

# Megiddo Message

Vol. 87, No. 10  
December, 2000

*"You are from  
everlasting to everlasting.  
You are God."*

*Psalms 90:2*





## “DO I QUALIFY?”

**T**o be part of almost any organization, one must qualify. To be admitted to the bar, one must qualify by passing rigid examinations.

To become a certified public accountant, one must be approved by selected individuals already in the field.

To become a licensed practitioner in any specific area of medicine, one must prove his or her qualifications.

To enter a trade union, to join the working teams of the trades, one must be tested and approved.

Even to enter an institution of higher education, one must pass exams.

If you want to enter a race, you must first pass the preliminary competitions.

If you want a certain job, you must prove that you are competent to do it.

Is it unreasonable, then, that God requires those who wish to live in His Kingdom to prove their qualifications?

The way we live in this world either qualifies us or disqualifies us for life in Christ's Kingdom. Said God through His prophet Isaiah, *“If you consent and obey, You will eat the best of the land”* (Isa. 1:19 NASB). And Jesus said, *“Blessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city”* (Rev. 22:14 NKJV).

Years earlier God's instructions to Israel were, *“What does the Lord your God ask of you but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all his ways, to love him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to observe the Lord's commands and decrees that I am giving you today for your own good?”* (Deut. 10:12–13 NIV). We must meet God's requirements to be eligible for His long-term blessings.

Paul described the conditions in another way in his letter to the Romans. He said that sin results in death, and obedience will lead to righteousness and life. *“Don't you know that when you offer yourselves to someone to obey him as slaves, you are slaves to the one whom you obey--whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to obedience, which leads to righteousness?”* (Rom. 6:16 NIV).

What is the end of failing to qualify? Jesus said the broad way leads to destruction (Matt. 7:13)—not eternal torment, not eternal misery, not life in a burning inferno but simply nonexistence, death.

To receive the benefits God is offering, we must qualify. We must follow His rules. Life is filled with rules, which are the same for all. If we smash our thumb with a hammer, the immediate response is pain. It is just as absolute, says Jesus, that one who takes the broad way and follows it through will end in destruction, and one who takes the narrow way and follows it through to the end will receive life.

In the natural course of time, all die, whether they are serving God or not, whether they are eligible for eternal life or not. But for those who die in Christ, there is hope of resurrection. This is the teaching of the Word of God. The prophet Daniel wrote, *“And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt”* (Dan. 12:2).

God has arranged that all who serve Him will be judged, and will receive just according to what they have done. The apostle Paul wrote: *“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, ... whether it be good or bad”* (2 Cor. 5:10). The purpose: to determine whether or not they qualify.

At the end of his life Paul knew that he had qualified. He wrote with confidence, *“And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness that the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on that great day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his glorious return”* (2 Tim. 4:8 NIV).

Do we share this certainty with Paul? Do we long for Christ to come and give us our reward? Do we have a real, sure hope of eternal life? Do we qualify? These are the questions we need to be asking ourselves every day, because God has given us this time in which to qualify, and God forbid that we let it go by unused.

*“He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God”* (Micah 6:8 NIV). ♦



# A Steady Faith

## IN TIMES LIKE THESE

**W**e are living in critical times. It would seem trite to say that these are stormy days or stirring days, when there is trouble in the Middle East, trouble in the Far East, trouble in Central America, South America, and a hundred other places.

Nevertheless, in light of fulfilled and fulfilling Bible prophecies, these are encouraging days. It is encouraging to know that we are living right at the end of the era of man's rule, right at the time foretold by our Lord, when men's hearts are failing them for fear of the things which are coming on the earth; the time when many of us may live to *"see the Son of man coming in a cloud, with power and great glory"* (Luke 21:26-27). It is the time when the rightful Heir to the throne of earth shall come to claim dominion and reign from *"sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth"* (Ps. 72:8); with authority to put an end to evil, sin, oppression and violence, and bring health and prosperity worldwide.

All this is part of the prophetic Word of the Lord.

With prophecies like these in mind, we can square our shoulders and declare proudly, *"It's a great time to be alive."* But sadly, multitudes are meeting life with a mixture of fear, cynicism, and despair.

The author of the book of Hebrews gave some very sound advice based on what lies ahead in the plan of God. First he surveyed the life and fortunes of his church. It was not an easy time to be living, even then. It was an age of active persecution, and the faith of many was being tested sorely. Some were meeting the onslaught of persecution with steady faith, endurance and resolute hearts. Others were living to themselves, having lapsed from their Christian commitment and become indifferent to its claims. *"Do not throw away your confidence,"* was his warm, loving appeal, *"for it carries a great reward. You need endurance, if you are to do God's will and win what he has promised. For 'soon, very soon' (in the words of Scripture), 'he who is to come will come; he will not delay; and by faith my righteous servant shall find life'"* (Heb. 10:35-38 NEB).

He then called their attention to their favored place in the scheme of God—and shall we think ourselves less favored? He says, and we quote again from the New English Bible (Heb. 12:18-20,22-24): *"Remember where you stand, not before the palpable blazing fire of Sinai, with the darkness, gloom, and whirlwind, the trumpet-blast and the oracular voice, which they heard, and begged to hear no more;... No, you stand before Mount Zion and the city of the living God, heavenly Jerusalem, before myriads of angels, the full concourse and*

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*"Send forth  
your light and your  
truth, let them guide  
me." —Psalm 43:3 NIV*

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## MEGIDDO MEANS...

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

## WE BELIEVE...

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

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

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

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

## THE HERALD AND THE KING

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

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



assembly of the first-born citizens of heaven, and God the judge of all, and the spirits of good men made perfect, and Jesus the mediator of a new covenant." What favor! what privilege theirs—and more especially ours, we who are living right in the era of its fulfillment. In the light of all this, how vital the warning that follows: "See that you do not refuse to hear the voice that speaks. Those who refused to hear the oracle speaking on earth found no escape; still less shall we escape if we refuse to hear the One who speaks from heaven" (v. 25).

It was an awesome audio-visual experience for those at Sinai that day, when the mountain shook and the voice of the Lord resounded like the blast of a trumpet. But that was nothing compared with the display that will accompany Christ's second appearing, the mighty "shaking" foreseen by the prophets of old. That shaking, he says, will strike "the earth and the heavens" (both the ruling authorities and the general populace), every part of the present system.

"Now he has promised, 'Yet once again I will shake not earth alone, but the heavens also.' The words 'once again'—and only once—imply that the shaking of these created things means their removal, and then what is not shaken will remain" (v. 27).

"What is not shaken will remain." For people of faith there was an eye of calm at the center of the hurricane, a solid certainty on which they could depend. Everything was not to be shaken. If God, the mighty God of heaven, was their strength, and if they were on His side, they were standing on that which is in the fullest meaning of the term unshakable, and "the things which cannot be shaken [shall] remain."

Upon this same unshakable foundation of faith we stand today. And it is just as solid, just as secure as it has ever been. Though God is silent at the moment, His plan is going steadily forward. And we may know that however stormy the nations about us, we have a solid, steady foundation under our feet. Our God is unshakable!

Do we appreciate it? Do we really believe it?

### **PROPHECY WE CAN TRUST!**

There is something strange about us mortals. We do not question the record of past events. But when it comes to what is ahead, we are skeptical, hesitant, slow to believe. We have a right to be skeptical when our information comes from human speculations. But when word of the future comes from the Lord God Almighty, is not the prophecy upon which He puts His signature just as sure as the history He writes? Does He not know the future fully as well—or better—than we know the past? Is not His prediction of an event just as factual and just as dependable as if that event had already occurred?

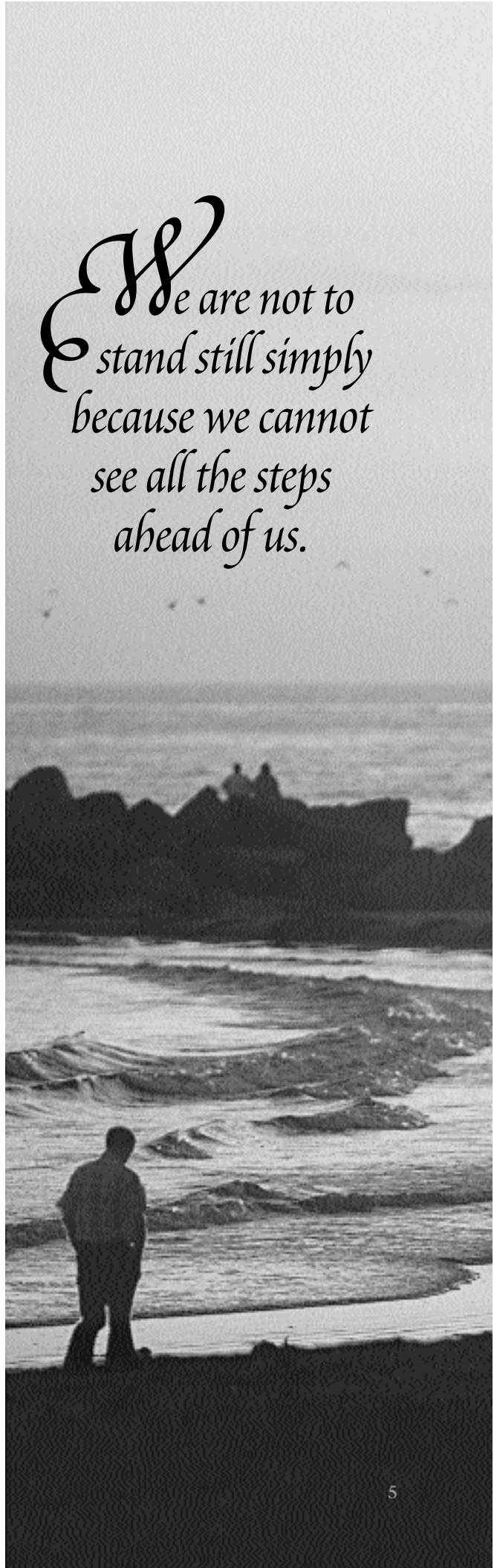
We have a further problem with our mortal makeup. We believe what we see, and disbelieve what we cannot see; in fact, what we cannot see. Going one step further, we tend to believe that what is now will always continue—though we know well enough from our own experience that there is nothing permanent but change. Still the illusion persists.

Here is the test of faith that must be part of the experience of God's people in all ages. Like Enoch, Noah, Abraham and Moses, we must live by faith and walk by faith—and walking means action and progress, going forward. We are not to stand still simply because we cannot see all the steps ahead of us. We must take God at His word and trust Him for what we cannot see, knowing that His promise is as certain as our existence. "The things which cannot be shaken [shall] remain." Some shall remain. It is the promise of the Lord, in which we may confidently trust: "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe" (Heb. 12:28 NIV).

What are the things that shall "remain"?

Again we must rely on the promise of the God of heaven: "For behold, I

*We are not to  
stand still simply  
because we cannot  
see all the steps  
ahead of us.*







*The things that cannot  
be shaken shall remain."*

create new heavens [new ruling powers] and a new earth [new populace]; and the former things will not be remembered or come to mind. But be glad and rejoice forever in what I create; For behold, I create Jerusalem for rejoicing and her people for gladness" (Isa. 65:17–18 NASB). A whole new heavens and a whole new earth, both of God's creating, fashioned according to His standard of excellence, composed wholly of men and women whom He has approved. Will it not be glorious?

Seven thousand years have been set aside for the completing of this new creation, this new heavens and earth; and these shall remain. In the words of the prophet Daniel, they "shall stand for ever" (Dan. 2:44).

The shaking is not to result in total destruction; the destruction is only to remove the opposition and make room for that which deserves to abide, the "things which cannot be shaken."

### A Comparison from Jesus:

*"As It Was in the Days of Noah..."*

In the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, Jesus gives us some profound insights into the Divine scheme. It is His temple sermon, the last He preached before He was crucified.

First Jesus pictures the things that can and will be shaken, the authorities of men. He forecasts the cataclysmic shaking of Jerusalem, and its total downfall. Then He foretells the Apostasy, and the end of it. Then bringing us right down to our very own day, He pictures the Second Coming of Christ, comparing it to the "lightning that comes from the east [and] is visible even in the west" (Matt. 24:27 NIV).

Then, commenting on our very own day and the time when all these things shall be, He compares the time when Christ shall come to that of Noah. "As it was in the days of Noah, so it will be at the coming of the Son of Man" (Matt. 24:37 NIV).

Perhaps no more fitting illustration could be found than is contained in this comparison of our Lord's. In so many ways does Noah's day parallel our own.

**First, in the certainty of Divine judgment.** As surely as the flood came in the days of Noah, just so surely will the end come in this age. God has spoken, and His word "shall not return unto [Him] void" (Isa. 55:11).

**Second, in the imminence of Divine judgment.** God had given Noah His word, that a flood would come; so has He foretold the end of this age, and we today find ourselves living when that "end" is right upon us.

**Third, in its results.** The flood resulted in the destruction of a wicked and godless race; and "so shall the coming of the Son of man [be]" (Matt. 24:27, 37, 39). And just as surely as eight survived the cataclysm in Noah's day so surely shall some remain from our day.

**Fourth, in its demands upon the believer for faith and courage.** End times are times of extreme stress, and bring their own special tests of character.

Jesus made the comparison especially for the benefit of those who would be living in the era of His return. Like the time of Noah, the time immediately preceding His return would be one of special testing, a time that would demand the utmost in unshakable faith.

How did Noah respond to the test? We read in Hebrews 11:7, "By faith Noah, warned by God about events as yet unseen, respected the warning and built

Lord, help me to be  
Cheerful when things go wrong;  
Persevering when things are difficult;  
Serene when things are irritating.

Grant that  
Nothing may make me lose my temper;  
Nothing may take away my joy;  
Nothing may ruffle my peace;  
Nothing may make me bitter.

May I so live that others  
May see in me the reflection of the Master.

AMEN.



*an ark to save his household; by this he condemned the world and became an heir to the righteousness that is in accordance with faith" (Heb.11:7 NRSV). Do we wonder that Jesus used Noah as an example to us?*

Like Noah in his day, we today confront the test of time. When the Divine hand seems to tarry, there is a strong temptation to lose faith. With the passing of time, the test becomes more and more acute.

We can imagine Noah with genuine enthusiasm in his voice and a deep fear and reverence for God in his heart, relaying God's warning to his people. A great flood was coming, and they would die unless they believed and entered the ark.

Of course many ridiculed, disbelieved, and scoffed. But some believed.

Noah set the example of faith by immediately commencing work on the ark. And as he worked, he continued to preach. Some listened, and were genuinely glad for the early warning.

But days came, and days went; suns rose and suns set, and....no flood. What was this that Noah had been saying? Was he mistaken?

Days added up to months, and months grew into years. And still...no flood. Surely something was wrong.... And one by one, his followers began to drift away. Generations came, and went. And still...no flood. By this time, some who had believed at first began to wonder.

Wondering led to doubt, and doubt to gross unbelief. Unbelief spread like wildfire. Was there nothing new from the Lord? No update or confirmation of His plans? What if it had been all a dream, all a mistake or misunderstanding on the part of Noah. Was it wise—even sensible—to build so much on one solitary message from the Lord—and that more than one hundred years ago? If it was such an important message, why was He so silent?

Yes, Noah agreed, God was silent. How he longed and prayed for another word from the Lord. If only he could find out if the Lord was pleased with his work. If only he could know that he was doing all that was expected of him at that critical, pre-flood hour.

But there was no further word from the Lord. And what difference did it make? Noah knew what he was to do, and all that remained was for him to do it; the rest was God's responsibility.

How many times was it necessary for God to speak before people should believe and take action—to save their lives! God had said the flood was coming, and when the time was right it would come. Now was their opportunity—their only opportunity—to get ready, and they should be doing it, or they would die in the flood.

Still the unbelievers doubted. With the sky so clear and the sun so bright—who could worry? Even some who had once believed lost faith and began to feel sorry for Noah, the poor, deluded old man who had dreamed so greatly and whose years and years of well-intentioned hard work were to be so sadly disappointed.

Is not all this parallel to our own day? Wasn't Jesus right when He said that those who should experience the last hours of the day, those who should have the privilege of living to see the Son of man come, would experience tests that would require the strength and faith and endurance of Noah?

What was Noah's secret source of spiritual strength? We read that Noah was *"a righteous man, the only blameless man living on earth at the time."* In the midst of that corrupt and desperately wicked people he *"consistently followed God's will and enjoyed a close relationship with him"* (Gen. 6:9 NLT). No ordinary accomplishment this; and what better example could we have? Do we wonder that he was able to maintain his faith through all those years, despite the scoffs of the multitudes? If Noah could consistently follow God's will in

*Do not throw  
away your  
confidence, for it  
carries a great reward.  
You need endurance,  
'soon, very soon' he who is  
to come will come;  
he will not delay."*

*—Hebrews 10:35–37*





*If God is in the thoughts you think,  
The words you speak, the deeds you do;  
If from the wrong you truly shrink  
That with our Lord you may go through;  
If you're a light along life's road  
That helps a traveler to see,  
Then do not ask to shift your load.  
And from your many duties flee.*

*If God is in the way you take,  
Though rough sometimes the pathway seems,  
If friends of other days forsake,  
And former plans fade from your dreams;  
If for your talents others bid,  
And make fair offers for your time,  
Think of the things those others did  
That robbed them of the things sublime.*

*Don't sell your soul and all that's grand  
For worldly glitter, wealth or fame,  
For when before the Lord you stand,  
You'll want a noble, spotless name—  
When you see Jesus face to face  
And He is seated on His throne—  
So He who holds for you a place  
Can robe and crown you as His own.*

—Selected

his day, in the midst of that exceedingly wicked world, can we not do it today?

And if Noah was a man of faith, and showed his faith by his actions, can we not share the same steadfast faith today?

Then, too, for Noah, there was the further test of obedience. We don't know what Noah did to support himself and his family during his first six hundred years, but when the command came, *"make yourself an ark,"* that had to come first. Noah might have said, Yes, Lord, but when do you expect me to plant my crops, or cultivate and prune my vineyards?

But whatever his accustomed pattern of life, Noah did not hesitate. He *"respected the warning"* and went to work. His first and only concern was to obey God, and in doing this he was preserving his own life and that of his family. For God had said that a flood would come, and Noah believed God.

Then there was the test of an unknown deadline—and do we not experience this also? If only we knew, we say; if we only knew how long time as we know it will continue. But we do not know; and Noah did not know how much time he would have to make this ark. There might be plenty of time; but there might not. His whole concern was the completing of his God-assigned task. The Lord had told him he could be safe if—but the rest was his responsibility. And suppose—suppose he had been working too slowly...?

And so he worked—steadily, diligently, lest the flood come before the ark was finished. And while he worked, he preached; Noah was a *"preacher of righteousness,"* right-doing. A flood was coming, he said, and the most important thing in the whole world was to get right with God.

The time seemed to tarry. The people asked "Why?" Noah himself might have been tempted to ask "Why?" Yet Noah knew, for the ark was not yet done.

Noah needed the time; still it was a test.

What of us? How shall we meet this test of time? Will we be able to sustain our concentrated effort over time? Can we keep up our zeal and determination and enthusiasm day after day, year after year, while the Lord seems to tarry?

The ark neared completion; it was almost done, still no flood in sight. This was another test of faith, when the task was almost done.

But Noah *did* finish the ark. And then the rain began, and the people went in—did the Lord tell them when it was time to go inside? We do not know, but we do know the angel of the Lord shut the door. And how many were safe inside? Only eight. Only Noah and seven members of his own family.

One hundred twenty years of preaching and building, and only eight believers. Was it worth all the effort, we ask, for such a few?

Yet what would Noah have said; or any of the seven who escaped with him?

Likewise we may ask in our day: Is it worth the effort to keep on, to keep doing the things we have been doing in obedience to the command of the Lord?

The answer is a resounding Yes, it is worth the effort. The salvation of each single individual means just that much to God. Every one is a jewel, a precious treasure, His own son or daughter, and God has planned His whole creation around

them (Mal. 3:16–17). Look at the tremendous effort God has expended to enlighten and develop them. It is truly so much for so little; but the work is



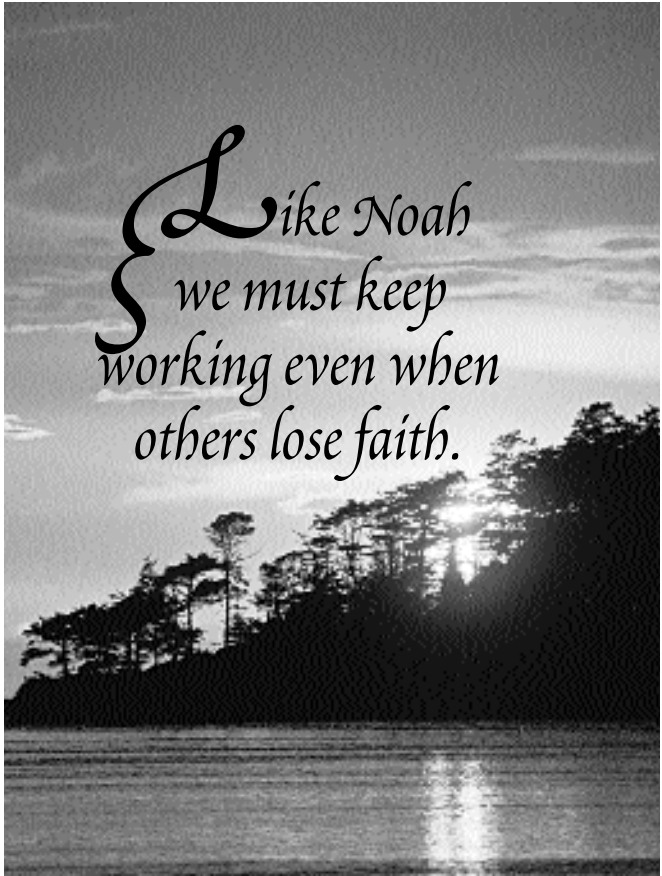
God's. Besides, all the resources are God's—so what can be lost? And shall we consider anything too small to do for God—especially when the benefit and be ours?

If God chooses to have eight million, or eight hundred, or only eight, that is His concern, not ours. We can only pray that we may be His, part of the things which cannot be shaken, the things that shall remain. For we have the Divine promise: *"the things which cannot be shaken shall remain. Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken..."*

How do we become a part of this Kingdom which cannot be shaken? It is all a matter of character; and the foundation of that character is an unshakable faith in the God of heaven and in His promise to recompense each faithful one.

Is our faith like this? Have we that solid, unswerving commitment that we will be faithful, loyal, wholehearted, come what may? Have we committed ourselves, without reservation, to total obedience? Are we each day renewing that relentless determination that will see us through all the way to the end of this age and into eternity? Have we bound ourselves, steadfast, unmovable, to the things that will remain?

In this time of unrest, let us hear again those words of assurance from the book of Hebrews and, like Noah of old, be warned; be moved with fear, moved to action, we who have been offered *"possession of an unshakable kingdom. Let us therefore hold on to the grace that we have been given and use it to worship God in the way that he finds acceptable, in reverence and fear."* ♦



*Like Noah  
we must keep  
working even when  
others lose faith.*

## Don't SAY It!

My friend Carol told of a conversation between herself and her husband John about remodeling their home. He said he wanted to buy a set of "How To" books he saw advertised and with the help of his brother, they could do much of the work themselves. "For a brief second," Carol said, "knowing how unmechanical both my husband and his brother were, I was about to make an unkind remark, like, 'So you want to have 'the house that Jack built'? We'd better look into better insurance coverage.'" But she held her tongue. "For once in my life," she said, "I *thought* before I *spoke*. I said to myself: Will this benefit John?" Of course, the answer was no. So after being quiet for a moment, she responded in a much more beneficial way.

We all have a big job to do to be always kind, thoughtful, and wise with our words. The book of James says that we are "perfect" when we have full control of our tongue (James 3:1-2).

We can all think of times we should have been more gentle, more encouraging to a brother or sister in Christ.

We can all think of times when we should have said—or not said—something that came immediately to mind. Ecclesiastes tells us that there is a time to keep silent as well as a time to speak. Sometimes we can accomplish more by not saying anything.

And sometimes we must speak. There are times when to keep silent is to communicate the wrong message.

But when we're tempted to say something critical, or damaging, or confidential, or boastful, or whiny, or self-exalting, or patronizing, we need to stop and think about the effects of it.

Yes, there's a time to speak and a time to keep silent. There's a time to say it, and a time to remember: *"Don't say it."*

*If you hold your tongue now you won't have to eat your words later.*

*"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt." — Colossians 4:6*



# Snap To *the Promises!*

by DONNA R. MATHIAS

*“As he thinks in his heart, so is he”* (Proverbs 23:7). Knowing this, we should apply our minds to learning more and more from God’s Word, so that we can use it to direct our daily lives.

Many computer programs use what is known as a grid system to make various functions of the program easier and quicker. This grid system consists of very fine, almost invisible lines, which show on the screen but do not necessarily print. Depending on the program and how it was written, the distance between these lines can be adjusted. An artwork grid, for example, allows the artist to know his exact position on the page even when the page is very large. An engineer’s grid is designed for even more precision, indicating the exact location of each individual dot in a drawing and making it possible for the engineer to do extremely accurate work.

Many of these programs have what is called a “snap to” feature. When this function is turned on, the object that is being worked on, when selected, will automatically “snap” or move to align with the nearest grid line if it is within a certain proximity of the grid. In this way one object can be easily aligned with another.

As we grow and develop, our minds become programmed with the subjects we choose to think on. These subjects make a type of grid in our minds. As with the computer program, we can determine how close together these grid lines are and how much influence they will have on our lives.

Some of us are naturally pessimistic, stressing the negative aspects of life, a sort of “prophet-of-doom.” The pessimist looks for—and sees—the dark side of everything. Like the man who

was complaining because his neighbor’s rooster crowed early every morning. It wasn’t the crowing that bothered him—he lay awake all night worrying about *when* it would crow.

A pessimist has a mindset of negative, discouraging, destructive, worrisome thoughts. These thoughts drain energy, squelch confidence, and turn one into a frowning, tight-lipped, fatalistic victim.

An optimist, on the other hand, is one who always expects a favorable outcome. He has programmed his mind to always expect the best. With the “snap to” feature turned on in his mind, he thinks positive, wholesome, encouraging, reassuring thoughts, and faces life victoriously.

Each of us give time and attention to some kind of temporal work, and this requires mental as well as physical effort. But even during the course of a busy day, non-work-related thoughts come into our minds. During those moments, what kind of thoughts do our minds snap to—the grid system of the pessimist or that of the optimist?

God wants us to be optimistic! His book, the Bible, is a storehouse of beautiful promises for us to think on. Scattered through it are hundreds and hundreds of specifically stated promises that Peter calls “*exceeding great and precious promises*” (2 Peter 1:4). Nearly all the prophecies are promises, and almost every verse of the 2,461 in the Psalms is a potential promise, as are the 915 verses which make up the Proverbs. It has been computed that there are more than 30,000 promises in the Bible. No one can prove this very large number. However, we know that the Bible is God’s cabinet of spiritual jewels, and that it is filled with “gems and precious

stones and pearls” of inestimable value.

Now put these promises into your mind—as many as you can—and turn on the “snap to” feature, and what happens? Your mind will automatically turn to a promise of God at every opportunity!

God has used the strongest yet simplest words and phrases to state His promises. We have a variety of choice expressions, which convince us of the truthfulness of His Word. What He has promised, He performs. His deeds match His declarations. The Heavenly promises are no idle dream, no “perhaps this” or “perhaps that.” They are Divine and cannot fail, because the God behind them cannot fail.

Are these great and precious promises ours just to claim whenever we choose? No indeed. Every promise is prefixed with an “if.” *“If ye be willing and obedient ye shall eat the good of the land; but if you resist and rebel, you will be devoured by the sword. For the mouth of the Lord has spoken”* (Isa.1:19–20).

When the apostle Paul presents a promise of comfort, he states also our duty. When he reminds us that God wants to be our Father, he also tells us what we must do. Take, for example, his words in 2 Corinthians. First comes the promise. *“What agreement is there between the temple of God and idols? For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: ‘I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.’”* Then follows what we must do: He says, *“Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing.”* Then he restates the promise so that we will keep it in our mind, so our minds will automatically “snap to” it at every opportunity. He says, If you do this,



then *"I will receive you. I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty."* Then, once again, he repeats our obligation. *"Since we have these promises, dear friends, let us purify ourselves from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for God"* (2 Cor. 6:16–7:1 NIV).

The Apostle John likewise places a promise beside a command. After reminding his listeners of the love which God has bestowed upon us in calling us to be His children, he instantly reminds us of what we must do to claim that promise: *"And every one who has this hope in him purifies himself*

*even as He [Christ] is pure"* (1 John 3:1–3).

In these days of stress and strain, let us be sure to keep the "snap to" feature turned on in our minds, so that the promises of God will be controlling our thoughts. This, in turn, will control our actions, and as we think in our hearts, so we will become!

God has promised us an eternal home of happiness and joy to all who will follow in the footsteps of Jesus. Then, when He comes, He will change their corruptible bodies and make them like to His own glorious body. (Phil. 3:20–21) What a wonderful promise to look forward to! ♦



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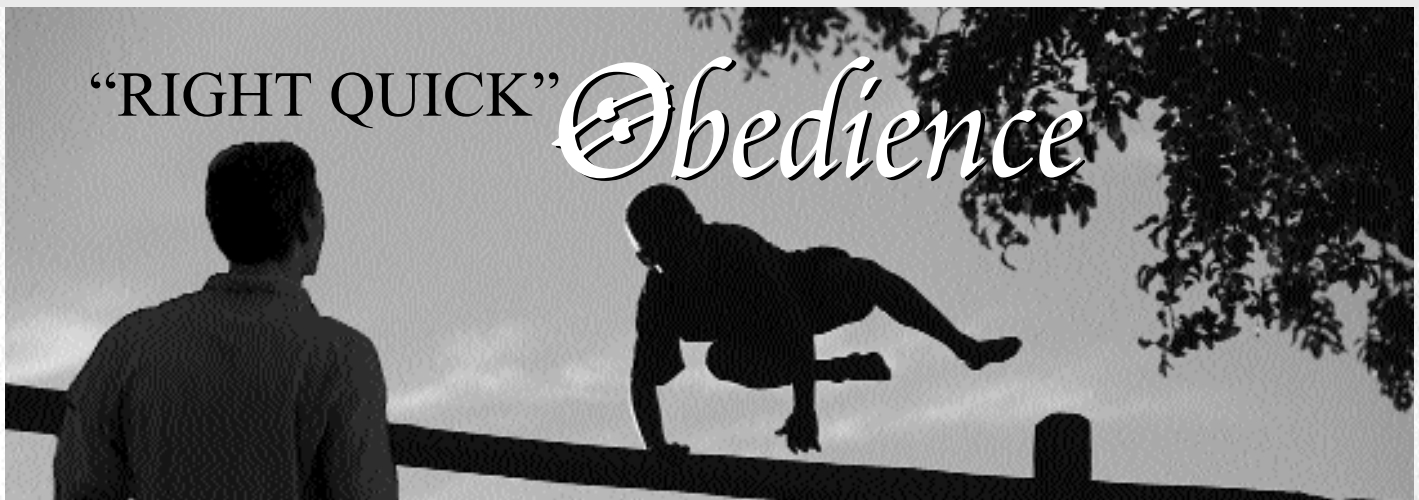
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**A**ren't you amazed at Abraham's immediate response to the Lord's command to go to Mount Moriah and offer Isaac as a sacrifice? Even though Abraham dearly loved his son, he didn't find excuses to delay his departure, but rather *"Abraham rose up early in the morning...and went unto the place of which God had told him"* to carry out the command God had given him (Gen. 22:3). Do we wonder why Abraham was called the *"father of all them that believe"*?

*"Abraham rose up early in the morning... and went unto the place of which God had told him."* –Genesis 22:3

Can we do as well when we read in God's Word what we should do? Can we respond as directly as did Abraham?

A religious teacher named Havner once illustrated this truth in these words: "When I was a boy, my father had a habit of calling me to do things with the summons, 'Come, right quick!' I didn't mind the 'come,' but the 'right quick' irritated me sometimes. He didn't mean, 'Take your time; think it

over; come if you feel like it.' I had the impression that I had better feel like it! Father considered himself to be the head of the house, and the rest of us were inclined to agree with him." Then added, "The big word with God is 'now.' If we are going to get anything done for Him, we had better get at it now. He is the I AM, the Eternal Contemporary."

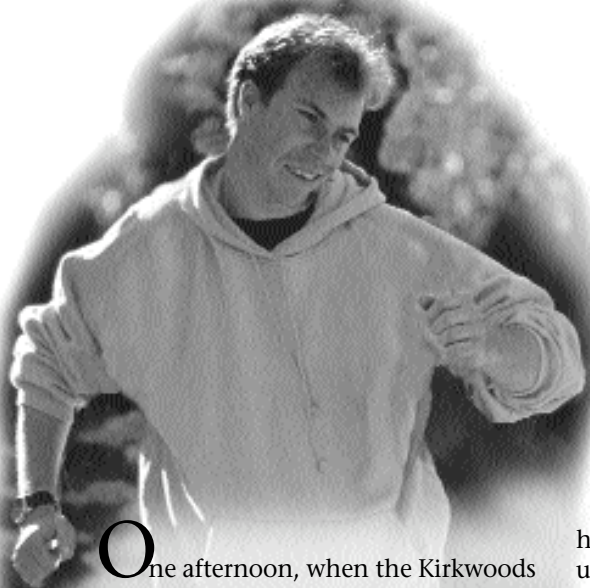
Is there an area of your life you have not yielded to the Heavenly Father's will? Are there things you know God wants you to do, but you've been holding back, finding reasons to delay? Then, for the Lord's glory and for your own personal blessing, Begin immediately to do what you know He wants you to do.

Abraham arose *"early in the morning"* to obey the Lord. When God calls you, He expects you to come *"right quick!"*

*Lord, when we sense Your call to serve,  
Help us "right quick" to start;  
We would not idly stand aside—  
But work with eager heart.* ♦



# Consider the Afflicted



One afternoon, when the Kirkwoods had just parked their car in a side street Lilly spotted a strange appearing man shuffling awkwardly down the sidewalk. "Look!" she said, "Isn't he funny."

In a second, two other Kirkwood children were staring at the man. Bradley snickered, "He looks like a scarecrow." Millie laughed out loud as she watched the man's arms shake and wiggle about. Instead of walking straight, he wobbled, and his face twisted as though he were trying to make faces.

Mr. Kirkwood suddenly turned to face Bradley and Millie, and he said sternly, "Hush! Both of you!" His face was red and his voice firm as he continued. "It is not kind to laugh at that poor man. Think how you would feel if you had to be like that and others laughed at you?"

The giggling and snickering in the back seat stopped immediately. One look at Dad was enough to tell them that he meant what he said, and that what they were doing was very wrong.

Mother spoke reprovingly to Bradley and Millie: "We can be very thankful that no one in our family is afflicted like that!"

"Mom, what does 'afflicted' mean?" asked Millie, very sober.

"You are afflicted if you have something that hurts, or if you are sick in some way, and can't move or act like most people. That man is afflicted because he can't make his hands or his feet or his face do what he wants them

to do. He can't help it. They call that condition 'spastic', or he may have an affliction known as 'cerebral palsy.' You or I could have something like that too, and we would be just like that man."

"Yes, thank God we don't." Dad continued: "I remember when I was a boy there was a boy who lived not far from us, and he was a spastic. His throat muscles didn't work well, so it was very hard for him to speak. Only a few people could understand him, and he would thrash his arms around because he couldn't help it. He walked a little like this man does, and other children in the town would come up behind him and make fun of him, and throw snowballs at him in the winter. They thought they were just being funny, but they were really being mean."

"Just because this boy couldn't talk like the rest of us, they said he was stupid. They would even talk about him right in front of him, as though he didn't have sense enough to know that they were saying unkind things about him."

"He couldn't play with the other boys, so he was always alone. I'm sure he felt very lonely, and many times his feelings were hurt because the other children didn't know any better than to laugh at him. He suffered a great deal because even grown-up people, even church people, didn't always show kindness to him."

"Because he didn't have many friends, and because he was exceptionally intelligent, he spent a lot of time reading about history, and geography, and geology. He started a stamp collection, and became very interested in rocks and stones. Even though it wasn't easy for him to get around, he would go long distances on his hands and knees, crawling in the hills and ravines and studying the rocks and soil formations."

"After some years, this boy, whom the neighbors thought was stupid, won

a scholarship in geology from a large university in the west. Now he has his doctor's degree, and a very good job, and has written text books that are being used in colleges."

Mother couldn't remain quiet any longer. "Children, it is wrong to laugh at or make fun of *any* person, either to their face or behind their backs. But we should be especially kind to someone who is afflicted, like this man you saw today. They aren't that way because they want to be, or because they chose to be, and they don't want to be laughed at anymore than you would want to be. Always remember that no matter how a person may look or act, he has feelings just like you do."

"There's a verse in the Bible," added Dad, "that says it really well, and it is a verse that all of you children know. It's by Jesus Himself, and it's one of the beatitudes. Can anyone guess which beatitude it is?"

All was quiet for a moment, as the children looked at each other, and tried to recall the different beatitudes.

"Is it the one about being pure?" asked Bradley cautiously.

"No, Bradley, that isn't the one I was thinking of. However, if we are pure, we will certainly have this quality too. But I was thinking of another one."

Millie spoke now. "I think I know, Dad," she said with more confidence. "It's the one about mercy. You said that having mercy was having feeling for other people, like we would want them to feel for us. So Jesus said, 'Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.'"

"That's it exactly," said Dad. "If we were in that situation, we would want mercy from others, so we need to give that same mercy to others, or Jesus will not have any mercy for us."

"I have an idea," Dad continued. "Let's try to think of some ways that we can help such persons, without making them feel that they are odd or queer. Then we won't be tempted to make fun of them." ♦



# He Who Has Seen Me Has Seen the Father

***"If Jesus is not God, please explain these words of Jesus in John 14:9, 'if you have seen me, you have seen my Father.'"***

Jesus has been discussing with His disciples that He would be ascending to His Father, at the same time explaining His relationship to Him. He first said that if they had known Him they should have known the Father. The verse reads, *"If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him"* (v. 7). When Philip asked plainly, *"Show us the Father,"* Jesus replied similarly, *"Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father?"* (v.9). These verses show that Philip did not believe Christ and the Father were the same person, else he would not have requested *"show us the Father."* He would have known that Jesus was the Father in human flesh. But no, such a thought never came into the mind of the Apostle.

How had they known the Father and how had they seen Him? Jesus explained, *"Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? [He did not say 'I am the Father and the Father is I] The words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me: or else believe me for the very works' sake"* (vs. 10–11). They are two distinct individuals. Jesus was in the Father and the Father was in Him because, as He explained, *"the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works."*

Jesus did not speak His own words, they were words given Him from another, His Father. He and His Father were in each other, not physically but in a rela-

tionship, Christ being submissive to the Father, speaking His Father's words and doing His Father's will. *"I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."* He was not the Father, but was taught by Him. His works were not His own. *"I do always those things that please Him,"* He continued (John 8:28–29). We see the same phraseology when He prayed that *"they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us"* (John 17:21). No one would think for an instant that Christ meant that He, the Father and *"they all"* were literally one person. *"They all"* were those who were not at that time even existing. He was speaking of future generations who would believe through His words and those of His Apostles, the same words which the Father gave Christ: *"For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them"* (John 17:8a).

The words to believe, as used in this verse and elsewhere, are not static words. John 15 speaks of Christ's followers abiding in Him if they bear fruit. Otherwise they cannot abide in Him (John 15:1–6).

Nor do we think of Christ and Paul as being the same person when Paul said that he was called *"To reveal his (God's) Son in me (Paul)"* (Gal. 1:16).

## **To which Christian denomination is the Megiddo Church connected?**

The Megiddo Church is not affiliated with any other denomination. We are an independent Christian organization consisting of members who have devoted their lives to the study, understanding and application of the teachings of the Bible. We believe that the Bible is the only source of information from our Creator available to us today, and that in its original form and when properly understood does not contain

contradictions. We believe the Bible, correctly understood, is in harmony with all true science, and that it is a guide to life as God wants it to be lived.

The Bible is for us the only source of knowledge about God and His Plan, and contains all the instructions we need to follow to bring our life to the standard which He will accept, so that we can receive His full salvation and be a part of the new society which He will one day perpetuate in His Kingdom on earth.

## **Parents, Children and Accountability**

***"I have read that God does not condemn the children for the sins of their parents. But what about Hosea 4:6? Doesn't it sound like God will forget the children because of the sins of their parents?"***

The text in questions reads, *"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children."*

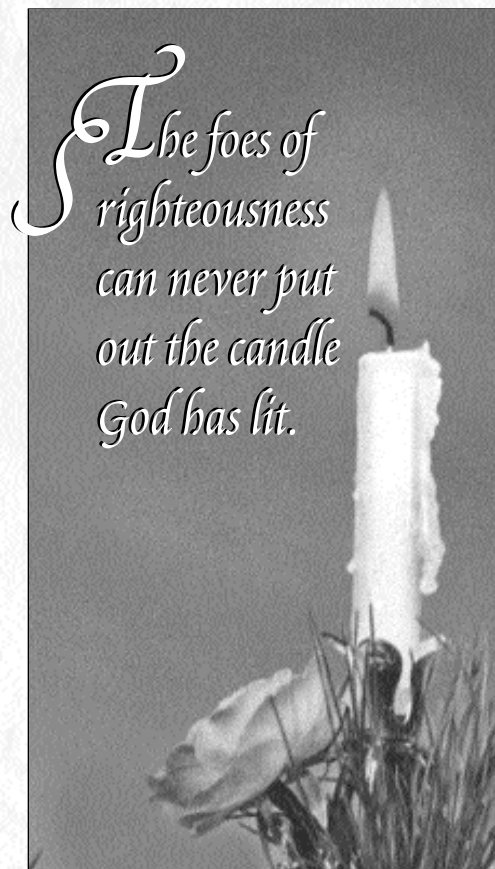
Hosea prophesied in a time of apostasy from the true God. God had favored Israel with a knowledge of His plan of salvation, but the majority had rejected it. God warned them what would happen; that if they forsook Him, He would forsake them.

True to His word, again and again, God often allowed Israel to be harassed by their enemies because of their rebellion against Him.

But what about the children suffering for the sins of their parents?

God is just and righteous, and it is not His way to cause the children to suffer for the sins of their fathers. It is a long and well-established principle with





continued from page 13

God that He does not punish the children for the sins of their parents. *"His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself"* (Prov. 5:22).

God had warned Israel that He would cast them off because they had not kept His law. But would He hold the next generation responsible for the sins of their parents? God is *"merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy"* (Ps. 103:8). Can we believe that He would be angry with the children for the sins of their parents? Not that the children of evil parents do not suffer, for such is often the case. Children born into a family that does not revere God start out at a distinct disadvantage. More than likely they will not be taught the Word of God, and the evil lives of their parents will have a detrimental effect on them.

On the contrary, it is clearly stated in Ezekiel that if a man shall *"beget a son, that seeth all his father's sins which he hath done, and considereth, and doeth not such like,...he shall not die for the*

*iniquity of his father, he shall surely live"* (Ezek. 18:14, 17). Only the children who themselves do wickedly will suffer. Each individual is responsible only for his own sin: *"His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall be holden with the cords of his sins"* (Prov. 5:22). He cannot be held responsible for the sins of another.

Only if the children themselves sin will they be condemned as it is stated in Deut. 24:16: *"The fathers shall not be put to death for the children, neither shall the children be put to death for the fathers: every man shall be put to death for his own sin."* As given in the law to Moses, the statement concerning sins of the fathers being visited on the children to later generations, is limited to *"them that hate me."*

What, then, can we conclude about the children whom God says He will forget in Hosea 4:6? We may safely conclude that if God forgets them, they, too, are among the transgressors. They are following in the footsteps of their parents. ♦

## THE KINGDOM OF GOD: HISTORY OR PROPHECY?

continued from page 17

auspicious time, when Jesus will assume the role of King, and *"the kingdoms of this world"* shall become *"the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign forever and ever!"* (Rev. 11:15).

When Jesus is King, all the governments of earth will become His Kingdom. There will not be many independent nations as we see today. All will be under the rulership of Jesus Christ.

### Revelation 1:5

*"Grace to you and peace from Him...and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth." A ruler over kings is called a 'King of kings.' Jesus Christ is that great King."*

You are right, a ruler over kings is a *"King of kings,"* and Jesus Christ is that great King. But He has not yet taken His

throne. Revelation is a picture of *"things to come,"* and if Jesus became King during the time of His earthly ministry, that statement in Revelation would not be true. Jesus gave this Revelation to *"show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John"* (Rev. 1:1). If Revelation is revealing things which *"must shortly take place,"* the Kingdom was still future at the time of its writing, and Jesus is yet to be the *"ruler over the kings of the earth."*

### Revelation 1:6

*"...and has [past tense] made us kings and priests to His God and Father." We cannot be kings (less-er, under Christ) without King Jesus who is over all. He is also our ruler (v. 5)."*

Here again, we are citing the Revelation which was given to reveal future events, not events already accom-

plished. Even though they are stated in the past tense, the events are future and prophetic. The tense was merely the style of the writing. Servants of Jesus were not already *"kings and priests."* They were not even all chosen at that time. This is the recognition which all faithful servants of Christ will receive.

### Matthew 10:33

*"Whosoever shall deny Me before men, him will I also deny before My Father who is in heaven" And Paul adds, 'If we deny Him, He also will deny us' (2 Tim. 2:12). These are obvious warnings that we ought to consider before dismissing anything."*

We agree heartily, these are obvious warnings that we must consider and not dismiss. If we do not uphold Christ's cause now, we will not be part of His Kingdom when it is established. ♦

THE END



# The Kingdom of God

- Real
- Literal
- Worldwide
- Eternal

Is the Church the Kingdom of God?

Has the Kingdom come?

Did the Kingdom come at Pentecost?

Is the Kingdom of God spiritual or literal?

Did God have a literal Kingdom in Israel?

**The Kingdom: History or Prophecy?**



# THE KINGDOM OF GOD: HISTORY OR PROPHECY?

SECTION SIX  
by RUTH E. SISSON

**H**ow can you publish as fact that Jesus Christ is a yet future king, when scripture plainly reveals that He is right now, and was in the first century, a king? I would appreciate your comments in light of the texts that follow."

## **Matthew 12:28**

*"'But if I cast out demons by the spirit of God, surely the kingdom of God has come upon you.' Jesus Christ did indeed cast out demons by the spirit of God, therefore the Kingdom of God did come upon them. It was a present reality in the first century and triumphant over the demons. Thus, the King was a present reality and triumphant."*

This passage uses the same word that we found in Mark 1:15, "...surely the kingdom of God has come upon you." The word translated "kingdom" is *basileia*, which means "His royal power, kingship, dominion, rule, not to be confused with an actual kingdom" (*Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*).

Jesus did perform many miracles and did cast out demons by the spirit of God, but this demonstrated not the presence of His kingdom but His Divine authority. Jesus was saying, in effect, If you see me perform miracles, then you can know that the majesty of God is in your midst, that I am indeed here by Divine authority.

## **Luke 10:8-11**

*"The Kingdom of God was a present reality in the first-century. Christ said so. King Jesus Christ was a present reality at that time. Read Luke 10:8-11. 'Whatever city you enter, and they receive you, eat such things as are set before you, and heal the sick who are there, and say to them, 'The kingdom of God is come near to you.' But whatever city you enter, and they do not receive you, go out into its streets and say, 'the very dust of your city which clings to us we wipe off against you. Nevertheless know this, that the kingdom of God is come near to you.'"*

In Luke 10, Jesus appointed seventy and sent them out in His name, to go "into every

city and place where He Himself was about to go." They were His emissaries, His forerunners, as it were, preparing the way for Him to come and preach. He sent the seventy in advance of Himself, to tell the people that the *basileia* (His royal power, kingship), was "coming near," i.e., literally approaching their town (10:1). Isn't it more logical that they would announce that the man Himself, i.e., His royal majesty, would approach or "come near" than that an entity such as "the Kingdom of God" was coming?

At the time Jesus spoke the words recorded in Matthew 28, He had been crucified and resurrected, and was at the point of ascending to heaven. At this time, He was commissioning His disciples to go out and teach in His name. To do this work He promised them power and authority from heaven, which they received on the day of Pentecost.

What did Jesus mean when He said, "all authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth"? (Matt. 28:8 NASB). If Jesus was literally given "all authority in heaven and on earth" at that time, He should still have that authority today. Why, then, do we have a world with many nations, many rulers, and many who oppose law and order altogether? If He has all authority, shouldn't He have fulfilled the promise of the angels at His birth, "peace on earth, goodwill to men"?

## **Matthew 28:18**

*"What did Jesus mean in Matthew 28:18? 'All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.' Christ Himself tells us that He is right now in charge of heaven AND earth."*

In John 17:2 we have a partial explanation of what Jesus may have meant. Perhaps He was speaking of a specific type of the authority which the Father was giving Him, i.e., the authority, to "give eternal life" to as many as the Father had given Him. In John 5, Jesus explained more about this authority: He was to have power to execute judgment, and to give life to whomever He chose (John 5:21-22, 26-27).



Jesus being at the center of the plan of God for this earth, God gave Him the authority to fill that role once His earthly career was completed. But He was not immediately in a position to exercise that authority. Many events had to take place before He could assume His kingly role or exercise His kingly powers. He would be going to heaven, to be at the Father's right hand, "till I make Your enemies Your footstool" (Acts 2:35). In the meantime, the Apostles had the task of carrying the Gospel "to the ends of the earth" (the then known world). Only when the time was right would He return to restore all things and set up His kingdom (Acts 3:20–21).

#### **Matthew 27:11**

*"And the governor asked Him, saying, 'Are you the king of the Jews?' So Jesus said to him, 'It is as you say' (Matt. 27:11). Christ acknowledges His kingship. 'Pilate said to Him, 'Are you a king then?' Jesus answered, 'You say rightly that I am a king.' (John 18:37). Once more, Christ acknowledges His present kingship."*

Why did Jesus allow Himself to be crucified if He was an all-powerful King? Why would He allow His kingship to be destroyed in this way? Jesus had to cooperate with His Father's plan. That is why He said when being tried, "My kingdom is not of this world" (John 18:36). (This *cosmos*, this present arrangement.)

#### **Ephesians 1:19–22**

*"[God] worked in Christ Jesus when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. And He put all [things] under His feet...' Paul proclaims and witnesses that Christ has all power above everything."*

Recall the parallel paragraph in Hebrews 2 discussed above, where the author says that "He put all in subjection under Him, He left nothing that is not put

under Him" (verse 8), as though it was an accomplished fact, a past event; then goes on to say, "But now we do not yet see all things put under Him." How are we to understand this if Jesus is already the reigning King?

Truly, Jesus is "King of kings and Lord of lords," just as He described Himself in Revelation to John on the Isle of Patmos. When He makes war with the nations of earth and overcomes them, He will be "Lord of lords, and King of kings" (Rev. 17:14), with authority above all "principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named." But were we to say that He is now in this position, exercising this authority, we would be making a false statement, a statement obviously not true. For what kings today recognize Christ's authority? What lords are under His rulership? At the present time He is not a reigning king but our Advocate with the Father (1 John 2:1).

The Psalmist knew the plan and said of the time when He will take dominion, "All kings shall fall down before Him: all nations shall serve Him" (Ps. 72:11). This prophecy will be fulfilled, and when it is, everyone on earth will know and acknowledge Jesus as the one and only "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

#### **1 Peter 3:22**

*"[Jesus Christ]...has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.' One more witness. Peter in effect says that Christ is in charge."*

Truly, the Bible writers agree that Jesus is at the right hand of God. But is He ruling the earth from that location? Again, the book of Revelation pictures Him standing on Mount Zion with His saints when He returns to take the reins of government. The saints will share His authority, they will sit with Him on His throne (Rev. 3:21). In another account, they are pictured as singing, "We shall reign on the earth" (Rev. 5:10). When He is King, all people everywhere will be ascribing praise to Jesus, acclaiming Him worthy to "receive power, riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:12). Who is doing this today?

#### **Hebrews 1:8**

*"But to the Son He says, 'Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, a scepter of righteousness is the scepter of your Kingdom.' More testimony as to the Kingship of Christ."*

Hebrews 1:8 is another prophetic description of the future world under King Jesus. In verses 5–7, the author describes the role of the angels. Then in verse 8 he speaks to the Son, that His throne is "forever and ever," and a "sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of [His] Kingdom." Then in verses 10–12, he addresses God the Creator. Verse 13 speaks of Jesus' singular present position: (in heaven, at the Father's right hand). "To which of the angels has he ever said: 'Sit at my right hand till I make your enemies your footstool?'" Jesus is now in heaven, waiting for the day when He will return to claim His kingship. This passage (Psalm 110:1) is quoted several times in the New Testament (see Matt. 22:44; Acts 2:34–35; 1 Cor. 15:25; Heb. 1:13; Heb. 10:12–13). Not once does it suggest that Jesus is now ruling as supreme King of the earth. He is waiting for the time to come, when His enemies will be subdued, and He will be able to take command of the earth.

#### **1 Peter 2:9**

*"But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood....' We cannot be a "royal" priesthood without a King or Kingdom. But we have a King."*

Why did Peter compare the faithful ones to "a royal priesthood" if they are without a King or Kingdom?

We do indeed have a King, if we are part of the royal priesthood. But again, the dominion of our King is future—or the prophecy has failed of its fulfillment. When He was on earth, Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Your kingdom come," not, now is Your kingdom here. We are part of a "royal" priesthood because we are preparing to be part of the coming Kingdom. The King is already chosen, His territory is established. He simply has to take the throne and reign. Revelation 11 describes this

*continued on page 14*





Your direction  
is as crucial as your speed.

*"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."*

—Proverbs 14:12

*"You had time enough in the past to do all the things that men do in the pagan world. Then you lived in license and debauchery, drunkenness, revelry,... and such like. Now, when you no longer plunge with them into all this reckless dissipation, they cannot understand it, and they vilify you accordingly." —1 Peter 4:3–4 NEB*

## Where's the Right Way?

When the crowd is running the wrong way, it's hard to be the odd one who runs the right way.

It is said that during a 10,000 meter cross-country race in Riverside, California, everyone thought one runner named Mike was heading the wrong way. He kept waving at the other 127 runners to follow him, but only 4 believed he had taken the right turn—the rest had missed it.

When he was asked about the reaction to his midcourse decision not to let the crowd determine his direction, Mike responded, "They thought it strange that I went the right way."

First century pagans felt the same way about the Christians. The apostle Peter said, "They think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you" (1 Pet. 4:4). Many people today still feel that way about the followers of Jesus Christ, as though they are going in the wrong direction. But actually, the believers are headed for the victors' crown; the unbelievers are going the wrong way.

The lesson here is that it is dangerous to do what seems right in one's own eyes. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but..." what about its end?

At every turn, think about the end of the road. Where is it leading you? Are you going to like where it ends?

Keep on the right path, no matter how many are running the other way. ♦

*The direction you are headed determines your destination;*

*It's better to be right than to be popular.*



**D**o not begin any enterprise you have not pre-tested with prayer.

*If your mind should go blank, don't forget to turn off the sound.*

**L**earn to *bear*, and to *forbear*, and *forget* and *forgive*; for this is the way all Christians should live.

**Y**our future begins today. Spend your time  
in that which will make you happy tomorrow;  
in that which you would like to ask God to bless;  
in that which you can review with satisfaction at the end of  
the day;  
in that which you would want to be found doing should Jesus  
come and surprise you.

**P**rayer must mean something to us before it can mean anything to God.

*The same hammer that shatters the glass also forges the steel.*

**I**f you want to feel rich, just count all the things money can't buy.

*There will always be a bumper crop of food for thought from God's Book. What is needed is people to harvest it.*

**A** goal is a dream with a deadline.

*Repentance without amendment is like continually pumping without mending the leak.*

**M**any favors which God gives us ravel out for want of thanksgiving; for, though prayer purchases blessings, praise keeps them.

#### **Are You for Sale?**

*Ahab sold himself for a vineyard; Judas, for a bag of silver; Achan, for a wedge of gold and a garment; Gehazi, for some silver and garments; Ananias and Sapphira, for the proceeds from the sale of their property.*



#### **Best Seller**

*It is worn where fond hands have caressed it  
And dog-eared where hearts found new ease.  
Oh no, it is not just the book-of-the-month,  
It's the Book of the Centuries.*

*There are tears where a soul shared its sorrow  
And smiles where it lightened a load.  
There are names of the true and stouthearted  
Who cherished it so on life's road.*

*I turn to it when I am happy  
And it doubles the joy of the day,  
I lean on it when I am troubled  
And its leaves blow my cares far away.*

*Its tale is as new as tomorrow,  
Every land knows the story Divine  
Of this quiet, eternal Best Seller,  
This dear little Bible of mine!*

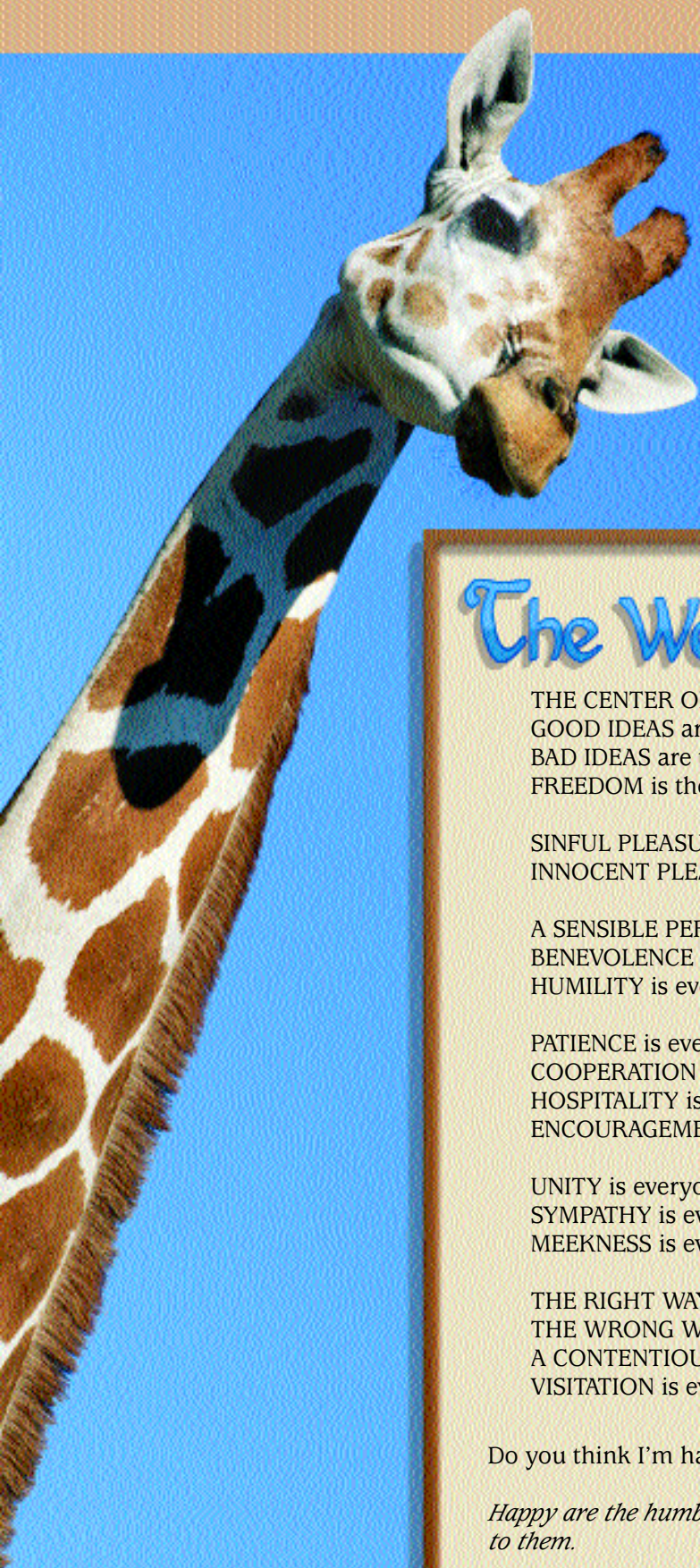
**P**rayer changes things?  
No! Prayer changes people, and people change things.

*Avoid looking at temptation. The more you see of it, the better it may look.*

**I** pray You, O God, that I may be beautiful within.

**L**ove looks through a telescope; envy, through a microscope.





## The World as I See It

THE CENTER OF THINGS is the place where I am.  
GOOD IDEAS are those that agree with mine.  
BAD IDEAS are those that oppose mine.  
FREEDOM is the right to do what I choose.

SINFUL PLEASURES are the things I dislike.  
INNOCENT PLEASURES are the things I like to do.

A SENSIBLE PERSON is one who listens to what I say.  
BENEVOLENCE is everyone giving handouts to me.  
HUMILITY is everyone bowing to my whims.

PATIENCE is everyone bearing with me.  
COOPERATION is everyone working with me.  
HOSPITALITY is everyone entertaining me.  
ENCOURAGEMENT is everyone complimenting me.

UNITY is everyone going along with me.  
SYMPATHY is everyone feeling sorry for me.  
MEEKNESS is everyone stepping aside for me.

THE RIGHT WAY is the way I would do it.  
THE WRONG WAY is any other way of doing it.  
A CONTENTIOUS PERSON is one who disagrees with me.  
VISITATION is everyone coming to see me.

Do you think I'm happy? The fact is, I'm not!

*Happy are the humble-minded, the whole earth will belong to them.*

—Jesus (Matt. 5:5 paraphrase)