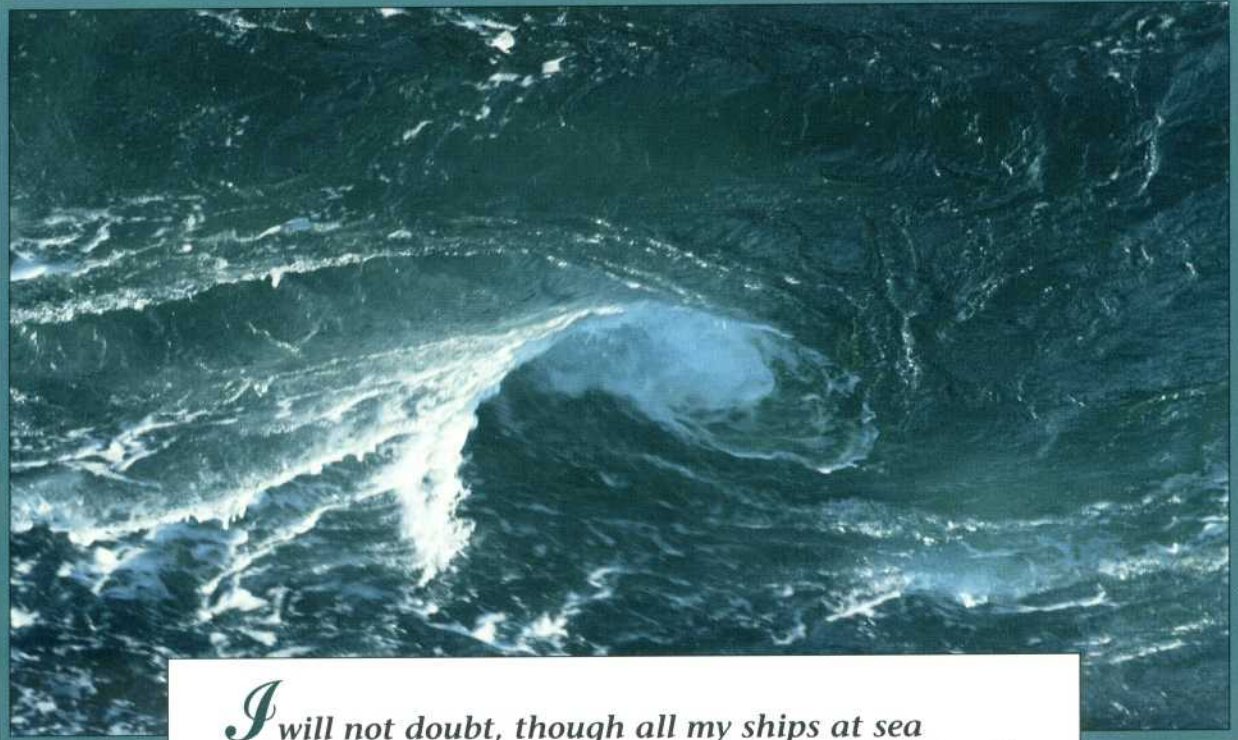
Imagine how Peter's feelings changed when he discovered the size of his catch of fish. He even had to call his partners to help him unload it—it was too much for the boat or the fisherman!

Imagine how Abraham felt when God intervened and spared Isaac, and reiterated His immortal promise: *"In thy seed shall all nations of the earth be blessed...because thou hast obeyed my voice."* Weariness and discouragement were changed into joy, surprise and exultant worship.

How can we do better than to follow the examples of Peter and Abraham, tame those feelings and obey—and trust the rest to God.

The recompense will be more than worth the effort. □





*I* will not doubt, though all my ships at sea  
Come drifting home with broken masts and sails;  
I shall believe the Hand which never fails  
From seeming evil worketh good to me;  
And, though I weep because those sails are battered,  
Still will I cry, while my best hopes lie shattered,  
"I trust in Thee."

*I* will not doubt, though all my prayers return  
Unanswered from the still, white realm above;  
I shall believe it is an all-wise Love  
Which has refused those things for which I yearn;  
And though, at times, I cannot keep from grieving,  
Yet the pure ardor of my fixed believing  
Undimmed shall burn.

*I* will not doubt, though sorrows fall like rain,  
And troubles swarm like bees above a hive;  
I shall believe the heights for which I strive  
Are only reached by anguish and by pain;  
And though I groan and tremble with my crosses,  
I yet shall see, through my severest losses,  
The greater gain.

*I* will not doubt; well anchored in the faith,  
Like some stanch ship, my soul braves every gale,  
So strong its courage that it will not fail  
E'en if I breast the mighty sea of death.  
For if I hear at last His sweet approval,  
I'll wonder why I had to fight so hard  
To never doubt.

—Selected