

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to the battle?"

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This monthly religious journal is published for the benefit of the Church of God universally. It is our supreme purpose to reach the world for Christ through the printed page. Our burden is to reveal the truth of God's Word to all mankind, to expose sin and error, to war against apostasy, and to eradicate the longstanding traditions of men that have no biblical foundations.

Brother Roger L. Decker ..... Editor  
Workers Too Numerous to Mention

**THE CHURCH OF GOD BELIEVES IN:**

- A personal God (John 4:24)
- A divine Christ (John 1:1, 14)
- An infallibly inspired Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17)
- Salvation from sin (Matt. 1:21)
- The new birth (John 3:3, 5-7)
- A holy life (Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12)
- Sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23)
- Unity of God's people (John 17:21, Eph. 4)
- Divine, physical healing (James 5:14-16)
- The ordinances (Matt. 28:19-20; John 13; 1 Cor. 11:23, 34)
- Eternal life (Matt. 25:46; Mark 9:43)
- The Trinity (1 John 5:7, 8)

**SOME SPIRITUAL FACTS  
PERTAINING TO THE CHURCH**

- Jesus organized it (Matt. 16:18)
- On a good foundation (Eph. 2:20; 1 Cor. 3:11)
- Christ governs it (Eph. 1:22-23; Isa. 9:6)
- God admits members (1 Cor. 12:13-18)
- Sin puts you out of it (Rom. 11:22; Ex. 32:33)
- The saved only are members (John 15:2-6)
- Membership is offered to all (Rev. 22:17)
- Final rewards (Rev. 20:12-15; 21:3-4; 22:14)
- Bible name of the Church (Acts 20:28; Gal. 1:13; John 17:11)

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# Guest Editorial

## The Crown of Life

### When Do We Receive the Crown?

Part 1 of 3

*James 1:1-3,12 states: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting. My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience.*

*Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him."*

This epistle was written to the church by a very influential and responsible pastor, one who identified himself as "James, a servant of God." He was the same person that Galatians 1:19 identifies as "James the Lord's brother." James was the pastor of the congregation in Jerusalem, and it numbered more than one hundred thousand souls. At the dawn of the first century, James, under the divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote a message in the form of an epistle. He set forth many vital truths that the church needed in that era as well as in the day in which we are living.

I want to draw your attention to one point that has become confusing to some, yet it is very encouraging and instructive. James wrote in verse 12, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." Notice that James spoke concerning "the crown of life." We want to examine this by the Bible to determine the answer

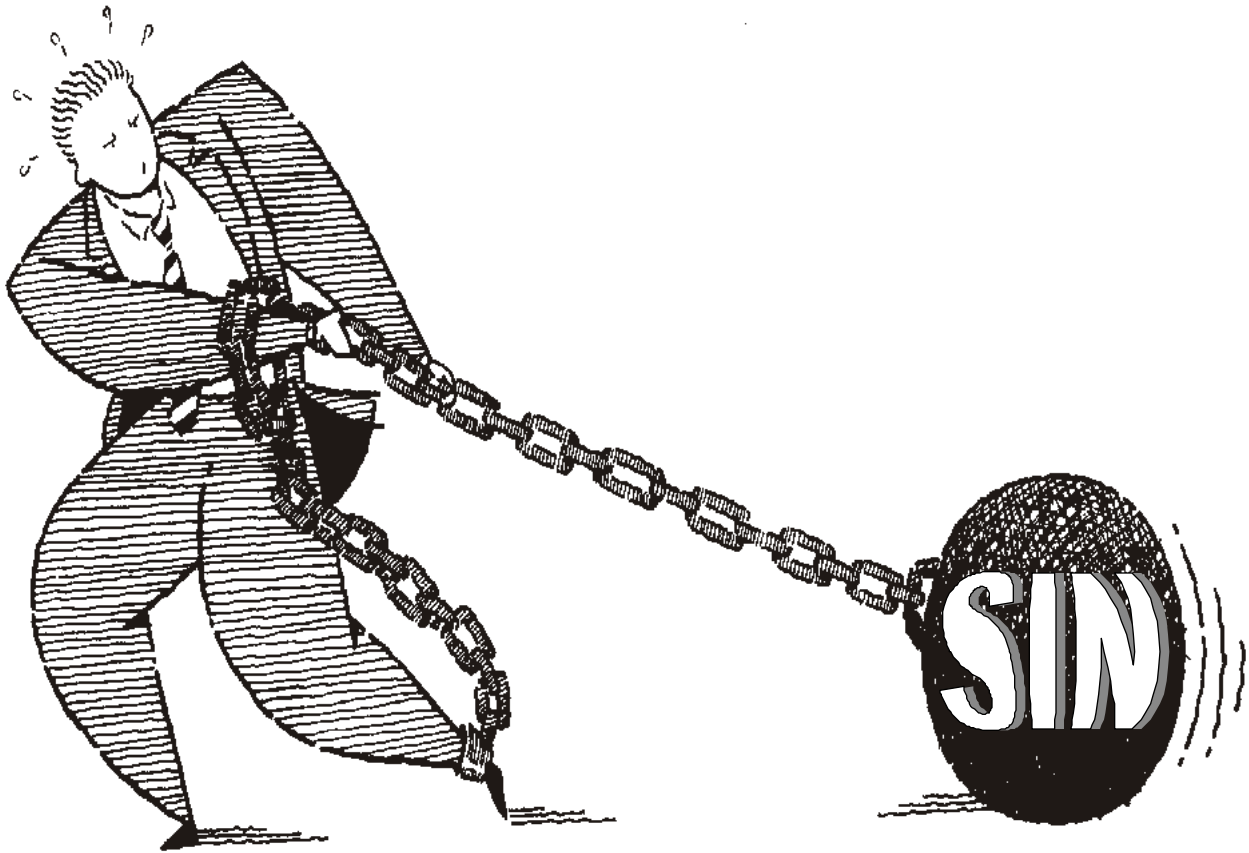
to several questions: What is the crown of life? What is its nature? How do you gain it? When do you receive it? and What was the Apostle setting forth? Much confusion in the religious realm centers around this point of truth. Sad to say, many take this and make it a very confusing subject. May God help us to clear away the mists of confusion.

As we begin to examine this Scripture passage, I ask that you approach it with your mind open to the Word and the Spirit of God and that you lay aside any preconceived notions that you might have concerning this text. In verse 2 of our Scripture text James plunged into the heart of his burden when he said, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations."

Often when people view the word *temptation*, immediately they take a narrow view of that word. James had a much broader meaning than we commonly allocate to this word. The word *temptation* in this verse is the Greek word **paremos**, which means "testing or trial." The *Emphatic Greek Diaglott* renders this "fall into various trials." The word *paremos* does not mean a seduction to sin or an inducement to do evil, but it is used in the broad sense of meaning "testing or trial." We can clearly see that was the thought that James was dealing with by reading verses 2-3 in continuity.

Verses 2-3 read: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience." James was speaking of temptations in the sense of trials. Notice that the sentence begins in verse 2 and does not conclude until the end of verse 3. This lets you know that he was dealing with the same subject. James was not

[continued on page 25]



*Brother Roger L. Decker*

### **Making Excuses for Sin**

The word *sin* is a very short word, but it is mentioned many times in the Word of God. People have many questions about the subject of sin, such as, Who is responsible? and What causes it? It seems that often there is no responsibility placed on the sinner. You can read in your newspaper of the many tragic things that have taken place: murders, adulteries, thefts, and many other crimes, but very seldom do you read the word *sin*. Nevertheless, sin is the root of those problems.

Often when someone ends up doing time in a penitentiary, the person claims that he committed the crime because he was abused, neglected, or mistreated as a child or that his parents were too strict. Some get their story in the news, and it sets a precedent for

psychiatrists and psychologists everywhere who are trying to get reduced sentences for their clients. Then they say that their clients suffered emotionally during their childhood years. People make excuses for just about everything they do.

People are prone to blame their failures on their past. Making excuses and placing the blame elsewhere are not anything new; that is very common. It has been that way since the beginning of time. It started with Adam and Eve and has continued down through the ages. Aaron, the brother of Moses, blamed the people for making the golden calf.

King Saul would not come clean; instead, he blamed the people for his disobedience. King Saul was given a commission to destroy all the Amalekites (the king, the servants, the families, and their

livestock) and everything they had. When King Saul failed to do that, he told Samuel that the people wanted to spare the best. Well, nothing is "best" when God says to destroy it.

Some people today try to spare the "best," but nothing is worth losing your soul over when God says to get rid of it. Many people are prone to do that, and they always offer excuses. That is a way of life for some people. You have to wade through all kinds of excuses before you get down to the fact of the matter. Often when a person is not up to par spiritually, he or she blames it on his or her unsaved companion. I have seen some individuals live for God regardless of whether the husband or the wife lived for God. I have seen the wife live for God when the husband was a real rascal. Also, I have seen others live for God when their families turned against them, yet they

stayed true to the Lord.

When some people do not act right, they say it was because they had a hard day at work and they were worn out. If they lose their temper and scream and shout, they say someone else caused them to do it. If you are one who is prone to lose your temper and scream and yell, you need help in your soul. God has more grace for you than that. It is time to get rid of all the excuses and get down to where the real problem lies. It is rare to find a man or a woman who will admit that he or she has sinned and failed God. Many unsaved individuals hear the Word of God, but they do not want to be looked upon as sinners.

### **Sanctified by the Word of God**

By the Bible we are going to study about sin and about what makes a sinner. I trust that by the help of the Lord, if you are in doubt about your condition, you will know your true condition after you have read this message. I believe that much of the confusion in the religious world about holiness is due to the fact that many people do not understand. Some fine Christian people live really good lives, but they hang on to the old thought that they sin more or less every day because a pastor, an evangelist, or a preacher got in the pulpit and convinced them of that. Friend, if you sin more or less every day, you are not a child of God; you are a child of the devil.

Some people think that their plight in sin is due to their forefathers fall and that their sin was passed down to them. Others say they are saved but not sanctified. Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 6:9-11: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor

extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified. . . ."

Those brethren at Corinth were sanctified and walking in the light, yet as soon as the Apostle Paul revealed their problem, they had to walk in the light that Paul sent to them. Paul wrote to them concerning division and walking as men. They needed to be more sanctified. They were drawn away from walking as men and united together in unity as never before. Again, Paul wrote in verse 11, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified [or set apart], but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, by the Spirit of our God."

If you are a child of God, you were sanctified (or set apart) before you were saved. How did you get saved? You were set apart. When you walked down the aisle to get saved, you had already stepped out of sin. You were sanctified, or set apart. Just as the Apostle Paul wrote, "ye are washed." The washing of water by the Word convinced you that you were a sinner and that you needed Jesus Christ, but you did not receive Jesus Christ until you set yourself apart from sin and the world; that is when you got saved. As you walk in the light, you continue to be sanctified as the Word of God goes forth. For example, after you get saved, you might have a problem with your temper. When the message goes forth that you need to control your temper and you obey, you become more sanctified. When you take that problem to Jesus Christ, He sets you apart and makes you more Christlike. You are sanctified wholly, which means to the end. Your spirit, soul, and body are sanctified, or set apart, until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. How do you get sanctified? You believe and obey the message.

People get so carried away with the word *sanctification*. I ask you to study it. It has many meanings.

Things were sanctified, or set apart, in the Old Testament: the old temple, the furnishings of the temple, the lamps, the oil, and the priesthood. For what were all those things set apart? They were set apart for the work of the Lord in the temple.

### **Sin Brings Spiritual Death**

If you are living in sin, I want to tell you how you became a sinner and how you can be free from sin. That is good news. It is time to quit using Adam and Eve's names as an excuse for sin. Their names have been used as a scapegoat for too long.

Paul stated in Romans 5:12-14: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned [the death he was talking about is spiritual death]: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses [from the first breaking of the law by Adam to the Law given by Moses], even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

These verses of Scripture tell us that "by one man sin entered into the world." The statement "sin entered into the world" simply means that it became a power to contend with; in other words, it became a force, a principle. Notice that he said "death by sin," not death by nature. This death that Paul spoke of was not by inheritance but by sin. Paul stated in Romans 6:23, "For the wages of sin is death."

James 1:14-15 reads: "But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished [or when it has run its course], bringeth forth [spiritual] death." Spiritual death passed upon

all men, for all have sinned. Sin was not imputed when there was no law. Paul wrote in Romans 7:7-9: "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."

Paul was not referring to his experience as a New Testament Christian. He was speaking of when he was a Pharisee under the Law, a Hebrew of the Hebrews. Verse 1 lets us know that he was speaking to those who knew the Law. Verse 9 says he was alive once without the Law. What brought spiritual death? Paul said when the commandment came, sin revived, and he died, spiritually speaking.

### **What Took Place in the Garden?**

What happened in the Garden of Eden? Adam and Eve did not have any inherited sin. They were created by God, and God would not put any sin in them. Paul said he was alive without the Law once, then the commandment came, sin revived, and he died. To have God charge you with sin, you must have knowledge and you must exercise your will.

Let us see if that is what took place in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve were placed in the garden, and it looked as though everything was going well, but God gave a law; so Adam had knowledge. Genesis 2:17 says, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam's knowledge was that God said not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and if he did, he was going to die. There was a law; that was a law God gave for Adam's day. Adam

had a wife, who also had knowledge.

Now I want you to see how our foreparents fell into sin. Genesis 3:1-3 tells us: "Now the serpent was more subtle [crafty, sneaky, or deceitful] than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? [Eve entered into a conversation with the serpent. Dear one, you should never converse with the enemy of your soul. The enemy started with a statement he knew that Eve would counter, but he got her attention and drew her into a conversation.] And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die."

Eve had knowledge, and she had a will. Next, she saw the fruit, desired it, took it, ate it, and gave to her husband to eat. One must have knowledge and exercise his or her will before sin can be imputed to that person. Dear one, when you confess your sin at an altar of prayer, you know what you are confessing. How could you confess something that you did not know anything about?

### **Boast Not of Tomorrow**

James 4:17 reads, "Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin." When you read that Scripture, you need to leave it in its context to understand what James was talking about. James was talking specifically to those who boast and brag.

Verse 16 says, "But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil." James was addressing those who knew they were not to brag or boast about what they were going to do, for no one even knows that he will see the light of tomorrow. How do we know that was what James was

talking about? Verses 14-17 state: "Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil. Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

To those who know better than to leave God out of their plans and to talk about things in the future and do not include God in those statements, that is boasting. James said if you know to do good and do not do it, it is sin. You should include God in every thought of the future. God ought to be recognized. James said such boastings are evil. You know that you need to include God in all your plans for the future. If you do not do that, "to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

Some people say, "I will do this and that." God is never included in their plans. Proverbs 27:1 says, "Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth." How foolish it is for man to make plans for the next day when he is not even certain that he will see it! God is never in their plans. Boasters brag about having the best. They think they can sing or play an instrument better than anyone else. Some think they are smarter than others. Some think they can preach better than others. If those are the thoughts that trouble you, then you know why God does not use you. All such boastings are evil.

You can only do this or that if the Lord wills. How many people have made plans for retirement and God was not even in their plans? Unfortunately, they did not live to retire. They left this life ahead of that time. Many have made plans to go on a vacation, to build a house, to get a better job, or to get married, but God was not in their plans. Friend, you need to say, "If

the Lord wills, I will do such and such." You may say, "Well, I am strong, and I am in good health. I have many years yet." If the Lord wills, you will have many years left. How quickly one's health can change!

### **Do We Have Inherited Sin?**

It has been taught by many that when a baby comes into the world, he comes with inherited sin and a depraved nature. Where did that teaching come from? It came from the Roman Catholic Church. A priest by the name of Augustine in A.D. 400 came out with that teaching. However, the Roman Catholic Church did not adopt it as a doctrine until A.D. 1540. It was adopted out of corruption: it was adopted because of the love of money, to raise money by means of infant baptism. When a little baby in a Roman Catholic family struggles between life and death, they make sure they get a priest there in time to baptize the baby. The truth of the matter is that a little baby has no sin. Again, for sin to be imputed, one must have knowledge and exercise his will.

There is no good that comes out of Roman Catholic teachings. When I speak of the Roman Catholic Church, I am talking about a false system of worship. There are some good people there. The teachings of the Roman Catholic Church leave men and women bound with fear and superstition. They kneel before statues and say the same prayers over and over. The people pray to Mary, the Apostles, and others, but they have no power to answer anyone's prayers or to forgive anyone's sins.

Jesus thought highly of little children. We read in Matthew 18:1-6: "At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be

converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Jesus was teaching greatness in the Kingdom of God. Among those who were gathered around Jesus, the one He chose to be the greatest was a little child. That was quite a blow to their pride! He let the disciples know that except they were converted and became as a little child, they could not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Before the Day of Pentecost, the disciples did not have New Testament salvation. You may ask, "How were they cleansed?" They were cleansed through the Word that Jesus spoke to them. From the time of Malachi (the last of the Old Testament prophets) to John the Baptist and until the Day of Pentecost, it was a transition period. The Law came by Moses, but grace and Truth came by Jesus Christ.

God wanted the Holy Spirit to dwell within man, but He could not dwell in an unclean temple. Before He could move in, there had to be a sacrifice to take away sin. The blood of bulls and of goats could not take away sin. Jesus had to go to the Cross first, and the temple had to be cleansed. When the temple is cleansed, God will move in, but He will not share the temple with sin.

In Matthew 19:14 Jesus said, "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Mark 9:36-37 tells us: "And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them: and when he had taken him in his arms, he said unto them, Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me:

and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth not me, but him that sent me."

Mark 10:13-14 reads: "And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

### **"The Soul That Sinneth, It Shall Die"**

Ezekiel 18:1-4 states: "The word of the LORD came unto me again, saying, What mean ye, that ye use this proverb concerning the land of Israel, saying, The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge? As I live, saith the Lord GOD, ye shall not have occasion any more to use this proverb in Israel. Behold, all souls are mine; as the soul of the father, so also the soul of the son is mine: the soul that sinneth, it shall die."

The children of Israel were crying out against the Prophet and saying, "We are in our present condition because of our forefathers. They went out and did wrong, and for that reason the children's teeth are set on edge." The Prophet told them that they were not going to have occasion to use that proverb anymore in Israel. The Lord said, "Behold, all souls are mine." Verse 20 reads, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him."

How do you get into sin? Again, the Scripture says, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die," spiritually speaking. Some have even died physically while committing sin. It is an insult to God to put forth the teaching that every child since

Adam and Eve has inherited sin. The soul comes from God. That is the reason it takes God to cleanse it and make it anew.

It is hard for people to admit that they have failed God. It is hard for a person to admit that he is a sinner. If you mention the word *sinner*, some people get offended. That may be an offensive word to some, but the truth is the truth. Friend, are you thinking about getting saved someday? Well, my question to you is, When are you going to do it? The Scripture in James says to take no thought for tomorrow. You should not leave God out of your thoughts. If the Lord wills, you will see tomorrow. If the Lord does not will, you will not see tomorrow.

Is God included in your plans? Would you like to get saved today? Why isn't today as good as a week from now or a year from now? The more you put off salvation, the more you will have to give up, the greater the bondage you will be in, and the more sins you will have to repent of. If you were getting ready to die, I am sure that you would put God first in your plans, wouldn't you? If you knew right now that you had a terminal disease and that you had only two days to live, no doubt you would include God in your plans quickly.

### **Only One Life**

Dear one, God is not to be used as you would use a spare tire, when all else fails. Serving God is a life; it is a new life. Serving God is the complete opposite of living in sin. I have seen ones who waited until they were ready to die in a hospital to call for a preacher to come quickly. Sometimes when you go to pray with them, they are so sedated that they do not even know you are there. They do not even have the right use of their minds. They cannot pray a prayer of repentance in such a condition. Then there are other times when people want to pray, but they cannot pray because

they are engulfed by unbelief.

Friend, every time you turn down the Gospel, you are hardening your heart. One of these days you will see exactly how hard your heart has become when you want to get saved but you cannot pray through. What if tonight were your last night? Some people have walked out of a Gospel service and have gone into eternity. Have you ever heard anyone say, "Well, if I go to hell, I'll have plenty of company"? Would that be comforting to you to be in the torments of hell and to have someone else there beside you who is also in torments? Is it comforting for a man on Death Row to be in a cell near someone else who is scheduled to die? Would it be comforting to have a terminal disease and have a week to live if you knew that the neighbor down the street had the same condition?

Someone may say, "That is foolishness." That is just how foolish it is to think that you are going to go to hell and have plenty of company. Hell will not be a picnic or a place where you can drink alcohol, smoke cigarettes, or take drugs and have a good time. No! Hell is a place of torments. If you do not serve Jesus Christ, you will go there, because God gives everyone the opportunity to turn from sin.

You have only one life, and you have only one soul and one hope. There is only one salvation, and that is found in Jesus Christ. Acts 4:8-12 reads: "Then Peter, filled with the Holy Ghost, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, If we this day be examined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. This is the stone which was set at nought [that simply means rejected] of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. Neither is there

salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved."

You cannot be saved by merely joining a church or by knowing someone who goes to church. Every knee will bow to the Lord Jesus Christ. It would be much better to do it voluntarily now than to have to do it at the Judgment. Dear one, what is your excuse for not being saved? You may think that your excuse is a good one, but it is not good enough.

Jesus is not going to overlook your sins at the Judgment. He commands everyone to be born again; you are not an exception. Jesus will not say, "I can see that you really had a problem. I know that your wife mistreated you and your family turned against you. No wonder you did not serve Me" or "I can see that you could not give up the cigarettes" or "I could see that you had to have a drink once in a while" or "I understand that you liked to gamble" or "I can see how you would be bitter." No, that would be foolishness.

With the grace of God you can do all things through Christ who strengthens you. Through Christ you can give up the habits of life. When you get saved, He cleanses the inside first. That means all bitterness, unforgiveness, and things that defile a man will go first; then when the inside has been cleansed, the outside will come clean also.

### **The Way Out of Your Condition**

Sin will destroy you. It will destroy your attitude. Some people used to have good attitudes, and they were fun to be around, even though they might have been having a struggle. When they gave up and turned their backs on God and went into sin, their attitudes, their personalities, and their characters changed. When people get in that condition, they have a problem with everyone but

themselves. They become critical of others. When people become critical, they are in worse condition than those whom they criticize.

Paul wrote in Romans 2:1-6: "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who

will render to every man according to his deeds."

The Bible says the goodness of God leads to repentance. It is not repentance, but it should lead you to repentance. Again, Paul said in verse 5, "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." What was he saying? Verses 5-6 in another translation read: "Because of your stubbornness and your unrepentant heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath when His righteous judgment will be revealed. God will give to each person according to what he has done."

Friend, do not let destruction run you down. It is on your trail. If you are living in sin, it is only a matter of time before sin overtakes you completely. When it does, it

will bring you down. It does not have to be that way. The Gospel always gives you a way out of your condition. You do not have to stay in sin any longer. Do not let the Lord return and find you wanting. Won't you be wise and repent? If you will give your whole heart to the Lord, He will abundantly pardon.

The more you give to God, the more He will give to you in return. The more you sell out to God, the more you will please God and the more He will use you for His glory. If you are a sinner, you do not have to stay that way. If God has shown you that you have broken His law, then you are a sinner. If you will turn from that sin and come to Jesus Christ and ask for forgiveness, He will abundantly pardon, and you can be set free. Thank God, you do not have to be a sinner anymore.

(Cassette C-4966E)

# Radio Log



LOCATION	STATION	DAY	TIME
Wellston, Ohio	WAJB-FM 92.5	Thursday	8:05 a.m.-8:35 a.m.
North Little Rock, Arkansas	KMTL-AM 760	Saturday	2:00 p.m.-2:30 p.m.
Newark, Ohio	WCLT-AM 1430	Sunday	7:15 a.m.-8:00 a.m.
Anderson, Indiana	WQME-FM 98.7	Sunday	8:00 a.m.-8:30 a.m.

*Tune in to the radio station nearest you to hear an inspiring message from the Word of God. If you enjoy the broadcast, let us hear from you!*

*Esther 2:5 Now in Shushan the palace there was a certain Jew, whose name was Mordecai, the son of Jair, the son of Shimei, the son of Kish, a Benjamite;*

*6 Who had been carried away from Jerusalem with the captivity which had been carried away with Jeconiah king of Judah, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away.*

*7 And he brought up Hadassah, that is, Esther, his uncle's daughter: for she had neither father nor mother, and the maid was fair and beautiful; whom Mordecai, when her father and mother were dead, took for his own daughter.*

*21 In those days, while Mordecai sat in the king's gate, two of the king's chamberlains, Bigthan and Teresh, of*

*those which kept the door, were wroth, and sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.*

*22 And the thing was known to Mordecai, who told it unto Esther the queen; and Esther certified the king thereof in Mordecai's name.*

*23 And when inquisition was made of the matter, it was found out; therefore they were both hanged on a tree: and it was written in the book of the chronicles before the king.*

*Esther 3:1 After these things did king Ahasuerus promote Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, and advanced him, and set his seat above all the princes that were with him.*

*2 And all the king's servants, that*

*were in the king's gate, bowed, and revered Haman: for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence.*

*3 Then the king's servants, which were in the king's gate, said unto Mordecai, Why transgressest thou the king's commandment?*

*4 Now it came to pass, when they spake daily unto him, and he hearkened not unto them, that they told Haman, to see whether Mordecai's matters would stand: for he had told them that he was a Jew.*

*5 And when Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath.*

# IS THERE A MORDECAI IN YOUR LIFE?



**Brother Calvin Foster**

## **Haman's Wrath**

In our Scripture text we have a story of two men: Mordecai and Haman. Mordecai was a Jew and had been taken into Babylonian captivity during the reign of King Nebuchadnezzar. Haman was over

all the king's princes. All the king's servants revered and bowed down to Haman except Mordecai, for he had determined in his heart that he was not going to bow down and give homage to Haman as others did.

Esther 3:5-11 states: "And when

Haman saw that Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, then was Haman full of wrath. And he thought scorn to lay hands on Mordecai alone; for they had showed him the people of Mordecai: wherefore Haman sought to destroy all the Jews that were throughout



the whole kingdom of Ahasuerus, even the people of Mordecai. In the first month, that is, the month Nisan, in the twelfth year of king Ahasuerus, they cast Pur, that is, the lot, before Haman from day to day, and from month to month, to the twelfth month, that is, the month Adar.

"And Haman said unto king Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in all the provinces of thy kingdom; and their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws: therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. If it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed: and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the charge of the business, to bring it into the king's treasuries. And the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman the son of Hammedatha the Agagite, the Jews' enemy. And the king said unto Haman, The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee."

Haman received what he wanted: he obtained permission and gained the power to destroy God's people. Friend, you need to be careful. Sometimes when a person gets a little money and a little power, it can go to his head, so to speak. Then he may get others to follow him and form a group.

Verses 13-14 read: "And the letters were sent by posts into all the king's provinces, to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day, even upon the thirteenth day of the twelfth month, which is the month Adar, and to take the spoil of them for a prey. The copy of the writing for a commandment to be given in every province was published unto all people, that they should be ready against that day." The day was set, the message was sent to all the provinces of the kingdom, and the instructions were posted.

## **The Great Mourning Among God's People**

Esther 4:1-3 states: "When Mordecai perceived all that was done, Mordecai rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth with ashes, and went out into the midst of the city, and cried with a loud and a bitter cry; And came even before the king's gate: for none might enter into the king's gate clothed with sackcloth. And in every province, whithersoever the king's commandment and his decree came, there was great mourning among the Jews, and fasting, and weeping, and wailing; and many lay in sackcloth and ashes."

Do you think you would be as Mordecai was should you hear something hurtful about God's people or hear about God's people being persecuted or destroyed? Have you noticed that many other people have come into our country and our communities who do not believe the Bible? Have you noticed that Christianity is being pushed to the background and that our lawmakers are doing away with godly principles? People in many churches are not honoring God and His Word.

When Mordecai heard that the people of God were going to be destroyed, he cried with a loud, bitter cry. No doubt, he said, "O God, your people are about to be destroyed!" How many people would do as Mordecai did: fast, weep, and wail? Do you cry out to God and say, "O God, there is strife and division among your people"?

Mordecai cried out because someone was going to destroy God's people. (This is symbolic of God's people today. Evil forces are coming against God's people.) Mordecai did not sit back and fold his arms and say, "We will see what happens." He was deeply troubled, and he put on sackcloth and ashes and cried throughout the city. Can you imagine walking through the city, crying with a loud, bitter voice that the people of God were going

to be destroyed? When the other Jews heard about it, they also put on sackcloth and ashes and wept and wailed.

## **Haman's Indignation Appeased**

Esther 5:9-14 reads: "Then went Haman forth that day joyful and with a glad heart: but when Haman saw Mordecai in the king's gate, that he stood not up, nor moved for him, he was full of indignation against Mordecai. Nevertheless Haman refrained himself: and when he came home, he sent and called for his friends, and Zeresh his wife. And Haman told them of the glory of his riches, and the multitude of his children, and all the things wherein the king had promoted him, and how he had advanced him above the princes and servants of the king.

"Haman said moreover, Yea, Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king unto the banquet that she had prepared but myself; and to morrow am I invited unto her also with the king. Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate. Then said Zeresh his wife and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon: then go thou in merrily with the king unto the banquet. And the thing pleased Haman; and he caused the gallows to be made."

Husband, you should be thankful if you have a godly wife. Haman's wife told him to hang an innocent man. She told him to build a gallows seventy-five feet high.

Haman bragged to his friends about how the king had blessed him and about being invited to attend the banquet with the king and the queen. Then he said, "Yet all this availeth me nothing, so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." All that Haman had was not enough! He wanted Mordecai to bow down to him just

as the rest of the king's servants did. All those blessings meant nothing to him as long as Mordecai refused to bow down to him. Therefore, Haman ordered a gallows to be built.

### **A Sudden Turn of Events**

What happened next? Esther 6:1-13a tells us: "On that night could not the king sleep, and he commanded to bring the book of records of the chronicles; and they were read before the king. And it was found written, that Mordecai had told of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, the keepers of the door, who sought to lay hand on the king Ahasuerus.

"And the king said, What honour and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? Then said the king's servants that ministered unto him, There is nothing done for him. And the king said, Who is in the court? Now Haman was come into the outward court of the king's house, to speak unto the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows that he had prepared for him. And the king's servants said unto him, Behold, Haman standeth in the court. And the king said, Let him come in. So Haman came in. And the king said unto him, What shall be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour? [Haman was standing in the king's court to ask permission to hang Mordecai, but before he could ask the king a question, the king asked him a question. I want you to notice how quickly something can get into someone's heart.] Now Haman thought in his heart, To whom would the king delight to do honour more than to myself?

"And Haman answered the king, For the man whom the king delighteth to honour, Let the royal apparel be brought which the king useth to wear, and the horse that the king rideth upon, and the crown royal which is set upon his head: And let this apparel and horse be delivered to the hand of one of the

king's most noble princes, that they may array the man withal whom the king delighteth to honour, and bring him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaim before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honour.

"Then the king said to Haman, Make haste, and take the apparel and the horse, as thou hast said, and do even so to Mordecai the Jew, that sitteth at the king's gate: let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken. [No doubt, Haman thought, 'I have to do that to Mordecai? The king wants to lift up *him* instead of me?'] Then took Haman the apparel and the horse, and arrayed Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the street of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done unto the man whom the king delighteth to honour. And Mordecai came again to the king's gate. But Haman hastened to his house mourning, and having his head covered [one commentator said that means he was humbled]. And Haman told Zeresh his wife and all his friends every thing that had befallen him. Then said his wise men and Zeresh his wife unto him, If Mordecai be of the seed of the Jews, before whom thou hast begun to fall, thou shalt not prevail against him, but shalt surely fall before him."

Notice how their talk changed. Once they heard what Haman had to do for Mordecai, their conversation changed. Earlier they had told him to make a gallows so he could have Mordecai hanged. (You had better be careful of whom you follow; they may change their minds on you.) When Haman thought things were going to be good, he told his wife and his friends, "I am going to be blessed, and the king is going to lift me up." She probably thought, "I am your wife, and if the king is going to lift you up, he will lift me up too." However, when he went home with the bad news, in essence, they said, "Oh, you are in trouble now!" Verse

14 tells us, "And while they were yet talking with him, came the king's chamberlains, and hastened to bring Haman unto the banquet that Esther had prepared." It was time for Haman to go to the second banquet.

### **Haman Was Caught in His Own Snare**

Esther 7:1-4 reads: "So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen. And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom. Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage."

Esther was pleading for her life even before she told the king what she wanted. We all love life and want to live. If I were in a position where a man put a gun to my head, I do not believe I would be too proud to plead for my life. I believe I would fall down on my knees and say, "I'm a family man. I don't want to die." What is more important, your physical life or your spiritual life? Friend, you need to plead with God for your spiritual life. You should not be too proud to plead for your life. Esther was pleading for her life.

Verses 5-10 read: "Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen. And the king arising from

the banquet of wine in his wrath went into the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen [notice that the situation turned; Haman was pleading for his life before the queen]; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king.

"Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face. And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. [If you set a snare for someone else, you could be the one to get caught in it. If you backbite and talk about someone behind his or her back and become hypocritical, you could fall into the same snare that you set for that person.] So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified."

### **"Honour Shall Uphold the Humble"**

Mordecai went through the streets of the city crying with a loud voice. Do you care about the Church of God? Saint, do you want to see people learn the way of the Lord? Proverbs 16:17-19 reads: "The highway of the upright is to depart from evil: he that keepeth his way preserveth his soul. Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall [Haman thought too highly of himself; he was so full of pride, and he had a haughty spirit]. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud." Haman, because of his hatred for Mordecai, planned to kill all the Jews and take

the spoil from them. I would rather be with the humble and the lowly than to divide the spoil with the proud.

Proverbs 29:23 tells us, "A man's pride shall bring him low: but honour shall uphold the humble in spirit." The Apostle Paul rebuked an evil spirit that possessed a young woman. Acts 16:16-18 reads: "And it came to pass, as we went to prayer, a certain damsel possessed with a spirit of divination met us, which brought her masters much gain by soothsaying: The same followed Paul and us, and cried, saying, These men are the servants of the most high God, which show unto us the way of salvation. And this did she many days. But Paul, being grieved, turned and said to the spirit, I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her. And he came out the same hour." Paul knew that was an evil spirit, even though she was speaking the truth. He knew it was a spirit of divination, so he said, "I command thee in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." Her masters became angry with Paul and Silas and caused them to be put in jail (Acts 16:19-24). However, if you keep reading the story, you will learn that God had a mission for them in jail.

Look at Mordecai's end and see what happened to him. Esther 8:15 says, "And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a

garment of fine linen and purple: and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad." Esther 9:4 reads, "For Mordecai was great in the king's house, and his fame went out throughout all the provinces: for this man Mordecai waxed greater and greater." Esther 10:3 tells us, "For Mordecai the Jew was next unto king Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed." Saint, you must stay humble. In Matthew 23:12 Jesus said, "And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted." God lifted up Mordecai; he became next in power to King Ahasuerus. He was great among the Jews and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the wealth of his people and speaking peace to all his seed.

Proverbs 14:34 states, "Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people." Proverbs 29:2 reads, "When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn." Is there someone that you know who will not sing your praises, so you cannot stand that person? Is there a Mordecai in your life? Are you like Haman? If so, you need to repent. God bless you is my prayer.

*(Cassette C-5051M)*

**The more we are transformed  
by the power of Christ, the  
less we will be conformed to  
this world.**

# Fear Not



God is so gracious to all His children that there is in the Word a remedy for every condition, a relief for every ill, a balm for every heartache. There is a Physician who understands our case, a Friend who was born for the day of adversity, a Helper in every time of trouble. There is an advent of the blessed Lord to every child of God in every hour of darkness, before that time for which we are looking. Hell never forged a weapon that can prosper long against the one who is committed to God.

If the saints would only look about them, they would find arms that are eternal, underneath them a Rock that is immovable, and ahead of them a city that hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. When Foster of Rochester was on the way to the scaffold, a martyr for the sake of Jesus, he suddenly caught sight of the block and the ax, and for a moment he was unnerved and much depressed. He took his New Testament out of his pocket and sent a prayer up to Heaven, saying, "O God, send me some particular word that will help me in this awful hour."

He opened the Book and saw that which came to him as a personal revelation from God, these words illuminated by the Holy Spirit: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17:3). He had seen that verse many times before, but he closed his Testament, saying, "Blessed be God! This will suffice for all eternity." It met the occasion

and was made for that hour.

I do believe that there never was a martyr who failed to find in the fire the presence of the Son of God, and I base it on this promise, "I am with you always." Paul heard it on the Mediterranean: "Fear not, Paul"; and he heard it in prison, "I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee" (Acts 18:10).

There is a promise for every place, every condition, and every circumstance. Why should such a one as you fear? Nehemiah could not be persuaded to seek a place of refuge; he knew to whom he belonged. Ezra declared that he would be ashamed to ask the king for a band of soldiers to protect the treasure and the priests on the way. He had declared his faith in God, whose hand was upon all them for good that sought Him, and he would live up to his profession.

Look in the Word when in darkness or in doubt, when the enemy comes in like a flood, when your friends fail to understand you, when hell is let loose, when your nerves are all unstrung, when you cannot sleep at night, and when your friends declare it is time for you to do something now. It is then that God wants you to go to His Word. He has something special for you: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee . . . I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness" (Isaiah 41:10). "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Hebrews 13:5).

"When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not

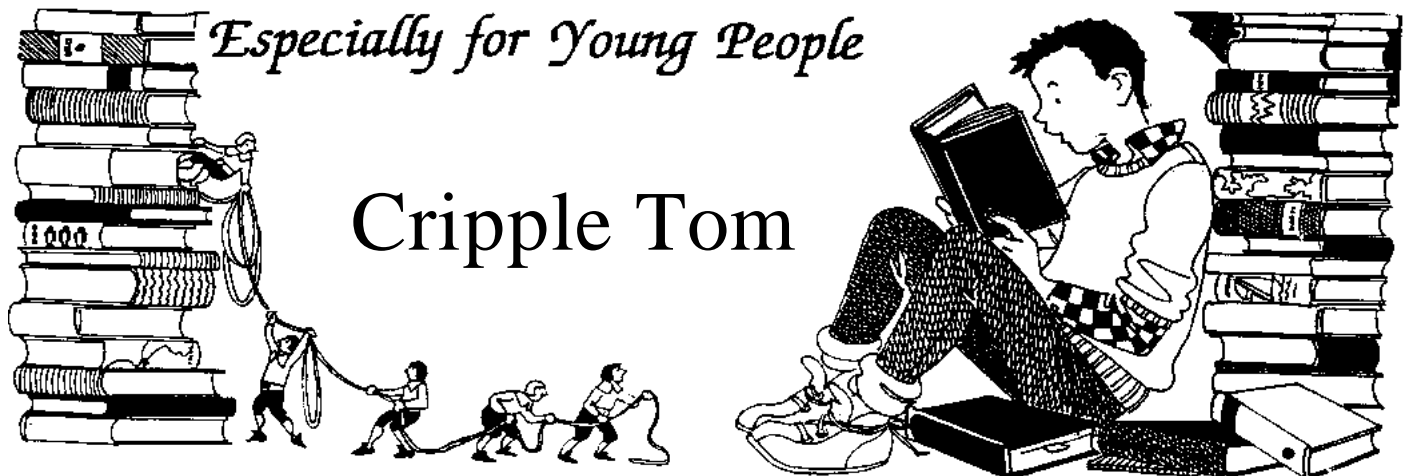
overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned" (Isaiah 43:2). Do not be afraid; He has managed waters before, divided seas, opened Jordan, walked with saints in furnaces, shaken prisons, appeared to banished saints in rugged lands, and is the same today and tomorrow as He was yesterday.

The Word upon which saints have leaned in the past and found comfort has never changed; it "abideth for ever." It is for all saints, in all circumstances, all the time. He abideth faithful—times change, seasons change, friends may change, and even mothers may change; but He never changes. It was said that on hard-fought battlefields, the presence of the Duke of Wellington was worth that of ten thousand men. How much is the presence of Jesus worth to you?

Devils trembled in Christ's presence when He was on earth, and He says now, "All power is given unto me" (Matthew 28:18). He exercises that power in your behalf. No man and no power can pluck you from the Father's hand. Fear not, believe only, and all things are yours. He is the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending" (Revelation 1:8).

Trusting Him, you cannot fail. You are foreordained to be a victor, appointed to obtain salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thessalonians 5:24).

Selected



*Especially for Young People*

## Cripple Tom

In one of the deplorably miserable East London homes, in a dark, wretched room at the top of a house lay a crippled boy. He had lain there for more than two years, greatly neglected and comparatively unknown. When quite young, his parents had died, leaving him to the mercy of an aged relative, whom he called "Granny."

Born a cripple, he had always been a sufferer, but as long as he was able, he had swept a rail crossing on his crutches or gone on short errands to earn a few pence. Soon after his parents' deaths, the boy had to take to his bed. Very ungraciously the old woman allowed him to occupy the top room in her house, which room he never left again.

His mother had taught him to read and write, and sometimes, on a snowy night, the lad had crept into the mission hall merely for the sake of getting warm. Numb with cold and weary in body, he took little heed of what he had heard on those nights; yet lying alone day after day, there came into his mind the memory of it. By degrees he was possessed with a great longing to know more about the things of God and to have a Bible of his own. He knew that it was from the Bible that the speakers had gathered their knowledge, and that was all. Summing up courage, he one day consulted Granny about it. His only encouragement in that direction was an ironical laugh. Bibles were not in her line! What did a lad like him want with a Bible? So the matter dropped for a time, but the lad's

desire to possess one did not grow less.

One day, however, up the creaking stairs came noisy, boisterous Jack Lee, the only friend the cripple had in the world. "Hurrah! Hurrah! Got a new box. Off north tomorrow! I've come to say goodbye, Tom," he cried with excitement, seating himself on the bed and wiping perspiration from his brow. "But I've got a really beautiful present for you, my lad," taking from his pocket something wrapped in a greasy bit of brown paper.

Tom raised himself on his elbows, not at all gladdened by the news he had heard. "A bright new shilling for you, Tom, and you are not to spend it till yer wants sumpin' real pertiklar."

"Oh, Jack, you are good, but I want something now, very, very particular."

"Yer do? What is it?"

"I want a Bible."

"A Bible! Well, I never! Whoever heard of a poor lad spending all that on a Bible, when I had to scrape months and months to save it in coppers."

"Don't be angry, dear Jack," cried the crippled boy, "you are going away, and I will be lonelier than ever, and oh, I do so want a Bible. Please get it, Jack, now, this very evening at Fisher's before the shop closes. Granny never would; she'd spend it on gin, if I let it get into her hands."

"What can ye want with a Bible, Tom? Only scholars understand

them there things," he answered rather crossly.

"Maybe so, Jack, but I'm hankering after one, for I must find one to see whether those folks in that mission hall we sometimes used to go to told true about someone they called Jesus. Let it be your parting gift, Jack, and you will make me very glad."

"Very well, lad, then I'll go, but I knows naught of Bible buyin'."

"Fisher's have 'em at a shilling, for I saw 'em marked in the window when I used to go by. Quick, Jack, or the shop will be closed!"

Jack complied very ungraciously and descended the stairs less rapidly than he had mounted them. But he got over his disappointment before he returned with a beautiful shilling Bible. "Fisher says I couldn't leave you a better friend, Tom. He declares the shilling couldn't be 'vested better, and he said: 'It may be worth a thousand pounds to the lad!' So, 'pears there's sumpin' we ought to know about."

Tom's joy and gratitude were unbounded. "I know it, Jack. I know it!" hugging the Book to his breast. "I'm happy now. Oh, how kind you were to save that shilling!"

The lads never met again; but if the honest errand boy could only have known what a precious treasure that Holy Book became to his crippled friend, he would have been amply rewarded for the sacrifice he had made to save the shilling. After a month's hard reading, Cripple Tom knew more about his Bible than many who have

professed to study it for twenty years. He learned the way of salvation, his only teacher being the Holy Spirit; he learned also that obedience to God's will meant helping to save others.

"It won't do to keep all this blessed news to myself," he said. So he thought and thought, until at last a simple, but very beautiful work was decided on for the Master. His bed stood close by the windowsill, which was low, and somehow he got a pencil and paper, wrote out different texts, and then dropped them into the noisy street below, directed, "To the passerby—please read!"

He hoped that by this means someone might hear of Jesus and His salvation. This service of love, faithfully rendered, went on for some weeks, when one evening he heard strange footsteps. Immediately afterwards, a tall, well-dressed gentleman entered the room and took his seat by the lad's bed.

"So you are the lad who drops texts from the window, are you?" he asked kindly.

"Yes," said Tom, brightening. "Have you heard that someone has got hold of one?"

"Plenty, lad, plenty! Would you believe it if I told you that I picked up one last evening, and God blessed it to my soul?"

"I can believe in God's Word doing anything, sir," said the lad, humbly.

"And I am come," said the gentleman, "to thank you personally."

"Not me, sir! I only does the writin'; He does the blessin'."

"And you are happy in this work for Christ?" asked the visitor.

"Couldn't be happier, sir. I don't think nothin' of the pain in my back, for shan't I be glad when I see Him that, as soon as I know'd about Him, I did all I could to serve Him? I suppose you get lots of chances, don't yer, sir?"

"Ah, lad, but I have neglected them; but God helping me, I mean to begin afresh. At home in the country

I have a sick boy dying. I had to come to town on pressing business. When I kissed him goodbye, he said, 'Father, I wish I had done some work for Jesus. I cannot bear to meet Him empty-handed,' and the words stuck to me all day long, and the next day too, until the evening when I was passing down the street your little paper fell on my hat, I opened it and read: 'I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work' (John 9:4). It seemed like a command from Heaven. It startled me and brought me to my knees that night, and I could not sleep until I could sing, '*Oh, the cleansing blood has reached me! Glory, glory to the Lamb!*' I have professed to be a Christian for twenty-two years, my lad, and when I made inquiries and found out who dropped these texts into the street and why it was done, it so shamed and humbled me that I determined to go home and work for the same Master that you are serving so faithfully."

Tears of joy were rolling down the lad's face. "It's too much, sir," he said, "altogether too much."

"Tell me how you managed to get the paper to start it, my lad?"

"That twarn't hard, sir. I jest had a talk with Granny and offered to give up my ha'porth o' milk she gives me most days if she would buy me paper instead. You know, sir, I can't last long. The parish doctor says a few months of cold weather may finish me off, and a drop of milk ain't much to give up for my blessed Jesus. Are people happy who have lots to give Him, sir?"

The visitor sighed a deep sigh. "Ah, lad, you are a great deal happier in this wretched room making sacrifices for Jesus than thousands who profess to belong to Him and who have time, talents, and money and do little or nothing for Him."

"They don't know Him, sir. Knowin' is lovin', and lovin' is doin'. It ain't love without."

"You are right, Tom, but not about yourself. I must begin by

making your life brighter. How would you like to end your days in one of those homes for crippled lads, where you would be nursed and cared for and where you would see the trees and the flowers and hear the birds sing? I could get you into one not far from my home, if you liked, Tom."

The weary lad looked wistfully into the man's kindly face, and after a few moments of silence answered: "Thank'ee sir, I've heard tell of 'em afore, but I ain't anxious to die easy when He died hard. I might get taken up with them things a bit too much, and I'd rather be a-lookin' at Him and carryin' on this 'ere work till He comes to fetch me. Plenty of joy for a boy like me to have a home with Him up there through eternity." The visitor felt more reprov'd than ever.

"Very well, my lad; then I will see that you have proper food and all the paper you need while you live. I will settle it all with one of the Bible women. Now, before I go, I want you to pray aloud for me." As he made the request, the strong man knelt down by the dying boy's bedside, scarcely suppressing a sob as he covered his face with his hands. The lad trembled at having to do such a thing, but when he saw that bowed form and heard that half-stifled sob, he knew he ought to comply with the request.

There was a seraphic light on the poor, pale, upturned face, as he said in a tone of the deepest reverence, "Lord Jesus, I know You're a-listenin', and I'm much obliged to You for sendin' this friend here to cheer me in my work. Now, Lord Jesus, he's a bit troubled about not havin' worked for Thee enough in the past days. Will You help him to see to it that there's nothin' left undone in the comin' days, and please, Lord, make him go straight away and tell them other rich men that they don't know Thee if they ain't a-workin' for Thee. I'm grateful to You, Jesus, for all the paper and the food that's a-comin' to me while

*[continued on page 26]*

*Psalm 37:1 Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity.*

*2 For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb.*

*3 Trust in the LORD, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed.*

*4 Delight thyself also in the LORD; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.*

*5 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass.*

*6 And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.*

*7 Rest in the LORD, and wait patiently for him: fret not thyself because of him who prospereth in his way, because of the man who bringeth wicked devices to pass.*

*8 Cease from anger, and forsake*

*wrath: fret not thyself in any wise to do evil.*

*9 For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.*

*10 For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be.*

*11 But the meek shall inherit the earth; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace.*



# INHERITING THE EARTH

*Brother Allen Polston*

## "Thy Word is a Lamp Unto My Feet"

God has a true and accurate interpretation of the Scriptures for us in this day and time in which we are living. Many have wrong interpretations; that is the reason it is very important to study God's Word and search the Scriptures. If you fail to do that, you could come to the wrong conclusion concerning what God has to say to you.

The Word of God was never intended to bring confusion. God wants it to be instructive for us. The Psalmist said in Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." God's Word is not something that He wants you to set aside because you

do not understand it. God gave His Word to be a lamp to our feet and a light to our path; in other words, He gave us His Word to guide us and to help us. Sometimes people get upset when a man of God preaches the Word, but they should not get upset, because it is a guide. It tells us how we should live if we intend to make Heaven our home.

God intends to accomplish many things through His Word. The Psalmist let us know that we can gain hope from the Word of God. Our hope is increased and strengthened, and we are encouraged by the Word of God. We rejoice in the things of God. In Psalm 119:162 the Psalmist said, "I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil." In other words,

the Psalmist was rejoicing as someone who finds something very valuable.

If you were to come out of your home and look down and see a one-hundred-dollar bill, no doubt that would bring a smile across your face. Why? Because it would be valuable to you. You would rejoice in finding that. The Psalmist said he rejoiced at God's Word, as one who had found great spoil. God's Word is the child of God's most precious and most valuable possession. Friend, it ought to cause you to rejoice to hear the Word of God. When I was unsaved, I did not rejoice in the Word. When you are not right with God, it does not cause you to rejoice. On the other hand, when you have repented of your

sins and your heart is right, you can rejoice in the Word of God as one who finds great spoil. God's Word is intended to be a help to you and me.

### **Will This Earth Be an Inheritance for God's People?**

Some declare that one day this earth will be the inheritance of Christian people. They say that when time is over, a certain number of those who have lived right are going to Heaven and the rest are going to live in a state of paradise on this earth. We want to examine that thought by the help of God.

The Bible lets us know that this earth is not going to remain forever. In 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17 Paul wrote: "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

These Scripture verses introduce us to something different from the thought of abiding on this earth forever. These verses reveal that one day, no matter what may be taking place, we will hear a shout that will sound forth around this whole world. No matter how much noise may be in the midst and no matter how much something may be taking your attention, you will not miss that shout when it comes on the day that God has chosen. Friend, the Lord will descend from Heaven with a shout and will declare that time will be no more.

When the Lord descends from Heaven, He will not place His feet here on the earth. Paul said that "the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." Those who have lived holy lives and have died in Christ will

rise first, and then those who are living true and faithful to God will be caught up to meet Him in the air.

We are going to be called to meet the Lord, not on the earth, but in the air; then "so shall we ever be with the Lord." The Lord is not going to isolate some saints to take to Heaven and then tell the rest to remain here on this earth. Paul said that "we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

Friend, it will be quite a sight to behold when the Christians take their flight to be with God for evermore. I do not know about you, but I want to be in that number. I do not want to be down here looking up as the saints are ascending to be with God. What a despairing condition that would be to watch the saints being taken up and to realize that your hope is gone forever! What an awful, terrible feeling that would be!

Sometimes I wonder what the antediluvians might have thought when God shut the door on the ark with Noah and his family and the creatures of every kind inside. What a terrible feeling that must have been for those who had failed to do what they needed to do when they saw the water begin to rise! No doubt many people began to rethink their decisions.

Friend, a similar day is coming. Noah preached to the people in his day that God was going to destroy the world with a flood, and just as Noah declared, it happened. One of these days, the Lord is going to descend from Heaven with a shout, and that will be the end. Those who are ready to meet the Lord shall rise to be with Him forever.

In 2 Peter we can read about some things that will happen at the end of time. Second Peter 3:10 says, "But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth

also and the works that are therein shall be burned up." God is coming for His people, and when He does, the purpose of this old earth will have been fulfilled, and there will no longer be a need for this earth.

### **The Purpose of This Earth**

Friend, God has placed us here upon the face of this earth so that we can exist in an atmosphere where we each can make a well-informed decision concerning where we will spend eternity. Had we been born into the sufferings and torments of hell, everyone would have hurriedly made the decision to serve God, not because we loved Him or because we wanted to be His children, but because of the terrible torments. Had we been born in Heaven, we all would have chosen to serve God because of the wonderful, blessed pleasures and the glory. The decision to serve God would have been made because of the heavenly atmosphere, not because of our love for God.

God is looking for individuals who realize what great love He has for us. He gave His only begotten Son. Christ cared so much for us that He was willing to suffer and endure much pain so that we might be saved. This great love can break the hard hearts, the stubbornness, and the selfishness and cause individuals to turn their lives over to Him because they love Him for what He did for them. God made this earth so that you and I would have a dwelling place where we could make a choice without the torments of hell pressuring us and without the pleasures of Heaven being revealed completely.

Matthew 24:35 reads, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." Friend, this earth is temporal. It was created in a perfect way. When God created it, He stopped several times and said, "It is good" as He looked upon what He had made. He knew it was for the right purpose, and He knew it was sufficient and good so that



men could make their decision. Friend, the most important decision that you will ever make in your life is where you will spend eternity.

Many Scriptures prove the fact that the earth will not exist forever. It will remain only until God declares that time will be no more. When the mercy of God has been exhausted, this old earth that we are living upon will no longer be needed. As long as God sees fit to give men the opportunity to repent, then He will leave it here. Sometimes scientists and others say that the earth is running out of natural resources and that it is going to be hit by a star. Well, God will keep this earth in place until His mercy has been exhausted. He will decide when the end will come.

Someone may ask, "Well, what about the Scripture we read in Psalm 37? And if the earth is not going to last forever, then what was Jesus talking about when He said, 'Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth?'" First of all, we need to study what the inheritances are, because God does have some things for us to inherit. The Bible makes that clear.

### **The Inheritance That God Has for His People**

Many people hold on to the pleasures of this world and the temporal enjoyments of sin, but God has something for us to inherit now and in the future. God has an inheritance for those who are meek. Jesus said it is a blessed condition.

We read about the inheritance that God has for us in the future in 1 Peter 1:3-4: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you."

The inheritance God has for His people is not this earth. It is not a state of paradise on this earth,

because He said it is "reserved in heaven." Verse 5 says, "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." God is waiting to reveal some things to us when He comes again and we meet Him in the air.

I thank God for full salvation. I am glad that God does not leave us in sin. God changes our desires. Some people think that getting saved and living the Christian life would be tormenting to them, because they think they would still want all the things that they know they would have to lay aside. They feel they would have to figure out some way to keep from them, but that is not how salvation works. God does not leave the desire for sin within you. Oh, you still have a flesh to deal with, but thank God He takes away the sinful desires so that you do not want to do those things anymore.

Friend, had it been left to me to try to change what I once was, it would not have been possible for me to have gotten saved. It took God in His faithfulness to make the change in my life. He is all you need in all situations of life. Friend, He can remove the old sinful desires and save your soul and deliver you from the sinful way of living. Thank God!

Sometimes we sing a song that says, "*I am fully saved today, I am in the narrow way.*" Full salvation delivers you from all sin; it is complete. The Lord does not leave you as a sinner or to sin more or less every day. I am glad that I do not have to sin anymore. Thank God, He does not leave an individual powerless, but He gives that person victory over sin. Salvation is wonderful, glorious, and blessed!

### **The Inheritance Reserved in Heaven**

I want you to realize there is much more to come when God calls us away. He has so much more in store for His children, ready to be

revealed in the last time. According to the Scriptures, this full salvation that we enjoy here is just a little down payment of what is to come. The Spirit of God is the earnest of our inheritance. Ephesians 1:13-14 tells us: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." You receive the Spirit of God when He saves you. The Spirit of God is the earnest of our inheritance, so there is more to come.

Often when someone makes a large purchase, he puts a down payment on it, usually a small percentage of the total purchase price, until it is time to make the final financial arrangement. Then when it comes time to close the deal, there is more involved in making the purchase. We know from the Scriptures that even though we have full salvation right now and we are delivered from all sin, there is more that God has for us in the future if we stay true. The joy, the blessings, the happiness, the victory, and the peace that we have today are only a down payment for what is yet to come.

Again, Ephesians 1:14 (talking about the Holy Spirit of promise) reads, "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." The part that has yet to be entered is the redemption of the purchased possession. We sing the song that says, "*I'm redeemed, I'm redeemed, From the darkness of the night, That so thickly enveloped my soul.*" We are redeemed from the darkness that comes from living the life of sin. As far as our fleshly bodies are concerned, we have to wait a little while until the redemption of the purchased possession. In other words, we have to wait until Jesus splits the clouds; then we will rise to meet Him in the air, and He will

redeem us completely. He will redeem the purchased possession unto the praise of His glory. We praise Him here on earth, but there is going to be much more praise in Heaven: it will be the praise of His glory, of His majesty, and of His power.

We have an inheritance ahead of us that we can look forward to. It is a continuation of what we have here, yet it is more than what we have now. Christian friend, when He redeems us entirely, He will give us a new body. The body that we each have now suffers with aches and pains, hunger, weariness, and tiredness. Sometimes it does not feel like going much further, and it is subject to the cold and the heat and other things of nature. One of these days, God is going to completely redeem His purchased possession; that is the inheritance that is yet awaiting us in the future.

You should not let this old world attract your attention and cause you to look around at things that glitter. An old saying is, "Everything that glitters is not gold." Do not allow the devil to cause you to look around for an easier way or distract you with his allurements. Certainly, there are things that are attractive. The devil uses those things to try to entice us. This is the reason we have to be careful. Do not let him get you to focus all your attention on the cares of life, because there is more to come down the road. There is much more to this inheritance that we have already begun to enjoy. It is reserved in Heaven for those who are kept by the power of God through faith, ready to be revealed in the last time.

### **The Promises of God Are Sure**

Friend, you can be kept by the power of God through faith. You must keep your faith in God. Sometimes you will face things that are hard to understand. You may say, "Why, Lord? Why am I faced with this situation?" You have to

keep your faith in God. He will give you the power to keep you until the day you receive the inheritance that is awaiting for you just up the road. There is an inheritance, but it is not in this old earth in which we are living. Friend, the inheritance that God has is reserved in Heaven, waiting for those who are kept by the power of God.

The inheritance reserved in Heaven involves a great change in this mortal body. One day you will no longer have aches and pains and troubles. This is the inheritance that God has awaiting us. Do not look around and allow the enemy to draw you into something easier and less than what God's Word requires. Remember, God has an inheritance for us in the future that has not been revealed yet. We do not know everything about it at this point, but thank God we know that the promises of God are sure. God's Word is sure; He cannot lie.

We can also read about the full salvation that is yet to be experienced by every Christian in Romans 8:19-21: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God." Friend, when the writer said "creature," he was talking about the fleshly body. We are going to be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

Being a Christian changes a person, and he no longer has condemnation. I like the song that says, "*I am free from condemnation.*" I thank God for that. We no longer have guilt for past sins. Thank God, we have been justified and set free from that. The fleshly body still has aches and pains and illnesses and difficult situations to face, but one of these days the creature is going to

be delivered from that. That is the inheritance that God has in store for those who endure to the end. It will be worth it, friend.

Have you ever read 1 Corinthians, Chapter 2, where Paul talked about the Lord of Glory? Verses 7-9 read: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

Many things in this world have a glory about them, or the ability to make you feel good. Many things can give you pleasure, but I want to tell you about the Lord of glory, the One who surpasses anything this old world can come up with. He is far beyond anything that man can create. He is the Master of glory; He is the Lord of lords and the King of kings. What He has in store is worth holding out for. It is worth keeping your love fervent and keeping yourself devoted to God. There is an inheritance that is yet to be revealed.

### **An Inheritance Among Those Who Are Sanctified by Faith**

The Bible also tells us there is an inheritance that we are enjoying right now, one that we are partakers of in this time world. Ephesians 1:11 says, "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Colossians 1:12 says, "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light." Christian friend, we have an inheritance that we are enjoying right now, and then we have one in store for us that God will reveal

when time comes to an end.

I often think about the first miracle that Jesus performed. It happened when He changed the water into wine at the wedding in Cana. Jesus did that to manifest His glory; in other words, He was revealing what kind of person He was and letting people know that the best was yet to come. The governor of the wedding thought they were enjoying some good wine, but Jesus showed them that the best was yet to come. In that first miracle He manifested His glory for us to behold and understand: that it is good right now, but the best is yet to come. There is something more, something better out in the future if we stay true to God.

In Acts, Chapter 26, we read about the testimony of the Apostle Paul when he was telling what happened to him and what God does for men and women. In verse 18 he said, "To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." He was using different ways to basically say the same thing about what God does. Each way expressed a little more insight into what this experience of salvation does for you.

Friend, you do not need to let the devil deceive you by telling you, "Serving God wouldn't be enjoyable. You wouldn't like it" or "You couldn't do it." Serving God is absolutely the best thing you could ever do in your life. I can guarantee you that the day you sell out to God, you will wish that you had done it sooner. You will never regret selling out to God and giving yourself wholeheartedly to Him. You must surrender all to Him—your wife, your children, your home, your job, and your friends. You must turn from sin and serve Him. The day you do that, you will not regret it.

Paul was using these things to

describe what the experience of salvation does for an individual. Last, he expressed in verse 18, ". . . inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." He was not speaking of the inheritance in Heaven, because he said an "inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." When you leave this world, there will be no more need for faith.

One song entitled "The Kingdom of Peace" says, "*Our faith shall be lost in the sight.*" Right now we are in a battle, and we have to deal with some difficulties. When I say, "God saved me, and He will take me through," you may ask, "Where is He?" Friend, you cannot see Him with the natural eye, and you cannot shake His hand, but He is here.

I am standing on the promises and fighting the good fight of faith. One day our faith will be lost in the sight. We will throw the faith away and say, "Hello, Jesus! Hello, God!" There will be no need for faith when we are in Heaven, because the battle will be over. The battles that we face now are because we are standing on the promises of God's Word. By the help of the Spirit of God, we are laboring to walk in holiness and righteousness. When it is by sight, it is not by faith. Faith is when we cannot see something with our natural eyes or touch it with our hands, but we can say, "Thank God, I know it is there." That is faith at work.

Sometimes you may be in a real battle to keep the faith, because you know the promise of God is there, but everything around you looks as if it is not there. You may suffer setbacks and become very low. You may be in the midst of that trial and another problem will arise. Then before you get through all of that, another difficulty may come along. By faith, you can say, "I know He is there." The devil may ask you, "Are you sure that God is there?" It is then that you must fight the good fight of faith.

Consider the patriarch Job.

Before one messenger could get out of the house, another came along and told Job of another loss. Several messengers came to him before it was all over. Do you know why the good fight of faith is a good fight? It is because you will win if you stay true and hold steady, even when you do not understand.

### **Power to Control Your Earthen Vessel**

Again, Paul said in Acts 26:18, ". . . and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." He was not talking about those who have gone on, because there would be no need to say "by faith." God gives us an inheritance right in this day and time. It is not this earth, or this land, that God is awarding us.

What is the "earth" that we inherit? The Bible lets us know that we were made from the dust of the earth. God created the first man from the dust of the ground. John 3:31 says, "He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all."

Second Corinthians 4:6-7 states: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." Other Scriptures also indicate that the body is nothing more than a little earth put together. I have already shown you that one of these days the earth and all of its works will be burned up. Most people live their lives building, lifting up, and exalting this earthen vessel, but one day it is going to pass away. In many places in the Word, the fleshly body is referred to as an earthen vessel, the earth, or earthly. What He can do for you this very day is give you power over your earthen vessel.

Friend, without God in your life you lack something that you really need, and that is the power to control your earthen vessel. Without God as your Father you are in the other group of people that Jesus talked about one day to the people who were gathered together. He said, "Ye are of your father the devil" (John 8:44). Without Christ as your Master, someone else is your master. You cannot serve two masters. Friend, only God can offer you the power to control your earthen vessel.

Do you know the reason so many people are in the prisons? Some have been there longer than I have been alive. Why do men and women yield themselves to ungodly acts and illegal activities, knowing that if they should be apprehended, they would be locked away for many years? Some have had good homes, good companions, nice families, and many other things that God had blessed them with, yet they turned away from all those good things to lie, steal, embezzle money, commit adultery, or commit murder. Why did they do those things? They did not have any power to control their earthen vessels.

Friend, God can give you a blessed inheritance, and He can give you the power to control your earthen vessel. Should someone say an unkind or an unfavorable word to you, you do not have to turn and say sharp, hateful words. You can go on in peace and happiness, knowing that your reward will be great in Heaven. God can give you the power you need to be victorious.

You do not know what will become of you without God's power in your life. You do not know what you will yield your flesh to without the power of God to keep it in subjection. God can give you the power to control your earthen vessel if you are willing to be meek. Jesus said in Matthew 5:5, "Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth." If you are willing to humble yourself, God can give you the power to make changes in your life.

Several years ago I was a young man without power to control my earthen vessel. I was bound by tobacco, drugs, and alcohol. Finally, I came to the place where I was sick of the way I was living. At an old-time revival meeting, I went to an altar of prayer and said, "Lord, I want to be free. I want to be delivered." When I humbled myself,

God gave me power, and I have never had to touch those things again.

Friend, God can give you power. He can give you an inheritance so that you can control your flesh. This world is in such a mess today. Some men want to be like women, and some women want to be like men. You do not know where you will end up if you refuse the power of God. Do not shun the grace of God. He can give you the power you need today.

Young person, God can give you power. You may think that people will make fun of you or that it will cause hardships in your life during your teenage years. I am not going to tell you that will not happen, but God can help you through any difficulties that you may face. He can give you power to control the flesh and to live a clean, holy, and satisfying life. The Psalmist said you could have an abundance of peace. You can inherit the earth, or your earthen vessel, the flesh. You can control it, but only by the power of God. May God bless you.

(Cassette C-4838M)

## *Life's Book*

*No matter what else you are doing  
From cradle days through to the end,  
You are writing your life's secret story—  
Each day sees another page penned.*

*Each month ends a thirty-page chapter,  
Each year means the end of a part—  
And never an act is misstated  
Or even one wish of the heart.*

*Each day when you wake, the book opens,  
Revealing a page clean and white—  
What thoughts and what words and what doings  
Will cover its pages by night?*

*God leaves that to you; you're the writer—  
And never a word shall grow dim,  
Till the day you write the word Finish  
And give your Life's Book back to Him.*

*Author Unknown*

*2 Corinthians 10:3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh:*

*4 (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)*

*5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

# Pulling Down the Strongholds of the Devil



*Brother Joseph Mbui Kibuchi*

## **Destroying the Works of the Devil**

Child of God, you have a duty and a work to do in pulling down the strongholds of the devil. The devil wants to take you back, so you must continue to pull down strongholds. As he builds, you must pull down and destroy the works of the devil. Jesus Christ came to destroy the devil's works.

The New Jerusalem is the Church of God, and as saints of God, we ought to build up the Church of God by destroying the works of the devil. You must destroy the works of the devil in your life to make it to Heaven.

Satan is always near to try to destroy you. The devil has strongholds where he hides; do not overlook those areas. Everything that is not good must be pulled down. Your weaknesses and my weaknesses are what the devil wants to use. Therefore, we have to stand still and pull down the weapons of the devil. Our mission and our duty is to pull down the strongholds of Satan and to build up the Church of God.

In 2 Samuel you can read about King Saul, the first king of Israel. He overlooked some strongholds of that nation. In his nation were enemy tribes that the Lord commanded him to destroy, and he

destroyed part of them, but he did not destroy one that was a thorn to Israel. As a Christian, you need to ask God to show you what is against His will and destroy everything that is contrary to His will. You need to ask the Holy Spirit to help you to see the strongholds of the devil.

In 2 Samuel, Chapter 5, you can read that King Saul allowed the tribe of the Jebusites to remain. That tribe was against Israel's customs. They used to do things against Israel, but King Saul liked them, so he let them remain. When King David reigned, his duty was to destroy that tribe.

Second Samuel 5:6-10 reads:

"And the king and his men went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, the inhabitants of the land: which spake unto David, saying, Except thou take away the blind and the lame, thou shalt not come in hither: thinking, David cannot come in hither. Nevertheless David took the strong hold of Zion: the same is the city of David.

"And David said on that day, Whosoever getteth up to the gutter, and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, that are hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain. Wherefore they said, The blind and the lame shall not come into the house. So David dwelt in the fort, and called it the city of David. And David built round about from Millo and inward. And David went on, and grew great, and the LORD God of hosts was with him."

### **God Has No Shortcuts**

When David started leading the nation of Israel, the first thing he did was destroy the tribe of the Jebusites. After you get saved, you might have some things that you need to destroy. You should attend camp meetings and revival meetings to check yourself to see if there is anything that you need to destroy in your life. You have to destroy all that is contrary to God's will to build a strong New Jerusalem. The Old Testament city of Jerusalem was the city of the king, and it was where they built the house of God.

We build a house in our hearts. If you are a child of God, God lives within you. You are a part of the New Jerusalem, or Zion. You have to destroy all the enemies of God to build a strong Church of God. Many people are trying to be the Church of God; however, they cannot be a part of the Church of God just because they attend the services. No, individuals have to start by going to an altar of prayer and destroying the works of the devil; then they can become a part of the

church and start building up the Church of God. Friend, you cannot do it without destroying the works of the devil in your life.

David destroyed the tribe of the Jebusites, and then he took over the city and built the city of God. Today we have to do that. We are living in the last days. Satan wants people to be religious and not to destroy the evil works in their hearts. In some places people have tried to build their homes on other people's property without purchasing the land and getting the deed. The first thing you have to do is get the deed so that you can rightfully build on that property.

Before you can become a member of the Church of God, you must be saved; you must have a covenant with Jesus Christ. There is no other way to become a part of the Church of God. Where I come from, many people have become church members by greeting the pastor and paying something, but the Church of God has no shortcuts. You must destroy the works of the devil.

### **Watch Out for the Little Foxes**

There are many works of the devil. I want to mention a few of them. In reading the Song of Solomon, you can see that there are two types of foxes. There are big foxes and little foxes, very small ones. In Africa we have little foxes and big foxes. The big foxes are not as dangerous because you can see them coming, but the little foxes are very bad because they walk through the tall grass and you cannot see them. They will sneak up on you and bite at you. You must watch out for the little foxes.

The Song of Solomon says there are foxes that you have to destroy. You must destroy all of them, because they will destroy your life. The Song of Solomon 2:15 says, "Take us the foxes, the little foxes, that spoil the vines: for our vines have tender grapes." We must destroy the little foxes that spoil the

vine. Unless you destroy them, you will get nothing from your vine. You must destroy all the foxes, the big ones and the little ones. They can destroy a congregation. In Africa when we see big foxes, we shoot them because we can see them, but the smaller ones we cannot shoot because they walk through the grass. They are very dangerous.

Many congregations have been destroyed by the little foxes. One little fox is jealousy. You cannot see jealousy, but you have to watch or it will destroy you. Jealousy has destroyed many places. You can read in the Old Testament about how jealousy worked in King Saul's life and caused him to go after David to try to destroy him. King Saul was very jealous of David.

Jealousy is an enemy in the Church of God. It is a very powerful little fox, and it destroys many vines. It has destroyed many people. Child of God, you must watch out for this little fox and destroy it. That is a stronghold of the devil, and he is using it to destroy many people, older people and younger people. Dear one, you can be destroyed by that little fox called jealousy. Jealousy has power, and it is very dangerous. Cain slew his brother Abel because of jealousy. That is a stronghold of the devil, and it is working today.

Another dangerous little fox is pride. It has destroyed many people. Pride can come to you, and you will see yourself as a big man. Pride and jealousy are brothers. It is a little fox, but it is very dangerous. It has destroyed many homes. Pride causes people to see themselves as being so much more important than others. We all are equal in the eyes of God. We must watch that little fox called pride. It has destroyed many people, especially young people. Young person, do not view yourself as being so important. You are nothing without Jesus. You must be careful of that little fox called pride. You have to destroy it; that is a stronghold of the devil.

## **Destructive Weapons of the Devil**

Another little fox is bitterness. Bitterness hangs in the heart, and it can destroy many homes. Do not allow yourself to become bitter. Bitterness is another stronghold of the devil, and it has destroyed many people. Many people no longer serve God because of bitterness. Friend, you must destroy it, because if you do not destroy bitterness, you cannot make it to Heaven.

Other little foxes are malice and hypocrisy. These are strongholds of the devil. If you are pretending that you are saved when you are not, do not pretend any longer. Many people pretend to be Christians. Friend, the devil wants you to pretend that you are saved because he wants you to one day go to hell. If you are not saved, you can be saved today and be a true Christian and make it to Heaven. Pretenders will end up in hell. Do not go to hell because you are going to church yet you are not saved. You must get saved and be a true Christian. We must be serious, because these are the last days. We are going home very soon to meet our God.

As a Christian, you must destroy malice and hypocrisy. You must be true. You must remember that God has given us one day at a time, just one day. You do not know about tomorrow. Today is the day of salvation. Tomorrow may never come. When you hear the truth, when you hear the Word of God, you need to be saved. You should not wait until tomorrow. The devil wants people to be pretenders. Again, I beseech you, do not be a pretender, because if you are a pretender, you cannot make it to Heaven.

Other strongholds of the devil are stubbornness, rebellion, and disobedience. You must destroy all these works of the devil to make it to Heaven. You must be serious. Too many people are not serious enough about their souls. Church of God people are serious. Our

business is to preach the Truth and to stand for the Truth. To be serious is to destroy all the strongholds of the devil.

Division is another stronghold of the devil. Romans 16:17 says, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them." We should mark them for bringing division. Division is sin.

The devil wants to divide you from me, because together we have power to defeat the devil. The devil wants to keep people separated so that we lose power. When we are together, we are powerful for God. When we are alone, we have no power. Division is the work of the devil. The devil wants to separate so that we lose power. These are the last days. We should mark those who cause division. Church, division is our greatest enemy, because if we are divided, we come under the work of the devil. When we are together, we can overcome the devil.

We must destroy division and love one another. Love is a commandment of Jesus Christ. He said to love one another. We should love even our enemies and pray for them. Division is another weapon of the devil, and we should destroy it.

We should respect our wonderful God. Also, we should respect our pastors, our leaders, and one another, because this respect will cause us to love one another. If you do not respect me and I do not respect you, we cannot make it to Heaven. We need to respect one another, and we will make it to Heaven. We must respect the Truth, because there is that one of being obedient. Only obedient people can make it to Heaven. I want to make it to Heaven. Friend, before you can make it to Heaven, you must destroy all the devil's strongholds and live a holy life.

The Church of God is a holy organization, and it is where God is moving. God works with His people. To be Church of God, you must live a holy life, because sinners are not in the Church of God. There is no sin in the church. If you are a sinner, you cannot be a part of the body of Christ. You can have the privilege of becoming a part of the Church of God by answering the call of Jesus Christ. You must ask the Lord to save you and destroy all the works of the devil in your life. Won't you be saved today and live a holy life? God bless you.

(Cassette C-5075M)

### **I AM THE BIBLE**

I am the Bible, God's wonderful library. I am always—and above all—the Truth.

*To the weary pilgrim, I am a strong staff.*

*To the one who sits in darkness, I am glorious light.*

*To those who stumble beneath heavy burdens, I am sweet rest.*

*To him who has lost his way, I am a safe guide.*

*To those who are sick in sin, I am healing strength and forgiveness.*

*To the discouraged, I am a glad message of hope.*

*To those who are distressed and tossed about by the storms of life, I am an anchor, sure and steady.*

*To those who search for salvation, I reveal the Savior of the world.*

I am the Bible—God's Holy Word.

[Guest Editorial—continued from page 2]

speaking of temptation in the narrow sense, as an inducement to evil or a seduction to sin, but rather as a test or a trial.

James penned this epistle during a time of trial for the church, in the proximity of A.D. 61. He was endeavoring to steady and encourage the people. Since he was the pastor in Jerusalem, why would he feel divine necessity compelling him to write a general epistle to the church at large? It was due to what had occurred. In James 1:1 he wrote "to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad."

Why were they scattered abroad? Acts 8:1 says, "And Saul was consenting unto his death [speaking of Stephen]. And at that time there was a great persecution against the church which was at Jerusalem [right where James pastored]; and they were all scattered abroad." They were scattered abroad because of the great persecution that came against the church. Therefore, the church, which had initially started in Jerusalem, was experiencing a great time of trial. As their pastor, James endeavored to steady and encourage the people in that trying time. The Book of Acts and James' epistle were penned between A.D. 60 and A.D. 65, and they dealt with the same circumstances.

James was trying to encourage the people with profound words when he stated, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried. . . ." Again, the word *temptation* is the same Greek word as in verse 2, which means "testing or trial." Those people were going through the depth of trial and persecution, and they had to leave all that was familiar to them. Therefore, their pastor, in essence, wrote, "You are a blessed people."

James revealed a truth often overlooked: there is a blessing that only trials can bring. Verse 12

in the *Amplified Bible* makes it stronger and renders it, "Blessed, happy, to be envied is the man who is patient under trial and stands up under temptation, for when he has stood the test and been approved he will receive [the victor's] crown of life which God has promised to those who love Him." How startling it must have been for people in the depth of trial when the Apostle James said they were to be envied! That is contrary to human thinking, but when we see what it accomplished, we become much more willing to face the trials and endure them graciously.

Why should the man in trial be envied? We need to understand what James meant when he stated, "Blessed is the man that endureth. . . ." The *Expanded Greek* says, "Spiritually prosperous is the man who remains steadfast under trial." This lets you know that spiritual merit and spiritual prosperity come through trials. If nothing else, one who has been greatly tried has great experience. This trial or test is a spiritual exercise meant to achieve a desired end. What is the desired end of trial? Our Scripture text tells us in verse 12, "Blessed [or spiritually prosperous] is the man that endureth temptation [or depth of trial]: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life."

Notice that James did not say this was something we would receive in Heaven after death. The place where God wants us to glisten is in this life. Today men want to take every Scripture and every thought of a crown and place it in an eternal realm, just as they do with the thought of living a life of holiness. They want to relegate it to some time in the future. On the contrary, the writer said, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life. . . ." When does one receive the crown of life? It is not in some future time, but rather it is when

he is tried. It is a present reality.

Jesus, speaking to the Philadelphia congregation in Revelation 3:11, said, "Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast [present tense], that no man take thy crown." He was writing to people who were already enjoying this crown, admonishing and warning them to be careful that no man take the crown they already had.

Our Scripture text is very plain. What is the blessing in trial? James said "when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life." You need victory when you are *in* the trial, not after your eyes close in death. Some people are going to be sadly disappointed when they make it over to the other side, because they are going to find that many teachings of religious men were not based on biblical Truth.

One receives a crown when he endures trials. This is the desired end. The spiritual experience is to enable the Christian to come through the trial in a victorious manner so that he can be a bright and shining light in the midst of a sin-darkened world. This crown is the victory that shines forth radiantly through one's life as he goes through the trial with victory and with the power of God resting on him.

One cannot have victory without opposition. This is what James was conveying to people who were in the depth of trial. He was trying to convince them not to view the trial as negative, but to count it all joy. The Greek says to "esteem it or deem it all joy." The trial may not be enjoyable while you are going through it, but you need to look to the end of what it will achieve and esteem it as joy.

The thought of counting it all joy was not unique to James. It was a common theme in the New Testament. Peter taught it as well. Peter, writing at approximately the same time frame, stated in 1 Peter 1:6, "Wherein ye greatly



rejoice, though now for a season, if need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." Peter was not speaking of temptations in the narrow sense. This is the same Greek word that James used.

James was encouraging the saints and wanted them to realize there are blessings and spiritual

merit in trials. Sometimes that may be hard for one to conceive while going through the trial. The lesson that James and Peter brought was to steady them in the time of trial, and it serves as a valuable lesson to us. What worked in the first century will work today. The Word of God is immutable and unchangeable. The

Psalmist said in Psalm 119:89, "Forever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."

In the next article we will continue to examine this truth and consider the question, "What is the crown?"

Brother Earl R. Borders

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*[Esp. for Young People—continued from page 15]*

I live. Maybe I'll hold out a bit longer to write these texts for Thee. Now, Lord Jesus, please bless this kind friend, always and always. I ask this for Thy name's sake. Amen."

Then the gentleman rose and said farewell. Before leaving London, he made every arrangement for the lad to be cared for, and then with a lighter heart, he went back to his beautiful country home and lived for Christ. As soon as he could, he built a mission hall on his own grounds and preached Jesus to the villagers. When he confessed his sin of negligence toward them and told them of his second conversion through the crippled boy and his text, many of them were led to seek Jesus.

News of the dying lad reached them from time to time through the Bible woman, but it was not till winter set in and the snow had fallen and covered the earth with its crystal whiteness that they heard that the dear lad had gone to be with Jesus. The same post brought a parcel which contained Tom's much-prized and much-used Bible. What a precious relic was that marked Bible in that beautiful home! For when the crippled boy's friend lent it to his youngest son to read, the careful markings, the short, simple prayers written by the crippled lad on the margin, and his dying wish on the flyleaf, written about a week before his death, that "this Holy Book may be as great a friend to someone else as

it has been to me," made such a deep impression on the youth that he gave himself to the Lord, and later on, to mission work in foreign fields. Out in Central America, he has shown that worn Bible to many a native Christian when telling them about Cripple Tom and his texts.

This beautiful incident of consecration in lowly life teaches us that the most adverse circumstances coupled with intense suffering need not interfere with a life of intensest devotion to Jesus Christ. Thousands of sad, weary hearts are wanting the little ministry of love that we might render. Shall we then take our ease, enjoy our pleasure, or indulge in our luxuries? Millions of dark, benighted souls are crying out for light. They continue to grope in darkness while many of us who profess to love Christ live self-centered and self-indulgent lives.

Today—without the help of the world—the Christian church could easily send out enough missionaries to evangelize the world. However, the dark blot of "it won't" stains its fair name. Oh, that the Spirit of God would, by His mighty power, cleanse away all the slothfulness, unreality, and self-complacency from our lives, for following Christ means self-sacrifice; there is no such thing as holiness without it. If a dying lad in suffering and destitution could joyfully deny himself the little sip of milk that cooled his parched lips and part-

ly fed his weary body, surely we can do much more!

First Chronicles 29:5 asks the question, "Who then is willing to consecrate his service this day unto the LORD?"

Selected

## Correction

In the May 2004 issue, in the article entitled "Holy Living," some lines of text were erroneously omitted. We apologize for this inconvenience. We endeavor to insure that such errors do not occur, but sometimes we all make mistakes. Below is the missing text:

holiness (see 1 Timothy 2:10). It is possible to dress in a way that is unbecoming to women who profess to be godly. To know that this is being done, one only has to go into many congregations of professed holiness people. If you would take young people from some of their holiness gatherings and place them beside a company gathered from the theater, too often there is but little distinguishable difference in their general appearance. That is a shame!

Holy living includes consideration of others. Holy people do not do all they feel free to do lest it may be a cause of stumbling to some weak brother.