

# THE GOSPEL TRUMPETER



SOUNDING FORTH THE SEVENTH AND LAST TRUMPET

Vol. 53 November 2023 No. 11

"I will offer to thee  
the sacrifice  
**OF THANKSGIVING,**  
and will call upon the name  
of the LORD."

Psalm 116:17

"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, 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 Timothy 3:16-17)
- Salvation from sin (Matthew 1:21)
- The new birth (John 3:3, 5-7)
- A holy life (Luke 1:73-75; Titus 2:12)
- Sanctification (1 Thessalonians 5:23)
- Unity of God's people (John 17:21; Ephesians 4:3)
- Divine, physical healing (James 5:14-16)
- The ordinances (Matthew 28:19-20; John 13:1-17; 1 Corinthians 11:23-34)
- Eternal life (Matthew 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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**REMOVE THE WEIGHTS**

*Hebrews 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us.*

The Lord is speaking through the Hebrew writer to encourage His children to lay aside and remove cumbersome weights, or those things hindering us from having a productive spiritual life in Christ. The Lord desires freedom for His people to serve Him. Someone may wonder, "What is the weight?" The main weight the Hebrew writer was referring to is unbelief. Unbelief works on the hearts of many people, causing them to become faint toward the promises Christ has given through His Word. Many do not believe Christ can or will fulfill all He has promised.

Unbelief must be driven out of our lives. It will stand in the way of a soul coming to Christ and receiving salvation. Some may desire to be saved from sin and guilt but fail to believe God will forgive them. Another thought weighing on their mind is they do not believe they can live free from sin. Philippians 1:6 affirms, "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God can and will finish the work He starts within the soul. Some think God will not keep or take care of them. The fearful can be confident that God is willing to supply every need. It

makes no difference whether the need is spiritual, physical, or financial. He can bring victory, help, and relief. Christ wants us to abandon these cumbersome weights that delay our spiritual progress.

Another weight hindering a soul from being what the Lord requires is the habit of murmuring and complaining. When things do not go how some people want or think they should, they murmur and complain. It is wise to take heed to yourself and discard this dangerous weight. The Bible tells us it is essential to be serious, sober, and diligent. You can become faint in your mind and think serving God is too difficult. Israel murmured and complained because of unbelief; thus, many died from the serpent's bite (Numbers, Chapter 21).

Let us consider other weights hindering a Christian's walk with Christ. Some of these weights may seem trivial, but they can cause one to fall short of God's glory. One is the weight of being a busybody. First Peter 4:15 associates this condition with murderers, thieves, and evildoers. People involved with this vice are never satisfied unless they delve into matters that do not concern them. They want to be the first to know something. A close kin to this weight is a talebearer. Proverbs 18:8 says, "The words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly." The words of a talebearer may seem innocent, but they are hurtful. They stifle spiritual progress and lessen one's usefulness to God.

[continued on page 6]



# Sowing Discord Among the Brethren

*Brother Roger L. Decker*

*Proverbs 6:16 These six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him:*

*17 A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood,*

*18 An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief,*

*19 A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.*

People sow discord for different reasons. Some delight in stirring up trouble and mischief and do it for power or because they are selfish. Some sow discord out of carelessness. The seed a sower of discord plants may be unkind words that raise suspicion about someone, destroying another person's confidence in them. They could be words of complaining or murmuring.

Sowing discord causes great pain. It is injurious, breaks hearts, and is unchristian-like. The person who sows discord is

in a hated position with God. *Discord* means "strife, contention, brawling, or quarreling." Sowing discord is spreading strife or starting a quarrel between brothers. God despises, or hates, the sin of sowing discord. God hates all sin, but these seven the Proverb writer lists stand out as especially offensive to God.

There has been much sowing of discord in congregations. Ones get too close to one another, and then they get too free with their tongues and say almost anything that comes into their minds. Isaiah 32:17-18 reads: "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever. And my people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places."

Romans 12:18 says, "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men." Sowing discord is the opposite of living peaceably. Someone may say, "I am an outspoken person."

Nothing may be wrong with that as long as discord is not spoken. Sometimes, being outspoken can be hurtful and unnecessary. Some are curt when they talk. We need to be careful not to hurt a person with a tender conscience.

## Putting on the Whole Armor of God

We are not battling against people, but spirits. Ephesians 6:10-13 states: "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

Verse 10 admonishes, "Be

strong in the Lord," but the one who sows discord is strong in the flesh. The devil is tricky. "The wiles of the devil" means he will lie in wait as a serpent who is patient and waits for his prey to come to him. Verse 12 lets us know we are not battling men, but the evil forces of Satan. Paul used the words "principalities," "powers," "darkness," and "wickedness." How do we overcome these forces? We need to put on "the whole armour of God," or put on everything of God you possibly can in your life. You cannot let down at any point.

Romans 13:12 says, "The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light." We must walk in the light we receive from God, or the enemy will overcome us. Second Corinthians 6:4-7 reads, "But in all things approving ourselves as the ministers of God, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, In stripes, in imprisonments, in tumults, in labours, in watchings, in fastings; By pureness, by knowledge, by longsuffering, by kindness, by the Holy Ghost, by love unfeigned, By the word of truth, by the power of God, by the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left."

Some things in the Old Testament were written down for our example. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10:11, "Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come." Let us consider some examples of discord in the Old Testament.

### **Presuming on the Mercy of God**

Numbers 12:1-9 states: "And Miriam and Aaron [Moses' sister and brother] spake against Moses because of the Ethiopian woman whom he had married: for he

had married an Ethiopian woman. And they said, Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses [here was the real problem]? hath he not spoken also by us? And the LORD heard it [Moses did not hear it, but the Lord did].

"(Now the man Moses was very meek, above all the men which were upon the face of the earth.) And the LORD spake suddenly unto Moses, and unto Aaron, and unto Miriam, Come out ye three unto the tabernacle of the congregation. And they three came out. And the LORD came down in the pillar of the cloud, and stood in the door of the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam: and they both came forth. And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the LORD will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream.

"My servant Moses is not so, who is faithful in all mine house. With him will I speak mouth to mouth, even apparently, and not in dark speeches; and the similitude of the LORD shall he behold: wherefore then were ye not afraid to speak against my servant Moses? [God was asking Miriam and Aaron: 'Were you not afraid to speak against Moses? Do you not know I can hear what you say?'] And the anger of the LORD was kindled against them; and he departed."

Moses went through many trials in the wilderness and coming out of Egypt, but this trial involved his family. They started their complaint because Moses married a foreigner. However, verse 2 reveals the real problem: "Hath the LORD indeed spoken only by Moses? hath he not spo-



ken also by us?" In other words: "Are we not elevated like Moses? Are we not just as good as Moses?" God called them out for a conversation. Moses did not call them out; God did. God asked Miriam and Aaron if they had any fear of God in them. God used Moses to lead His people out of Egypt, through the Red Sea, and into the wilderness. Moses was a great leader. Miriam and Aaron thought they had the right to speak against Moses because he was their brother.

Peter said in 2 Peter 2:10: "But chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government. Presumptuous are they, selfwilled, they are not afraid to speak evil of dignities." Peter said they despised authority and presumed that the grace and mercy of God would cover them. Even though they spoke evil of those in leadership positions, they assumed they had the right and God's mercy would overlook them. Jude 8 says, "Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities."

If God had not intervened, Moses would have had a real problem. His family was rising against him, and they were well known in the congregation. Aaron was a priest, and Miriam was a prophetess. They had influence in the congregation. God did not allow Moses to take care of the problem; God took care of it. Even though Moses intervened and pleaded for God's mercy, he could not stop the hand of God, who struck Miriam with leprosy. The entire congregation of Israel

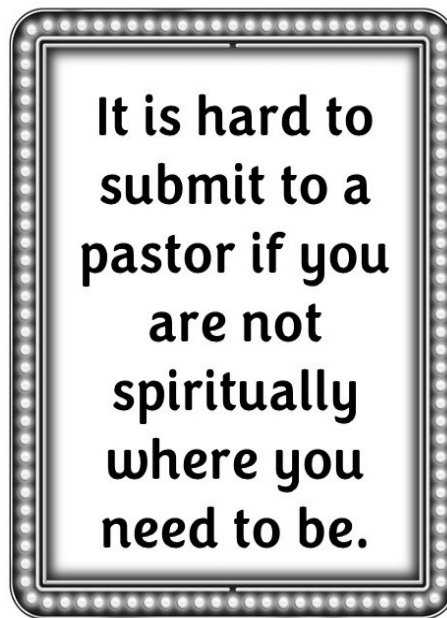
did not move any further in their journey because "Miriam was shut out from the camp seven days" (Numbers 12:15). Moses did not want his sister to die a leper, but God hates the sin of sowing discord.

### Submitting to Authority

Another example from the Old Testament is found in Numbers 16:1-4: "Now Korah, the son of Izhar, the son of Kohath, the son of Levi, and Dathan and Abiram, the sons of Eliab, and On, the son of Peleth, sons of Reuben, took men: And they rose up before Moses, with certain of the children of Israel, two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly, famous in the congregation, men of renown: And they gathered themselves together against Moses and against Aaron, and said unto them, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the LORD is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the LORD? And when Moses heard it, he fell upon his face."

What was the charge? "Ye take too much upon you." In other words: "Moses, the whole congregation is holy. Who are you to lift up yourself?" God calls leaders and places them over the flock to lead them. Look at the difference between these fellows and Moses. They expressed the problem to the people, but Moses spoke it to God. These people were sowing discord, and Moses went to God for help and direction. What was the result of their sin? Moses prayed and interceded for them, but God would not let the sin go unpunished.

Numbers 16:31-34 states: "And it came to pass, as he had made an end of speaking all these words, that the ground clave asunder that was under them: And the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed them up,



and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They, and all that appertained to them, went down alive into the pit, and the earth closed upon them: and they perished from among the congregation. And all Israel that were round about them fled at the cry of them: for they said, Lest the earth swallow us up also." The earth, or the flesh, has swallowed those caught up in this sin. They live in a fleshly atmosphere.

Hebrews 13:7 says, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation." Verse 24 reads, "Salute all them that have the rule over you, and all the saints." It is hard to submit to a pastor if you are not spiritually where you need to be. You may disagree with some of the pastor's decisions, but you can still submit. Jesus did not always please the crowd or the disciples following Him, and we know Jesus was always right.

There may come a time when your pastor will do or say something you do not like, but do not let that cause you to sow discord in the congregation. God despises the sin of sowing discord.

Submission is a great thing in a Christian's life. You may not like to submit, but we must submit to God and authority. If you fail to submit to the boss on the job, you may not have a job.

### Guarding Your Tongue

The devil would like us to fight with one another. We can stand against false religion, teachings, and doctrines, but we should not come against our own members. It is the opposite of "love one to another" (John 13:35). The one who causes strife has spiritual problems. The devil may not get you to yield to the temptation of getting drunk, becoming involved in the world's vices, or mingling with false religion, but he will work on you some other way. "The wiles of the devil" can cause us to destroy one another if possible. The devil tries to attack the saints from within.

Be careful who you spend time with. If the ones you spend time with are not spiritually minded, your soul can be negatively affected. The Word of God warns us not to keep company with those who oppose the truth. People can get too close to one another and then start confiding in each other about some woes or other things they do not like about certain people. They may oppose the leadership and begin sowing discord among each other. Then it spreads throughout the congregation.

Mark 3:24-25 tells us: "And if a kingdom be divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. And if a house be divided against itself, that house cannot stand." A congregation cannot stand when there is division on the inside. How does division start? It starts with a "tongue." James 3:5 states: "Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire

kindleth!" It is like a wildfire that cannot be put out.

Let us be wise, church. Be careful of talk that slanders and defames a person's character. Proverbs 21:23 reads, "Whoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles." You can avoid much trouble by guarding your tongue. Psalm 34:13 says, "Keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips from speaking guile." This sin is easy to fall into and comes with significant consequences.

James 3:3-4 states: "Behold, we put bits in the horses' mouths, that they may obey us; and we turn about their whole body. Behold also the ships, which though they be so great, and are driven of fierce winds, yet are they turned about with a very small helm, whithersoever the governor listeth."

You can control a horse if you put a bit in his mouth and take hold of the reins. He will go in the direction you want him to go. James also talked about a ship being turned about by a rudder. The lesson is that if we can control the tongue, we can control the man. The damage the tongue can do is like lighting a match in a dry forest. One commentator said: "Those who blow the coals of contention are but preparing for themselves a fire of the same nature."

## Are You Building Up the Kingdom of God?

The tongue is a wonderful organ God gave us. There are so many things we can do with this little member. It does not have to be all bad; we can do good with it. We can talk to one another on the phone or face to face. We can praise God, sing songs, preach, witness, or talk to someone about their soul. We can use the tongue to build up the Kingdom of God, or we can use it to tear down a congregation and destroy friendships.

Proverbs 16:28 says, "A forward man soweth strife: and a whisperer separateth chief friends." Another translation of that same verse says: "A perverse man spreads dissension, and a gossip divides close friends." You can slander, sow discord, and quickly destroy a person's character with your tongue. In Matthew 26:59-60, at the trial of Jesus, we read: "Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death; But found none: yea, though many false witnesses came, yet found they none. At the last came two false witnesses."

If you draw close to God, He will help you. God is not against you if you have had trouble

along these lines. He wants to help you. Thank God for the Spirit of God. Have you ever slipped up and said something you should not have, and God smote you? You may have said something that caused the Holy Spirit to chastise you, and you had to go back and make it right. The trip back is worse than what you said to begin with.

I do not want to be in the category of what God hates. I do not want to displease God. I love to have God as my Friend. Proverbs 18:24 says He is "a friend that sticketh closer than a brother." I never want to offend God or have Him stirred against me. I do not want God to be mad at me because I cannot keep my mouth shut. God wants us to watch what we say, especially against leadership, which includes pastors, Sunday school teachers, the choir director, or anyone in a leadership position whom you have to submit to. God wants to help us, so He sends messages like this to correct us, cause us to move closer to Him, and bring us spiritually to a higher level.

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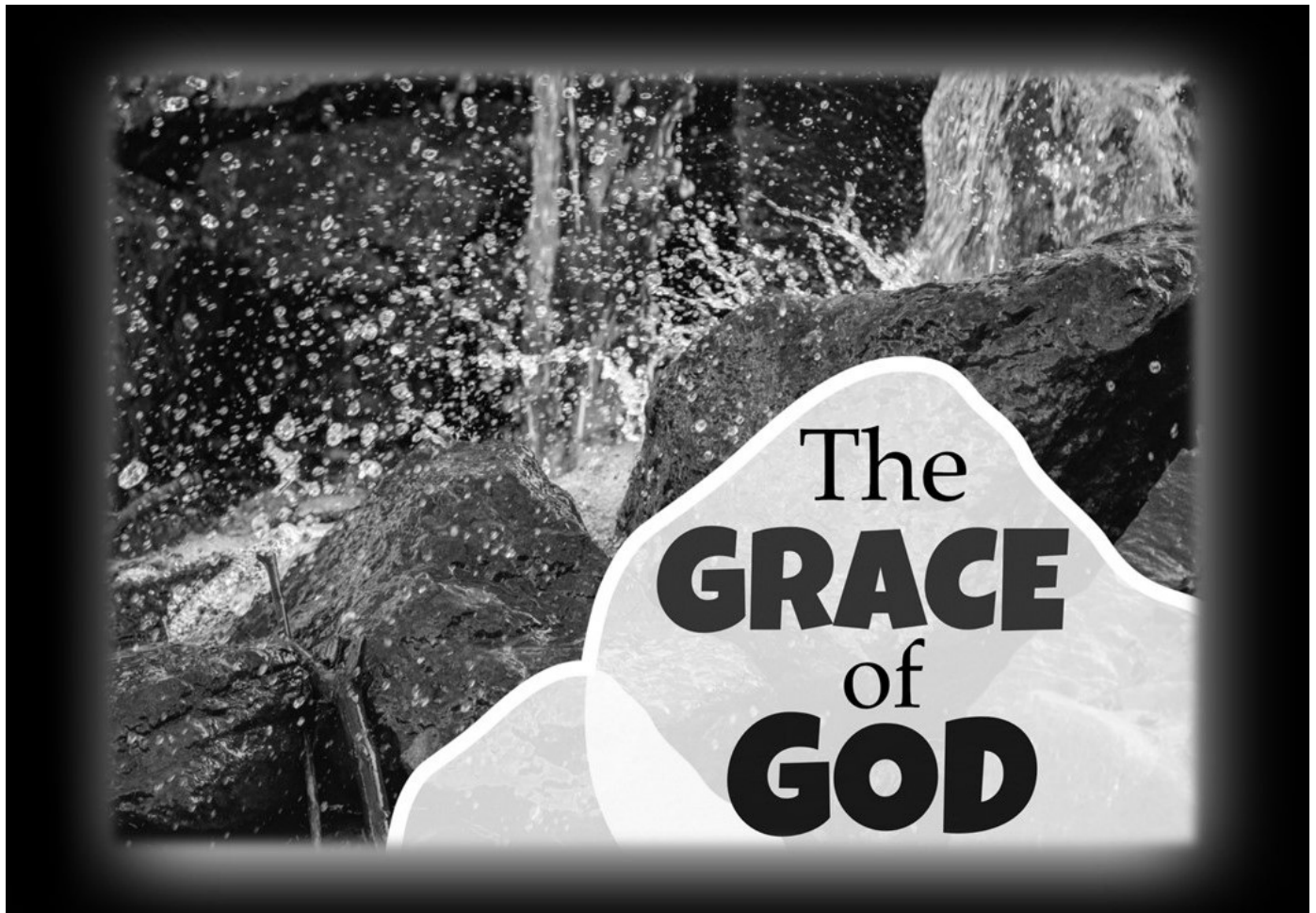
*[Guest Editorial continued from pg. 2]*

Next, there is a weight called dishonesty. Some think nothing about speaking an untruth; lying seems easier than telling the truth. Colossians 3:9 instructs, "Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds." Another form of dishonesty is cheating or defrauding another brother or sister. Dishonesty discredits the beauty of holiness. Second Corinthians 4:2 tells us to renounce "the hidden things of dishonesty."

A child of God must rid himself of many other weights, habits, and vices, such as jealousy, envy,

hatred, and resentment. In 2 Corinthians 7:1, we read, "Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God." Neglecting to cleanse, or mortify, the flesh will dwarf your experience with God. It will prevent you from being the person God intends for you to be. I encourage you to "lay aside every weight" that would hinder you from being what you need to be for the Savior.

Selected



*Brother David Watson*

*Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,*

*12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;*

*13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;*

*14 Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

*15 These things speak, and exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no man despise thee.*

**G**od's grace is amazing. The human tongue cannot thoroughly ex-

plain it. The grace of God has been sufficient through the years for all whom God has spoken to—the Apostles, prophets, and brethren. When God gave a commission, His grace was sufficient for whatever the Lord called them to do.

Hebrews 13:8 says, "Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever." If we are not careful, the value of the Scriptures can slip away from us. They should still hold the same value and meaning as when we first learned them. We should appreciate the grace of God that brings salvation.

The Bible teaches us to "live soberly . . . in this present world" (Titus 2:12). Being sober is not being foolish but knowing what you are thinking and doing, who you are, where you came from,

and where you are going. God has given us a commission in life. It takes a sober-minded person to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, think about the things of God, and do what He asks us to do. This commission is not to be taken lightly or played with. It is the anointing of God.

John 3:33-36 reads: "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true. For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand. He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him." We must not do anything to harm the anointing of God.

## Saved By Grace

The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 15:32, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus." You can read about Paul's fight in Acts, Chapter 19, over the goddess Diana and all their homemade gods. Verse 19 talks about a book burning. Paul established a congregation in Ephesus. He wrote to the young congregation and said in Ephesians 2:8, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." You do not get salvation through ritual, ceremony, or the natural level. It is a gift from God.

Through divine revelation, the Holy Ghost will convince you of your wrongdoings. When you repent, the old man is crucified, buried, and resurrected to a new life in Jesus Christ. It is through the grace of God that you are saved from the world, out of the miry clay, and placed on a solid rock by God so you can stand. It means something to be saved by the grace of God. Salvation takes all the shame away. God washes away all that ever disgraced you. Thank God, when I repented, all the bad and the cruel were crucified, and I became a new creature in the Lord. He gave me a testimony in my heart: "The grace and power of God saved me. I have been changed!" When God saves you, He gives you a testimony, and you are now on your way to Heaven.

The Apostle Paul said in Ephesians 2:9, "Not of works, lest any man should boast." Some people brag about what they do. One person showed me a ring he had and said, "This is my religion." Salvation is not about ceremonies, rituals, card signing, or going through motions that make you feel spry. It will work on your heart and give you an old-time experience. You will know God has lifted you out of

sin. You will have something in your heart you can talk about and not be ashamed of. God has saved you, not by works, but by the grace of the living God!

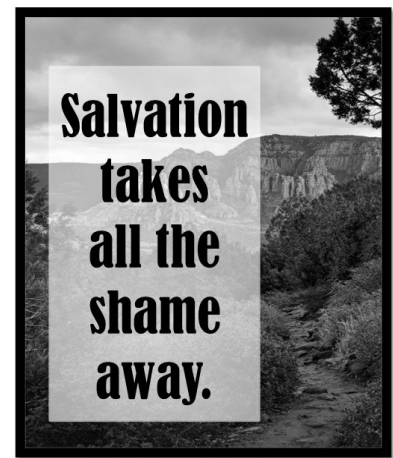
Some people say, "Oh, how I love Jesus." In 1 Corinthians, Chapter 13, you can read that this experience is more than singing or talking like an angel. You can give your body to be burned, play all kinds of instruments, go to church every Sunday, put your money in the offering plate, and raise your hand, but it goes deeper than that.

## Living By Grace

Salvation must first get into the heart. Then the devil or this world cannot do anything except stand back because you are saved, and your ways are filled with grace. The Holy Ghost has moved inside. The people of God have the grace of God in their lives. Everything they do, they do gracefully. They love gracefully, and all their actions are graceful.

Our Scripture text says we should deny "ungodliness and worldly lusts." When God saves you, He takes the world out of you. You are living in this world, but you are not of it. The world has its fights. It does what it wants, but we are dead to it. We do not go to their dance halls or play their games. Praise God, we are a separate people because of the grace of God in our souls. I would rather go somewhere alone and talk with Jesus than have the whole world. Communion with God is a blessing! He is good all the time.

Ephesians 2:11-12 says: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Is-



rael, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world."

The old covenant required "circumcision in the flesh made by hands." Under grace, God circumcises the heart with the Holy Ghost. He removes the flesh and the will of the person by performing a spiritual surgery on the heart. If God does a spiritual surgery on you, you are no longer a stranger to Jesus or His covenant, but you are a joint heir with the family of God. You are washed in the precious blood of Jesus Christ. He saved and redeemed you, bought and paid for you, and you are His. Thank God for the saving grace of God!

Some are filled with self-righteousness, thinking they have grace, but really they are a *disgrace*. There is a difference between having grace and being without grace, and it shows. Proverbs 21:2 reads, "Every way of a man is right in his own eyes: but the LORD pondereth the hearts." Some people weigh their own attitudes, measure their own selves, and claim their own righteousness. Proverbs 16:2 states, "All the ways of a man are clean in his own eyes; but the LORD weigheth the spirits."

God weighs you. He knows you from the top of your head to the soles of your feet. There is as much difference between a person who *thinks* he is right and



one who *is* right as daylight and darkness. If you have grace, people can see a difference in you from those who do not have grace. There is a difference between self-justification and one who has been sanctified by the Word of God and the grace of God.

### Having Peace With God

The Apostle Paul gracefully brought us the Word of God. He said in Romans 5:1, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." When grace comes in, you have peace in your soul with God. I did not have peace when I was a stranger to the covenant. However, the grace of God brought me hope. I was justified because I believed in Him who was crucified, buried, and resurrected on the third day. Because He lives, I can live and have glorious peace through the grace of God that He brought me.

The world is running here and there, looking for peace; all they need is to turn to God. Jesus said in John 6:37, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." The sinner needs to throw up his hands and say: "Lord, I have had enough of this world and its fares. I have been troubled long enough. I want peace in my soul." Zechariah 13:1 talks about how "a fountain" will be "opened." When you drink this living water, you will have peace.

There is a fountain flowing, and it brings wonderful peace and grace. God can quench the thirst you have for the things of the world. He gives peace in the heart and renews the spirit within. When God quickens you, peace flows in your soul, and you can know you are right with God. You can be at home wherever you are because, if God calls, you have peace between you and the Lord. Thank God for

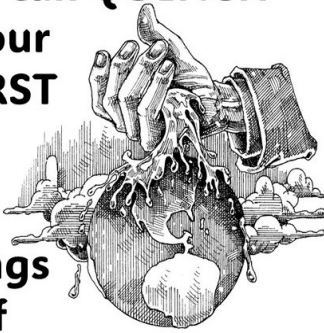
peace and joy in the soul. It is good to know you have bowed your heart to the One who gave His life, laid it down, and took it up again. You can have peace by the grace of God.

Romans 5:2 says, "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Are you glad the door has not been shut on you? In Hebrews, Chapter 10, we read He made a way for us to enter where He is. Whenever we talk with Jesus, we find glorious grace and rejoicing.

### God can QUENCH

your  
THIRST

for  
the  
things  
of



this world.

Some people try to get man's help, but the Bible says in Isaiah 2:22, "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils." Man cannot help you. The High Priest over the house of God, Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, can help you. When you come into His presence, He will fill you with joy and bless your soul. You can talk with Him, and He will listen to you. Thank God for Jesus and the grace of God!

God has given us a wonderful privilege. When the devil tells us to shut up and sit down, we can stand up straight and say: "I do not have to sit down or shut up. I know I have been born again and can go right where Jesus is. I have a Companion the devil cannot do anything about." We do not have to put up with an old, dried-out, dead religion. God has given us something to-

day that will still be here tomorrow. It is not just a feeling. A fountain is opened, and it is joy unspeakable and full of glory.

### God's Grace Is Sufficient

David said in Psalm 40:2-3: "He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD." David had joy in his soul because God lifted him.

Romans 5:3 states, "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also; knowing that tribulation worketh patience." There will be some cloudy days in your life. In 2 Corinthians, Chapter 12, Paul was carried up and received a vision he could not explain. He got exalted over it, so God brought him a thorn in the flesh. Whenever he prayed about it, God said He would not remove it. Verse 9 reads, "And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee."

Sickness and dark days may come your way. Psalm 30:5 says, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Whatever comes and goes will only last a little while. Then you will see the other side. If He does not heal you or bring you out of your affliction here, joy is coming in the morning. Hallelujah, a bright day will break forth, and you will go home to be with the Lord forever and ever. All your troubles and sadness will be over.

I have been in dark places and troubled times. My wife, who is now deceased, would say, "David, help me!" I would say, "Honey, nobody can help you but the Lord." Sometimes, it seemed I was climbing the walls, but I kept praying and holding on to God. One day, I asked God:

"When will this dark night pass? When will the sun shine again?" God brought me through. God will see you through if you hold on. He has not quit you or forgotten you. He will bless you and be with you. The same grace that saved you will lift, encourage, and take care of you.

Church, be encouraged. You do not have to look down or bow your head and be "whipped" by the devil. You can have victory. If you have God, you are on the winning side. God has all power, so trust Him. Romans 5:4 reads, "And patience, experience; and experience, hope." Patience brings hope. Whatever you are going through, grace keeps working, and hope shows up.

Consider Mary, who came to the tomb of Jesus on the third day. Hope was working. John 20:11-12 says, "But Mary stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, And seeth two angels in white sitting, the one at the head, and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had lain." When Mary met those two angels, she heard good news. In the darkest place of your life, there is hope for a better life in Jesus Christ. There is power in the Lord. He has not forgotten you, and hope is real.

### Grace Through the Holy Ghost

Paul was encouraging the church when he wrote Romans, Chapter 5. Verse 5 says, "And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." God picked up the old cup and filled it with the Holy Ghost of God. Did you find something when you went to an altar of prayer? When God gets hold of you, He fills you with the Holy Ghost, which gives you something you can feel. He is the wit-

ness of the life Jesus gives you.

The hope and saving grace is shed abroad in your heart through the Holy Ghost, a Companion who leads and guides you into all truth. When you are born again, He does not leave you alone or to yourself. He continues to work on you. He took you by the hand, led you from this world, and is leading you on the upward way, filling you with glory, rejoicing, and hope. He is doing better things for you all the way home to Heaven.

Verse 6 reads, "For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." When He died, He had you and me in mind. Whenever I was hateful and doing wrong, His death on the Cross of Calvary stood between me and hell. He took our place. He died so He could forgive you and me. Jesus went through all the suffering of the nails through His hands and spikes in His feet, the crown of thorns, being spit on and slapped in His face for you and me. When He was on the Cross, He tried to get His breath by pulling Himself up to give His lungs space, but His hands and feet hurt. He went through all that so He could save you and me.

In His dying hour, Jesus cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46). He became sin on the Cross of Calvary, and all the sins of the whole world were upon Him. He reached way down to save and redeem us from sin. He washed us and gave us a new life to live. Isaiah 43:7 says, "Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have



formed him; yea, I have made him." We are not here for ourselves but for God's glory. God created you and me so we could live in such a way as to give Him glory and honor.

Are you a stranger to the covenant of God? Are you without hope and peace? If the world has you, God wants to change you and get glory out of you. He created you. You need to recognize that He is your Creator. Give Him a place in your heart. Let Him clean you up and fill you with joy. You will never be sorry. The devil will take you back anytime you want, but if you truly get salvation, you will never want to go back. Put your trust in Jesus and believe in Him. He died for you because He loves you. He wants to redeem you. Sell out to the Savior and come home to Him.

*(Compact Disc TR-2788)*

*Brother David Watson is a  
Church of God evangelist from  
Lenoir City, TN.*

**"My grace is SUFFICIENT  
for thee" (2 Corinthians 12:9).**



The word *respect* means "considerate of others; show appreciation; be polite; have a good attitude; treat someone kindly; or pay the proper attention." A Bible dictionary defines *respect* as "to consider one [others] as possessed of real worth." In this lesson, we will consider what it means to respect other people. No doubt, all could relate to feeling disrespected.

There are many examples of feeling disrespected. Young people may think older people treat them like a child. Some feel their efforts should be more appreciated. Perhaps you put great effort into something, and someone says: "That is nothing! I could have easily done what you did." It makes you feel small. Some people may bring up your past mistakes. That is a form of disrespect, especially if you have repented and God has changed your life. Some may not like your opinions or personality, and they make it known. You may not fit in, which causes you to feel disrespected. Perhaps your coworkers belittle or put you down because they have more experience than you.

Young people disrespect their parents when they come home after curfew, roll their eyes, refuse to make eye contact, ignore the rules, slam their bedroom door, stomp their feet, or put headphones in while their parents are talking. These are all forms of disrespect.

Young person, can you expect respect from others if you do not give it? Let us consider some ways to respect others. When faced with a conflict, give "a soft answer" (Proverbs 15:1) by listening and agreeing to disagree when all else fails. You do not need to run others down. Sometimes, it does not matter what you say, nothing will improve the situation. You may need to gently walk away from the conversation.

Consider times when someone expressed an opinion that differed from yours. If negative comments were made, you may have felt disrespected. What is the best way to handle that? Consider "a soft answer" you could respond with, such as, "You might be right" or "I never thought about it that way." Are you open to letting others have a different opinion than you?

There was once a debate on the internet about the color of a dress. Was it blue and black or white and gold? There is an entry on *Wikipedia* called "The Dress." At one point, there were eleven thousand tweets per minute from various people arguing about the color of that dress. Did it really matter? Matters of opinion usually do not affect whether you are saved or unsaved. If you think the sky is blue, and someone else feels it is black, it has no bearing on your salvation. We need to allow for differences in opinions. When people disre-

spect us, it would be good to remind ourselves that everyone possesses real worth.

Someone may disrespect you because of a misunderstanding. It is frustrating when others will not listen to you. If you are not careful, you can raise your voice and start talking louder, thinking others will listen and be convinced you are right. You may cross your arms or roll your eyes, displaying your frustration through body language. These are natural human reactions, but they typically do not resolve the problem. Also, they do not promote respect on either side.

When you feel misunderstood, try listening to the other person. Even if you disagree, let them talk and consider their side. A chapter in a book I once read is called "Seek First to Understand." That is good advice! We may need to make allowances for others who speak out of turn. Maybe they had a bad day. We all have had times when we may have spoken too quickly and then wondered: "Why did I say that? That was not kind or appropriate."

Let us consider two points. (1) Are you showing disrespect to those around you? You may not like someone, or you may not think about reaching out to them. It could be intentional or unintentional. With God's help, we need to be more aware of the people around us who need us to reach out to them. (2) Are you

being mistreated or ignored? Praise is one way to reach out to others. Look for something they do well as a door of opportunity. Most importantly, pray for them and to keep your spirit right.

Being ignored is a way of being disrespected. It is difficult when this happens. You may try to talk to someone, but there is no response. Everyone in your friend group may get invited to go out, but you do not. You may feel invisible. Sometimes, when people deliberately ignore us, there is a temptation to retaliate. You may think, "If they ignore me, I can ignore them back." That is the flesh talking; it is not how God wants us to handle disrespect.

The most important person at the moment should be the person in front of you. How do you feel when you are excited about sharing something, and the person

you are talking to pulls out their cell phone? It is frustrating! Have you tried talking to someone who is constantly looking around? You may want to say, "Never mind" because you feel disrespected.

How do you feel when you talk to someone who gives you their undivided attention, making eye contact, and not looking around? You feel they are genuinely interested in what you have to say, and it makes you feel good. It shows they care about you.

Has a notification on your cell phone taken priority over the person in front of you? What about the cashier at the grocery store? I have seen people at a grocery store go through the entire checkout line talking on their phones and not saying one word to the cashier or the bagger. As a teenager, I was a cashier for three years, and although there were no cell phones back then, people

had a way of ignoring you because you were just an employee.

It is meaningful to others when you pay special attention to them. I was standing in a checkout line sometime back and overheard the cashier telling someone her grandfather had just died. When it was my turn to pay for my purchases, I told the cashier: "I am sorry to hear your grandfather died. How are you doing?" She started opening up and sharing with me her struggles and how difficult it was for her. No doubt, it was a meaningful conversation for her. I was reminded of the importance of looking for opportunities to show care and respect for others.

Are you respectful of other's

time limitations they put in place? When our children were younger, we had nanny software on our home desktop computer. (This was before everyone had their own cell phones and devices.) The software tracked how long each user was online and what websites they were visiting. We set it up for the computer to disconnect from the internet at midnight, so none of our children would be on the internet after we went to bed. Later, one of our children confessed (thankfully, they made it right) to setting the computer's clock back one hour, giving them extra internet time. It was an example of disrespect. You are disrespectful if you attempt to find ways to get around

your parents' rules.

Are you respectful when it is someone else's time to speak? Ecclesiastes 3:1 and 7 reads, "To every thing there is a season, and a time to

every purpose under the heaven . . . a time to keep silence, and a time to speak." Being respected is having people listen to you while you are speaking. It is frustrating to be in the middle of sharing something dear to your heart, and someone interrupts you or starts talking to someone else. If you have attempted to share something overwhelming to you but they ignored you, walked away, or got out their phone to check their social media, you understand the importance of being listened to.

We want people to listen when we are talking. It is a waste of time to speak if no one is listening. Something to consider: respect is a two-way street. If you want people to listen to you, it would be good to look at the other side and ask yourself, "Am I respectful when other people are talking?" What about when the pastor is preaching or the Sunday school teacher is teach-



## Respect is a two-way street.



time? How does it feel when people make you wait? Knowing how frustrating it is when others make you wait can help you work on being more careful to show proper respect. If you say you will be somewhere at a specific time, be there or let the person know you are running late. If you forget to call or text, apologize and work at making sure it does not happen again. Let others know their time matters to you.

If someone disrespects you by making you wait, allow for unplanned events. Maybe they had a flat tire, or an accident held them up. Give them the benefit of the doubt and then remind yourself of the times people had to wait for you. One of the best ways to handle disrespect is to remember when you may not have been gracious or patient with others.

Are you respecting your parents by obeying the curfews or

ing? Are you listening and making eye contact? That greatly encourages the one who is speaking.

If people have their phones out, talk to each other, or leave the room, it is difficult for the teacher or preacher to be inspired. What our leaders have to say is important! While the youth leader speaks, you should not sleep or read a book; you should listen.

It is easy to get distracted. If a comment to the person sitting beside you in the church service becomes a conversation lasting the entire service, that is a form of disrespect. There may be an emergency, and you need to check your phone, but having your phone out during church should never be a habit. You are being disrespectful if you are on your phone instead of taking part in the worship service. Other forms of disrespect include being involved in a group chat or watching a video on YouTube during the services.

How should you handle others being disrespected, such as one of your family members? I remember hearing some teenagers make fun of my younger brother when I was about eleven years old. I was angry and frustrated. In my teenage years, someone commented negatively about my parents to me. In both cases, I remember thinking: "This is my family. How could they say that about them?" You could say, "Please do not talk about my family that way." However, often it does no good to say anything, and it is best to walk away.

Does it bother you if someone disrespects your brothers and sisters in Christ? It is not fun when you are being made fun of, but is it easy to join in when someone else is being made fun of? Perhaps someone in the congregation is being made fun of, and you are tempted to join in. Instead of joining in, you could

say: "That is hurtful. I am not okay with that. They are my church family." We also need to be careful not to get too upset. There is a respectful way to handle the person who is making fun.

Knowing how to respond to disrespect is not easy. Again, this lesson is about how to handle disrespect and also how to be respectful. There are two sides, being disrespected and showing disrespect. We need to know how to deal with both sides. Work on showing others the respect you want. Remember the times you felt disrespected, and be determined to do your best to be different.

Titus 2:7 says, "In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works." First Peter 2:17 in the *Amplified Bible* reads, "Show re-

spect for all people [treat them honorably], love the brotherhood [of believers], fear God, honor the king." The brotherhood includes your brothers and sisters in Christ, and the king refers to the ones who are ruling, such as your pastor.

In addition to using the tools in this lesson on handling disrespect, pray for the one disrespecting you and talk to a trusted spiritual adult, such as your parents, Sunday school teacher, youth leader, or pastor. Ask them for advice on how to handle disrespect and also how to be respectful to others.

Sister Sheri Strelecky

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*Sister Sheri and her husband, Brother Steve, are the youth leaders at the Church of God in Newark, OH.*

**WANTED**

**SERVANTS OF GOD**

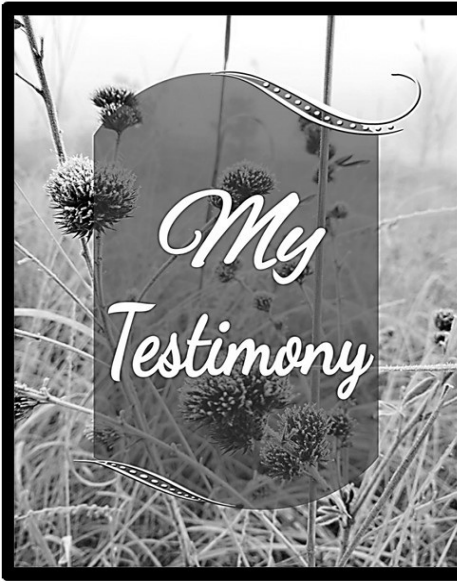
**Requirements:**

1. Humble (Matthew 18:4; 2 Timothy 2:24-25)
2. Obedient (John 14:23; Acts 5:29)
3. Willing (1 Corinthians 7:22-23; 1 Thessalonians 2:7-9)
4. Faithful (Luke 16:10-13; 1 Timothy 1:12-14)

**Wages:**

1. Satisfaction (Psalm 65:4; Jeremiah 31:14)
2. Honor (Proverbs 21:21; John 12:26)
3. God's Approval (Matthew 25:21-23; Hebrews 13:16)
4. Fruit (John 15:16; Romans 6:22-23)

Florence A. Wilson



## My Desire to Be Faithful

Sister Mary Ann Miller

On September 24, 2022, I was diagnosed with an incurable cancer. There is no hope for me, medically speaking. I will have this for the rest of my life. However, I do not feel horrible. I do not say: "God, why did You send this to me? I do not understand." I just do not feel that way. Instead, I pray, "God, please help me do what You want me to do, and help me to be pleasant about it." He has helped me.

I thank the Lord for all He has done for me. He has been with me the whole time I started

having horrible pain, before we discovered it was cancer. I do not know what God has in mind, but I thank Him for the help and strength He gives me daily.

Shortly after I left the hospital, I would lie awake hour after hour during the night. God gave me a couple of thoughts, and I quickly wrote them down so I would not forget them. He told me this may have taken me by surprise, but it did not take Him by surprise. He said He chose me for this. I still do not know His exact plan, but I asked Him to

please help me be faithful. Whatever He is trying to show me or prove, I want to be a success at it. I believe He has helped me.

My husband could tell you I cry a lot, but it is not necessarily all bad crying. There are times I cry because my heart is happy. Understanding how you can have cancer and be happy about it is hard, but I have prayed for God to help me.

I thank God for my husband, who has been a wonderful help to me, and my children and grandchildren who have all been special. My daughter-in-law, Lisa, advocated for me when I first became so sick and in so much pain. I could not have done it without her. I thank God for using her to help me in a mighty, mighty way!

I especially want to thank all the saints, the young people, and the Sunday school classes who have sent me so many cards. It is just unbelievable and has been a blessing. Even though I do not understand it all, I am still thankful. My heart is happy!

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*Sister Mary Ann Miller attends the  
Church of God in Newark, OH.*

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*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace.*

*Helen H. Lemmel*

While the material things of this world matter to us (we are sentimental about them), we are grateful for them. God has blessed us with them. My husband and I are now in a season of life where we have gone through the valley of the shadow of death. In the last few years, ones who were close to us have passed away. We are given the responsibility to go through their things—lots and lots of things at times.

I have found myself thinking: "I'll take this. I could use this." Our parents collected many things, and there is nothing wrong with collecting things, with having possessions. God blesses us with things that help us in our lives.

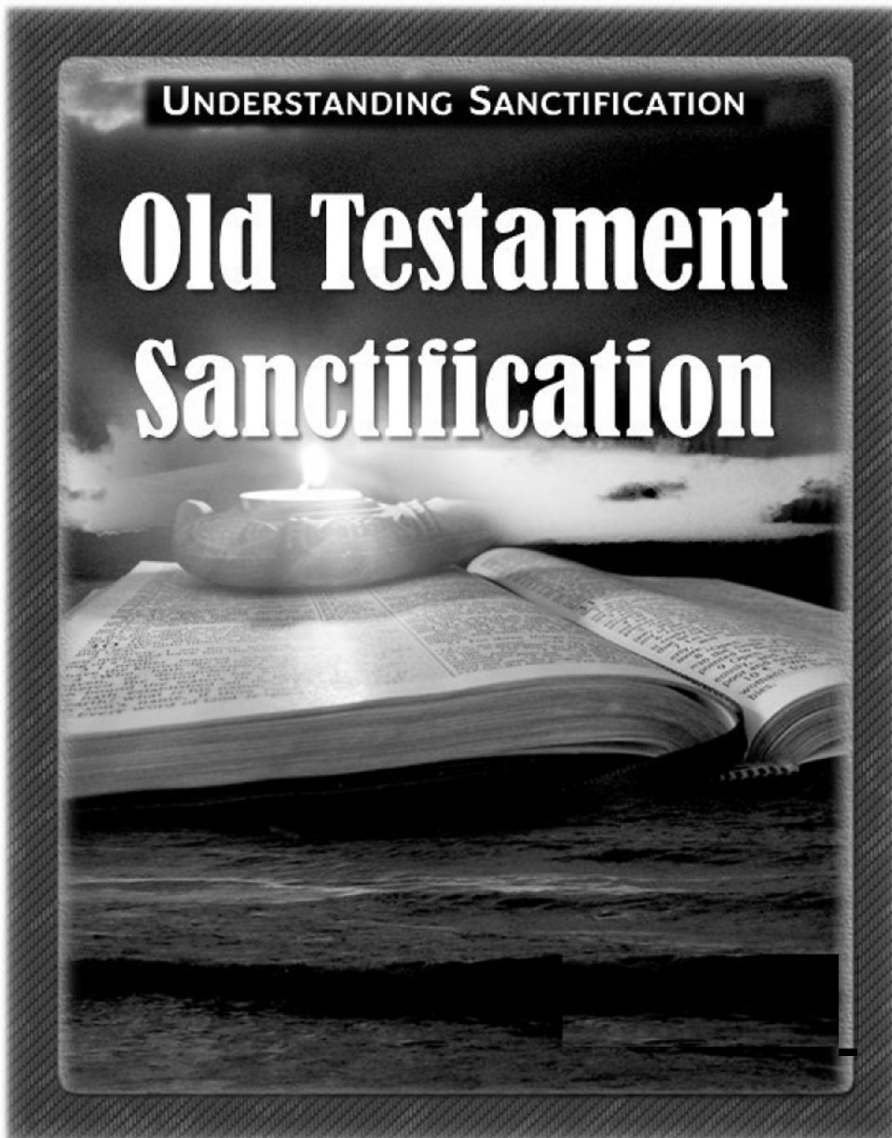
We have things that have sentimental value, things that have memories. But I am thankful that there is a treasure in the fact those things, at a certain age, are growing dim to me. I am not saying I do not want my stuff. I am still collecting things, but there is beauty in the fact that those things are taking their proper place.

I see where I am going. It is right before me. It is an awesome thing for the "things of earth" to "grow strangely dim." No doubt, young people cannot fully understand this because most of their life is ahead of them. But if you could take a moment and realize—these are just things. It is okay to collect, but make sure you have Him as your Shepherd, as your very own personal best Treasure.

Sister Arlene Orr

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*Sister Arlene Orr attends the  
Church of God in Newark, OH.*



Brother Earl R. Borders

*Genesis 2:3 And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made.*

*Numbers 7:1 And it came to pass on the day that Moses had fully set up the tabernacle, and had anointed it, and sanctified it, and all the instruments thereof, both the altar and all the vessels thereof, and had anointed them, and sanctified them.*

*Leviticus 27:14 And when a man shall sanctify his house to be holy unto the LORD, then the priest shall estimate it, whether it be good or bad: as the priest shall estimate it, so shall it*

*stand.*

*15 And if he that sanctified it will redeem his house, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be his.*

*16 And if a man shall sanctify unto the LORD some part of a field of his possession, then thy estimation shall be according to the seed thereof: an homer of barley seed shall be valued at fifty shekels of silver.*

*17 If he sanctify his field from the year of jubile, according to thy estimation it shall stand.*

*18 But if he sanctify his field after the jubile, then the priest shall reckon unto him the money*

*according to the years that remain, even unto the year of the jubile, and it shall be abated from thy estimation.*

*19 And if he that sanctified the field will in any wise redeem it, then he shall add the fifth part of the money of thy estimation unto it, and it shall be assured to him.*

The great lawgiver, Moses, penned quite an array of Old Testament Scriptures. The common vein of truth uniting our Scripture texts is the incorporation of the expression *sanctified*. Sadly, there is much confusion concerning the word *sanctified* and the Biblical doctrine of sanctification. The Bible explicitly teaches that we are to live sanctified lives. Unfortunately, confusion and differing positions arise in addressing these questions: What is sanctification? When do we achieve it? How is it accomplished?

As the Apostle Paul admonished, it is our burden to "study" sanctification in order to be "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15). In this first segment of our study, we will consider Old Testament sanctification. Galatians 3:24 informs us that the Old Testament Law "was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." Old Testament Scriptures and practices reveal New Testament realities.

First Corinthians 14:33 says, "God is not the author of confusion." Rightly dividing the Word of truth will dispel the confusion on this vital Biblical doctrine of sanctification. Throughout this study, we may allude to them, but we will not be dealing so much with the traditions and teachings held by some. We will instead attempt to confine ourselves to Biblical truths concerning this subject. We trust the Spirit of God will enlighten "the eyes of your understanding" (Ephesians 1:18).

## Defining the Word "Sanctify"

According to *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance* of the Bible, the word *sanctifieth* does not appear in the Old Testament, only the words *sanctified* and *sanctify*. In Genesis 2:3, we read, "God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it." The English word *sanctified* appears in the Old Testament forty-six times. The English word *sanctify*, as in Leviticus 27:14, which says, "And when a man shall sanctify," appears sixty-four times in the Old Testament, totaling one hundred and ten times for both words. In every instance, the words *sanctified* and *sanctify* are the same Hebrew word *qadash*. The first truth we want to point out is that this Hebrew word is employed in different tenses and senses according to the context in which it is used.

In the textbook, *Christian Theology*, page 449, by Brother Russell R. Byrum, in the section entitled "Entire Sanctification," it says, "The term sanctification is capable of being used in at least eight different senses in respect to experience or practice, and is used in most of these senses in the Bible." Study is essential because we must not view these words in an isolated sense but in the greater context to know how they are utilized in each particular passage.

Genesis 2:3 is the first place the word *sanctified* appears in the Bible. So, the first account of sanctification in the Bible is a day. The *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* defines this word in this particular verse as "it is to be consecrated, dedicated." Genesis 2:3 refers to a day being dedicated for a special purpose. Also, in conjunction with the seventh day being sanctified, no ceremonies or cleansings were associated with this day, and no shedding of blood occurred on this occasion. Why would we mention that? Because

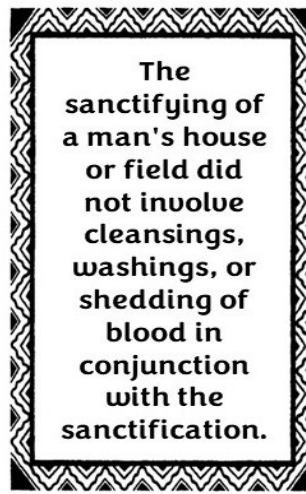
some advocate connecting some of these things to sanctification and say they are necessary to have sanctification.

Moses had received instructions in Exodus concerning constructing the Old Testament tabernacle in the wilderness. In our companion text in Numbers 7:1, we read that he "had fully set [it] up." He had erected the tent and put in all the articles and furnishings according to the pattern given to him on Mount Sinai. When he had them all placed in the proper positions, he "anointed them, and sanctified them." According to *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, the word *sanctified* in this context means "set apart as sacred; consecrate, dedicate."

The tabernacle was just a tent, and the table with the shewbread was just a table with some bread before Moses anointed and sanctified them. He set them apart, consecrated them, and dedicated them for singular and sacred use. Although there are many aspects to the word *sanctify*, the overall intent and predominant definition is to "be set apart, consecrated, dedicated, or hallowed."

### Sanctification Without Blood Application

We read in Leviticus 27:14-19 about a house and a field being sanctified for sacred purposes. Verse 14 says, "Sanctify his house," and verse 17 says, "Sanctify his field." When a man sanctified his house or field, it was essentially a monetary transaction or the equivalent of exchanging property for money. "The priest shall estimate it" (verse 14). And verse 19 talks about the "fifth part of the money," to pro-



vide funds for the maintenance or repair of the sanctuary, thus a sanctified purpose.

Many things under the old economy could be sanctified. According to *Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon*, the word *sanctify* used in these Scriptures means "set apart, devote, consecrate." The sanctify-

ing that occurred to a man's house or field did not involve cleansings, washings, or any shedding of blood in conjunction with the sanctification.

Nehemiah 3:1 reads, "Then Eliashib the high priest rose up with his brethren the priests, and they builded the sheep gate; they sanctified it, and set up the doors of it; even unto the tower of Meah they sanctified it, unto the tower of Hananeel." They sanctified the sheep gate and the tower. In other words, they set them apart for specific, sacred purposes. Again, there were no cleansings, ceremonies, or application of blood in any of these.

Exodus 29:27 states, "And thou shalt sanctify the breast of the wave offering, and the shoulder of the heave offering, which is waved, and which is heaved up, of the ram of the consecration, even of that which is for Aaron, and of that which is for his sons." Many Scriptures in the Old Testament deal with things being sanctified. The New Testament also speaks of many things being sanctified.

We say this with love and kindness. Many have preconceived notions of the true Bible teaching of sanctification. Sadly, it has been taught because of accepted tradition both repeatedly and fervently. Unfortunately, it has left an impression in people's minds that will not



stand Biblical scrutiny. It has caused many to be confused about this vital doctrine. We need to understand, by rightly dividing the Word of Truth, that many things under the old economy — a day, a place, the Tabernacle, the vessels, a house, a field, the wave offering, the heave offering, the sheep gate, the towers of Meah and Hananeel — were sanctified. We cannot take one or two of these occasions as a fixed rule and say this is what sanctification is. There are differences in what the application of the word actually means according to the event or the context.

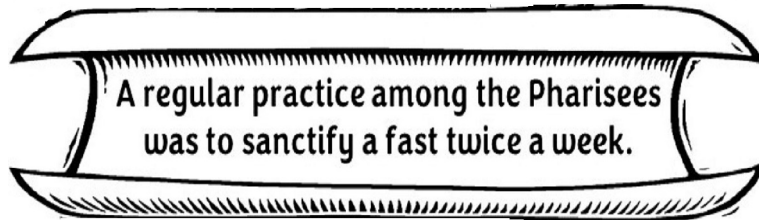
We are not out to denigrate, degrade, or belittle anyone in any manner, but as the Apostle Paul said in Philippians 1:17, we are "set for the defence of the gospel." Some forcibly advocate that sanctification is a definite, instantaneous experience. We trust you will see this is not an accurate Scriptural position when we are rightly dividing the Word of Truth and studying the entire scheme of the Scriptures. Ephesians 6:12 says, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood." We are not against any people anywhere. We love all the dear brethren and do not want to be hurtful or contentious. We desire to clarify the confusion generated over this teaching.

### **Sanctification — A Repeated Event**

The next truth we need to consider is that sanctification, in many cases, was not a once or twice occurrence, but it was repeated. Deuteronomy 5:12 states, "Keep the sabbath day to sanctify it." It was a day to be set apart. How often was it to be set apart? It was to be kept once every week for the entire year under the old economy. It was not a sin-

gular event. The Jewish months had thirty days, and their weeks did not equate to fifty-two as our year does. However, the Sabbath Day was set apart and kept every week, not once or twice, but continually.

Consider the Passover. Second Chronicles 35:6 says, "So kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves, and prepare your brethren, that they may do according to the word of the LORD by the hand of Moses." God instructed the Israelites to kill a lamb when they were getting ready to leave Egypt after more than four hundred years of bondage. Exodus 12:5-6 states, "Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year: ye shall take it out



from the sheep, or from the goats: And ye shall keep it up until the fourteenth day of the same month: and the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening."

The Passover lamb was a definite type of Christ, our Lamb, who was without spot or blemish. Notice, Exodus 12:2 says, "This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you." The Israelites killed this lamb, shed its blood, and applied it to the doorposts.

Verses 11 and 14 say: "And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover. . . . And this day shall be unto you for a memorial; and ye shall keep it a feast to the LORD throughout your generations." How often did they keep the Passover? Once a year on the fourteenth day of the

first month. According to 2 Chronicles 35:6, they were instructed to "kill the passover, and sanctify yourselves." How often were they to kill the passover and sanctify themselves? At least once a year. It was an annual event.

Consider the words of the Prophet Joel in Joel 1:14, "Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD." Joel 2:15-16 reads: "Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children." Obviously, this event was engaged in more than once. The fact is that it became a regular practice among those in Judaism.

In Luke 18:11-12, when the Pharisee went up to the temple, he proclaimed: "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week." A regular practice among the Pharisees was to sanctify a fast. Twice every week, they set aside time for prayer and fasting.

### **Old Testament Types Reveal New Testament Realities**

First Corinthians 10:11 says, "Now all these things [the previous ten verses were Old Testament occurrences] happened unto them for ensamples." The Greek word for *ensamples* is *tupos*, which means "a type or types." *Webster's New World Dictionary* defines a *type* as "a person, a thing or an event that represents or symbolizes another, especially another that is to come." These Old Testament types depict New Testament realities. Verse 11 continues, "They

are written for our admonition."

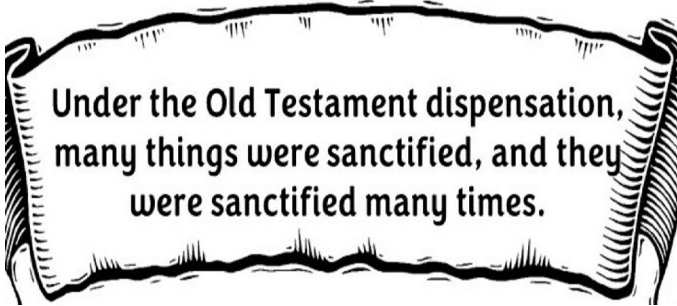
First Corinthians 5:7 says, "Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." He is the Lamb that was slain. His blood needs to be applied to our hearts in faith believing. Certainly, we recognize that if literal blood were a requirement, it would have been exhausted long before the end of the first century. Romans 3:25 tells us it is "faith in his blood," in the vicarious work it did because the wages of sin is death.

Sin required death. Jesus took on a substitutionary role. He died in our stead, so we would not have to pay for the terrible penalty of sin. Second Corinthians 5:21 says, "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." He is the Lamb slain, the One who enabled us to be loosed from the bondage of sin, just as the Israelites were loosed from Egyptian bondage.

As we consider these truths, we find under the Old Testament dispensation, many things were sanctified, and they were sanctified many times. The Passover was an annual event; the keeping of the Sabbath and fasting became weekly events. These were continually sanctified, set apart, and consecrated for a specific purpose. Some things were done once. There is a reason for that. There was only one application of the lamb's blood over the doorposts for the death angel to see and pass over it. This enabled the Israelites to leave Egyptian bondage once, not twice.

### Sanctifying the People

Let us consider another aspect of what was sanctified in the Old Testament. In Exodus, Chapter 19, Israel had come out of Egyptian bondage and was at the



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base of Mount Sinai where God was ready to meet with His people, particularly Moses. Verses 10-19 state: "And the LORD said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to day and to morrow, and let them wash their clothes, And be ready against the third day: for the third day the LORD will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai.

"And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death: There shall not an hand touch it, but he shall surely be stoned, or shot through; whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.

"And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people; and they washed their clothes. And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come not at your wives. And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.

"And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part [or the lowest parts] of the mount. And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof

ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice."

In verse 10, the Lord told Moses, "Go unto the people, and sanctify them." Some advocate that being sanctified indicates an application of blood. The examples we have considered, with the notable exception of the Passover, including this occasion, had no application of blood.

Exodus 19:10 is the second time the word *sanctify* is used in our English or *King James Bible*, which consists of three things. *Gill's Exposition of the Entire Bible* says, "The Jews understood not of their garments, but of their bodies also." *Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers* says: "The external purification was to consist in three things—(1) Ablution, or washing the person; (2) washing of clothes; and (3) abstinence from sexual intercourse." Exodus 19:15 reads, "Be ready against the third day: come not at your wives." According to *Brown-Driver-Briggs*, the word here is the same word used in the rest of the Old Testament (*qadash*), and it means "consecrate by purification."

### External Observances and "Divers Washings"

Under the Levitical law, the requirement for washing clothes occurred on many occasions, not just once or twice. We read one of them in Exodus, Chapter 19. Also, Leviticus 11:25 states, "And whosoever beareth ought of the carcase of them shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even." If they came into contact with a carcass, they had to wash their clothes. Verse 28 says, "He that beareth the carcase of them

shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: they are unclean unto you." Verse 40 reads, "And he that eateth of the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: he also that beareth the carcase of it shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even."

Leviticus 13:6 says, "And the priest shall look on him again the seventh day: and, behold, if the plague be somewhat dark, and the plague spread not in the skin, the priest shall pronounce him clean: it is but a scab: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean." Verse 34 reads, "In the seventh day the priest shall look on the scall: and, behold, if the scall be not spread in the skin, nor be in sight deeper than the skin; then the priest shall pronounce him clean: and he shall wash his clothes, and be clean." Verse 58 states, "And the garment, either warp, or woof, or whatsoever thing of skin it be, which thou shalt wash, if the plague be departed from them, then it shall be washed the second time, and shall be clean."

Leviticus 14:8-9 reads: "He that is to be cleansed shall wash his clothes, and shave off all his hair, and wash himself in water, that he may be clean . . . But it shall be on the seventh day, that he shall shave all his hair off his head and his beard and his eyebrows, even all his hair he shall shave off: and he shall wash his clothes, also he shall wash his flesh in water, and he shall be clean." Verse 47 says, "He that lieth in the house shall wash his clothes; and he that eateth in the house shall wash his clothes." Leviticus 15:5 states, "Whosoever toucheth his bed shall wash his clothes, and bathe himself in water, and be unclean until the even." Many other Scriptures could be quoted.

Hebrews 9:10, speaking of the Old Testament dispensation, says, "Which stood only in meats

and drinks, and divers washings [or different washings] . . . ." There were many external observances and "divers washings." The Israelites had to wash themselves and their clothes on many occasions. The Old Testament "washings" served as types of New Testament realities. We cannot transpose literal occurrences under the old economy into literal events in the new economy.

### **The Dedication of the First Covenant**

Hebrews 9:18-22 states: "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the

**Under the Old Testament, the APPLICATIONS OF BLOOD and SANCTIFICATION were two separate things.**

book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission."

Let us examine this Scripture passage and see what it truly references. Isaiah 28:13 instructs us to lay "precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." Isaiah 34:16 says, speaking of the Scriptures, "None shall want her mate." The writer of the Hebrew letter spoke to Hebrew converts,

those familiar with the Old Testament practices and the Hebrew economy.

So what was the writer referring to when he said in Hebrews 9:18, "Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood"? Obviously, the first testament was the Old Testament. The Hebrew writer was talking about when the Old Testament was initially dedicated. He was alluding to what Moses did when he came down from Mount Sinai. Exodus 24:3-8 says: "And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD, and all the judgments: and all the people answered with one voice, and said, All the words which the LORD hath said will we do.

"And Moses wrote all the words of the LORD, and rose up early in the morning, and builded an altar under the hill, and twelve pillars, according to the twelve tribes of Israel. And he sent young men of the children of Israel, which offered burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings of oxen unto the LORD.

"And Moses took half of the blood, and put it in basons; and half of the blood he sprinkled on the altar. And he took the book of the covenant, and read in the audience of the people: and they said, All that the LORD hath said will we do, and be obedient. And Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people, and said, Behold the blood of the covenant, which the LORD hath made with you concerning all these words."

Moses did all this when he came down from Mount Sinai. Verses 2-3 say: "And Moses alone shall come near the LORD: but they shall not come nigh; neither shall the people go up with him. And Moses came and told the people all the words of the LORD." Moses received the words of the Lord, wrote them down, read them to the people, and

informed them of the parameters of the new covenant, and they agreed to it. They said, "All the words which the LORD hath said will we do."

### **The Application of Blood**

Verse 8 says, "Moses took the blood, and sprinkled it on the people." Why? Because it was a covenant between God and the people. Moses sprinkled half the blood on the altar and the book, which was God's part, and half on the people, which was their part because it was a covenant, or agreement, to unite the two. Moses went on to say, "Behold the blood of the covenant." How many times did Moses dedicate this covenant? *One* time, he sanctified or set apart the people and the covenant. It was not repeated. This application of blood was singular to dedicate the new covenant they were entering into, or we refer to it as the first or old covenant.

Where did the blood come from? Verse 5 says, "Burnt offerings, and sacrificed peace offerings." These particular offerings showed the special position they held as a covenant people. It says in Exodus 20:24, "An altar of earth thou shalt make unto me, and shalt sacrifice thereon thy burnt offerings, and thy peace offerings, thy sheep, and thine oxen: in all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee."

These sacrifices and the blood that was applied to the altar and then to the people showed the uniting of God and His people in the old covenant. Hebrews 9:20 says, "This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." The *Amplified Bible* reads, "Saying these words: This is the blood that seals and ratifies the agreement (the testament, the covenant) which God commanded [me to deliver to] you." When we consider He-

brews 9:18-22, we must recognize it was a singular event. Verse 18 says, "Neither the first testament was dedicated without blood." So, it was dedicated with blood, as we read in Exodus 24:3-8, and it was a singular application of blood.

The Bible was not divided into chapters and verses until 1555 A.D. Hebrews was originally written in continuity as a letter. Hebrews 12:24 states, "And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling." How many times was the new covenant instituted? Once. How many times did Jesus sprinkle His blood? Once. The famous Scottish expositor, Dr. William Barclay, rendered his offering of verse 24 as, "To Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, to the sprinkled [past tense] sacrificial blood."

### **Ineffectual Sacrifices – The Blood of Bulls and Goats**

Under the Old Testament, there were many applications of blood onto many various items, not just one or two, and we must consider why they were offered. Also, the applications of blood and sanctification were two separate things. Some in our day unite the two, even though in these Old Testament Scriptures, many times they were completely separate from each other, denoting separate events. Some occasions were singular, such as when Moses came down out of the mount and dedicated the old covenant and when the blood of the lamb was shed and applied to the doorposts before coming out of Egyptian bondage. When Jesus offered His blood, He became the mediator of the new covenant, and the shedding of His blood was also a onetime event.

Hebrews 9:1 says, "Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and

a worldly sanctuary." Verse 7 reads, "But into the second [room of the Tabernacle] went the high priest alone once every year [this was a repeated event, not once or twice, but *once every year*], not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people." The priest had to atone for his own sins and the people's sins.

Hebrews 10:3-4 states: "But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." The animal blood had no power. All it did was satisfy the tenets of the Levitical law. The people who partook of those sacrifices were put in a justified state looking forward in faith to Him who was to come. They did not have New Testament regeneration or the ability to be delivered from sin. They were justified, which is a legal declaration in Heaven. God was satisfied with those who met the conditions for that dispensation.

Notice, both Hebrews 9:7 and 10:3 say "every year." Once every year, there was an annual Day of Atonement. Today, it is called Yom Kippur. It took place yearly because of ineffectual sacrifices—the blood of bulls and goats could not take away sin. It served a purpose for a period of time.

### **The Efficacious Blood of Jesus Christ**

Notice the contrast in Hebrews 9:12, which says, "Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Verse 14 reads, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve

the living God?"

What would the blood of Christ "purge your conscience" of? Hebrews 10:2, speaking of the Old Testament sacrifices, says, "For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged [If the Old Testament sacrifices had been adequate, or efficacious, they would not have needed multiple sacrifices or blood applications. They would have been once purged.] should have had no more conscience of sins." Jesus Christ purges the conscience of sins.

Hebrews 10:12 reads, "But this man [Jesus Christ], after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever." Jesus offered one sacrifice. Verse 14 says, "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Hebrews 9:20 talks about the "blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you." Referencing verse 18, the Old Testament was dedicated with blood. Hebrews 12:24 reads, "Jesus [is] the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling," which occurred once. There is a singular application of blood in the dedication of the Old and New Testament dispensations and in the individual experience of salvation.

Hebrews 10:1 tells us, "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things." One rendering says the Old Testament was "a crude outline" of types and shadows. They were typical, but to rightly divide the Word of Truth, we must recognize that the blood of Christ was efficient, or efficacious, and performed a singular work. First John 1:7 says, "But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." There is no Scriptural support for two applications of blood.

Sanctification, even in the Old Testament, was an ongoing event converse to blood applications to the people. Leviticus 8:14 talks about the sin offering. Hebrews 9:21 says, "He sprinkled with blood," referring to Leviticus 8:15, which reads, "And he slew it; and Moses took the blood, and put it upon the horns of the altar round about with his finger, and purified the altar, and poured the blood at the bottom of the altar, and sanctified it, to make reconciliation upon it."

According to verse 14, this application of blood came from "the sin offering." The purpose, according to verse 15, was "to make reconciliation." In other words, it was a type of Christ who, according to Hebrews 9:26, is our sin offering. Moses sanctified the altar, but there was no application of blood on the people on this occasion.

#### **The Consecration of the Priesthood**

Leviticus 8:22-24 deals with the "ram of consecration," which was part of a onetime installation of these Levitical priests. A blood application consecrated Aaron, the high priest, and his sons into the priesthood. In Exodus, Chapter 29, Moses followed through with the instructions given to him on the mount. He sanctified the Tabernacle, the vessels, and the officers of the Old Testament covenant, the Levitical priests, which occurred once.

Exodus 29:20-22 states: "Then shalt thou kill the ram, and take of his blood, and put it upon the tip of the right ear of Aaron, and upon the tip of the right ear of his sons, and upon the thumb of their right hand, and upon the great toe of their right foot, and sprinkle the blood upon the altar round about.

"And thou shalt take of the blood that is upon the altar, and of the anointing oil, and sprinkle



it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon the garments of his sons with him: and he shall be hallowed, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him. Also thou shalt take of the ram the fat and the rump, and the fat that covereth the inwards, and the caul above the liver, and the two kidneys, and the fat that is upon them, and the right shoulder; for it is a ram of consecration."

This blood was not dealing with sin. It did not come from the sin offering, but from the "ram of consecration." It was not to deal with sin, but with consecration. It served as a type. Verse 20 talks about putting it on the right ear. What does that tell us? Our ears need to be consecrated. Jesus said in Matthew 13:16-17: "But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." Seven times in the Revelation, Jesus said the same thing: "He that hath an ear, let him hear." The Greek word for *hear* means "heed." We could say, "Heed what the spirit saith."

Hebrews 3:1 tells us Christ is the "High Priest of our profession," but we are the priests. Revelation 1:6 says, "And hath made us kings and priests." Revelation

5:10 reads, "And hast made us unto our God kings and priests." According to Romans 5:17, we shall "reign in life" on the earth, not in a supposed utopian society to come.

### Sanctification – An Ongoing Event

First Peter 2:21 says, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." First John 2:6 states, "He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." Friend, just as Christ had a keen ear to hear, we need an anointed, sanctified ear to hear what the Spirit says.

In Exodus 29:20, we read about the blood "upon the thumb of their right hand." Why not the left hand? What is the meaning of the right hand? Galatians 2:9, when Paul went up to Jerusalem, states, "When James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship." The right hand denotes fellowship.

First Corinthians 15:33 says, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." Another version says, "Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character.'" We need to be cautious about whom we fellowship and associate with. We can become corrupt if we get involved with the wrong people. Also, Exodus 29:20 talks about the blood being applied to the "right foot." Hebrews 12:13 says, "And make straight paths for your feet." How? Verse 14 reads, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness." We need to walk right, walk in holiness, and make straight paths for our feet.

Leviticus 8:22 tells us, "And he brought the other ram, the ram of consecration." Then we

read in verse 30, "And Moses took of the anointing oil, and of the blood which was upon the altar, and sprinkled it upon Aaron, and upon his garments, and upon his sons, and upon his sons' garments with him; and sanctified Aaron, and his garments, and his sons, and his sons' garments with him." Again, the blood was upon the altar, but it came from "the other ram, the ram of consecration." In verse 23, we read Moses "slew it."

These Scriptures in Leviticus are the fulfillment of what was actually implemented according to the instructions given in Exodus. The blood from the ram of consecration was on the altar. They took the blood and put it on the men and their clothes, which was a type of what Isaiah 61:10 calls "the garments of salvation." Again, the blood was not from the sin offering or for any blood cleansing, but it came from the

"ram of consecration." The ram's life was forfeited for the purpose of consecration. We must yield our lives for the same purpose.

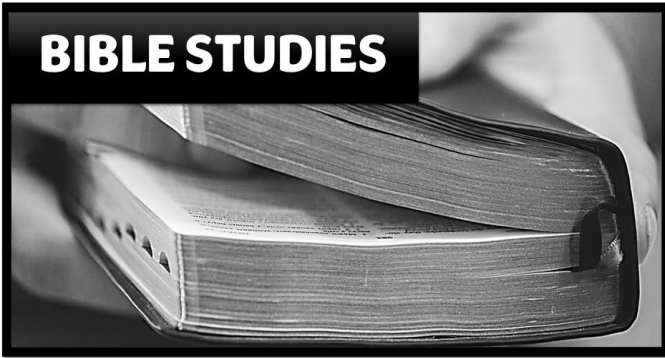
We trust you can see the truth that the expression *sanctify* does not speak of a singular event. Sanctification is continual. Under the old economy, which is a type of the new, many things and many occasions were sanctified, and many times when they were sanctified, it involved no cleansing or blood application whatsoever. It is necessary to establish this foundation because the New Testament is premised on Old Testament events and types. We need to understand sanctification in the Old Testament to understand the realities and truths of sanctification in this New Testament dispensation.

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## BIBLE STUDIES



# THE CONSCIENCE



## QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Have you heard the saying, "Let your conscience be your guide"? These words have been used in popular songs and movies, but are they in the Bible? Can your conscience be trusted? Some artists have depicted the conscience as an angel, whispering into one's ear to counter the advice given by the devil who is whispering into the opposite ear. Is this an accurate picture?

What is your conscience? How does it work? Does everyone have a conscience? The Bible speaks of having a "good conscience" (1 Timothy 1:5) and a "pure conscience" (1 Timothy 3:9), but it also speaks of an "evil conscience" (Hebrews 10:22). Why might some people have a good conscience or even a tender conscience while others have an evil conscience or seemingly have no conscience? Sometimes when one has done wrong, you might hear the words, "He acted in good conscience." What does that mean? These are good questions, and we can find the answers in God's Word.

## BIBLICAL EXAMPLES

The first time the word *conscience* is found in the Bible is in John, Chapter 8. The scribes and Pharisees brought a woman "taken in adultery" to Jesus, trying to tempt (or test) Jesus to say something they could use against Him. Jesus "with his finger wrote on the ground." Then He said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." After Jesus wrote on the ground a second time, verse 9 tells us, "And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one." Something in Jesus' words, or perhaps what He wrote on the ground, pricked their conscience (made them feel guilty). Here we see conscience working to convict people of their own wrongdoing.

The second time we find the word *conscience* in the Bible is found in Acts 23:1. There Paul said, "I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Yet, before his encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus,

Paul had "persecuted the church of God, and wasted it" (Galatians 1:13). In Acts 26:9, Paul said he "was [once] persuaded that it was my duty to do many things contrary to and in defiance of the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (*Amplified Bible*). How could Paul say this was done in "good conscience"? From this, we see that the conscience can be wrong.

What determines if our conscience is working as God wants it to? Hebrews 5:14 and Hebrews 12:11 both tell us the secret to having a pure or good conscience. The conscience must be "exercised." In other words, it must be educated and trained. How does one train his or her conscience? We read that Paul exercised himself "to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men" (Acts 24:16). Acts 24:14 tells us how he did this: "believing all things which are written in the law and in the prophets." For Paul to believe "all things" in the Old Testament, he had to KNOW what those things were. Paul had a "good conscience" because he had educated his conscience in the Word of God.

The Bible must be the standard used in determining whether something is right or wrong. In the days of the judges, we read, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (Judges 21:25). The Israelites rejected God's standard and determined right or wrong based on their feelings. However, we cannot trust our feelings or our heart to guide us. Jeremiah 17:9 says, "The heart is deceitful above all things." This emphasizes the great need to let the Bible be our standard for good and evil. Bible reading and Bible study are vital if you are going to have a good and pure conscience.

## AN UNINFORMED CONSCIENCE

One definition of *conscience* is "an internal compass that gives moral guidance when properly educated in Biblical truth." An untrained or uninformed conscience can cause people to say they have a "clear conscience." They do not feel bad about what they are doing. Their conscience is uneducated and insensitive. Will God hold people accountable for their actions if they do not feel those actions are wrong? Does not knowing that you were speeding while driving your car on the highway spare you from a speeding ticket? Just as getting your driver's license requires you to know the laws of the highway, God has a manual that He expects you to read as well. God will be patient with you, but you must put forth the effort to read His Word and know what it says.

Another result often seen from an uninformed conscience is an overly-sensitive conscience. Some people who have made the decision to be saved and live for God continually feel condemned over the smallest things. They often feel they have done something wrong when they have not. The Bible describes this as a "weak conscience" (1 Corinthians 8:12). A tender-hearted person is usually more likely to experience this. One of the best ways to overcome a physical weakness is to exercise. So it is

spiritually. The best way to strengthen your conscience is to educate it in God's Word.

## WHAT KIND OF CONSCIENCE DO YOU HAVE?

When writing to the young pastor Timothy, Paul warned about people who would "depart from the faith . . . having their conscience seared with a hot iron" (1 Timothy 4:1-2). It is believed Paul was referring to the practice of branding criminals on the forehead. Another word for "seared" is *cauterized*, and the definition is "to make insensible, or unaware of something." How does someone sear their conscience? By refusing to obey what God has shown them to do, and by ignoring their conscience. Each time it becomes easier and easier until a spiritual callus forms. Right and wrong will become a matter of opinion instead of what God says.

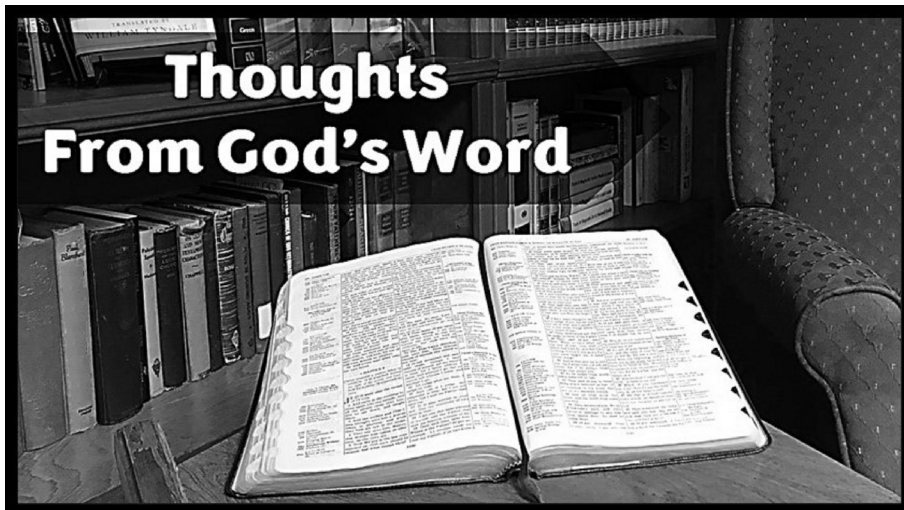
There is another type of conscience spoken of in the

Bible. Paul wrote to the saints in the city of Corinth of having a "conscience [which] testifies that we have conducted ourselves . . . not in fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God" (2 Corinthians 1:12, *Amplified Bible*). When you continually exercise your conscience by hearing, reading, and obeying God's Word, it will testify to others of your walk with God.

What are you doing with your conscience? Are you exercising it as you should? Are you listening to it when it "pricks" you? Or do you ignore it and override it? Do you have a good conscience or has it become hardened?

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*This Bible Study is part of a youth Sunday school lesson available at [GodsAcres.org](http://GodsAcres.org). Click on "Resources" and "Sunday School (Youth)."*



The Bible says "do not be afraid" or "fear not" at least 365 times—one reminder every day for a year that we can live above fear. When thoughts of fear come into your mind, they cause a certain level of anxiety or anticipation. Often there is a physical reaction where the nervous system releases hormones (adrenaline and cortisol) that can cause the heart to race, cold hands, rapid breathing, shakiness, or even the feeling of passing out.

Fear is a very real feeling, but most of the time, it is created in our imagination. What we fear has not

even happened yet. The devil knows our mind is a great place to start, so he plants thoughts of fear about tomorrow, the unknown, witnessing to others, stepping out to testify or sing, and simply trusting God's direction for our lives.

God's Word lets us know: "There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love" (1 John 4:18). The enemy would like nothing more than to keep us in torment, fearing to do anything. When thoughts of fear begin to torment you, remember "love

casteth out fear," and "God is love" (1 John 4:16).

Deuteronomy 31:6 reads, "Be strong and of a good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the LORD thy God, he it is that doth go with thee; he will not fail thee, nor forsake thee." Having determination to be strong and fearless takes a lot of courage. Martin Luther King Jr. said, "Courage is the power of the mind to overcome fear." So, be strong and have courage, knowing God's love will strengthen you. All He requires is for you to trust Him. He has promised He will not fail you.

It is not God's plan for us to live in fear. Jeremiah 29:11 says, "For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the LORD, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." I challenge you to utilize the 365 times in God's Word He tells us not to be afraid. You can read a single "fear not" Scripture every day for the next year!

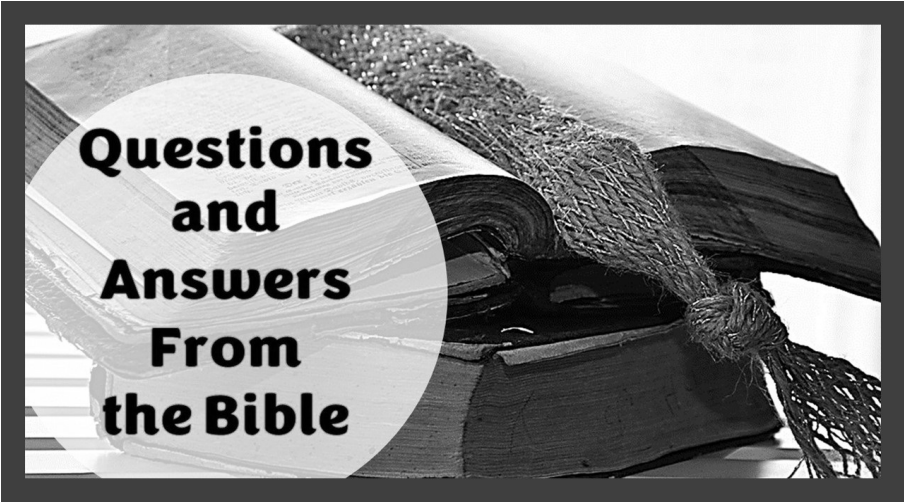
What a great way to start each morning—conquering fear!

Sister Ronda Rae Eldreth

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*Sister Ronda Rae Eldreth attends the Church of God in Warrensville, NC.*





## Questions and Answers From the Bible

### WHAT WAS THE PROPHET ISAIAH REFERRING TO WHEN HE SPOKE OF "LEVIATHAN" (ISAIAH 27:1)?

The prophetic writings of Isaiah (a "Messianic Prophet") view New Testament realities to such an extent that the Book of Isaiah has been referred to as "The Fifth Gospel" and "The Gospel of Isaiah." This passage serves as an excellent example of his writings encompassing the realities of this Gospel Day. Chapter 27 begins by establishing the prophetic time setting of this Scripture. The prophetic expression "In that day" or "at that day" is used forty-four times. All revert to the initial expression of "in the last days" (Isaiah 2:2).

On the Day of Pentecost (A.D. 33), the Apostle Peter said, "THIS IS THAT which was spoken . . . and it shall come to pass in the last days" (Acts 2:16-17). Biblically, "the last days" began on the Day of Pentecost. "This" day is "that day." Isaiah 27:1 is a prophecy with a New Testament time setting and fulfillment.

Look at how the "serpent" (Isaiah 27:1) is to be dealt with: "The LORD with his sore and great and strong sword shall punish leviathan." "Leviathan" (in the singular) is being punished by the "sword" ("the word of God"; Hebrews 4:12). "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal" (2 Corinthians 10:4). We are engaged in spiritual warfare in the New Testament dispensation. Thus, we are admonished to "put on the whole armour of God" (Ephesians 6:11) and "take

the sword of the Spirit . . . the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17). Isaiah prophetically portrayed a spiritual warfare that took place between Christ and the church and this "piercing serpent, even leviathan that crooked serpent . . . the dragon" (Isaiah 27:1).

What does this "leviathan" represent in the New Testament dispensation? "Leviathan" is mentioned five times in the Scriptures. There was a literal creature of this type known to the Patriarch Job. He gave great detail concerning this creature (Job 41:1-34). Asaph wrote of "the heads of leviathan" (Psalm 74:14). This verse in the Hebrew and the Greek *Septuagint* says "heads" (plural). Yet, the personal pronoun "him" is representative of a single entity. Isaiah and Psalms speak of "leviathan" being defeated.

Let us put the truth of these verses together. "In that day" reveals the prophetic reality is this New Testament dispensation. "Leviathan" is called "the dragon" in our text (singular). It was an enemy to be dealt with by the "sword" (the "word"). The "dragon" ("serpent") has "heads" (plural). The same description is in Revelation 12:3—a "dragon, having seven heads." He is also called "that old serpent" (Revelation 12:9). This "dragon" was an enemy in spiritual warfare: "Michael [a symbol of Christ] and his angels fought against the dragon" (Revelation 12:7). This does not portray a

carnal warfare; what brought them victory was "they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (Revelation 12:11).

What is this "dragon" ("serpent" or "leviathan")? *Strong's Expanded Dictionary of Bible Words With Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary* defines the Hebrew word "as a symbol of Babylon." What part of Babylon? Revelation 16:19 says Babylon is "divided into three parts." Revelation 12:3 gives identifying factors: "a great red dragon." The "red dragon" was "a Roman symbol cavalry units carried on their flags" (*Ancient Pages.com*). This verse tells us the "dragon" ("serpent") had "seven heads and ten horns." In symbolic language, "heads" represent government (Isaiah 9:6) and "horns" represent kingdoms (Daniel 8:20). The historian Machiardi described how the pagan Roman Empire had seven distinct different "heads" (types of government in its pagan form). Later, when it began to decline and divide, it was broken into "ten minor kingdoms."

This was the first opposing force to the morning-time church. As Isaiah 27:1 describes, the "sword" (or Word) wielded by the morning-time brethren slayed this "dragon." Its effectiveness and even its existence were destroyed. "Another great event that marks the close of this period of time, A.D. 270, is the division and decline of the Roman Empire" (*A History of the Church* by Wickersham, page 104). I trust we can see "leviathan" (Isaiah 27:1) is used as a representation of a New Testament reality the church faced and defeated, the pagan Roman Empire.

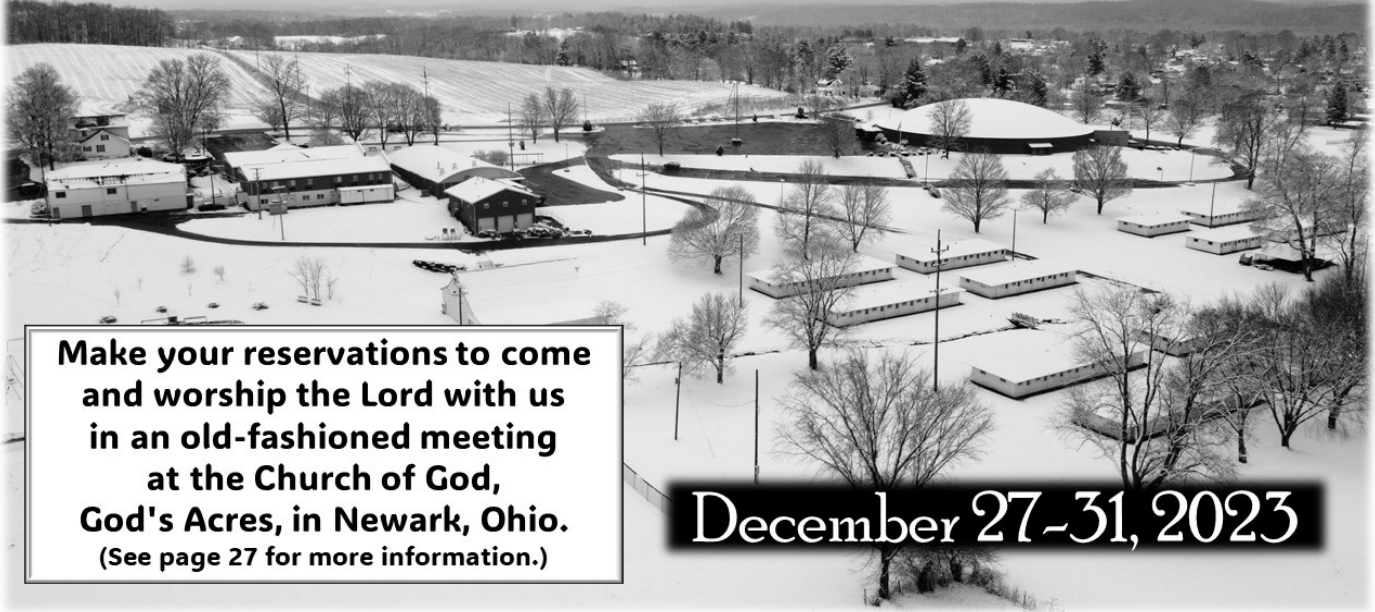
(For more information, or explanation, of Revelation, Chapter 12, please see *The Book of Revelation Explained, Volume IV.*)

Brother Earl R. Borders

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*Brother Earl R. Borders is the pastor of the Church of God in Summersville, WV.*

# 2023 Winter Camp Meeting



**Make your reservations to come and worship the Lord with us in an old-fashioned meeting at the Church of God, God's Acres, in Newark, Ohio. (See page 27 for more information.)**

**December 27-31, 2023**

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# Upcoming Meetings

## November 8-12 — STEWARTVILLE, AL

**REVIVAL & FELLOWSHIP MEETING:** The Church of God, 1950 Goodwater Hwy, Sylacauga, AL 35150  
Service times: Wed.-Fri. 7 p.m.; Sat. 10 a.m. & 6 p.m.; Sun. 10 a.m. & 5 p.m.  
Evangelist: Brother Earl R. Borders from Summersville, WV

## November 22-26 — CANBY, OR

**ANNUAL THANKSGIVING & FELLOWSHIP MEETING:** Church of God, 522 NW 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave, Canby, OR 97013  
Services times: Wed. 7 p.m.; Thur. 10:30 a.m.; Fri. & Sat. 7 p.m.; Sun. 10:45 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Evangelist: Brother Mike Wilks from Newark, OH  
For more information, contact: Pastor David Stegmeier @ 503-313-0227

## December 6-12 — PHOENIX, AZ

**REVIVAL:** Church of God, 3450 West Grovers Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85053  
Service times: 7 p.m. nightly; Sun. 10 a.m. (children's Sunday school) & 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m.  
Evangelist: Brother Earl R. Borders from Summersville, WV

## December 27-31 — NEWARK, OH

**CAMP MEETING:** Church of God, 675 N Cedar Street, Newark, OH 43055  
Three services daily: 10 a.m., 3 p.m. & 7 p.m.  
Please Note: The first service begins Wednesday at 7 p.m.  
For lodging reservations, call 740-345-1213 or visit us @ [GodsAcres.org](http://GodsAcres.org)  
(Click on "Events" and "Dates and Reservations")  
For more information, contact: Pastor Roger L. Decker @ 740-344-2543



## 2024 Camp Meeting Dates

The Church of God,  
God's Acres

June 16 - 23  
July 28 — August 4\*  
December 27 - 31

\*Please note: due to schools starting earlier, the  
Fall Camp Meeting date has been changed

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