

The Times of Our Lives:
The Wisdom of Solomon

The Times of Our Lives:
The Wisdom of Solomon
By
Marjorie A. Younce



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By
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“The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be;
and that which is done is that which shall be done:
and there is no new thing under the sun.”
Ecclesiastes 1:9

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About this Book

This book was originally intended to be a book of poetry based on the famous “Time Poem” of Ecclesiastes 3:1-8.

As I read the Book of Ecclesiastes, its author, King Solomon, stepped right out of its pages. In person! You remember him from Sunday School. When he became King of Israel, he went to the Tabernacle to pray. God said to him in a dream, “Ask what I shall give thee.” Most other men would have asked for riches, but Solomon asked for an understanding heart. That is the good about him that we heard in Sunday School.

“And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; (11)

Behold, I have done according to thy words: lo, I have given thee a wise and an understanding heart; so that there was none like thee before thee, neither after thee shall any arise like unto thee. (12)

And I have also given thee that which thou hast not asked, both riches, and honour: so that there shall not be any among the kings like unto thee all thy days” (1 Kings 3:11-13).

Happily ever after, right? No. This is not Camelot, and the tale of a mythical King Arthur. There will be no “Happily ever-aftering” here. We find out Solomon is only human, and very like the rest of us. There is no “Once upon a time,” that ends up “happily ever after,” in real life.

Solomon looked back, and beckoned to the rest of his dysfunctional family, and some supporting characters, all of whom found their way into this book. Let’s hope we can all take a bow when the curtain falls on our final page.

When you finish the book I hope you will know the answers to questions like: How were people saved during Old Testament times, Who was King David talking about when he said, “What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruah?” Who was Shimei? Why was King David so adamant that Solomon should execute Joab? There will be many situations experienced by Solomon and his family, that modern families experience today. Then, again, there will some that modern families will not experience. Praise the Lord for that!

This book has everything going for it that the world loves. It is drawn from the lives of the first three kings of the Nation of Israel, and has love, hate, court intrigue, enemies of the righteous, salvation, and prophecy.

A passage from the Book of Ecclesiastes, Chapter 3:1-8, has the dubious distinction of topping the music charts as a result of being included in a song by composer, Pete Seeger. But, this book will not make the “Best Seller” list. Why? Because it is truth taken strictly from the Bible.

The context of this book is taken from 1 and 2 Samuel, 1 and 2 Kings, 1 and 2 Chronicles, and the Book of Ecclesiastes. There is a cross-reference in the back for every verse in Ecclesiastes. Surprisingly, Ecclesiastes 9:14,15 is not a parable, as many think. It is the historical account of 2 Samuel 20:13-22. It is similar to what the Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 12:2, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, ...". The "man" Paul was speaking about was himself.

Solomon penned the Proverbs, one or two of the Psalms, Ecclesiastes, and the Song of Solomon. Many literary quotes have been taken from Ecclesiastes. Although Solomon wrote many other books, none exist today, except those in the Bible.

The life of King David is the only one, exhaustively, examined from the time of his childhood until death. It is an open book like no other. Even his state of mind is revealed in the Psalms, like a diary open to our review. How would our lives look if subjected to this scrutiny?

The Apostle Paul tells that we are to learn from the life experiences related in the Old Testament.

"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. (11)

Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall. (12)

There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. "

(1 Corinthians 10:11-13).

You say, "Well, what about the life of Christ?" Now, you are talking about the Author of the Bible, and His story extends from "In the beginning God," the very first verse of Genesis, to "...Even so, come, Lord Jesus," in Revelation 22:20, and to the last "Amen," of Revelation 22:21.

Most of the life experiences of Solomon, and his extended family, are common to mankind. I pray we can learn from them.

"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope" (Romans 15:4).

Yes, there are some poems worked in...

The book is definitely enhanced by Rachel York's stunning art work. She is a married, stay-at-home mother of two children, and a dedicated Christian who is active in her church, the Good News Bible Church of Cohasset, Minnesota. We thank the Lord for her.

My husband, of 62 years, is Dr. Max D. Younce, the pastor of Heritage Bible Church.

From both Rachel and I, please enjoy your trip into one of the most exciting times in Biblical History.

The Anvil of God's Word

Last eve I paused before a blacksmith's door
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime.
And looking in, I saw old hammers on the floor,
Worn by the beating years of time.

“How many anvils have you had,” said I,
“To wear and batter all these hammers so?”
“Just one,” said he, then with a twinkle in his eyes,
“The anvil wears the hammers out you know.”

And so I thought, the anvil of God's word,
For ages skeptic blows have beat upon.
Yet though the noise of falling blows was heard
The anvil is unharmed—the hammers gone!

Source unknown



“And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin: (28) And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.” (Matthew 6:28,29)

Introduction

Time Taken in Biblical Context

Our Bible has two sections, the Old Testament (Genesis to Malachi), and the New Testament (Matthew to Revelation). The Bible is one book of Scripture, with a total of sixty-six books, forty different authors, living at different times, in different parts of the world, most of whom did not know each other. They were written down, from the time God gave Moses the Pentateuch to write down, by inspiration; until the Book of Revelation was given, by inspiration, to the Apostle John, in approximately 96 A.D. God's Word is only inspired in the original text. The Pentateuch is made up of Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. There are no inspired translations.

Taken in context, there is not one contradiction of Scripture to be found in the entire Bible. A text is a particular verse, or passage. To determine, with accuracy, what your text is teaching from God's Word, you must also read what the preceding verses, and the following verses have to say. They are called the "context." You do not set a verse aside by itself. That is what the Apostle Peter meant when he said,

"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (2 Peter 1:20).

When an archaeologist lays out a "dig," he first stretches out a grid of string, and then carefully measures, and photographs, each layer going down. When an artifact is found, "in situ," meaning "in the place where it should be found," a wealth of information about the artifact can be gleaned from the area surrounding it.

We should never enter any book in God's Word, especially Ecclesiastes, without investigating our text "in situ," or the surrounding context,

Further, we learn from the last book of the Bible, the Book of Revelation, given to the Apostle John in about 96 A.D., that our Scriptures are now complete, and nothing is to be added or taken away.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: (18)

"And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book" (Revelation 22:18,19).

When verses are quoted, they should be explained. And they shall be...later, in Chapter Eleven.

Since the Bible is “one book” of Scripture, the Old Testament is not to be used without added light from the New Testament. The New Testament is not to be used without consulting the Old Testament. We often say, “The New is in the Old concealed. In the New, the Old is revealed. The Scriptures are one unit, working together as a whole, and contain all that God wants man to know.

Our study will begin with the Book of Ecclesiastes, and branch out.

One very famous preacher said, in his commentary on Ecclesiastes, “Solomon knew nothing of the New Testament.” Ah, but, Solomon was one of those people that we read about in the Old Testament, to whom God spoke personally. He did not have the New Testament Scriptures to read, but he knew the Author well, and the Author knew where to find him!

The name of the book, Ecclesiastes, means “assembly, or one who convenes an assembly.” It comes from the Greek word, “ecclesia,” which in the New Testament means “assembly, or church.” In Hebrew the title is Koheleth, and it also stands for the speaker in the book, King Solomon.

A. R. Faussett explains it this way.

“The Hebrew title of the book is Koheleth, which the speaker in it applies to himself. “I the Preacher (Koheleth) was king over Israel in Jerusalem” (Ecclesiastes 1:12).

It means an Assembler, or Convener of a meeting, and a Preacher to such a meeting. Solomon was endowed with inspired wisdom especially fitting him for the task. The Orientals delight in such meetings for grave discourse. “The Preacher” taught the people knowledge, orally;”

“And there came of all people to HEAR the wisdom of Solomon, from all kings of the earth, which had heard of his wisdom” (1 Kings 4:34).

“And she (Queen of Sheba) came to Jerusalem with a very great train, with camels that bare spices, and very much gold, and precious stones: and when she was come to Solomon, she communed with him of all that was in her heart” (2).

“Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that HEAR thy wisdom” (8).

“And all the earth sought to Solomon, to HEAR his wisdom, which God had put in his heart” (1 Kings 10:2, 8, 24).

In the Book of Ecclesiastes, Solomon paints a verbal picture of such an assembly of learned Jewish people. Picture Solomon, lecturing in the royal robes of the oriental monarch. His robes must have had threads of every hue, trimmed with gold. Remember, our Savior pointed to the “lilies of the field,” as an example of the beauty of Solomon’s raiment, and said,

“And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:” (28).

“And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these” (Matthew 6:28-29).

Get the picture?

In this assembly, he is taking the part of “the Preacher,” or “Debater” in a court of logic. The premise to be debated is, “What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?” The “man under the sun” is the natural man, the lost person who is living for himself, and not God, or, a believer who is not yielding to the Holy Spirit, and just living for himself. Who better to speak on this subject than the wisest man on earth who had everything, but “blew it” in the end?

It is reasonable to assume that since “the world” was aware of Solomon’s God-given wisdom, it also became aware of the sinful life he led in his old age. He wrote his own epitaph in these words,

Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary (perfumer) to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.
(Ecclesiastes 10:1).

There is only one life,
T’will soon be past.
Only what’s done
For Christ will last.

The Preacher

The very first verse in the Book of Ecclesiastes says, "The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem." King Solomon cast himself as a "Preacher" of long ago. Here are some words about a preacher in our time.

He may walk a little slower;
But, his voice is plainly heard,
When he brings the Sunday Sermon
Taken from God's Holy Word.

If you don't know you're going to Heaven,
You've heard the truth you must believe.
Accept Christ, now! Without delay!
And eternal life you will receive."

He explains each verse in context,
Gives each meaning in its place,
Divides the Word of Truth rightly,
So, each one can grow in grace.

Let us bow for closing prayer.
"Thank you, Lord, for eternal life.
Bless those who came to church today;
As they go out to a world of strife.

And at the end of every message,
He deftly "pulls in the strings."
For those who are without Christ,
The Gospel he clearly brings.

I pray they know your perfect peace;
So, if they are called Home tonight,
They'll wake up in Heaven with You,
In that Land Where There Is No Night."

"All men are sinners, bound for Hell.
Our works won't pay the price!
Only our Savior's precious blood
Makes the perfect sacrifice.

He silently prays as he walks to the back,
To meet each person at the door;
If someone failed to accept Christ today,
They'll come back to hear it once more.

No sinner can ever enter Heaven.
It's a glorious perfect place.
You may be good;
but, you're not perfect!
The only way in-- is Grace.

Oh, His steps may be a little slower;
But, he still can be plainly heard,
As he delivers the Gospel message
So clearly from God's Word.

...Marjorie A. Younce

The moment you believe Christ died for you,
He marks your sin debt fully paid;
With His Righteousness to your account.
The guarantee of eternal life is made.

What Time is It?

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

To every *thing there is* a season,
And a time to every purpose under the heaven:

A time to be born, and a time to die;

A time to plant, And a time to pluck up
That which is planted;

A time to kill, and a time to heal;
A time to break down, and a time to build up;

A time to weep, and a time to laugh;
A time to mourn, and a time to dance;

A time to cast away stones,
And a time to gather stones together;

A time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
A time to get, and a time to lose;

A time to keep, and a time to cast away;
A time to rend, and a time to sew;

A time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
A time to love, and a time to hate;
A time of war, and a time of peace.

Many have sunk deeply into this passage of Scripture, and have come up “very dry.” This is not a schedule that God has marked out for us, and we are simply robots keeping step with a gigantic plan. It is simply just the “way things are.” Just like lightning, everything has a positive, and a negative. Every cause has a consequence. That is life. We are born, and then, unless the Lord decides to call the church home at the Rapture, we shall die. It’s not complicated. It’s just the way things are.

“Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2).



“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over *and* gone; (11) The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing *of birds* is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;” (Ecclesiastes 2:11,12)

God knows the “things that are going to happen, if the things that have happened didn’t happen.” That is foreknowledge. He would not be an infinite God if He did not know the end from the beginning. (Isaiah 46:10). God is “not the author of confusion,” so He gives time to man so that man will know that he lives in a world of order, and not a world of chaos. (1 Corinthians 15:3).

God gave us the seasons immediately after the flood.

“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease. (Genesis 8:22)

As Solomon points out, “There is a certain time to plant, and a time to pluck up” or clean out your field. If you plant in the wrong season, such as winter, your crop will not grow. It’s just how things work.

God has set our universe in order, and all things are held together by the power of His Son, The Living Word, Jesus Christ.

“Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; (2) Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;” (Hebrews 1:2, 3).

Time begins with man, and ends with man. After Satan’s destruction of Earth, God recreated it for mankind. With our universe ticking along like clockwork, God generally allows our actions to proceed to their conclusion, good or bad. Actions have consequences. That’s just the way things are.

But, at times, God does step in to alter events, if He so wills. For instance, he may chasten a Christian who is making Him an open shame, and take him home to Heaven sooner than he expects. Because God is all-powerful, we can never rule out the miraculous. That is why we pray.

There are eight dispensations, or periods of time, laid out in Scripture, so that man knows he can expect certain things to happen in the future, and realize that time is passing by. All eight dispensations are part of the Kingdom of God, an island in God’s Sea of Eternity. Teaching the Dispensation Principle is not the purpose of the book, so, we will just name them. They are:

- First: Innocence – From Creation to Expulsion
- Second: Conscience – From the Expulsion to the Flood.
- Third: Human Government – From the Flood to the Tower of Babel
- Fourth: Promise – From the Call of Abraham to Bondage in Egypt
- Fifth: Law – From the Exodus to the Cross.
- Sixth: The Church Age of Grace – From Pentecost to the Rapture.
- Seventh: Seven-Year Tribulation – From the Rapture to the Second Coming of Christ.
- Eighth: The Kingdom – From the Second Coming to the Great White Throne Judgment.

A dispensation is a period of time in which God deals with mankind concerning his sin, and his responsibility to God. Now, mankind can look in God's Word, and realize that Calvary is over, Christ has made the payment for the world's sin, and we are somewhere in the Church Age. Man now has a way to measure the passing of time.

What time is it? It is "Church Age Eleven Forty-Five," and waiting for the upward call of the Rapture.

Anticipation

Can't you hear it? I can!
It's the silence anticipation brings.
All God's Creation holds its breath.
Someone's waiting in the wings.

Not a leaf turns on forest tree.
Nowhere can be seen a motion.
Lakes and streams are clear as glass.
There's not a wave upon the ocean.

There's nothing left to be fulfilled.
All eyes search the Eastern Sky.
When that last soul fills Christ's body,
Saints, our Redemption draweth nigh!

The Lord, Himself, shall then descend,
His mighty shout heard everywhere!
All the Saints shall together rise
To meet our Savior in the air.

God's trump leads the Angelic Host.
Our convoy to Heaven is in their care.
We must pass through Satan's domain.
He's the Prince of the Power of the Air.

All will wonder where we've gone.
And the Antichrist will soon appear.
All the answers he'll seem to have.
Men will believe each lie they hear!

Soon he'll wield world control.
Without his mark, none can buy or sell.
If you take it, you are doomed,
"A dead man walking" straight to Hell!

"What's our job while we wait?
Don't let another precious day go by.
Spread the Gospel far and wide.
Don't waste time staring at the sky.

Our Lord will come at the time appointed.
He knows the day, the hour, the minute.
Until He comes we must redeem the time,
Each day, each hour, each second in it!

We all have loved ones we must tell
That Jesus is the Truth, the Life, the Way.
If they accept his payment for their sin,
They too will be caught up on that day.

But God understands we do get weary.
And yearn to see those called Home.
Our hope, the last prayer in God's Word,
"Even so, Lord Jesus, Come."

"He which testifieth these things
saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen.
Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Revelation 22:20).

...Marjorie A. Younce



"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (4) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4-5).

Chapter One

“A Time to Be Born,”

In the manner of King Solomon, we are going to “convene an assembly” to discuss the most famous “birther” case of all time. We shall review the evidence to prove that Jesus Christ is Israel’s prophesied Messiah and King. The “Debater” is the Inspired Written Word of God.

Our Savior is one person whose time of birth could be known many years before hand, because of the prophecies given in the Ninth Chapter of Daniel. Sadly, His birth went nearly unnoticed by a nation that had turned its back on God, was not looking for Him, and which did not receive Him when He did come.

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. (11) But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:” (John 1:11-12)

"Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, (1) Saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him" (Matthew 2:1, 2).

These "wise men" were Magi, Oriental astrologers who studied the stars, and the Scriptures. They must have read Balaam’s prophecy in Numbers 24:17, “...there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel,..." We do not know how many there were, or what their names were. When they enter Jerusalem, about two years after the birth of Christ, they ask a question which stirs up, or "troubles" all Jerusalem, including King Herod.

The possibility there was a child "born" King of the Jews," was a threat to Herod’s throne, as he was not a Jew, but a hated Edomite, appointed "King" under the Romans. A threat to be eliminated. Immediately!

Herod did not know God's Word, but had to ask the scribes. The scribes knew the Word, but did not act upon it. The wise men were both hearers, and doers of the Word! How close the priests were to the Messiah, yet they did not go.

"And they said unto him, In Bethlehem of Judaea: for thus it is written by the prophet, (5) And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Juda, art not the least among the princes of Juda: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel" (Matthew 2:5-6)

Operating under the influence of Satan, Herod, then set about to destroy Christ, Satan's purpose since God pronounced sentence upon him in Genesis 3:15. It seems illogical that someone who has been around since “In the beginning God...” would believe that he could out maneuver God, when God’s plan for the salvation of man is right on schedule.

Nonetheless, Satan is always busy as he knows he has only a short time. (Revelation 12:12). The only course he has left is to take as many souls to Hell with him as he can. How does he do that? He does it through the false doctrine preached by his ministers.

“And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. (14)

Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works” 2 Corinthians 11:14,15).

Herod questioned the wise men, diligently, as to when the star had appeared, but God's plan for mankind's salvation was already in motion. The Savior had been born right on time. In fact, the only time in History when his right to the throne could be confirmed by the lineage records kept in the temple. They would be destroyed by Titus, and the Roman Army in 70 A.D.

In Luke 3:31, Nathan was a younger brother of Solomon, (1 Chronicles 3:5) the son of King David and Bathsheba, also with a right to the throne. (We know that 1 Chronicles 3:5 does not list the sons of Bathsheba in chronological order, as Solomon, also called Jedidiah, was the second born. (2 Samuel 12:25). The first born, as we know, “died on the seventh day.”

If Christ were the natural son of Joseph, He could not have occupied the throne. Both Mary and Joseph descended through Solomon's line, but Joseph's line was set aside by the curse in Jeremiah 22:28-30. Christ, being the seed of Mary through Nathan's line, bypassed the curse, and had the legal right to inherit the throne as the adopted son of Joseph. Therefore, His blood rights came through Mary, and His legal rights through Joseph. Christ then had the legal rights, and the ancestral rights to the very Throne of David.

Christ, in His Humanity, was a descendant of King David. In His Humanity, he was the Messiah, “the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29).

"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, (4) To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons" (Galatians 4:4-5).

When the Millennial Reign begins, Christ will be God who descends out the Heavens as the “King of Kings, and Lord of Lords who reigns over all the nations of the earth. (Revelation 19:11-16). King David will be the one ruling over the Nation of Israel, as a prince under Jesus Christ, the King of Kings. (Ezekiel 34:23-31).

Christ, incarnate, was the only one who could fulfill these requirements. He was the only one born during the period when the Temple was still standing, with all the records in existence from which the correct ancestry could be proven, and before the Temple's destruction in 70 A.D.

The prophet, Daniel, gives the exact time that Messiah would be cut off.

"Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince shall be seven weeks, and

threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in trou-
blous times" (25)

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself:
and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary;
and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are
determined" (Daniel 9:25, 26)

The fulfilling of the 483 years from the edict (or commandment) given in 445 B.C.
to Christ being crucified has been illustrated as the following.

445 B.C.	The Edict to Rebuild Jerusalem
33 A.D.	Age Christ Died
4 Yrs.	Calendar Off
<u>1 Yr.</u>	Difference of Months
483 Yrs.	Of Prophecy Fulfilled.

After the captivity, the genealogical records were found by Nehemiah,

"And my God put into mine heart to gather together the nobles, and the rulers, and
the people, that they might be reckoned by genealogy. And I found a register of the
genealogy of them which came up at the first, and found written therein, (5) These are
the children of the province, that went up out of the captivity, of those that had been
carried away, whom Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon had carried away, and came
again to Jerusalem and to Judah, every one unto his city;" (Nehemiah 7:5, 6).

The Temple that was built after the captivity by Ezra, and Nehemiah, in about 515
B.C., was not as large as Herod's. Surprisingly, the genealogical records were still
there, and had been maintained. Now, since the destruction of the Temple in 70 A.D.,
the only genealogical records of Christ's lineage, or the lineage any Jewish person, are
contained in the Bible.

We continue this old, familiar, story of God's wonderful plan of salvation. God
would protect this helpless young child from the ruthless Herod. When the wise men
found Christ, He would no longer be an infant in swaddling clothes; but, a young child
living in a house in Bethlehem with Mary and Joseph. The wise men did not worship
Mary. They reserved all their worship for the Savior.

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his
mother, and fell down, and worshiped him: and when they had opened their treasures,
they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh. (11) And being
warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into
their own country another way"

(Matthew 2:11, 12).

After the wise men's departure...

"...the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the
young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee
word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. (13) When he arose, he took
the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: (14) And was there
until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the
prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son" (Matthew 2:13-15).

When Herod saw that he had been tricked by the wise men, he flew into one of his typical homicidal rages and...

"...slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently enquired of the wise men. (16) Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, (17) In Rama was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not" (Matthew 2: 16-18).

Approximately 30 years later, the son of Herod the Great, Herod Antipas, handed Christ over to Pontius Pilate to be crucified. The Messiah was about to be "cut off, but not for Himself." The Jews replied to Pilate's question...

"...Pilate saith unto them, Shall I crucify your King?..-

"The chief priests answered, We have no king but Caesar." (John 19:15).

The scepter had departed from Judah (Genesis 49:10); but, praise the Lord, Shiloh," or the Messiah, had already come during the only possible time in History. He had to come within the time frame prophesied by Daniel; and, before the genealogical records and the Temple were destroyed. It was our Savior's "...time to be born." (Ecclesiastes 3:2)

The Jews could have known, nearly, the exact day of the Crucifixion. They could have lifted him up with holy hands, and said, "We know you have to go to that Cross as the Perfect Sacrifice to pay for the sins of the world." (John 1:29). We'll be waiting at the tomb."

"For God so loved the world,(that's all of us) that he gave his only begotten Son (to die on the cross to pay for mankind's sin), that whosoever (that's you) believeth in him should not perish (you will not go to Hell), but have everlasting life" (John 3:16).

Are you seeking Jesus? All you have to do is believe He died on the Cross to pay for your sins, and you have found Him!

They Followed God's Word, Not the Star

Over 300 prophecies
Christ fulfilled,
The Nation of Israel
Should have known
The time of His coming
Was drawing near,
But, He was never
Received by His own.

It was left to Magi
From parts unknown,
When they saw
"The Star of Jacob appear,"
To know it was time
For Daniel's Messiah,
The birth of Israel's
King was near.

Appearing at Jerusalem's
Gates one day,
Like a mirage
In the noon day haze.
Soon the reality
Of their arrival,
Set the streets
Of the city ablaze!

Winding their way
Through the city's streets,
Majestic and regal,
To see a King they came.
They expected all Jerusalem
To be rejoicing,
But, in Israel, who cared?
What a shame!

The news of a rightful
Heir to the throne,
Was not a joy to Herod,
But a threat!
He called them to appear
In his private court,
To see what intelligence
He could get.

He slyly asked when
They first saw the star.
They revealed
It was a two-year trip.
Now, Herod knew
The age of the child.
His exact location
Still out of his grip.

Herod gathered
The chief priests and scribes,"
"Demanding...where
Christ should be born."
"In Bethlehem, Judea,
For it's thus prophesied,"
"So close,
I could be there by morn."

Herod realized that
If he moved too soon,
Seized the wrong child,
He'd still lose his throne.
In a tone, smooth as butter,
He requested of them.
"Tell me when He's found.
I'll worship on my own."

Learned in Science; but,
Prone to deception,
They could have given
The Christ Child away.
The Magi believed
All the old king had said.
But, God sent them home
A different way.

When the Magi saw the star
Over the house,
In Bethlehem...Judea,"
As the Scribes said.
They rejoiced exceedingly
At the sight of the star,
It was proof to them
God's Prophecy had led.

“And when they were come
 Into the house,
They saw the young child
 With Mary his mother,
And fell down, and
 Worshipped Him (only):”
They worshipped the Christ,
 Not His mother.

When they did not return,
 Herod saw he was mocked.
His “Mafia” killed
 All children up to age two.
But, God sent Joseph
 And his family to Egypt.
“Out of Egypt
 I have called my son,” is true..

Through Bethlehem’s coasts
 And even up to Ramah,
Was heard the voice
 Of lamentation and grief.
Rachel “heard” weeping
 For Israel’s slain children.
Prove Jeremiah’s prophecy
 Worthy of belief.

In God’s Word, the Bible,
 “The good guys” always win!
Herod lived a life of sin
 And died a horrible death;
He tried to kill his family
 To have mourners himself.
Though it didn’t happen,
 He was bad to his last breath!

Ten fulfilled prophecies
 Should remove all your doubt,
The Babe in the Manger was
 The Christ of Calvary.
Who, for the joy set before Him,
 Paid for our sin,
Believe he died for you,
 Eternal life is free!

We don’t have to join
 A camel caravan;
Traveling for miles
 Across desert sands,
Or, look for our future
 In a sky full of stars.
We have the Bible
 Right here in our hands.

Be wise as the Magi,
 Trust Christ as Savior today.
He’ll take your sin and
 Mark it, “Paid on account.”
In exchange, He’ll give you
 His righteousness,
And more blessings
 Than you can count!

A historical fact
 That leaves no doubt,
All time is dated from
 Jesus Christ’s birth.
When you date a check
 Twenty-Sixteen A.D.
That’s Anno Domini,
 The year our Lord
Came to this earth.

...Marjorie A. Younce

And A Time to Die”

Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. (James 4:14)

The Apostle James is telling us that we should value each day as a gift from God. At some point in time, God will look down from Heaven and call our name, and we will be “absent from the body, and present with the Lord in the space of just one breath.” (2 Corinthians 5:8) Some of us know ahead of time that our departure from earth is near. Some turn their head, and in the blink of an eye, are off into eternity,

What, then, should be our most important preoccupation? The answer is obvious. We should take every opportunity we can to clearly explain to people how to go to Heaven. It is the only thing that matters.

August 19, 2016. That is the day our Precious Savior called our middle son home to be with Him. It was sudden, and hard for everyone, especially his children. I am sure he is very proud of his children, as we are, for they followed their father’s express wishes to the letter. He had his reasons and we must respect them. I know it was not easy for them.

I liked what his son had to say. “I know my father walks with the King.” We know it, too, and what a comfort that is. Even though it seems all wrong for children to go before we do, we would not wish then back for anything! I have friends whose sons and daughters have preceded them to Heaven. Now, we know a little about how that feels, also realizing that all circumstances are not the same, and everyone does not mourn in the same way. Grief is an individual thing. Praise the Lord! There is no grief in Heaven.

Going to Heaven is one trip you do not have to pack for. You do have to have your reservation paid. If you believe that Jesus Christ died on that Cross to pay for your sins, was buried, and rose again, showing Christ’s sin payment was accepted, your home in Heaven is guaranteed.

In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (13)

Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. (Ephesians 1:13-14).

Packing for Heaven

You don't need to pack for Heaven,
All you need is waiting there.
Things of this life are left behind,
We go without baggage, or a care.

Our Savior sends His Angels to fetch us,
Lest we take a wrong turn on the way.
And He waits on Heaven's threshold,
To embrace our fears away.

We are now absent from this world's cares.
There's no remembrance of sin, pain, or death.
It was "Good Night, World—Good Morning, Lord,
And it happened in the space of just one breath.

The King of the Universe stoops to take our hand,
And lead us through the Heavenly Gate,
He says, "You believed that I paid for your sin,
Now Heaven's splendors, and eternity, await.

All the wrongs we've done-- forgotten.
Taken away "by the blood of the Lamb."
Our "mortality...is swallowed up of life."
Now we "walk by sight" with the Great I Am.

We see those who wait to greet us,
Friends, and loved ones, who've gone ahead.
Some, whose faces you may not recognize,
There, because of the Gospel you have spread.

Believers have the comfort from God's Word
That they shall see their loved ones again.
"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven..."
And ...we shall be caught up together with them..."

Let us "Comfort one another with those words,"
Oh, Yes! We must grieve with sorrow's pain!
Yes, we "sorrow, but not as those without hope..."
God's Word promises we will see them all again!

...Marjorie A. Younce

"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: (16), Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. (17) Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18)



In The Shadow Of The Cross

He seemed just a helpless babe,
Nestled there upon the hay;
Even in the shadow of the Cross,
In God's protective hand he lay.

He seemed an ordinary Jewish child,
Just another mouth to feed;
Until the angels told the world,
He was mankind's greatest need.

Born the sinless Lamb of God,
The only Perfect Sacrifice,
Which would not just cover sin;
But, paid the total price.

The yearly sacrifices and offerings,
God had no pleasure in.
“...The blood of bulls and goats (could never)
Take away (our) sin.”

This Babe, our Lord, His Body gave,
As sin’s payment “once for all.”
And from the Cross, in due time,
“It is finished,” will come the call.

The Cross is only a shadow;
Until His years increase.
He’ll toddle in the carpenter shop
And have boyhood years of peace.

At Twelve, He’ll be the “Prodigy”
Confound the “Learned” in God’s Word;
Unaware they’re in the presence
Of “Jesus Christ, the Lord.”

About the intervening years,
It’s not wise to speculate;
God has His perfect time.
He may delay; but He’s never late.

Christ began at about age Thirty,
To teach and heal all who came.
When the crowds followed Him,
The Sanhedrin envied His fame.

They thought Him the Carpenter’s Son;
They said, He’s just a mortal man.
Instead of searching the Scriptures,
They closed their eyes, and evil plots began.

They did not recognize their King,
Who was standing in their midst;
Their chance to break the Roman Yoke
Vanished like the morning mist.

Our Savior set His face toward Jerusalem.
What was shadow became reality.
His death upon that bloody Cross,
Marked our sin debt “Paid” for Eternity.

They wrapped his body in a linen cloth
And laid it in a friend’s new tomb.
They rolled a stone across the door,
And left our Savior in that cold, dark room.

Suddenly, three days and nights later,
An Angel rolled that stone from the door;
Pilate’s pitiful seal was snapped!
A bright ray of light shone ‘cross the floor,

Revealing the place where Christ should lie,
Was filled with empty grave clothes.
Said Angels, “Why seek the living among the dead?
He promised, and He arose!”

By the door lay a fragment of manger,
An old scrap of wood they could use.
One side said, “Sealed on Order of Pilate”;
The other, “This is Jesus, the King of the Jews.”

As we celebrate this Christmas,
Let’s remember Salvation’s cost.
It could have not been accomplished
Without the shadow of the Cross.

Poem: Marjorie A. Younce

Background Picture: Rachel A. York

Our Savior Had...A Predicted Time to Die...

The date and time of our Savior's crucifixion and resurrection were presented in prophetic Scripture for Israel, so they would know when it was time for the Messiah to be "cut off" (crucified). It is presented in the details of the Passover, which Moses gave by inspiration, in the Book of Exodus. It is, also, predicted from the day the Ark rested on the Mountains of Ararat. These details were also given to Moses, by inspiration, in the Book of Genesis.

The unblemished lamb for the Passover was to be selected on the Tenth Day of the First Month of the Religious Calendar, Nisan/Abib (our April). That was the day Christ rode into Jerusalem for the Triumphal Entry. On the Fourteenth Day of Nisan, the Lamb was slain, and the Passover was eaten. That was the day He died for the sin of the world.

"This day came ye out in the month Abib." (Exodus 13:4)

"This month shall be unto you the beginning of months (IN THE RELIGIOUS CALENDAR): it shall be the first month of the year to you." (Exodus 12:1-2)

Then, we have the Ark. What in the world does the Ark have to do with the Resurrection of Christ? I repeat. The Ark is a Type of Christ. Moses recorded, in the Civil Calendar, that the Ark would rest on the Seventh Month of the Civil Calendar, which is April, or Abib. on the Seventeenth Day, the exact day Christ would be resurrected.

"The ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat. (Genesis 8:4)

. How did Moses know to record in the Civil Calendar that the Ark (a Type of Christ) would rest on the seventh month of the Civil Calendar, which is April; and the seventeenth day, the exact day Christ would be resurrected? There is no way Moses could pick the seventh month (April) out of 12 months which would not be revealed until many years later. The answer is very simple and easy to understand, and described in God's Word.

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. (20) For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. (2 Peter 1:20-21)

This leads to an obvious question. Are you in the Ark of Salvation? Have you trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior?

Did King Solomon know about this? Most assuredly! Like every other Jewish person in the Old Testament, when he made his sacrifices, and celebrated Passover, he did it looking forward to the Cross. He was believing in "the Lamb of God who would come to take away the sin of the world."

The next day John (the Baptist) seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. (John 1:29)

When Paul wrote in Ephesians 4:8, “When he (Christ) ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, Solomon was in that “cloud of saints” that accompanied Christ out of Paradise, and into Heaven.

Israel’s Civil and Religious Calendar vs. Modern Day Calendars

Order of Months In Civil Calendar	List of Months In Jewish Calendar	Order of Months Religious Calendar	Our Present Day Calendar	
1st Month	Tishri (Ethanin)	(7 th Month)	October	10 th Month
2 nd Month	Cheshvan (Bul)	(8 th Month)	November	11 th Month
3 rd Month	Kislev (Chisleu)	(9 th Month)	December	12 th Month
4 th Month	Tevet (Tebeth)	(10 th Month)	January	1 st Month New Year
5 th Month	Shevat (Sebat)	(11 th Month)	February	2 nd Month
6 th Month	Adar	(12 th Month)	March	3 rd Month
7 th Month	Abib (Nisan)	(1st Month)	April	4 th Month
CIVIL CALENDAR Noah’s Time “The ark rested in the seventh month, on the seventeenth day of the month, upon the mountains of Ararat.” (Genesis 8:4)	ISRAEL’S RELIGIOUS CALENDAR AFTER THE EXODUS Abib, or April - New First Month “This day came ye out in the month Abib.” (Exodus 13:4) “This month shall be unto you the beginning of months: it shall be the first month of the year to you.” (Exodus 12:1-2)		↓	↓
8 th Month	Iyar (Zif)	(2 nd Month)	May	5 th Month
9 th Month	Sivan	(3 rd Month)	June	6 th Month
10 th Month	Tammuz	(4 th Month)	July	7 th Month
11 th Month	Ab	(5 th Month)	August	8 th Month
12 th Month	Elul	(6 th Month)	September	9 th Month

Stopping By Woods on a Snowy Evening

Were you ever in the woods on one of the first-of-winter days. There is no wind. Suddenly, you see them! Snowflakes. One of God's tiny, crystal wonders, no two alike.

This is one of my favorite poems. It is by Robert Frost and he is describing a gentleman who just stopped his horse to observe the beauty of the winter snow. He hopes his friend, whom he is going to visit, will not see this "foolish" thing he is doing.

But...it is also a poem about time, and describes all of us...who "have promises to keep, and miles to go before I sleep. What have you promised the Lord that you would do for him. This book is one of mine. Enjoy the poem. Robert Frost has many others. Turn off the television set and sit down with a book of his poetry some snowy evening.

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep
Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep.
And miles to go before I sleep.



Morning Glories. Picture by Rachel A. York

“For his anger endureth but a moment; in his favour is life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” “Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early.” (Psalm 30:5; 57:8)

Chapter Two

“A Time to Plant, And a Time to Pluck Up...”

“I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: (4) I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all *kind of* fruits: (5) I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:”

(Ecclesiastes 2:4-6)

More plants and plant products, a total of thirty-three, are associated with Solomon than with any other person in the Bible. There are eighteen plants and/or their products unique to his writings. Plants found nowhere else in the Bible are algum wood (positive identification still unknown), caper, henna, saffron, and walnut. In addition, Solomon's image of almond flowers; the apple tree for human stature; hyssop ecology; gourds, lilies and pomegranates as decorations; pomegranate flesh for ruddiness; fragrance of mandrake fruits; olive wood in construction; spice tree for old age; and palm and wheat for feminine beauty is unique among Bible authors.

When the Bible says, “he (Solomon) spake of trees, from the cedar ... to the hyssop,” he was speaking of all plants, from the greatest to the least. (1 Kings 4:33) The Spirit of God has seen fit to preserve comparatively few memorials of the fruits of Solomon's God-given intellect. The greater part of those writings accredited to him were not preserved, or were lost during the Babylonian Captivity. They were not inspired Scripture.

A common saying, today, is “A mind is a terrible thing to waste.” It is obvious that Solomon did not waste his, but enjoyed learning different things about God's creation. A good thing when those things were spiritual. A bad thing when they were just used to satisfy his fleshly desires.

Not only did Solomon use his God-given intellect for botany, he used it in the fields of engineering and hydrology. The three pools he constructed to water his terraced gardens can still be seen today.

The three large reservoirs, following each other in line, stand several dozen meters apart, each pool with a roughly 20 foot drop to the next. They are rectangular, partly hewn into the bedrock, and partly built, between 387–587 feet long and 26–52 feet deep, with a total capacity of well over 75 million US gallons). Source: Wikipedia.

Originally, they were spring fed. Over time, and with alterations by the Romans, Herod's construction, and the destruction in 70 A.D. by Titus, and the Roman Army, they are not the beautiful gardens and pools as Solomon originally built them. But, you can go to Israel, and see them today. The remains of the terraced hillsides can also be seen. Unfortunately, they are in the Palestinian part of Israel.

I imagine that King Solomon would very much enjoy sitting down with local farmers and ranchers to exchange information about inches of rainfall, expenses, and yields. He would know the farmer's “break-even” point to the lowest decimal. Anyone

who could corner the gold market to the point that silver was as worthless as rocks, would love to discuss profit and loss. He was the consummate business man. With Israel's prime position as the land bridge between Egypt and Asia, he knew the "art of the deal." He had brokered many trade alliances with the nations around Israel. As Solomon would say, "There is nothing new under the sun..."

Not to be outdone, the liberal theologians, say Solomon did not really build the pools, they are just named after him. To them, God has this to say,

Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. (16)

For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. (Romans 16:17-18).

Solomon reveled in the beauty of God's Creation. He said,

Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

Why did he say this? He knew better than anyone the trouble that even Christian young people can get into.

And, like many young people today, he was self-absorbed. He had "I" trouble. Notice in the above Scriptures how many times he uses the pronoun "I" to refer to himself. It was all about him. We should always remember "By the grace of God I am what I am..." (1 Corinthians 15:10).

What should Solomon, and all of us, remember?

What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? (19)

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20).

Dear Lord: Do not let me get so preoccupied with the everyday task of just getting things done, that I am too busy to go to work in your fields. I am positive that ten-thousand years from now in eternity, I won't even care there is dust on the coffee table, or that I haven't emptied the dishwasher.

"Then Cometh Harvest"

Are you working in the Harvest;
Bringing in the sheaves;
Or, sitting idly on the sidelines;
While the Holy Spirit grieves?

This is not the time to shirk,
There are souls yet to be won.
The day is almost over,
It's the setting of the sun.

When the Lord counts your sheaves,
Will they be many; or, be few?
Each sheaf is a precious soul,
In Heaven because of you.

"Lord, I cannot reap today;
My finances are so few.
I have to make a living first;
And then I'll work for you.

It's just too hot, it makes me ill.
I'll come tonight when the air is cool."
Says the Lord, "The time's too short,
To think of just yourself is cruel!"

Will you try to make excuse;
And suffer shame before His gaze?
Or, will you have a garner full,
And be rejoicing in His praise?

Wouldn't it be wonderful
To hear the Savior say,
"Well done, thou faithful servant!"
On that grand and glorious day?

The message is to just believe
Christ paid your price for sin.
It's not by works of righteousness;
But faith that gets you in,

To a life that is eternal,
No assurance should you lack.
Sealed by the Holy Spirit,
And never taken back!

When we gather up in Heaven,
And the Harvest is all in,
Will your family be the ones,
You did not have time to win?

Or, will you rejoice in wages full;
And gain the soul winner's crown?
Not a crown to wear in pride;
But at the Savior's feet cast down.

Behold, this message give I unto you,
The fields are already white.
There's not much time left to reap,
For, Christ may come tonight!"

Marjorie A. Younce

Say not ye, There are yet four months, and *then* cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.
(John 4:35)



“To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:” (Ecclesiastes 3:1).

Chapter Three

“A Time to Kill, and A Time to Heal”

“A Time to Kill...”

As dramatic actors often say, “Timing is everything.”

The word “kill” in this verse is translated from the Hebrew word, “harag,” and means “to smite with deadly intent.” The same word is used in Genesis 4:8 when Cain “slew” Abel.

“And Cain talked with Abel his brother: and it came to pass, when they were in the field, that Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew (harag) him” (Genesis 4:8).

Cain “killed,” or murdered, his brother because he was angry that God had accepted Abel’s sacrifice, and rejected his. When Abel sacrificed the “firstling,” or the best of his flock, that innocent lamb, guilty of nothing, was the sacrifice of faith looking forward to Calvary.

When Cain offered “the fruit of the ground,” or the work of his own hands, that was actually a rejection of the coming Messiah, Jesus Christ. Cain’s sacrifice was a bloodless offering, and did not represent Christ as the “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29). Hebrews 9:22 tells us...

“And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission of sin.”

When Cain killed, or slew (Hebrew “harag”), Abel, it was First Degree Murder, pure and simple!

Let’s listen in as the LORD questions Cain,

“Where is Abel thy brother?”

Cain answers Almighty God in an arrogant manner,

“And he said, I know not: Am I my brother’s keeper?” (9).

God renders Cain’s judgment to fit the time before the flood.

“What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother’s blood crieth unto me from the ground. (10)

And now art thou cursed from the earth, which hath opened her mouth to receive thy brother’s blood from thy hand; (Genesis 4:9-11)

Hebrews 11:4 says that Abel’s blood speaks to us today from the pages of God’s Word.

“By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh” (Hebrews 11:4).

By Abel’s sacrifice of the “firstling” of his flock, God says “he obtained witness that he was righteous.” He offered his sacrifice, looking forward to the perfect Lamb of God (Christ) who would take away the sin of the world. The blood that Christ shed on Calvary for the sin of the world is the bedrock of the Bible. Even though Abel is dead, he speaks to us, today, from the pages of God’s Word.

“Not as Cain, who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother’s righteous”
(1 John 3:12).

Cain did not receive righteousness, as his sacrifice reveals he was not looking forward to the Cross.

God did not render the judgment of death on Cain, immediately. He only placed a mark on Cain, and sent him from His presence to show the consequences of sin when it goes unpunished. After the Flood, in Genesis 9:6, God instituted the death penalty.

“Whoso sheddeth man’s blood, by man shall his blood be shed: for in the image of God made he man” (Genesis 9:6).

God has given governments the right to take a person’s life, judicially, when that person has taken someone else’s life. We find that validated in Romans 13:4.

“For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil” (Romans 13:4).

Capital punishment was granted by God, for moral reasons, to give governments the right to render justice. Capital punishment is also a deterrent to murder.

My husband, a former police officer, often recounts the night he observed four suspicious individuals, in an out-of-town car, cruising the streets of Troy, Ohio. They had come to town to “fill orders” for chain saws by stealing them from a certain business place in Troy. When my husband, with no back-up, took the four men into custody for questioning about another burglary, a gun, and a letter asking for two chain saws was found under a blanket in the back seat. All four had long, criminal records.

My husband asked the occupant of the back seat, and owner of the gun, Arthur “Buddy” Rogers, why he did not shoot through the door of the car. Rogers replied promptly, “I’m not going to burn in the electric chair for any “blankety-blank” cop!” At that time, the State of Ohio had capital punishment, and executions took place in a room where the electric chair, nick-named “Old Sparky,” sat.

Capital punishment is definitely a deterrent to murder! That gun that Arthur “Buddy” Rogers had under a blanket in the back seat of that car had large enough caliber to make a huge hole in the car door, and my husband. I could have been a widow, and our children could have been orphans in the blink of an eye!

Americans should always resolve to back up law enforcement. They are not perfect, but they are out there, risking their lives for us every day, and many times, with a target on their back. It is a blot on the patriotism of our country that certain groups degrade law enforcement, for political reasons.

As Solomon says, “There is nothing new under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes. 1:9).

One question that always appears on police examinations is “What is the best deterrent to crime?” The answer always is, “Swift and sure punishment.” And what does Solomon say in Ecclesiastes 8:11?

“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil”

(Ecclesiastes 8:11).

Killing, judicially, includes killing in war. Nations have a right to defend themselves, or other weaker nations, when they are attacked.

As we said, “Timing is everything.” Murder is a crime. Justice and war are not. That’s just the way things are.

Solomon’s forty year reign nearly did not happen. Solomon was the tenth son of David, and he had older half-brothers who could be in line for the throne. At least, that was the thinking of one half-brother, Adonijah. In fact, the right of succession by age had not yet been established in Israel.

Solomon was actually appointed king twice. In 1 Kings 1:34, David appointed him king to put down the rebellion of Adonijah. 1 Chronicles 29:22 records that he was anointed king a second time, and the whole chapter records the prayers, and great celebration which David gave for Solomon as he ascended to the throne.

When David was in his last days, Adonijah, who was used to having his own way, and stupid enough to be used by other ambitious men, decided to take matters into his own hands. The two men who decided to use the foolish Adonijah were Joab, long-time general of David’s standing army, and Abiathar, the priest, one of David’s close advisers.

Now getting older, King David, was ill, and physically weak. Sadly, in the Near East of King David’s time, when political rivals observe weakness, that is when they strike. The three men, Adonijah, Joab, and Abiathar, with the backing of others in leadership, disguised their take-over of David’s throne as a religious festival, when it was actually going to be a coronation.

As we have said, actions have their consequences, and news of the take-over was soon leaked. Nathan, the prophet, and Bathsheba, went into action to make the dying king aware of the situation. They were able to arouse him enough to counter-act the plotters. Let us read this exciting account from God’s Word. No one can tell it better than God. It is found in 1 Kings 1:11-53.

Solomon Appointed King: Part One

Nathan: "...Nathan spake unto Bathsheba the mother of Solomon, saying, Hast thou not heard that Adonijah the son of Haggith doth reign, and David our lord knoweth *it* not? (11) ...Let me,... give thee counsel, that thou mayest save thine own life, and the life of thy son Solomon. (12)

Go... in unto king David, and say unto him, Didst not thou, my lord, O king, swear unto thine handmaid, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? why then doth Adonijah reign? (13) ...I also will come in after thee, and confirm thy words. (14)

Bathsheba went in unto the king('s)... chamber:...(15)

Narrator: (The presence of Bathsheba seemed to rouse the aged king. Perhaps she even brushed her hand across his forehead, or touched his cheek with her lips. Even though he was a mighty king, she loved him, and now was about to lose him.)

Bathsheba: And Bathsheba bowed, (kneeling by the bedside of the sleeping) king.

King David: What wouldest thou? (16)

Bathsheba: My lord, thou (*did swear*) by the LORD thy God unto thine handmaid, *saying*, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne. (17) And now..., Adonijah reigneth; and... my lord the king, ... knowest *it* not: (18)

...He hath slain oxen and fat cattle and sheep in abundance, and hath called all the sons of the king, and Abiathar the priest, and Joab the captain of the host: but Solomon thy servant hath he not called. (19)

And thou, my lord, O king, the eyes of all Israel *are* upon thee, that thou shouldest tell them who shall sit on the throne of my lord the king ... (20).

Narrator: ("The eyes of all Israel are upon thee!" That would pierce his consciousness! Can you not see his eyes begin to blink as the oxygen level in his blood begins to rise?)

Bathsheba: (*If you do not do something*)..., when my lord the king shall sleep with his fathers ...I and my son Solomon shall be counted offenders (*and be killed*). (21).

Narrator: (Picture a very ill King David, struggling to throw his feet over the side of his bed to sit up. He, perhaps, assumed that God would just send the prophet, Nathan, to anoint Solomon king, just as He had sent Samuel to anoint Saul, and himself. Now, he realizes this is something different. Something he will have to do himself. Kill my beloved Bathsheba and Solomon? Well, Adonijah, says Dad, that's not gonna' happen! I can see him gathering his last bit of strength and energy to take care of this dire

situation. He probably said to himself, "If that boy, Adonijah, thinks he is going to prevail against the will of God Almighty, it's going to be over my dead body!")

Bathsheba: While she yet talked with the king, Nathan the prophet also came in. (22)
(In the meantime, Bathsheba respectfully bows, and leaves.)

Nathan: .My lord, O king, hast thou said, Adonijah shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne? (24)

For he (Adonijah) is gone down this day, ...and hath called all the king's sons, and the captains of the host, and Abiathar the priest; and, behold, they eat and drink before him, and say, God save king Adonijah. (25)
But me, (Nathan)...,and Zadok the priest, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada (a Levite priest), and thy servant Solomon, hath he not called. (26)

Narrator: (A secret meeting that David did not know about! God save king Adonijah? Well, that did it! Now, he is sitting straight up on the edge of the bed. The mighty king's warrior/tactician mind swings into action, even if his body is having some difficulty.)

Nathan: Is this thing done by my lord the king, and thou hast not shewed *it* unto thy servant? (27)

Narrator: (Now, the orders begin to fly. Even though very weak, the old, but still clever, King David goes into action!)

King David: Call me Bathsheba. And she came into the king's presence, and stood before the king. (28)

Narrator: (Talk about waiting until the last minute to remember something and make it right!)

King David: And the king sware, *(to Bathsheba)* ...As the LORD liveth, ...Even as I sware unto thee by the LORD God of Israel, saying, Assuredly Solomon thy son shall reign after me, and he shall sit upon my throne in my stead; even so will I certainly do this day. (29/30)

Bathsheba: Then Bathsheba bowed with *her* face to the earth, ...and said, Let my lord king David live for ever. (31)

Narrator: (Live for ever? Well...it's what you say, and wish at a time like that, but Bathsheba knew it wasn't going to happen.)

King David: Call me Zadok the priest, and Nathan the prophet, and Benaiah the son of Jehoiada...

Narrator: (Benaiah, even though a Levite, was a mighty warrior, and head of David's bodyguard.)

...And they came before the king. (32)

King David: Take with you the servants of your lord, (the bodyguard) and cause Solomon my son to ride upon mine own mule, and bring him down to (the spring) Gihon: (33).

...Let Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet anoint him there king over Israel: and blow ye with the trumpet, and (*shout*), God save king Solomon. (34).

Then ye shall come up after him, that he may come and sit upon my throne; for he shall be king in my stead: and I have appointed him to be ruler over Israel and over Judah. (35)

Narrator: It was official. Solomon had now been appointed king. He would be Co-Regent now, and would occupy the throne after David's death.

‘Directions were forthwith given for the immediate coronation of Solomon. A procession was to be formed by the "servants of their lord"—that is, the king's bodyguard. Mules were then used by all the princes (2 Samuel 13:29); but there was a state mule of which all subjects were forbidden, under pain of death, to make use, without special permission; so that its being granted to Solomon was a public declaration in his favor as the future king (Esther 6:8, 9). and “bring him down to Gihon”—a pool or fountain on the west of Jerusalem (2 Chronicles 32:30), chosen as equally public for the counter proclamation’ (Word Search Bible (JFB).

The Bible: Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people (*shouted*), God save king Solomon. (39)

And all the people came up after him (Solomon), and the people piped with pipes, and rejoiced with great joy, so that the earth rent with the sound of them” (40).

Narrator: Here comes Solomon's Coronation procession, and Adonijah's little party was over! All the guests high tailed it back home! (49). Solomon's Coronation procession was winding joyously up the road from the Gihon Spring, in the Kidron Valley, on their way to the Throne Room in the Palace of the City of David, Jerusalem.

Solomon Appointed King: Part Two

We are all familiar with the Xbox Game of Thrones. That is just a game. The political “game” of taking someone’s throne, in the days of King David, was played “for keeps.” Adonijah ran straight to the tabernacle and threw himself on the horns of the altar. (1 Kings 1:50).

When Solomon, now Heir Apparent, learned that his big brother was hanging on the horns of the altar, and begging that Solomon “...swear unto me today that he will not slay his servant with the sword,” (1:51) *his answer was...* “If he will shew himself a

worthy man, there shall not an hair of him fall to the earth: but if wickedness shall be found in him, he shall die” (1:52).

Solomon then had big brother, Adonijah, dragged off the horns of the altar, and brought to grovel before him. Adonijah did get a reprieve from a death sentence for his treachery from his little brother, but since traitors never quit trying, it was only temporary.

And Solomon was about learn what “a time to kill,” or wield the sword in rendering justice meant. And, so shall we.

These are David’s last words to Solomon. “

“I go the way of all the earth: be thou strong therefore, and shew thyself a man; ...keep the charge of the Lord thy God, to walk in his ways, to keep his statutes, and his commandments, and his judgments, as it is written in the law of Moses, that thou mayest prosper in all that thou doest...” (1 Kings 2:2.3).

This is good advice for all of us. God tells us that serving the Lord is not a Sunday School picnic. We are in a battle for the souls of men and women. He tells us to...

“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (3) No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:3-4).

And how do we “please the Lord?” By maintaining a good testimony, and walking in fellowship with Him.

“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” (1 John 1:7).

“A Time to Kill,” Or “Bear the Sword” In Judicial Punishment.

Adonijah could not leave well enough alone, so he attempts to use Bathsheba in another power play. He thought Solomon would not refuse his own mother anything. The story he told Bathsheba was that he really had the right to be king, but God had worked against him. Surely, he should at least have one of the harem girls as his own, and he had one of them in mind. Abishag. (1 Kings 2:13-17).

Bathsheba bought it, hook, line and sinker! Not Solomon. Even before he became “the wisest man on earth,” he figured this one out, immediately! In the Near East, those who had possession of any part of a king’s harem had a basis to make claims against the throne, especially if the king died.

And, in the Near East, the death of a monarch was easily arranged. That is why they had “cup bearers” who tasted all their food and drink. The cup bearers not only brought the food and drink, they had to taste it to check for poison. If the cup bearer did not die, the king would then eat or drink the food.

Solomon had passed by the usurper, Adonijah, once, but he realized his brother had not changed, and would always be a threat to the throne. He passed sentence and ordered his death. (1 Kings 2:24, 25)

One traitor down. Abiathar, Number Two, was deposed from the priesthood, and banished to his ancestral village. (1 Kings 2:26, 27).

Traitor Number Three: Joab was part of the unfinished business that David passed on to Solomon.

“Moreover thou knowest also what Joab the son of Zeruiah did to me, and what he did to the two captains of the hosts of Israel, unto Abner the son of Ner, and unto Amasa the son of Jether, whom he slew, and shed the blood of war in peace, and put the blood of war upon his girdle that was about his loins, and in his shoes that were on his feet. (5) Do therefore according to thy wisdom, and let not his hoar head go down to the grave in peace” (1 Kings 2:5-6).

Joab’s First Offence: Shedding the Blood of War in Peacetime

Time: Rewind to approximately 33 years earlier, during the first part of David’s reign, as King, in Hebron. Joab ambushes, and murders Abner to avenge his brother, Asahel’s death. As a result, the uniting of the Nation of Israel under the rule of David, as King, is nearly overturned.

“And there were three sons of Zeruiah there, Joab, and Abishai, and Asahel: and Asahel *was as* light of foot as a wild roe.” (2 Samuel 2:18). That meant, “He could run like a deer.” Zeruiah was David’s sister, and Asahel was the youngest of her three sons. After King Saul was defeated and killed, the House of Saul, and the House of David fought for two more years, while David began his reign over Judah in Hebron. When Saul died, his cousin, Abner, as general of Saul’s military, installed Saul’s son, Ishbosheth, as king over all of Israel, except Judah. A long war ensued, and David’s armies, led by Joab, and Abishai, Zeruiah’s other two sons, gained the upper hand. (2 Samuel 3:1)

Getting a general’s armor was the grandest trophy of war in David’s time. As the armies led by Abner fled, Asahel, set on getting Abner’s armor, outran all others, and was gaining on the retreating commander. It is one thing to be able to outrun someone, but, when that someone is a battle-tested veteran in good physical condition, beware! Asahel was young, light in weight, but not aware of one, very deadly, battlefield tactic that cost him his life.

Unwilling to kill Asahel and cause “bad blood” between himself and Joab, Abner twice urged Asahel to take the armor of a younger man, saying, “Wherefore should I smite thee to the ground?” The warning was not heeded. Abner made a quick thrust with the sharp end of the back of his spear, and killed Asahel. Asahel could even have run into the spear on his own momentum. We might as well go for the gory details. This type of death is a shock to view. It would have been better for Asahel to continue the attack, rather than to seek a trophy about which to brag.

“Howbeit he refused to turn aside: wherefore Abner with the hinder end of the spear smote him under the fifth rib, that the spear came out behind him; and he fell down there, and died in the same place: and it came to pass, that as many as came to the place where Asahel fell down and died stood still.” (2 Samuel 2:23).

Joab and Abashai chased Abner to the border of Gibeon. Abner's army had been "sorely beaten," losing 360 men, while David's casualties were 19, and Asahel. After burying their brother at Bethlehem, Joab and Abshai return to Hebron. (2 Samuel 2:18-32).

After a time, Ishbosheth accuses Abner of consorting with one of Saul's concubines. This angers Abner, and he decides since he put Ishbosheth up, he can take him down!

Abner had forgotten one very important thing. Daniel 2:21b tells us,

"...he (God) removeth kings, and setteth up kings..."

Abner sends messengers to David, asking him to agree to a covenant with him, and he will "bring about all Israel unto thee." (12). David agrees to "make a league," or covenant with Abner, under the condition "...except thou first bring Michal Saul's daughter, when thou comest to see my face."

We see that David does not plot with Abner in secret. He also sends a message to Ishbosheth, who is supposed to be Abner's king, and to whom he is supposed to be loyal.

And David sent messengers to Ishbosheth Saul's son, saying, Deliver me my wife Michal, which I espoused to me for an hundred foreskins of the Philistines.

(2 Samuel 3:12-14).

And, as we know, Michal was returned, with her "husband," Phaltiel, weeping behind her.

Now, Abner becomes a "king maker," between David, the tribe of Judah, the tribe of Benjamin, and the rest of Israel. In this case, God used a revengeful traitor to unite the kingdom under David.

"Abner had communication with the elders of Israel ..." He spoke the truth about the fact David had been anointed by God to be king, but he was not prompted by religious motives. His motives sprang entirely from revenge against Ishbosheth. The two-faced, dishonesty of a traitor comes to the forefront, like dross rising to the top of molten lead. (2 Samuel 3:17-18).

"And Abner also spake in the ears of Benjamin:" (2 Samuel 3:19a). The tribe of Benjamin, would not want to lose the prestige of the "Royal House of Saul." In truth, there was no "royal house." Saul had nothing that was not given to him by God. Whatever good qualities Saul began with, he was like the rest of us, "I am what I am by the grace of God." (1 Corinthians 15:10).

Abner increased his influence over the tribe of Benjamin by escorting Michal back to David. They viewed this as a uniting of the House of Saul and the House of David. David, in all likelihood, considered his protection would be best for Michal, when unscrupulous men were vying to regain Saul's throne.

Under pretense of returning Michal, and ending the civil war, Abner appears as a public ambassador in Hebron, with twenty men, and Michal. They all sit down with

King David. After dinner, in private conversation, he presents a plan to King David to bring over the rest of the tribes.

In one masterful stroke, in reuniting Michal with David, he had bestowed the sovereignty of the “Royal House of Saul” on David. As we have said before, the game of usurping a throne in the time of David, the King, was played for keeps. There could not be two, competing, kings for a nation. Ishbosheth was about to go.

“And Abner said unto David, I will arise and go, and will gather all Israel unto my lord the king, that they may make a league with thee, and that thou mayest reign over all that thine heart desireth. And David sent Abner away; and he went in peace” (2 Samuel 3:21).

Joab had missed out on the court intrigue. He was out leading troops in battle, and returned after Abner had left.

“Then Joab came to the king, and said, What hast thou done? behold, Abner came unto thee; why is it that thou hast sent him away, and he is quite gone? (24) Thou knowest Abner the son of Ner, that he came to deceive thee, and to know thy going out and thy coming in, and to know all that thou doest. (2 Samuel 3:24, 25).

Joab knew Abner's treacherous character. Abner's military talents, popularity with the army, and influence throughout the nation, threatened Joab. If Abner succeeded in bringing over all the other tribes to David, as King of Judah, this could put a roadblock on Joab's military career. Joab could not understand why David could not see that Abner was a threat to him, as well.

Joab seethed with anger about the death of his brother, Asahel (2 Samuel 2:23). Determined to get Abner out of the way, Joab recalled Abner, and went out to meet him by a noted, out of the way, well in the neighborhood. Greeting him as an old friend, Joab stabbed him unawares. (2 Samuel 3:26, 27).

This placed King David in a difficult position. He had to go into a “full court” press, or the Nation of Israel would divide, again, before it had a chance to re-unite. He named names, so that the nation would know the guilty parties. He proclaimed himself, and his government, guiltless in the murder of Abner. He, and all Hebron, publicly wept for Abner. David would not even eat until the sun went down. He eulogized Abner as a “prince and a great man.”

“And David said to Joab, and to all the people that were with him, Rend your clothes, and gird you with sackcloth, and mourn before Abner. And king David himself followed the bier” (31).

“And all the people took notice of it, and it pleased them: as whatsoever the king did pleased all the people. (36) For all the people and all Israel understood that day that it was not of the king to slay Abner the son of Ner. (37) And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel? (38) And I am this day weak, though anointed king; and these men the sons of Zeruiah be too hard for me: the LORD shall reward the doer of evil according to his wickedness.” (2 Samuel 3:31-39)

Second Offense: Joab Murders His Rival, Amasa

Time: Fast forward to the latter part of King David's thirty-three year reign in Jerusalem. Joab's Second Offense: He ambushes, and murders, Amasa, his rival.

Because the procession to conduct King David back to Jerusalem began before all the ten northern tribes could get there, they took it as an insult and went home...again. Then, one Sheba, took it upon himself to launch a full-scale revolt. He blew off his big mouth, and also...

“...he blew a trumpet, and said, We have no part in David, neither have we inheritance in the son of Jesse: every man to his tents, O Israel. (1) So every man of Israel went up from after David, and followed Sheba the son of Bichri: but the men of Judah clave unto their king, from Jordan even to Jerusalem” (2 Samuel 20:1-2)

They had just put down Absalom's revolt, and here comes this Sheba. David appointed Amasa, from one of the northern tribes to assemble a force from the men of Judah, and to bring them in three days, ready to catch the renegade Benjamite, Sheba. Amasa was not back in three days, as the men of Judah would not “rally around” him. This gave too much time for the revolt to strengthen, and David went to Plan B. He appointed Abishai, Joab's brother, to the command. Joab resented this deeply.

Notice. There was already a “Plan B” in King David's very tactical mind. He did not look at his military leaders, throw up his hands and wail, “What am I going to do now?” He had a secret weapon for his success as a military commander. He would ask the Lord, Jehovah Sabaoth, our Lord of Armies, for tactical advice. When the Philistines came against him, after he had taken Jerusalem for his capital, David,

“...enquired of the LORD, saying, Shall I go up to the Philistines? wilt thou deliver them into mine hand? And the LORD said unto David, Go up: for I will doubtless deliver the Philistines into thine hand” (2 Samuel 5:19).

The Philistines were soundly beaten. But, we all know Philistines never give up, and they came back again the next year to the same place. Once, again, David enquired of the Lord, “Shall I go up?” This time, the Lord had a different plan which David followed to the letter. He was to “fetch a compass behind them,” and wait until he “heard the sound of a going” in the trees.” (2 Samuel 5:23-25). Once, again, victory was decisive.

It would be a wonderful thing if the leaders of our “one nation under God” would ask His guidance once in a while. The very first person to say, “The battle is the Lord's, was a young shepherd in the process of felling the giant, Goliath. When we have battles to fight in our personal lives, if we take the Lord's direction on how to fight, we will always have victory. Why? The “battle is (always) the Lords.”

Now, we return to the apprehension of the rebel leader causing trouble in the northern part of Israel, Sheba. David has just put down Absalom's rebellion.

So Abishai went out, and Joab, and his “mighty men” went out with them. Joab got ahead of the main force, and trapped Amasa, alone, at the “great stone which is in Gibeon.” Joab was wearing a long garment with a sheathed sword beneath it. The sword was connected to a “girdle,” or belt contraption, by which Joab could cause it to fall out

on the ground, within easy reach. As Joab pretended to give Amasa a friendly greeting, “*Art thou in health, my brother? And Joab took Amasa by the beard with the right hand to kiss him.*” (9). The sword fell out, and Amasa did not see it in Joab’s hand. (2 Samuel 20:9,10).

Joab and Abishai, his brother, resumed the chase for Sheba, leaving Amasa to wallow in blood in the midst of the highway. The bloody sight shocked all the bystanders so much that poor Amasa was covered with a cloth, and dragged off the highway to die. (2 Samuel 20:12, 13).

Such is the life of a King! Gaining the right to sit on a throne is one thing. It takes constant vigilance to keep that throne. It was a bloody business, no matter how you look at it. It is no different today. It takes constant vigilance to keep a nation free. As Solomon would say,

“The thing that hath been, *it is that* which shall be; and that which is done *is that* which shall be done: and *there is* no new *thing* under the sun. (9) Is there *any* thing whereof it may be said, See, this *is* new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us” (Ecclesiastes 1:9,10).

Time: We go forward in time, and resume our narrative at the beginning of Solomon’s reign. We would have to characterize Solomon as a law and order king.

Beside the previous two offences, and the killing of Absalom, Joab had, now, completely betrayed David, and defected to the side of Adonijah, the last of David’s sons who attempted to take his throne. Adonijah had been executed for his treason, and Joab knew he that he was next. He lost no time in heading for the tabernacle, and the horns of the altar.

Before you waste any sympathy on this assassin, and think God is too cruel, Joab is a man who killed two generals in his own army. He killed them out of revenge and jealousy. Had David, as King, levied judgment, immediately, and had him executed after the first offense, the second offense would not have happened. For some reason, he did not. The prophet, Habakkuk, tells us what happens when the law is slack.

“Therefore the law is slacked, and judgment doth never go forth: for the wicked doth compass about the righteous; therefore wrong judgment proceedeth”
(Habakkuk 1:4)

Solomon, himself, says, “Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil.” (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

We see that Solomon has no problem with applying swift and sure judgment. Nearly every day in our country, the nightly news is witness to policemen being ambushed, and killed. What happens? If a perpetrator is located, we soon hear about his poor childhood, and he becomes the victim. We need more judges like Solomon, today.

Solomon orders Joab’s replacement as commander in chief, Benaiah, to “Go, fall upon him.” When Benaiah went to the tabernacle, he told Joab, “Thus saith the king, Come forth.” In essence, Joab said, “Nope, I am not coming out. I will die right here.”

So, Benaiah goes back to Solomon, and tells him that Joab will not come out, and that he had said “I will die here.” Said Solomon, “Fine! Let him have it his way! Kill him right there. That is the kind of judge we need in America, today.

“And the king said unto him, Do as he hath said, and fall upon him, and bury him; that thou mayest take away the innocent blood, which Joab shed, from me, and from the house of my father” (1 Kings 2:31).

Solomon was indeed “shewing himself as a man,” in carrying out the unpleasant side of being king. That was the job of rendering severe justice when severe justice is called for. It was not, always, strolling about in his private zoo enjoying his peacocks and apes. There was sometimes “...a time to kill.”

Now we know that there is “a time to kill” when meting out judicial punishment, or declaring war. There is never a right time to commit murder. Since we have learned this lesson, let’s close the door on Solomon’s Hall of Judgment, and look ahead to the future... “to that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” (Titus 2:13).

And we have “*no time to kill*,” or waste, in our service to the Lord. We must follow the “Rules of Engagement” for a Christian soldier in the Lord’s Army. We must fight God’s battles God’s way.

“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (3) No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:3-4).

The verse says, “chosen to be a soldier,” not “chosen to have eternal life.” You already have eternal life, or you could not fight in the Lord’s Army.

The word “chosen” is from the Hebrew word, “stratologeō,” and is made up of a compound of the base of (stratia) and (lego) (in its original sense); to *gather* (or *select*) as a *warrior*, i.e. *enlist* in the army :- choose to be a soldier. How long does our enlistment run? “For the duration,” meaning until the Rapture. There is always “time” for a lesson on doctrine.

A Christian Soldier's Rules of Engagement

For our Savior always stand up.
To ev'ry one be sure to speak up.
Certainly you should never back up,
Until the day that we are caught up.

Jesus saves! Our occupation,
By ev'ry means to ev'ry nation,
TV, Web, or Radio Station,
Friend, or foe, or close relation.

Read God's Word to be inspired.,
And ev'ry day be Gospel-wired.
Pray for strength to not be tired,
And not get in this old world mired.

Ev'ry night kneel by your bed,
Pray the next day you'll be led
To some lost soul who needs fed
With the Savior's Living Bread.

The Word says ev'ryone's behooved,
To study to show himself approved.
Rightly dividing, and not disproved.
Our doctrinal foundation, never moved.

There's no time to rest on laurels,
Or get side-tracked by petty quarrels.
The World will never send you florals,
When you speak God's Word on morals.

Step out each day with shield and sword.
Giving in to Satan we can't afford,
Our testimony will then be abhorred,
And our Lord comes quickly with His reward.

As we rise to meet Christ in the air,
May crowds of those we've won be there,
And a Soul-Winner's Crown be ours to share,
At Christ's feet in Heaven's Throne Room fair.

Marjorie A. Younce



The Greek word for iris means rainbow.
"I am the rose of Sharon, A the lily of the valleys."
(Song of Solomon 2:1)

“A Time to Heal.”

In Ecclesiastes 3:3, the word “heal” is translated from the Hebrew word, “rāpā,” a prime root; meaning “to mend and make thoroughly whole.” It is in contrast to the word “kill” from the Hebrew word, “hārag,” meaning “to smite with intent to kill.”

Many so-called evangelists travel around in our country, pretending to heal all manner of diseases. I don’t often recommend Hollywood films, but the film “Leap of Faith,” in which actor Steve Martin played the typical “faith-healing fraud,” is a graphic portrayal of how innocent victims are duped into thinking they can be healed.

Kathryn Kuhlman used to tell people they were healed of their cancer, and they died, needlessly, because they believed her, and refused the medical treatment that could have extended their lives.

The last miracle healings given in the New Testament took place after about 58 A.D. (Acts 28:1-9) The power to do miracles was only given to the apostles, and disciples, to confirm the Word they were preaching was true until the New Testament was completed.

No one has the power to perform miraculous healings today! No one! Occasionally God, as the Great Physician will step into “the times of our lives,” and do something that no physician, or nurse can explain. For these “times of our lives,” God has given mankind the gift of medical knowledge, fine nurses and physicians, and wonderful hospitals.

"And they (the eleven disciples) went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and CONFIRMING THE WORD WITH SIGNS FOLLOWING"
(Mark 16:20).

There were many, spoken of in the Bible, who were not healed from about 60 A.D. on to the present.

First, there was Epaphroditus in Philippians 2:25-30. Paul, who had performed many miracles prior to this, was unable to heal his friend. God did see fit to heal Epaphroditus later, as Paul credits God with the healing and glory in Philippians 2:27.

Then, Paul could not heal Timothy. Paul, in his writing to young Timothy, whom he had won to Christ, advised him to, "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities" (1 Timothy 5:23).

This took place about 62 A.D. There was probably no other person whom Paul loved more than Timothy, yet he was unable to heal him as he had others before. Even at this time, about 34 years before the writing of Revelation, the last book of the Bible, the miracle signs had ended.

Finally, Paul could not heal his friend, Trophimus. "Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick." (2 Timothy 4:20). In, about, 66 A.D., Paul could not heal Trophimus; but, just a few years earlier, Paul had made a man blind.

(Acts 13:11). He made a cripple who had never walked, WALK! (Acts 14:8-10). He cast out a demon. (Acts 16:18), and healed Publius' father. (Acts 28:8).

In the past, Paul had performed many special miracles.

"And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul; (11) So that from his body were brought unto the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them." (Acts 19:11,12)

But, now, in 66 A.D., he could not heal Trophimus, and had to leave him at Mile-tum sick. The miracle signs had ceased!

We find in 2 Corinthians 12:7-9, that Paul could not even heal himself. Whatever illness Paul had, it affected his body, for it was a "thorn in the flesh" (the body). Paul could not heal himself, as he had when he was bitten by the venomous viper. (Acts 28:1-9). He asked the Lord three times to cure him; but, in this case, it was not God's will to do so. As 2 Corinthians was written about 58-60 A.D., we can see the power of Paul to heal himself was not present. The miracle signs had already ceased!

Lessons From God's School of Grace

Three times Paul asked the Lord,
To take away his thorn;
A handicap within his flesh,
Most grievous to be borne.

Three times the answer came back, "No";
He did not whine nor complain.
He trusted in God's sufficient grace,
Christ's power would be made plain.

No matter what Paul said or did,
To spread the Gospel in each place,
The message had far greater power,
Through sufficiency of God's grace.

Here is the lesson contained within,
This portion of God's Word.
There's no excuse for not witnessing,
'Til all you've met have heard.

Many have thorns in their flesh;
That illness, or accident wreak.
Even though their spirit is willing;
Their flesh is often times weak.

Still, they speak out for the Lord,
Through each hard and painful hour.

It's not easy, and plain to see,
It's God's grace that gives the power.

Can you see, think, and speak?
Is your body well and complete?
Do you thank your Savior every day,
You can walk on your two feet?

Or, do you seek to make excuse,
Why you can't work for Him today?
"I'm too busy, too tired, too shy."
"I don't know enough," you say.

Then "grow in grace and knowledge,"
Of the One who died for the unjust;
Speaking forth the message,
With which we're put in trust.

"Study to shew thyself approved,"
A workman who labors not in vain,
Rightly dividing the Word of Truth,
Making the Gospel plain.

The message we give out by grace,
Is the one all must believe.
Christ has paid your price for sin.
Will you His payment receive?

"For God so loved" this sinful world,
On the Cross His Son he gave.
If, in this, you do believe,
Your soul from Hell He'll save.

"For by grace are ye saved."
Works don't count at all!
"It is finished!" shouts the Cross,
Where Christ paid it all.

Even tho' we live in the flesh,
And our works burn at the Bema Seat,
We, ourselves, will still be saved.
Our Salvation is complete.

A soul once saved has life eternal,
Our Savior holds you in His hand.
No man can ever pluck you out,
And, "No man" means you, My Friend!

So, we who study in God's school of grace,
Are not graded on a curve.
The grade received, with or without a thorn,
Will be one that we deserve.

We thank our Lord for His Amazing Grace,
We do not deserve at all;
By which we're saved for eternity,
And marked "present" at Heaven's Roll Call.

Marjorie A. Younce

This poem was inspired by a wonderful Christian gentleman, Mr. Douglas Hatmaker, who has gone on to be with the Lord, and is greatly missed by friends, and family. How did he inspire! He never allowed his situation, as a wheelchair bound paraplegic, keep him from serving the Lord.

Abishag, the First Practical Nurse

Abishag, was one of the first practical nurses in the Bible, and, possibly the first hospice care nurse in History. She was in the room when the legalities of Solomon being appointed king were laid down. Adonijah did not seek to have her because of her beauty. He reasoned that she might have knowledge that would help him to depose Solomon, and make another attempt to gain the throne.

Abishag was chosen for the service with great care. She ministered to the king; that is, waited on him as personal attendant and nurse. She is mentioned only twice in the Bible, (1 Kings 1:3; 1 Kings 2:23). The safest place for her, after David's death, would have been in the House of Women. Since God has nothing more to say about Abishag in the rest of the Bible, than to tell us about the selfless way in which she cared for King David, we will not speculate. David's last days, were approximately a year in length, and Abishag was still there after his death.

King David was not just any king, but the one about whom the Bible has the most to say, second to our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. As my friend, Pastor Dan Adams, remarked, "When I went to Sunday School, the only thing I learned about David was that he had killed Goliath with five stones. In my study for the ministry, I learned that God puts it all in the Bible, warts and all!"

Yes, our God recorded the life of David in great detail. We see that, like us, he was only human, and not perfect. But the Bible twice tells us, "He was man after God's own heart." (1 Samuel 13:14; Acts 13:22). God loved him anyway. We find the same principle extended toward us in Romans 5:8,

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

In the Old Testament times, the Holy Spirit came upon people for power, and left when special power was not needed, or that person disobeyed, as Samson did when he allowed Delilah to cut his hair. (Judges 16:17). David is the only person in the Old Testament whom, once it came upon him, the Holy Spirit never left. (Compare 1 Samuel 16:13 to 1 Samuel 16:16).

Today, when we believe that Jesus died on the Cross to pay for our sin, and came out of the grave three days, and nights later, the Holy Spirit indwells us and becomes a "down payment" on our eternal life in Heaven.

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (13) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." (Ephesians 1:13,14).

The Holy Spirit never leaves the believer's body while they are alive on this earth. James 2:26 tells us, "For as the body without the spirit is dead,..." 2 Corinthians 5:8 completes the picture, "We are confident, *I say*, and willing rather to be absent from

the body, and to be present with the Lord.” At death, the body stays here, and the soul and spirit (the real “you”) goes to Heaven.

Abishag was not a wife, or concubine, to David, and he did not “lay with her.” In spite of whatever those who chose Abishag wanted to take place, both she and the king kept their integrity. Bathsheba was the last wife taken by David, and she bore him three more sons, besides Solomon. Bathsheba was the “love of his life” for that “time of his life.”

Abishag saw that David was given the proper respect he was due, as king, up until the final moments of his life. She would have to feed him, wash him, sooth any physical pain he had, and touch him in places you would not normally touch a king. She was to keep him warm because he was too weak to do it himself. All these things would have been humiliating for a man, like King David, and hard to endure. They must be done with the greatest respect.

She gave the best of care to a king in poor health, at a very old 69 years of age. She eased his last days and provided comfort for his dying body. There was nothing wicked or shameful in what she did.

David was thirty years old when he began to reign, reigned for forty years, and died in the seventieth year of his age, (2 Samuel 5:4;1 Kings 2:11). He appointed and established Solomon on the throne about a year before his death.

Sixty-nine was not an advanced age for those days; but David had been exhausted with the fatigue of many battlefields, and a difficult reign, due to problems with his children, and the enemies of Israel. He was much older in constitution than he was in years. With God’s help, he handed the kingdom over to Solomon with borders to their greatest extent, and completely at peace.

Abishag sets a good example of the way we should serve our King, Jesus Christ. We are to be servants for Christ. Not just in words but also in actions. We are called to serve our Lord by serving others. There are many ways to serve. You can visit those in nursing homes who seldom get a visitor. You can participate in a prison ministry, or help with ministries to the homeless.

One of our local hospitals, Sanford Westbrook Medical Center, is an example of how communities can band together in the ministry of healing.

The Ministry of Hospitals in Healing

When we moved here from a city, it was comforting to know there was a hospital near. It is a wonderful hospital! They care for you as if you are the only patient there. I stayed for six days with pneumonia and, if I had not felt so bad, it would have been just like an all-girl slumber party. I got so inspired, another poem about nursing found its way into this book.

We should never take these rural hospitals for granted. They are the only thing that stands between ourselves, and the trauma center of the “big” hospitals. Then, you are looking at an approximately 100 mile trip by helicopter in good weather, or an ambulance over snowy roads. That could be the difference between life or death for you.

Given the stress of farming and the dangers of the equipment farmers must use, it is crucial to have medical help nearby. How thankful we should be for the hospitals that we have in our local areas, and for the committed staff that run them from day to day.

An illustration of the dangers of farming was shared with me by a church member. A farm accident had made her a widow. According to the Minneapolis Star Tribune, one of the greatest contributors to farm accidents is a tractor roll-over.

That is what happened to my friend's husband in 1953. She looked out her kitchen window, just checking on her husband as he ploughed. Usually, he was far out of sight, but, this day he was working a field close to the house. She was making a lunch to take out to him, and looking forward to a short picnic by the tree line. She looked to see where he was, and what she saw made her heart freeze.

From her vantage point, she could see that the tractor had gone over, and the large rear wheels were rolling in circles around the front wheels. Not seeing her husband, anywhere, she threw everything aside, and frantically ran to the scene. There she found him...being ground into the soil by the circling tractor wheels. He never had a chance!

That is only one of the dangers of farming, and why we should appreciate having a hospital near.

We are fortunate to have two hospitals within a 10-mile radius. The one we consider "ours" is in Westbrook, Minnesota. This hospital was begun by Daniel Schmidt, a Westbrook farmer, and his son, Dr. Henry Schmidt. Henry Schmidt graduated from the University of Minnesota Medical School in 1909, and returned to practice medicine locally, only to die in the "Spanish Influenza" outbreak in 1918.

Dr. Schmidt's death was a tragedy to Schmidt family, and the area, but, the idea of having a hospital was not derailed. A large donation by Dr. Schmidt's father, and other money from the community of Westbrook, kept plans for the hospital on track until it was incorporated in 1947 as the Dr. Henry Schmidt Memorial Hospital

When farming communities get behind something, they make it happen! More than 20 hospital auxiliary units made up of over 450 women were formed. 19 area nurses began the Clara Barton Club to support the new hospital. All collected food and necessary supplies to open the hospital in January 1951. Westbrook and the surrounding area continued their support through auctioning aprons made by local women, and Hospital Days celebrations until 2001.

At one time, it had the distinction of being Minnesota's smallest, fully functioning, independent hospital

In 1995, the hospital board made the difficult decision to merge with the Sioux Valley Hospital system in Sioux Falls, South Dakota. This meant that Schmidt Memorial was no longer an independent hospital under the direction of local residents. It was a hard to give up their independence, a quality much prized by Minnesotans, but this made it possible for specialists to come to Westbrook on a regular basis. Patients no longer needed to make a 200-mile round trip for a doctor visit. In their tradition of al-

ways putting the needs of their patients first, and considering our Minnesota winters, it was done. The name was changed again in 2007 to Sanford Westbrook Health Center.

Today, Sanford Westbrook Health Center is a fine hospital with a very competent staff of physicians, physician's assistants, and nurses. We are privileged to have a fully functioning hospital like this in our area. The years of sacrifice have paid off, and it functions well!

A Tribute to Nurses

A ministry since Biblical times,
Behind the lines since the Civil War,
Cooling brows, writing letters home,
For soldiers who'll see home no more.

Nurses serve on all battlefields,
Dodging bullets without a thought,
Bravely tending the awful wounds,
Where ever battles must be fought.

An accident by the side of the road,
The law says they must render aid,
Give all comfort as best they can,
It's their calling and strictly unpaid.

As we look for help to the sky
A helicopter comes in to land.
Who's first one out the door?
A flight nurse to lend a hand.

Hospital nurses go their rounds,
With hushed steps, and tender touch,
Their patient words quell all fears,
When kind words mean so much.

With helping hands, and caring heart,
To night time sorrows they give ear,
No matter how much they have to do,
They'll weep with you over losses dear

Even if there's trouble at home,
They leave their families behind,
To, first, tend your utmost need,
Putting their problems out of mind.

No talk of the troubles they endure,
Even though they have them, too.
It's your well-being they ensure.
They quickly say, "It's all about you."

With hushed steps they come, smiles bright,
Though sometimes through clenched teeth,
As they face the task, during the day or night
When they must clean your bottom, beneath.

They are spat upon, and puked upon,
By fearful patients out of control.
Cursed at, often pounded upon,
That's how emergency rooms roll.

Flight nurses, E.R., O.R., and ICU,
Psychiatric, Hospice, and Oncology, too.
They're practical, and registered,
All fields of medicine come into view.

The work is hard and the hours long.
Twelve-hour nights, Twelve-hour days,
And not enough of them to fill the gap.
Priceless, No matter what the hospital pays.

So, we must ask the reason why,
Such occupation is so precious to you?
"My answer's easy, though the way is hard.
It is a ministry, and a calling true.

If God has placed this calling in your heart,
And, when in your nursing cap, you graduate,
Be sure God will help you the rest of the way,
To render a service we all appreciate.

...Marjorie A. Younce

Appreciate Your Doctor!

I don't have a poem honoring physicians, but, I do know their best medical tool.

My husband, Dr. Max D. Younce, is a pastor, and one of his favorite pastimes is to pray with patients before medical procedures. Before going under the anesthetic, it is comforting for a patient to hear someone pray for them. It is, then, that they, and often the physician, realize that God is in this situation, too. Max will frequently say in the course of his prayer, "If there is a decision to be made, Lord, please help the surgeon to make the right one."

It just so happened, that during a prayer like this, the surgeon was, also, in the room. During the surgery, there *was* a decision to be made. He had two options. After the surgery, he related to Max that, in that crucial moment, he thought about what Max had said, and had actually prayed, "Lord, help me to choose the right one." He could see from the patient's good response that his prayer had been answered.

I believe that most physicians realize, even with modern medicine, and the best in medical techniques, they must still rely on the God who created us. He set these marvelous creations of our bodies in motion, and he knows what "makes them tick." There will always be times when, no matter what a doctor does, the patient will not recover. There will, also, be those times when a patient recovers, and they should not.

We, as patients, should consider what the life of your "favorite doctor" is really like. It takes years of education and internship to become a physician. When he does go into practice, medicine usually does not have "9 to 5" hours, and takes a lot of time away from his family. Even if a physician has an adequate salary, usually there is not time to enjoy it.

Many times a physician will succumb to the stress and pressure of his occupation. A good example of this is my step-father's brother, Dr. John D. Van Nuys, Dean of the Indiana University School of Medicine. He died at the age of 54 from a heart attack.

My husband takes our doctor a big hot chocolate when he goes for a visit. Of course, this may not be welcomed by every physician, but you can certainly give them a card, occasionally, or tell them how much you appreciate them, often.

"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones."
(Proverbs 17:22).

"As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all."
(Ecclesiastes 11:10).

"...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much"
(James 5:16).

"Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."
(Hebrews 4:16).

The “Magic Stick”

A Seventh Grade Science teacher asked if anyone knew the origins of the Caduceus that represents the medical field. A student mentioned he thought it was in reference to rod the Lord had Moses make, entwined with snakes, and if the people looked on it they would be healed. His teacher shamed him by saying, “Yeah, OK, it's a magic stick,” and the whole class laughed.

First, let me say, there is no excuse for a teacher to ridicule a young person in front of a class. That belittles their self-esteem and, certainly, is not the goal of an educator.

Secondly, there are two symbols with serpents on a pole, that are said to represent the medical field. One is a winged pole with two serpents, called the caduceus, representing the so-called Greek god, Hermes. The other has one serpent, and is called the Rod of Asclepius. Both are a part of Greek mythology.

The very first bronze serpent on a pole was “commissioned” by God, and made by Moses in approximately 1452 B.C. It was a type of Christ. When this teacher ridiculed this rod as a “magic stick,” she was laughing at the cross of Christ. Christ, himself, gave it as an example of what He was going to do on Calvary in His conversation with Nicodemus. It pictures the salvation we can have in Christ.

“And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up:” (John 3:14).

Let us “fast forward,” for a moment, to that rooftop in Jerusalem, and eavesdrop on the conversation between Our Savior, Jesus Christ, and Nicodemus, the Pharisee. The point that Christ is trying to get across to the Pharisee is...

Ye Must Be Born Again

Nicodemus ruled the people,
From his height as a Pharisee.
Learned in all points of Law,
It was grace he could not see.

It was the time of the “Jews Passover,”
And he was in God’s House of Prayer;
A witness to Christ’s indignant rout
Of the “den of thieves” polluting there.

When asked by what authority
He drove the money-changers out,
He compared the Temple to His body,
Resurrection power leaves no doubt.

He healed the lame, made the blind to see,
They knew He had even raised the dead.
No mere man could do these things,
“He must be God,” all Jerusalem said.

That night Nicodemus in his chamber sat
With questions racing through his mind.
He knew a mere Sabbath-journey away
All the answers he could find.

So, off he went into the night
To find the Savior’s open door.
He went as a questioning Pharisee;
But he became much more.

The Savior took him to God’s Word
Where the answer is always found.
Retold of the Serpent Moses lifted up,
That portrayed Redemption’s ground.

It was a picture of the future Cross,
And all who looked, in faith, did live.
When we believe “He was made sin for us,”
God’s righteousness to us He’ll give.

Christ “did not come to condemn a world,”
Already bitten by the venom of sin.
He came as the perfect “Lamb of God,”
Victory over the Serpent to win.

What mankind lost in Eden long ago,
By yielding to the Serpent’s allure,
Our Lord bought back, crushing his head,
And providing for sin the cure.

The Lord went on in His “now famous” verse,
“For God so loved the world...” (How it rings!)
“That his only begotten son” He gave on the Cross
And to “whosoever believeth,” gives two things :

He promises all believers “should not perish,”
(Hell’s gates “shall not prevail against” you.)
He guarantees you’ll “have everlasting life.”
(No works needed; it’s a gift of priceless value)

Nicodemus looked to the Cross that night,
And was spiritually "born from above."
Understanding "Christ is the end of Law,"
He became expert in God's grace and love.

It took him time to "grow in grace,"
Later the Savior he did defend.
When they laid Christ in the tomb,
He proved a faithful friend.

That is the last that Scripture mentions him;
But, his story is a lesson to all men.
It doesn't matter who you are,
To be in God's Family, "Ye must be born again!"

Marjorie A. Younce

Scriptural Allusions: John, Chapter 2,3;
2 Corinthians 5:21; Matthew 16:18

Rewinding, now, to the time of Moses and the Exodus, we see the people had sinned in two ways: by speaking against God, and against Moses.

"Therefore the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, for we have spoken against the LORD, and against thee; pray unto the LORD, that he take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. (7) And the LORD said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. (8) And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived" (Numbers 21:8-9).

The people were dying. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23). Every person born into this world has been bitten by the fiery serpent of sin and is condemned already. (John 3:18).

Israel deserved to die, but God, in love and grace, provided a remedy. Moses' prayer for the people reminds us of the prayer of Christ, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Why another serpent for a remedy? They had too many real ones already. The serpent of brass pictures Christ, who became sin for us.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Brass speaks of judgment, and on the cross, Christ bore our judgment for us. The serpent had to be "lifted up"—Christ had to be lifted up on the Cross to be crucified. (John 3:14; 8:28; 12:30-33).

The people prayed, "Take away the serpents!" God said, "Look and live!" The people were not saved by ignoring the bites, beating the serpents, applying medicine, or trying to run away. Salvation came by looking in faith to the uplifted serpent in the center of the camp.

"Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else" (Isaiah 45:22)

The serpent was not lifted up in a corner. It was lifted up in the center of the camp where all could see it and live. Christ is available today. The remedy for sin is available to all; "whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Revelation 22:17).

It was free. It cost the dying sinners nothing to look and live. They could believe and live! We can believe and live.

One uplifted serpent was enough for the whole camp. Christ alone is sufficient for our salvation; we need nothing more. The dying were not saved by looking at the serpent, and then keeping the law, or looking and bringing a sacrifice, or looking and making promises to do better. They were saved by faith alone. Christ is sufficient to give us eternal life.

They were healed immediately. Salvation is not a process; but an immediate miracle that takes place when the sinner believes that Christ died on the Cross to pay for their sin. You cannot be a little bit saved, any more than you can be a little bit dead. Christ in His death and Resurrection does not save us "a little bit at a time." He saves instantly, immediately, and completely.

People say, "Oh, going to Heaven is like the spokes on a wheel, there are many ways to be saved!" There was only one way to be saved in the camp of Israel, and there is only one way to be saved today.

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Readers, this foolish teacher was wrong to laugh at the student's answer. The Caduceus and the Rod of Asclepius were both, without doubt, based on the rod with the bronze serpent that God commanded Moses to make. After all, Moses made the bronze serpent in approximately 1452, and Greek culture was not spread world-wide until the conquests of Alexander, the Great, in approximately 333 B.C.

There will come a time when the atheists of this world will stand before the Great White Throne of Judgment. They will not laugh when they hear these devastating words,

"...Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" (Matthew 25:41).

That student's right answer reveals that his parents are doing their job! I happen to know he regularly attends a Bible-teaching church that is straight on the Gospel, and has a wonderful youth group. Congratulations, Mom and Dad!

Chapter Four

“A Time to Break Down, And a Time to Build Up..”

Once-beautiful buildings often get broken down to make space, or be “built up” for something modern, and useful. There is a right time for that. There is never a right time for godly nations, Christian institutions, or gospel preaching churches to fail. But, they do fail due to these four main reasons:

1. Satanic attack from without.
2. Dissension and discord within.
3. The founder dies and his successors do not keep the same Biblical principles.
4. A lack of money to run the organization.

Solomon’s administration of David’s great kingdom resulted in three out of the four. The only one he lacked, he had no outside attack.

Solomon was an able administrator, but, in reality, he had too much power. There were no checks and balances. Solomon had priests as advisors, but, it was just better to agree, and not “make waves.” There was no prophet during Solomon’s reign, and the voice of the people was seldom heard.

The people were divided into groups which caused dissension. The remaining Canaanites, which Israel had not conquered, and were still living among the people, were reduced to slavery, and worked labor gangs. After all, Solomon had huge works to build.

The temple, which Solomon was allowed to build, was located on Mt. Moriah. David had gathered much material, but the final size, style, and ornamentation was left to Solomon. In 1 Chronicles 22:14, David gave permission for Solomon to “add thereto.” Solomon had determined that nothing but the best was good enough for God’s house, and he spared no expense. The building was begun in the fourth year of his reign and completed after seven years.

During the temple’s construction, Solomon also built an elaborate palace, called the “House of the Forest of Lebanon,” the “Hall of Pillars,” and the “Hall of the Throne.” (1 Kings 7:1-12). They were elaborate and costly, and just as today, the people paid for them. (An accurate representation is shown in the cover painting.)

Solomon had a private dwelling and another for his queen in a court nearby. (1 Kings 7:8). He also built a number of fortress cities, store cities, and cavalry forts. (1 Kings 9:15-19)

He divided 'all Israel' into 12 fiscal districts for tax collection purposes (1 Kings 4.17-19a), with each district providing food for 'the king and his household' one month per year.

Actually, Solomon was spending more than he was taking in. Even though the tribes were supporting the Monarchy, that did not pay the total cost of Solomon's building projects, or the nation's infrastructure. He had no real tax base in his country, nor any type of manufacturing. It was still a farming economy, each family taking care of itself.

Solomon had spared no expense in his building projects for materials, or craftsmanship. These were "outsourced" to Hiram, King of Tyre, so that was money flowing out of the treasury, not coming from people having employment in Israel, and paying taxes. As Solomon says, "There is nothing new under the sun," and Economics 101 was the same in 992 B.C. as it is today. There was a short fall in the treasury so Hiram was "given" twenty cities in Galilee, for which he paid "six score talents of gold.

Nothing new under the sun. If you run short of money, you sell off some land.

Most countries in that time fought wars, bringing people into captivity, who then paid tribute, or taxes, to their conqueror. There were no wars during Solomon's reign, therefore, he had no tribute nations as a source of income.

What began so well when the strong leader, David, handed the kingdom over, became a disaster when Solomon's wives turned him away from God.

Wherefore the LORD said unto Solomon, Forasmuch as this is done of thee, and thou hast not kept my covenant and my statutes, which I have commanded thee, I will surely rend the kingdom from thee, and will give it to thy servant. (11) Notwithstanding in thy days I will not do it for David thy father's sake: but I will rend it out of the hand of thy son. (12). Howbeit I will not rend away all the kingdom; but will give one tribe to thy son for David my servant's sake, and for Jerusalem's sake which I have chosen. (1 Kings 11:11-13)

At Solomon's death his son, Rehoboam, met with the people. They asked for a lighter tax burden.

Thy father made our yoke grievous: now therefore make thou the grievous service of thy father, and his heavy yoke which he put upon us, lighter, and we will serve thee. (1 Kings 12:4)

The young king spoke to the people harshly saying,

My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke: my father also chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. (1 Kings 12:14)

The people had heard enough! The Ten Northern Tribes departed and the Nation of Israel was divided. The Golden Age of the shining city with the beautiful temple on a hill was over.

When King David, the strong leader, was gone, and Solomon strapped the nation financially, and then went into apostasy, it was all over. There was nothing to hold it together. All that is left of one of greatest empires of all time are the tribes of Judah and Benjamin in the southern half of Israel.

But, all is not lost. God will build it all up again when Israel inherits their land during the Millennial Reign, and their leader, King David will rule over Israel just as he did in his lifetime. This time, he will have no old nature, and he “do it right” this time.

Sometimes Bible colleges, churches, or missions cease to exist because they lose their leaders. It is unthinkable that Pillsbury Bible College, or Tennessee Temple Schools are no longer in existence. When the strong leader dies, there is nothing to hold them together.

We must always remember. They will live on in the lives of the people they have trained, and in the lives of the people they win to the Lord.

Sometimes churches close down, or change because the neighborhood around them changes. People move from city center to the suburbs, and leave the church there. But, gospel preaching churches never die. They live on in the lives of the people they have won. “Breaking down” and “building up” are a part of life. That’s just how things are.

“The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. (9) Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.” (Ecclesiastes 1:9-10).

Solomon’s statement, “there is no new thing under the sun,” is for the natural man, that lost person who does not know Christ as Savior. There is nothing new for them. In the light of the New Testament, everything becomes new for the person who trusts Christ as the payment for their sin.

“Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.” (2 Corinthians 5:17).

Even old church buildings can be re-purposed for other uses. Let us consider the

“The Old Downtown Church.”

I went down to my old church,
In the center of our town.
Where fine buildings used to be,
Now, many are torn down.

What used to be a place of pride,
Is now decrepit and forlorn.
What used to look bright and new
Is quite run down and worn.

Red and white striped awnings
Are hanging now in threads.
There’s nothing in shop windows,
Their curtains hang in shreds.

There she stands, large and still
Her steeple reaching to the sky.

Stained glass panes have some cracks
From errant stones flying by.

Though She's not as elegant as before,
The service times are just the same
And on the sign by the door.
Is a different pastor's name.

Sunday's message won't be brought
By the eloquent Dr. So and So.
But, the message will be just the same,
From Pastor Johnson that you know.

This used to be a neighborhood
That the upper class would claim.
Now, they say, "It's too run-down.
Coming here would bring us shame.

Jesus still calls from his window,
I am the Way, the Truth, the Life.
God's Word still comes from the pulpit,
And, it's a haven from urban strife.

As I watch, the church doors open.
It's lovely bells ring out a hymn,
People come from the city's streets,
How wonderful! They still come in.

The music is a little different,
With a happy, rhythmic sound.
But when that crowd begins to sing,
It can be heard for miles around.

I feel real welcome when I walk in,
With friendly handshakes at the door.
I know the prayers still reach to Heaven,
The Gospel reaches out once more.

God did not move that church,
He kept it where it could be used.
So neighborhood down and outers,
Would be comfortable in the pews.

Sometimes God changes mission fields,
Bringing them right to your front doors.
Don't run, keep giving the Gospel of Grace,
And, a harvest of souls will be yours.

Well done, good and faithful servant;
Thou hast been faithful over a few...,
I will make thee ruler over many" ...:
...The joy of thy Lord enter into.

...Marjorie A. Younce
Scripture Allusion: Matthew 25:23

The Parable of the Lighthouse

The lonely sentinel stands at water's edge.
Its light is dark and all is still.
A "For Sale" sign shows what time can do:
Both for good, and for ill.

It was built when blood-bought people
Determined that by God's Grace,
The light of the glorious Gospel
Would shine forth from that place.

They worked and sacrificed together
To build the Lighthouse there.
So, men and women, young and old,
Could learn God's Word to share.

In the summer breezes of Bible Camp,
The laughter of children rang;
While playing games and learning verses,
The woods would echo the song they sang.

'This little light of mine.
I'm gonna' let it shine
Let it shine. Let it shine, Let it shine,
I won't let Satan blow it out
I'm gonna' let shine
Let it shine. Let it shine. Let it shine."

In the classes there was Bible-teaching,
With the goal no child would leave:
Until they knew how to go to Heaven.
And Christ as their Savior receive.

The light shone brightly for miles around:
Folks came on Sunday to hear God's Word,
Preached from Genesis to Revelation;
And grew in Grace from what they'd heard.

Godly men have served this pulpit.
They came to water, plant, and sow.
They knew it's God that gives the increase;
And not mere man below.

For nearly 50 years it's beamed
The Gospel to all around.
Withstanding attack from every side-
Their unity kept them sound.

Until the day they lost the "Rock"
That was called the "Leaning Stone"
Their unity began to crack,
They began to feel alone.

The building was the Lighthouse.
The people were the ship:
And, without their Captain at the helm.
Their moorings began to slip.

We know that "Satan walketh about.
Seeking whom he may devour."
What he could not do from the outside,
He did inside at their weakest hour.

The winds of contention began to blow,
And discord began to seep inside.
There was no Captain to steer them clear.
They hit the rocks on the rising tide.

Those that were left tried mightily
To keep that ship upright.
But, one-by-one slipped overboard,
And floated away out of sight.

With not enough crew to man the ship,
And no one left to tend the light:
They sadly extinguished the beacon's flame;
Satan believed he'd put out the light

But that light still shines in the witness
Of all who've trusted the Savior there.
It gleams brightly each and every time
The pure, clear Gospel we share.

There are some lights Satan cannot dim.
If we choose to let our "Gospel light" shine.
Remembering the words of the children's song,
Give a witness with "this little light of mine.'

We'll not know this side of Heaven
The number of souls that have been won;
But, some of us can surely say,
"Praise the Lord, I am one."

Why the Light went out this way
Is something hard to understand;
But, the Savior led us through it all.
Like a child with His Mighty Hand!

Someday when we stand on Heaven's shore,
And meet our Savior face to face,
We'll know that His Way was the best one,
And be mighty thankful for God's Grace!

What is hard to bear in life down here,
We won't care about at all up there.
As we praise our Savior around His Throne,
And, together, everlasting life share.

...Marjorie A. Younce

No Christian work ever dies. They live on in the lives of the people they have won,
and those they witness to.

Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in
the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the
Lord. (1 Corinthians 15:58)

Bowed Down, but Not Broken Down

As my husband and I sat in our living room one afternoon after church, we began to count our many blessings. That morning had been the Sunday before Christmas. The Sunday school children were especially endearing when they sang. The sermon was very good, if I do say so myself! When the service was over, we had our customary gift exchange. It had been a blessed time of fellowship; or, so it seemed.

Now, we just sat relaxing and basking in the afterglow.

Then, my husband of 59 years made the comment, "Don't we enjoy the mountain tops!" I joked back, "Well, you know what comes after the mountain top. The big slide down into the valley!" And we both chuckled and he settled down to a football game, while I headed off to bed for my "Sunday nap."

How quickly that afterglow would evaporate!

The next Sunday, first of the New Year, started off with a bang! The church we had given twenty-two years of our life to, took a direct hit to the heart. The unity which we had enjoyed so long was "blasted to smithereens!" No one came except the members we have now. I would like to say I took it like a champ! In reality, I went back to the nursery and cried like a baby.

Our church had split. Our unity had broken down. What Satan could not do from the outside, he did by dissension and discord within.

When churches split, either one of them doesn't make it, or the result is two churches. Other outcomes: neither survive, or both survive.

We thank the Lord that our church survives, and thrives because of our wonderful people. The "faithful few" who always pitch in to help with a "we can do this" attitude. Four years later, and after twenty-six years in the area, we are still not large, but we are growing. God is meeting our needs and we are paying the bills. We must never be too proud to start over.

And, it is always too soon to quit!

Once, or Twice, In Every Lifetime

Once, or twice, in every lifetime
There will come a Gethsemane.
Something that can't be faced alone;
And we begin to ask, Why me?

God's work you've spent your life on,
Seems cast aside like trash.
What you thought would be eternal,
Blows about like a cold fire's ash.

Those you thought you could count on,
Are not as loyal as they professed to be.
Where God guides, strength He provides,
We learn from our Lord's Gethsemane.

He knew God could save him;
But victory over Satan must be won.
He was the only perfect Substitute.
The Son obeyed; the Father's will was done.

Even though He knew the Father's will,
Our Lord went into the Garden to pray.
That's Lesson One when trouble comes.
Pray, "Lord, what should I do today?"

We tend to fight with the "arm of flesh."
Human reasoning is a second-best sword.
"Father all things are possible ... to thee;"
Forget not, the battle is the Lord's.

"Watch and pray, lest into temptation ye (fall).
The spirit .. is ready, but the flesh is weak."
He spoke these words for us today;
When these words to Peter he did speak..

So, trust in the Lord, Dear Christian.
Fight God's battles in God's way,
If we "do all things" through His strength,
Victory is ours at the end of the day

Don't be like Elijah under the Juniper tree,
And think that you're all alone,
God had reserved seven thousand men,
Forget your "Woe is me's," and go on.

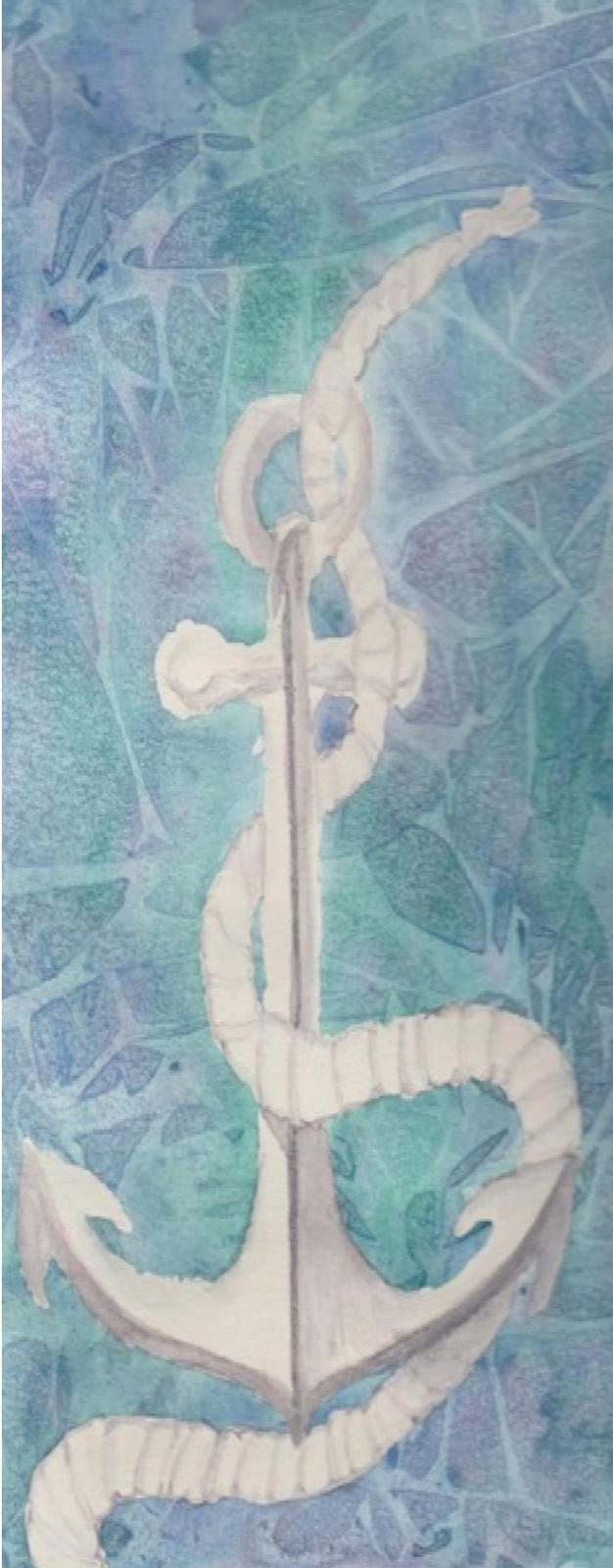
Don't be like Samuel grieving for Saul.
When others are willing to take up the work.
Rejoice in those "found faithful."
Who put the Lord's work first and won't shirk.

"He that spared not His own Son;
But, delivered him up for us all,"
Gives us the gift of eternal Salvation,
And a Friend who is always on call

The Garden, the Cross, and the Tomb are empty.
Dear Christian, in God's strength, just keep on;
Scan the sky for the "glorious appearing;"
When all our Gethsemanes will be gone!

Marjorie A. Younce

Scripture Allusions: Mark 14:32-42;
Hebrews 5:7-8; Romans 8:28,32; Titus



SAFE HARBOR

I head for my safe harbor
At the setting of the sun,
Kneeling at my bedside
When the day is done.

In Heaven's Throne Room
I find a resting place,
And lay out all my troubles
Before the Throne of Grace.

I thank Jesus for my blessings;
And though I forget a few,
He never scolds my ingratitude,
He just makes my day all new.

I pour out all my heart needs
Into His loving ear.
He reaches down to comfort me,
"My Child, I'm always here.

I will never leave thee;
Nor, when trials come forsake.
I'll walk with you through the valley.
I know the way to take.

Sleep in peace, My Child,
And at the morning's dawn,
We'll face the day together.
I'll help you carry on.

Let not your heart be troubled,
My peace I give to you.
Not that trouble will not come;
But, I will take you through.

When at the end of life's voyage,
You bid this world "Good Night."
I'll welcome you to Heaven's Harbor,
Where everything's made right."

Good Night, Lord!

Chapter Five

A Time of Weeping and Mourning

Have you ever heard of "God's Waiting Room?" It's that place where loved ones go at the end of life, where, temporarily, they seem suspended between Heaven and Earth.

We, who keep the vigil, are the ones that will be left behind when they enter Heaven's glory. They wait for that "waiting room" door to open and for our precious Savior to call their name. It is so hard for we humans, to "just wait."

The Lord tells us to comfort one another with the knowledge that we can meet again in Heaven. (1 Thessalonians 4:18) He knew we would have sorrow; but, sorrow with the hope of seeing our loved one again is a victory. It is still sorrow, as we miss having our loved ones with us, and grief is hard to deal with. Why? We are human.

Sorrow WITHOUT hope is a tragedy. It means our loved one is lost.

Max and I were talking about this. He said, "Of course, it is hard. Death is an enemy. The good news is, it is an enemy that will be destroyed at the Great White Throne Judgment.

“And death (the enemy of life) and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death” (Revelation 20:14)

Yes. “The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.” (1 Corinthians 15:26)

I know God, without even being asked, will shower His grace on all in His waiting room. He is gracious toward those who will be "left behind" until the Rapture, and those waiting for the upward call.

Somewhere, right now, whole families, or someone all alone, are in God's waiting room, keeping a vigil at the home going of a brother, sister, child, or parent.

God's waiting room reminds all of us to consider whether we are using our lives for what matters. Are we “redeeming the time,” or merely rushing from one appointment to another, not realizing that whole chunks of our lives are flying by? Are we using our lives just to make money, or, are we sending treasure ahead by serving the Lord?

“But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you” (Matthew 6:33).

“So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom” (Psalm 90:12).

King Solomon, and, indeed, all Israel became acquainted with God's waiting room, as they watched their beloved King David suffer the ravages of old age in his last year of life.

David had spent approximately seven years living off the land, in running battle with Saul. He was 30 years old when first proclaimed king. He spent seven years reign

in Hebron, and most of his 33-year reign in Jerusalem, as king of all Israel, leading his troops into battle. This rugged life style began to take a toll on the 69 year old, warrior king.

Bathsheba, Solomon, Nathan, the prophet, Zadok, the priest, and Benaiah, head of David's body guard, are those mentioned as being close to him during his last days.

In Ecclesiastes 12:1-7, Solomon gives a clear, firsthand, description of what the once strong, and vibrant king, suffered during his last illness. His loved ones probably wept more at the sight of the mighty king being brought physically low, and considered his death merciful. Even though very ill, much to Adonijah and Joab's chagrin, he could manage his administrative duties, and handed the kingdom, and the plans for the building of the temple, over to Solomon in good order. David knew what he was doing, and where he was going.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever" (Psalm 23:6).

Ecclesiastes 12:1 gives some very good advice to young people.

"Remember now thy Creator (bara) in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;" (Ecclesiastes 12:1).

"Thy Creator," is translated from the Hebrew word, "bara," and means bringing something into existence where nothing has existed before. Solomon tells us we should remember our Creator in the days of our youth, as that is the time we have the strength to do great things for the Lord.

Paul reminds us that we should glorify God in our spirit and our body, also. Why? Because we are bought with a price.

"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God (God, who created us), and ye are not your own? (19)

For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Corinthians 6:19,20).

As we grow older, our days are "evil" as we become ill more often. Chronic diseases, such as diabetes, heart disease, or Parkinson's, and others, make it an effort just to live through each day." The years draw nigh," means they are growing few in number.

"While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:" (Ecclesiastes 12:2).

In Verse 2, old age is pictured as a gathering storm. "While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain:" One ailment follows another in a vicious cycle, like the weather, each progressively worse.

"In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened" (Ecclesiastes 12:3).

Ecclesiastes 12:3 gives us part of the description of "the old house, or our body. The arms and the hands are the "keepers of the house," as we take care of ourselves

with them. The legs are the “strong men” who are now weak, and will not support the body. The grinders are our teeth. Even though we long for a delicious prime rib, we must always eat soft food as our teeth (the grinders) are few.

The eyes are the “window to the soul,” and they look out of the windows of the old house. The eyesight becomes poor in old age, sometimes even to the point of blindness. As a result, we cannot feed our souls by reading God’s Word. If we “hide God’s word in our hearts,” reading it, consistently, when we are young, when our eyesight fails, we can bring it to memory. If we are fortified with Scripture in our minds, it can be a comfort to us, especially if our last days include dementia, or Alzheimer’s.

There is physical blindness and spiritual blindness. Spiritual blindness is worse than physical blindness. Spiritual blindness can result in spending eternity in Hell.

“And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. (39) And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? (40) Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth” (John 9:39-41).

“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” (John 3:36).

There is physical deafness and spiritual deafness.

“And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; “ (Ecclesiastes 12:4).

Ecclesiastes 12:4 says, “...the doors shall be shut in the streets,” The doors of the old house are our ears, and we begin to have difficulty hearing.

In the last days of the Church Age before the Rapture, people will close their ears to the Word of God.

“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;(3) And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables”
(2 Timothy 4:3,4).

“...The sound of the grinding is low” because we are unable to hear the sounds of everyday life. To “rise up at the voice of the bird, means you are startled by every slight, sudden sound. “All the daughters of musick shall be brought low;” Music in a hearing aid now becomes noise. Quiet surroundings are now preferred. Doctors tell us that out of our five senses, before death, hearing is the last to fail.

“Also when they shall be afraid of that which is high, and fears shall be in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets:
(Ecclesiastes 12:5).

Ecclesiastes 12:5 tells us “...they shall be afraid of that which is high,” The elderly have difficulty climbing steps. You are certainly not going to see me going up a ladder! At 80-plus, it is wise to keep your feet flat on the ground. “Fears *shall be* in the way,”

Many elderly have had their lives shortened by a fall. An elderly friend slid off a roof and fell to the ground, seemingly without injury. Later he developed cancer, which the doctor said had broken out due to the fall.

Solomon uses the lovely white blossoms of the almond tree to represent the white hair of the elderly.

“The hoary (white) head is a crown of glory, if it be found in the way of righteousness” (Proverbs 16:31).

Isaiah 46:4 promises that God will not desert us in our old age. It may feel as though people have forgotten us, but God never will.

“And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar (white) hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you.”

“And the grasshopper shall be a burden,” Sometimes, due to osteoporosis, or rheumatoid knees, we give the appearance of a grasshopper hobbling along. “And desire shall fail.” This will not find us casting our eyes over the neighbor’s rooftop.

“Man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets.” Our long home is eternity. Where are you going to spend yours? Are you going to be absent from the body and present with the Lord? (2 Corinthians 5:8). Or will you be as the rich man in Luke 16:23?

“And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.”

My husband has led many to the Lord a short time before their death, but what if someone cannot come to you with the Gospel? If you don’t know you are going to Heaven, why don’t you get that settled right now? The Bible says,

“For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not”
(Ecclesiastes 12:20).

“ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
(Romans 3:23).

Without Christ, sinners have to pay for their own sin in Hell.

“For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
(Romans 6:23).

Now, we have a problem! We need a Savior.

“For he (God) hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

How do we get His righteousness?

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,…” (Acts 16:31).

Simple, isn’t it? Even if you are young, or old, why not get that settled. Right now! Before “mourners go about the streets.”

In the preceding verses, the subject has been old age. Ecclesiastes 12:6 is speaking about the end of life. It is pictured as a lamp with a golden bowl, suspended by a silver cord, a broken pitcher, a broken wheel on the rope for the cistern.

The “silver cord” is our spirit. James 2:26 tell us that “The body without the spirit is dead...” The “golden bowl” is the skull containing the brain. When the “silver cord” is loosed, the “golden bowl” crashes down and is broken, a picture of the finality of death.

“The “pitcher” that is broken at the fountain is that great vein which carries blood to the right ventricle of the heart, here called “the fountain.” The pitcher pours, the fountain receives, life continues on with each pump of the muscle. But the pump is known to fail, the vein is known to shatter, and, when that happens, the fountain no longer receives the lifeblood of the man.

The “wheel” that is broken at the cistern is that great artery which receives blood from the left ventricle of the heart, here designated as “the cistern.” Modern science has the capacity to repair these things to some extent, but eventually they will wear out, unless something else goes first, and our life on this earth is over.

Ecclesiastes 12:7 says, “Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.” Now, who wants to contend that Solomon did not believe there was life after death, either in Paradise or Torment?

“In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return”
(Genesis 3:19).

“He (David) was buried by his son Solomon, in Jerusalem, with great magnificence, and with all the other funeral pomp which kings used to be buried with; moreover, he had great and immense wealth buried with him, the vastness of which may be easily conjectured at by what I shall now say;

...for a thousand and three hundred years afterward Hyrcanus the high priest, when he was besieged by Antiochus, that was called the Pious, the son of Demetrius, and was desirous of giving him money to get him to raise the siege and draw off his army, and having no other method of compassing the money, opened one room of David's sepulcher, and took out three thousand talents, and gave part of that sum to Antiochus; and by this means caused the siege to be raised, as we have informed the reader elsewhere.

Nay, after him, and that many years, Herod the king opened another room, and took away a great deal of money, and yet neither of them came at the coffins of the kings themselves, for their bodies were buried under the earth so artfully, that they did not appear to even those that entered into their monuments. But so much shall suffice us to have said concerning these matters" (*Antiquities* 7.15.3. Flavius Josephus, First Century Jewish historian).

Note: Josephus was born in Jerusalem in A.D. 37-38 and became a historian writing principally about the Jewish people up until his death ca. 100. Four of his works are extant: 1) The Jewish War; 2) The Jewish Antiquities; 3) Vita (life) and 4) Against Apion. These works provide us with knowledge of the New Testament era which we otherwise would not possess. In short, Josephus has contributed to our understanding of

the social, political, historical, chronological data, and religious backgrounds of the New Testament.

To date, the exact location of the tomb of David and Solomon has not been found. Experts believe their location was unknown at the time of Nebuchadnezzar's siege of Jerusalem, and he was satisfied with all the gold and treasure above ground. The same can be said for the Romans, when Jerusalem was scraped to bare earth in 70 A.D.

David held a great convocation, or solemn meeting, when he turned over the kingdom, the plans for the temple, the gold and silver, plus other building supplies to build it with. If you thought Bill Gates was the richest man in the world, let me dazzle you now with a verse from the Bible.

“Now, behold, in my trouble I have prepared for the house of the LORD an hundred thousand talents of gold, and a thousand thousand talents of silver; and of brass and iron without weight; for it is in abundance: timber also and stone have I prepared; and thou mayest add thereto” (1 Chronicles 2:14).

How much are we talking? First, there is so much silver here, the temple could have been made of solid silver.

Value of the silver in today's money = 14.4 to 24 Billion. Value of the gold in today's money = 90 to 150 Billion. That is 1 million more in gold than they have at Fort Knox. What did King David do with all those Billions? He gave them to God to build the temple.

King David also had a personal fortune equal to one-half the wealth of the world. He was worth 125 Trillion in gold and silver. How did he amass such a fortune? By conquering all the surrounding nations, and gathering from them a tribute. That was standard procedure in those days. But, don't be in too much of a hurry to head to Israel and look for the location of David and Solomon's tomb. Why? Solomon knew very well the location of the tomb of David. He buried his father.

Remember Economics 101. King David had amassed his fortune from the spoils of war. Now, the Nation of Israel was at peace, and there were no spoils of war. At the end of the forty years of Solomon's reign, he had been spending more than he was taking in, and was forced into more taxation. Solomon, himself, spoke of this very situation. What the father takes a lifetime gathering, the son inherits, and wastes it all.

“Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me. (18) And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise man or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise under the sun. This is also vanity.
(Ecclesiastes 2;18,19).

I am certain that the whole nation mourned a great king, but, there is always a happy ending for the believer.

In Hebrew the name David means “beloved.” As I said, David is the only person in the Bible who is “a man after God's own heart.” (1 Samuel 13:14, Acts 13:22). In fact, it is recorded twice.

“But now thy kingdom (King Saul’s kingdom) shall not continue: the LORD hath sought him a man after his own heart (David), and the LORD hath commanded him to be captain over his people, because thou hast not kept that which the LORD commanded thee.” (1 Samuel 13:14).

“And when he had removed him (King Saul), he raised up unto them David to be their king; to whom also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man after mine own heart, which shall fulfil all my will” (Acts 13:22).

He was anointed, as a boy, to be God’s chosen king by the prophet, Samuel, and from that day forward, the Holy Spirit remained with him for the rest of his life.

“Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward. So Samuel rose up, and went to Ramah” (1 Samuel 16:13)

God made an unconditional covenant with King David, called the Davidic Covenant. An unconditional covenant means that it does not depend on what man does, the covenant is totally controlled by God. The Davidic Covenant takes place in the Kingdom when Israel gets their land back, all of it.

“I will sing of the mercies of the LORD for ever: with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations. (1) For I have said, Mercy shall be built up for ever: thy faithfulness shalt thou establish in the very heavens. (2) I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant, (3) Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations. Selah” (Psalm 89:1-4).

And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever” (2 Samuel 7:16).

“So David (his body) slept with his fathers, and was buried in the city of David” (1 Kings 2:10). His soul and spirit joined his first child by Bathsheba, and other loved ones in Paradise.

“Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever” Psalm 23:6).

That is surely a happily forever after in eternity. What is your “happily forever after” going to be? Will it be “absent from the body and present with the Lord”? Or, will you be like the rich man in Luke 16:23, “And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments”?

“Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,…” (Acts 16:31)

Some Day the Silver Cord Will Break

Some day the silver cord will break,
And I no more as now shall sing;
But oh, the joy when I shall wake
Within the palace of the King!

And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story—Saved by grace;
And I shall see Him face to face,
And tell the story—Saved by grace.

Some day my earthly house will fall.
I cannot tell how soon 'twill be;
But this I know—my All in All
Has now a place in Heav'n for me.

Lyrics by Fanny Crosby – 1891 - Music by George C. Stebbins – 1894

A Time Not to Mourn

“Playing the Fiddle for Saul”

There is a right time and a wrong time for everything, even mourning.

You remember Samuel. You heard about him in Sunday School. He was the little boy his mother, Hannah, prayed for. She promised God that if He gave her a son, she would give him back to the Lord, all the days of his life. When he was about three years old, she took him back to the tabernacle in Shiloh. And, as your Sunday School teacher told you, she took him a little coat every year.

Then, she went ahead and made the Nazarite Vow for him. A Nazarite vow meant no razor would come upon his head. Since all other Jewish men had short hair, the long hair of one professing the Nazarite Vow would stand out. It also meant he would never take wine, grapes, or any source of wine, and would stay ritually clean from a dead body all of his life, or until completion of the vow

There is a lot more to Samuel than what you learned in Sunday School. He was not aware that he was to replace Eli, the current high priest. One, obvious, reason God was displeased with Eli was his failure to discipline his two sons, who were also priests.

Eli only said, “Nay, my sons; for *it is* no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD'S people to transgress.” When his sons ignored him, Eli did not follow through by removing them from office. They were making a mockery of the people’s sacrifices

by demanding that the people give them the best part, which really belonged to God. They were supposed to be satisfied with what was left.

People told Eli they were lying with women outside the tabernacle door, and he did nothing. Like Lot, he simply said, "Do not so wickedly."

Eli violated a well-known principle of parenting. Unless there is a consequence for bad behavior, children, of any age, do not change. As Solomon says,

"Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us" (Ecclesiastes 1:10).

This is one principle our Heavenly Father takes very seriously. You do not mock the sacrifices of God. They represent our redemption from sin. God's retribution was swift. Eli's sons had carried the Ark of the Covenant into battle. The Philistines captured the Ark, and killed Eli's two sons. When Eli heard the news, he fell backwards, breaking his neck, and died. Thus ended the House of Eli. Never would they serve the priesthood again. (1 Samuel 2:31).

When Samuel replaced Eli,

"...all Israel, from Dan even to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was established to be a prophet of the Lord. (20) And the Lord appeared again in Shiloh, for the Lord revealed himself to Samuel in Shiloh by the word of the Lord." (1 Samuel 3:20,21).

Before this time, there was no open vision. God was not revealing himself to Eli. Now, Samuel became the last of the judges, and the first of the prophets. God spoke to him, and he brought God's Word to the people.

When Samuel grew old, he made his sons judges over Israel. Every father hopes his children will walk in his footsteps. As, Solomon would say, "There is nothing new under the sun," and history repeated itself. Samuel's sons took bribes and gave perverted judgment.

The Bible is silent about *this* father-son relationship. Nothing negative is pointed out about the way Samuel raised his children. Samuel had the same problem as parents do today. You can raise your children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," but, when they grow older, they *will* make up their own minds.

There was an evangelist who used to declare, "If you raise your children right, they will not go astray. If they go astray, you didn't raise them right!" Then, his children grew up, and he never said that again. Solomon also gave this advice in Proverbs 22:6,

"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

This is not an absolute. You can "train up" every child. If they leave the home and stray, they can always remember, and come back to what you have taught them. Some will come back, and some will not. That is why every mother should teach her children God's Word, and lead them to Christ, while they are still youngsters at her knee. It is what God wants a mother to do.

Mother's Legacy

Mother's up in Heaven, now;
She left her legacy behind.
Much more precious far than gold:
Or any diamond mined.

I took it down from the shelf,
It's pages are old and worn.
Some are even stained with tears
From unknown sorrows born.

And where she underlined a verse,
There's a message there for me.
Of course, I know them all by heart,
I learned them at her knee.

That's where I came to know the Lord
At a very tender age.
She taught that "Jesus died for me,"
From each Salvation page.

"We have not, because we ask not,"
She often used to say;
Then, she took us to the Throne of Grace,
And taught us how to pray.

Each night we heard her pray for us.
"They're your children, too," she'd say.
"Thou who sees the sparrow's fall,
Guide my children's steps each day."

She taught us how to "grow in grace,"
By daily reading of God's Word.
She taught us by example,
A silent lesson, clearly heard.

And, if we had a problem,
"The Bible's where the answer's found."
That's what Mother lived before us;
And, remembered, when she's not around.

And so, I turn to John Three Sixteen,
With my little one at my knee.
I teach him what my Mother taught,
"That Jesus died for me."

Simply I explain to him,
"All you have to do is believe

That Jesus died to pay for your sin,
And Eternal Life you'll receive.

Mother's legacy was not her Bible;
But, the truth each page contains;
And, if we teach our children these,
My Mother's legacy remains.

Marjorie A. Younce

And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: (6) And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Deuteronomy 6:6,7).

We cannot say if Samuel saw to it that his sons learned about God’s Word according to the guidelines given in Deuteronomy 6:6,7. These guidelines, given in Deuteronomy, are the equivalent to the instructions Paul gives to parents in Ephesians 6:1-4, the point of which is “...bring them (your children) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

The people had enough of dishonest judges and priests, and now they wanted a king. They were afraid they would be left with his Samuel’s dishonest sons after his death. “We want to be like all the other nations,” they said.

“...Nay; but we will have a king over us; (19) That we also may be like all the nations; and that our king may judge us, and go out before us, and fight our battles.”
(1 Samuel 8:19,20).

Samuel felt rejected. God said, “Samuel, it is not you they have rejected, it is me.” They did not want God to reign over them.

A thousand, or so, years later, our Savior would tell the disciples in the upper room, “Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also” (John 15:20). As Solomon would remind us, there is nothing new under the sun.”

God gave Israel his permissive will, but, not before he had Samuel inform the nation what having a king was going to cost them. That is laid out in 1 Samuel 8:11-18. They could not say they were not warned.

We may ask God for something that will not turn out well. God may, in His permissive will, allow us to have it just to teach us a lesson. Israel was now going to have a king they would never forget! One who was jealous, subject to homicidal rages, unstable, and disobedient to God. This was going to be the worst kind of government men could imagine. Be careful what you pray for. You might get it.

God directed Samuel to Saul of the tribe of Benjamin. When Samuel got his first glimpse of Saul, he stood head and shoulders above other men. From the outward appearance, he looked every inch a king. But God does not look on the outward appearance.

“...for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart” (1 Samuel 1:7b).

Saul was anointed king, and all was well for a few years. Then, he began to ignore God’s commandments. Power had turned his head, and made him proud. Solomon had something to say about this in Ecclesiastes 8:4,

“Where the word of a king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?”

God gave Saul one final test, a special mission with specific instructions. He already had three strikes against him. If he fouled this one, he was out!

“Now go and smite Amalek, and utterly destroy all that they have, and spare them not; but slay both man and woman, infant and suckling, ox and sheep, camel and ass” (1 Samuel 15:3).

They were not to take anything. Nothing! What did Saul do?

“But Saul and the people spared Agag (the king), and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them: but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly” (1 Samuel 15:9).

You need to be following God’s leadership, closely, if you are entrusted with the leadership of His People, Israel. Effectively, Saul has said, “OK, God, I’ll take it from here.” God had a few words to say about this, Himself.

“It repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he is turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments. And it grieved Samuel; and he cried unto the LORD all night” (1 Samuel 15:11).

“Repenteth,” in 1 Samuel 15:11, is from the Hebrew Word “nāham.” It means God has changed His mind. Yes. God changes His mind. When God changes His mind, it is in response to man’s obedience, or disobedience to Him. If God does not change his mind, why should we ever pray? The predestinationalist holds that all things are pre-ordained, and prayer is useless. Prayer does change things, as we are admonished many times in God’s Word to pray. In fact, we are told in 1 Thessalonians 5:17 to “Pray without ceasing.”

To Samuel, who was really attached to the king, this was a painful announcement which led him to pass a sleepless night in earnest prayer. However, Samuel was also a brave man, and did not hesitate to pass on the message from God to Saul. Saul could easily have killed him.

“And the LORD sent thee on a journey, and said, Go and utterly destroy the sinners the Amalekites, and fight against them until they be consumed. (18)

Wherefore then didst thou not obey the voice of the LORD, but didst fly upon the spoil, and didst evil in the sight of the LORD?” (1 Samuel 15:18,19).

True to form, Saul concocted a story about how he had destroyed all the people, but had brought back only the king. You know, just one, little, king. God had said he was to bring back no one. Then, he blamed the people for bringing back the good things which were to be destroyed, with the excuse they wanted to sacrifice them to the Lord. What a king! What a story!

Then the hammer comes down. Brave Samuel thunders out the sentence which has been imposed by God.

“For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the LORD, he hath also rejected thee from being king. (1 Samuel 15:23).

“And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou” (1 Samuel 15:28).

Then, Samuel does something remarkable for a prophet of his age. “Then said Samuel, Bring ye hither to me Agag the king of the Amalekites. And Agag came unto him delicately. And Agag said, Surely the bitterness of death is past. (1 Samuel 15:32). Can’t you just see him simpering along?

Get ready for this one! Raising the sword high over his head “...Samuel said, As thy sword hath made women childless, so shall thy mother be childless among women. And Samuel hewed Agag in pieces before the LORD in Gilgal” (1 Samuel 15:33).

Then Samuel turned abruptly, threw down the sword, there was a rustle of his robe as he turned, and, silently, headed down the road to Ramah. “And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul:... (1 Samuel 15:5)

It is hard to know why Samuel mourned so long for such a fickle person as Saul. But, did you ever hear the saying, “Are you playing the fiddle for Saul?” when some type of discipline has to be rendered in an organization? Samuel “played the fiddle so long for Saul” that God had to snap him out of it.

“...the LORD said unto Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing I have rejected him from reigning over Israel? fill thine horn with oil, and go...” (1 Samuel 16:1) In other words, “Dry your tears and move on, Samuel.”

There comes a time to bury the past, or the past will bury you. If we cannot forget the past, we will not be of future use to the Lord. A Christian is not to go through life looking in his rear-view mirror.

This was not the time for Samuel to mourn. It was a time to look to the future. It was time to anoint another king. This king would not be man’s choice. And where would Samuel find this king? Would he stand out, head and shoulders, in a crowd? No, Samuel would find this king in a sheepfold. He would be a shepherd, just exactly what we need leaders to be. Under-shepherds to our Great Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ.

“I (God) will send thee to Jesse the Bethlehemite: for I (God) have provided me a king among his sons.” (1 Samuel 16:1).

What is the lesson here?

“ To every *thing there is* a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:”
There is a time to mourn,” (4) and a time not to mourn.”

Don't let yourself fall into the trap of “playing the fiddle for Saul” because of personal feelings for someone.

Mourning at the Wrong Time Almost Cost a Kingdom

What parent, even though their child's negligence, or wrongdoing, has caused their own death, does not grieve for that child. Even kings are not spared this sorrow, but as Solomon points out, there is a time and a place. King David had many sons, but, like Eli, the priest, discipline was lacking in his "parental skill set."

Let us imagine a scene in King David's palace in the City of David. King David is watching his sons strut around with his crown hanging lop-sided on their heads. They are playing at driving a chariot, and shouting out commands. This may have been entertaining to David when they were children. It may not have been so entertaining when Absalom and Amnon began a tug of war with the crown. "I want it now. You've had it long enough," snarls Absalom. "I shall always have it," announces Amnon. "I am the oldest, and I shall be the next king! Won't I, Father? This had to be just an "every-day crown, one worn as a badge of authority.

Rebellion can begin early in any family. King David was a great warrior, and administrator, but, a lenient father to his sons. He reaped a terrible harvest from the seeds of rebellion he allowed to fester in his children.

The judgment pronounced on David in 2 Samuel 12:10-12,14, seems to fall very quickly. We have the death of David and Bathsheba's first son, the birth of Solomon, all in the same chapter, but there is a gap of approximately eleven years between Verses 25 and 26.

"Judgment delayed is judgment denied," goes the old saying. God may delay, but He is never late. God has his timing and when David's sons grew up, the sword of God's discipline, exactly as predicated in 2 Samuel 12:11,12, began to fall.

Amnon, David's eldest son, now a young adult, assaults his half-sister, Tamar, after concocting a scheme that even fooled David.

"...Amnon lay down, and made himself sick: and when the king was come to see him, Amnon said unto the king, I pray thee, let Tamar my sister come, and make me a couple of cakes in my sight, that I may eat at her hand. (6) Then David sent home to Tamar, saying, Go now to thy brother Amnon's house, and dress him meat." (2 Samuel 13:6,7).

It is hard to believe that David did not see *this* coming. This is Number One in a sequence of tragic events that fulfill God's punishment of David for his violation of Bathsheba, and murder of her husband, Uriah.

Tamar dutifully went to her half-brother's room, played the little game, making, baking, and serving the cakes right in front of him. She should have caught on when he asked that all her guards be told to leave the room. He then asked that she bring the food to his "chamber," or bedside, which she did.

When she came close enough, "he took hold of her, and said...Come lie with me, my sister." (11) Her answer was "Nay," but he was not taking "Nay" for an answer.

Consequently, "...being stronger than she, forced her, and lay with her. (14) Then Amnon hated her exceedingly... And...said unto her, Arise, be gone." (15)

"And she said unto him, ...this evil in sending me away *is* greater than the other that thou didst unto me. (16) Then he called his servant, and said, Put now this *woman* out from me, and bolt the door after her." (2 Samuel 13:11, 16-17)

This was a terrible thing to happen to a young woman in those days.. Notice how Amnon refers to her scornfully as "this woman."

Her brother, Absalom, advises her to "hold now thy peace, my sister: he is thy brother; regard not this thing. So Tamar remains desolate, unmarried and childless, in her brother Absalom's house." (20) We find brotherly love now turns to absolute hatred for Amnon. (2 Samuel 13:20).

What does King David do? Absolutely nothing! As king, and a judge of Israel, he was responsible to apply the Law of God without prejudice. God had given a law against what Amnon had done to Tamar in Leviticus 18:9, "The nakedness of thy sister, the daughter of thy father, or daughter of thy mother, *whether she be* born at home, or born abroad, *even* their nakedness thou shalt not uncover."

The punishment for this crime is given in Leviticus 18:29, "For whosoever shall commit any of these abominations, even the souls that commit *them* shall be cut off from among their people." The words "cut off" are translated from the Hebrew Word "*karat*," and means "exterminate or destroy." (W.E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words.)

What does King David do? He gets angry! (2 Samuel 13:21). What action does he take? None. Word gets around when things like this happen. Rumors fly. Did the people say to themselves, "It appears the Law of God does not apply to the sons of the king?"

Do we not see that today? Women are assaulted, and many times the man who attacks them becomes the victim, and the poor woman is the criminal. This happens, especially, when the attacker is a celebrity. They do not have to go to someone's harem and be "desolate" the rest of their life. They do have issues with trusting men because of the awful memories they retain of the event. Solomon would have said,

"Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us." (Ecclesiastes 1:10)

Absalom said nothing to Amnon about what he had done to Tamar for two full years. Then, he planned a get together for all the kings sons, at his own estate, a celebration after the shearing of the sheep. He even invited his father. David answered, "Nay, my son, let us not all now go, lest we be chargeable unto thee. And he, Absalom, pressed him: howbeit (he, David) would not go, but blessed him."

"Be chargeable unto thee" meant that if David went, his whole corps of bodyguards would have to accompany him. That would be too large a crowd to manage for just a sheep shearing celebration. So, he politely declined.

“Then said Absalom, If not, I pray thee, let my brother Amnon go with us. (26). And the king (asked)...,Why should he go with thee? Still, Absalom pressed him, that he let Amnon and all the king's sons go with him.” (27).

Well, at least, he did ask him “Why should Amnon go with you?” The answer must have been a good one, as David allowed all his sons to attend.

Absalom already had a plan worked out. “...he commanded his servants, saying, Mark ye now when Amnon's heart is merry with wine, and when I say unto you, Smite Amnon; then kill him, fear not: have not I commanded you? be courageous, and be valiant.” (28)

The servants of Absalom kill Amnon, as he has ordered. All the rest of the kings sons mount their mules, and high tail it home as fast as they could get those mules to go.

In the uproar, a rumor came to David saying, “Absalom hath slain all the kings sons, and there is not one of them left.” Upon hearing this, David arose, tore his garments,”and threw himself on the ground. All the servants did the same. (30,31).

David is relieved when Jonadab, David’s nephew, informs the panic-stricken group that only Amnon had been killed. He says, “...Amnon only is dead: for by the appointment of Absalom this hath been determined from the day that he forced his sister Tamar.” (32)

It becomes clear that Jonadab knew about Absalom’s plan to kill Amnon beforehand, and told no one. Actually, Jonadab had been in on this from the beginning. He was Amnon’s friend, and the one who cooked up the plan for Amnon to trick Tamar into coming to his bedchamber. With “friends” like this, who needs enemies.

Soon all of David’s sons, except Absalom and Amnon, come tearing in. Everybody dismounts. “...the kings sons...lifted up their voice and wept: and the king also and all his servants wept very sore.” (36).

Absalom flees to the home of his maternal grandfather in Geshur, and stays there three years. “And *the soul of* king David longed to go forth unto Absalom: for he was comforted concerning Amnon, seeing he was dead.” (2 Samuel 13:39).

How would David be “comforted concerning Amnon”? Only if he believed when Amnon celebrated Passover, and made the yearly sacrifices that only covered sin, that Amnon was looking forward, in belief, “to the Lamb of God that would take away sin.” (John 1:29). Of course, only Amnon, and God, would know that with assurance. Amnon was no longer a child, and would have to make this decision himself.

Through Joab’s influence, Absalom is allowed to return to Jerusalem to his own house, but David does not see him until two years later when Joab, again, intercedes, after having his fields set on fire by Absalom.

Said Absalom, “I have been here two full years, and my father still will not see me. I want to see him face to face and “if there be any iniquity in me, let him kill me.” (32).

So, Joab sent a woman who told David a fabricated story designed to soften up the king's feelings toward Absalom. After which, "Joab came to the king, and told him: and when he had called for Absalom, he came to the king, and bowed himself on his face to the ground before the king: and the king kissed Absalom." (2 Samuel 14:33).

All is forgiven, right? The two men throw their arms over each other's shoulders and go out on the terrace to talk it all over. Nothing could be further from the truth. It appears that was all there was to it. The above verse is all the Bible has to say about that meeting.

Whatever happened during the meeting with his father did not satisfy Absalom, as Chapter 15 begins Absalom going full force to steal the kingdom. He appears in the trappings of a king, galloping around with chariot and horse, and fifty men to run before him to say, "Here comes Prince Absalom." His prime target was the ten northern tribes. You have to get up early if you are going to steal a kingdom, and that is exactly what Absalom did.

"...Absalom rose up early, and stood beside the way of the gate: and it was *so*, that when any man that had a controversy came to the king for judgment, then Absalom called unto him, and said, Of what city *art* thou? And he said, Thy servant *is* of one of the tribes of Israel." (2)

And Absalom said unto him, See, thy matters *are* good and right; but *there is* no man *deputed* of the king to hear thee."(3) He was hinting that David was not doing his job and had not sent anyone to hear their cases. Absalom, the political organizer, "zeroes in" on the ten northern tribes, who already felt neglected by the government in Jerusalem. As Solomon would say, "There is nothing new under the sun."

He did this for four full years and, "... stole the hearts of the men of Israel."(6). His instigating reminders of how mistreated the ten northern tribes thought they were, causes the rebellion to break out. This is classic political activism.

He persuades David let him go to Hebron to pay a vow that he pretends he had made during his time in Geshur. He told David this was the vow. "If the Lord shall bring me again indeed to Jerusalem, then I will serve the Lord." (How could anyone refuse?) David said, "Go in peace."

"Absalom immediately sent spies throughout all Israel with a message. When you hear the sound of a trumpet, say Absalom reigneth in Hebron!" (2 Samuel 15:10).

Then he rode out of Jerusalem, but not alone. Two hundred men accompanied him, but knew nothing. He sent for David's counselor Ahithophel. The conspiracy against David increased with people, and in strength.

Finally, news of the rebellion reached David, who immediately took his whole household out of Jerusalem, lest they be trapped in the City of David, an impregnable fortress. If a siege took place there, he and his court would not be harmed, but many innocent people outside the walls would die. He left ten concubines to keep the house.

Note: Archaeologists in Israel believe they have excavated down to the level of David's palace. They call it the "building of large stones." The architecture of 1,000 to 900 B.C. was much different than the Greek and Roman architecture of Christ's time.

Off the pitiful caravan went with King David in the lead. They went up by Mount Olivet, with David walking bare footed, his head covered, and weeping. When Zadok and Abiathar follow with the Ark, David tells them, “Return to the city in peace. You and your two sons can help me more there.” There is a remembrance by Solomon of this occasion in Ecclesiastes 10:7.

“I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth.”

Soon David found out that Ahithophel, his old faithful counselor had signed on with Absalom. David prayed, “O Lord, I pray thee, turn the counsel of Athitophel to foolishness.” (2 Samuel 15:31)

This was a much needed prayer! 2 Samuel 16:23 gives the reputation of this “counselor.”

“And the counsel of Ahithophel, which he counselled in those days, was as if a man had enquired at the oracle of God: so was all the counsel of Ahithophel both with David and with Absalom.”

David convinced Hushai, another counselor, that he would be of more value if he went back to Jerusalem and pretended to sign up with Absalom. “Whatever you hear, tell it to the two priests, and they will have their sons bring it to me.”

We are going to make this long, sad, story short. We find the mighty King David being forced to flee past the Jordan River. They were in the wilderness but, their former enemies (2 Samuel 12:26-31), the people of Ammon, brought them beds, food, basins, and earthen vessels. Not quite all the comforts of the palace, but good enough.

The flattering counsel of Hushai contradicted the wise counsel of Ahithophel, and the vain, and foolish, Absalom followed Hushai’s false advice. He gathered an army and made Amasa captain of the host. The battle took place in the wood of Mt. Ephraim.

David’s army, under Joab, was made up of hundreds, and thousands. He sent them out in three bands. A third under Joab, a third under Abishai, and a third under Ittai, the Gittite. They did not let David go with them.

“And the king commanded Joab and Abishai and Ittai, saying, *Deal* gently for my sake with the young man, *even* with Absalom. And all the people heard when the king gave all the captains charge concerning Absalom.” (2 Samuel 18:5)

“...the people of Israel were slain before the servants of David, and there was there a great slaughter that day of twenty thousand *men*. (7) For the battle was there scattered over the face of all the country: and the wood devoured more people that day than the sword devoured.” (2 Samuel 18:7,8).

Remember, when you say the “people of Israel,” this is referring to the ten northern tribes.

“And Absalom met the servants of David. And Absalom rode upon a mule, and the mule went under the thick boughs of a great oak, and his head caught hold of the oak, and he was taken up between the heaven and the earth; and the mule that *was* under him went away.” (2 Samuel 18:9).

Absalom's predicament was immediately made known to Joab, who killed him by thrusting three darts through his heart. They buried him under a pile of stones.

Two runners were sent to tell the king the good news of the victory and that his kingdom had been saved. "Blessed be the Lord thy God, which hath delivered up (those) that lifted up their hand against my Lord the king." (28)

David cared nothing about the victory, or how many casualties the people had sustained, or how difficult the battle had been. All he could ask was, "Is the young man, Absalom, safe?"

It was the same with the second messenger. Finally, he was told, "And the king said unto Cushai (the messenger), Is the young man Absalom safe? And Cushai answered, The enemies of my lord the king, and all that rise against thee to do *thee* hurt, be as *that* young man *is*." (32)

"And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (2 Samuel 18:10-33)

No thankfulness, or appreciation, did he express to the people who went out and risked their lives putting down the rebellion his son, Absalom, had caused.

"And it was told Joab, Behold, the king weepeth and mourneth for Absalom." (2 Samuel 19:1).

"And the victory that day was *turned* into mourning unto all the people: for the people heard say that day how the king was grieved for his son. (2) And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle." (2 Samuel 19:2,3).

David was still carrying on when Joab presented him some cold, hard facts. "Thou hast shamed this day the faces of all thy servants, which this day have saved thy life, and the lives of thy sons and of thy daughters, and the lives of thy wives, and the lives of thy concubines;(5)

It appears to me, "...that if Absalom had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well." (6) Well, that was not true, he just needed to get his father's heart under control. After all, this whole thing had been caused by the rebellion of Absalom.

"Now...speak comfortably unto thy servants: for I swear by the LORD, if thou go not forth, there will not tarry one with thee this night: and that will be worse unto thee than all the evil that befell thee from thy youth until now." (2 Samuel 19:5-7)

David's excessive mourning for Absalom was a shame to him, and all those who fought for him. They were not in Jerusalem, but guests in the city of a former enemy. There should have been a grand victory parade, led by someone with Absalom's head on a spear!

It was a poor testimony, as the people watching might believe the God of Israel could not win His battles.

“Then the king arose, and sat in the gate. And they told unto all the people, saying, Behold, the king doth sit in the gate. And all the people came before the king: for Israel had fled every man to his tent.” (2 Samuel 19:8).

David smiled through his tears, thanking all who went to battle for him, and telling them what a wonderful job they had done. This was not the right time to mourn publicly. He would have to do that in private.

“To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:”
(Ecclesiastes 3:1).

Doesn't this verse remind you of what happened in our country after the Viet Nam war?

“And the people gat them by stealth that day into the city, as people being ashamed steal away when they flee in battle” (2 Samuel 19:2).

Those returning from Viet Nam should have been welcomed by ticker tape parades, and special celebrations in every hometown. It was not their fault that America pulled out, and let the Viet Cong overrun the country. They fought in the jungles, and on the rivers, witnessing unspeakable horrors. They gave it all they had.

Praise the Lord, we have finally gotten around to honoring these very brave people. If you have not seen the Viet Nam Wall, the traveling one, or the real one in Washington D.C., I recommend that you take the first opportunity. I have seen the traveling wall, and it is an awesome experience. You can shed a few tears at that wall, and be perfectly justified.

The Names on the Viet Nam Wall

In Washington D.C. there stands a wall,
V-shaped granite, black, and cold.
On its side are engraved the names
Of Viet Nam casualties, young and old.

Silently, day or night, they come
To walk that black wall, one by one,
Searching along that long, dark length
For mother, father, daughter, or son.

They walk slowly down that wall,
Carefully scan each precious name.
To find the one who belongs to them,
For that loved one they can claim.

And, when that name is found,
It's often just too hard to bear.
Many tears have been shed
By those standing there.

There's not a lot of comfort
To find a name upon that wall.
Though it is meant to honor,
It's one family's grief, after all.

Precious gifts are left behind,
Out of respect, they will stay.
Until winter's wind and snow,
They are safely put away.

And, if those names could talk,
I wonder what they'd say,
About that very unpopular war,
They fought that long ago day?

Then, I began to hear them,
As one by one they spoke,
About the horrors of a war that,
Many a good man's spirit broke.

“Even when a war’s unpopular,”
Was called out by one name.
“When our country’s duty calls,
We must fight it just the same.”

Said another, “I got out alive,
Came home to ridicule and shame.
You heaped pity on the enemy,
And tormented us with the blame!”

“We sat ignored on city streets.” said one.
Our plight was politically incorrect!
Until the tide of patriotism turned,
We bore mental abuse and neglect.”

Another said, “We paid the price,
That’s paid for any nation’s liberty.
We patriots fight, even in far-off lands,
To keep our nation’s shores free.”

One name plead for our nation
“To honor those who gave their all
And never, again, allow ingratitude,
For those who fight against tyranny’s call.”

“Sir, I really did not want to go,”
The last name spoke from that wall,
“But, when Uncle Sam calls your name,
You must answer your country’s call.

When you see someone in uniform,
Walk up and shake their hand for me,
Tell them, “It’s from a name on the wall,
Your brother-in-arms for liberty.

Tell them the best place to find your name,
Is the Lamb’s Book of Life up in Heaven.
Believe that Christ was made sin for us,
And His righteousness to you will be given.

He paid it all on that old, rugged cross,
And offers you the gift of salvation free.
Believe it, and take it from me, my friend,
Up in Heaven, you’ll be sure to meet me!”

I turned away as silence returned,
And, brushed a tear from my cheek,
That moment I decided in my heart
For those names on the wall to speak.
...Marjorie A. Younce

Chapter Six

“...And a Time to Dance”

Did you ever consider this?

“Then Samuel took the horn of oil, and anointed him David in the midst of his brethren: and the Spirit of the LORD came upon David from that day forward... (13)

But the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the LORD troubled him” (1 Samuel 16:13,14).

The Bible is telling us that the moment David was anointed king, the Spirit of the LORD came upon him, BUT the Spirit of the LORD departed from Saul.

As we said, previously, in every dispensation before the Cross, the Resurrection, and Pentecost, the Holy Spirit did not indwell believers, but, came on them for power to accomplish a task given them by God. When it was not needed, the Holy Spirit left. This does not mean there is not enough Holy Spirit to go around. It is part of the Trinity, and therefore, God. God is omnipresent, and God, the Holy Spirit, is omnipresent. That means “everywhere at once.”

The Spirit of the LORD is another name for the Holy Spirit, as David wrote in Psalm 51:11.

“Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me.”

In the Dispensation of Grace, the Church Age, the Holy Spirit indwells every believer the moment they believe, and goes with the Church, or Body of Christ, at the Rapture.

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, (13) Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory” (Ephesians 1:13,14).

When God removes His protective hand, he often turns the person over to Satan for destruction, or to an evil spirit for torment. The devil and the evil spirits do the work, but God has allowed them to do what comes natural to them for His own purpose.

In Psalm 78:49, God judged Israel "by sending evil angels among them." In Judges 9:23, "God sent an evil spirit between Abimelech and the men of Shechem." In 1 Kings 22:22, God sent a "lying spirit" in the mouth of the false prophets to send Ahab to his death.

In our passage, 1 Samuel 16:14-15, God removed His Spirit from the disobedient Saul. This opened the door for an evil spirit to come and torment Saul. In this passage, it is only the servants of Saul that said the evil spirit was from the Lord, but in other passages (1 Samuel 18:10; 19:9), the text states that the evil spirit came from the Lord.

God does not commit wickedness, but He uses the wicked for His purpose. In the end, God will have His glory. How much better it would have been for Saul to obey

Him willingly. Saul's downfall was not the evil spirit. It was his rebellious nature that caused him to be removed from being king. We find very few kings in the pages of Scripture who could wield absolute power to the glory of God. Saul was not one of them.

And what brought these two men together at court? The evil spirit is the reason David is present at the court of King Saul. One of the king's servants had a prescription that would calm Saul when the evil spirit tormented him. Saul needed to hear harp music, and the very best harpist in Israel at that time was...David.

“Wherefore Saul sent messengers unto Jesse, and said, Send me David thy son, which is with the sheep.”

As a young person, David had killed Goliath. Saul had made a vow that the man who killed Goliath would become his son-in-law. This has the ring of a story book tale in the beginning, but I assure you, there is no “happily ever after to this account! After killing Goliath, David and Jonathan, Saul's son, become loyal friends. Everyone at court became so fond of David that they did not let him go home, again. Saul gave David a military commission, and “life was just a bowl of cherries”...until...

“And it came to pass as they came, when David was returned from the slaughter of the Philistine, that the women came out of all cities of Israel, singing and dancing, to meet king Saul, with tabrets, with joy, and with instruments of musick.(6) And the women answered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands” (1 Samuel 18:6,7).

Saul did not like that score! Thousands for him, and ten thousands for David. Saul could see that the Spirit of the Lord was with David, and blessing him in all that he did. When he heard the women praising David after a battle, he said “...what can he have more but the kingdom.” (1 Samuel 18:8) “And Saul eyed David from that day and forward.” (18:9). Now, he viewed David as a threat to his throne to be eliminated.

Back to the promise of the hand of the king's daughter in marriage for killing Goliath. Merab, Saul's first daughter should have been given to David, but Saul went back on that promise and had given her to another man. David did not feel he was “marriage material” for a king's daughter, anyway.

“And David said unto Saul, Who am I? and what is my life, or my father's family in Israel, that I should be son in law to the king?” (1 Samuel 18:18).

David was only stating the obvious. He was too poor to provide a dowry for a king's daughter.

“...On the morrow” Saul appears to be in a frenzy, with a javelin in his hand. David played the harp as usual, but ...Saul cast the javelin; for he said, I will smite David even to the wall *with it*. And David avoided out of his presence twice. (11) And Saul was afraid of David, because the LORD was with him, and was departed from Saul” (1 Samuel 18:11,12).

We see that the power of the evil spirit (demon), that God had allowed to torment Saul, was limited by God's power. God protected David from being killed by Saul's javelin.

Saul removed David from the court where everyone admired the young warrior, including his son, Jonathan, and daughter, Michal. He gave him a military commission as “a captain of a thousand.” He hoped the Philistines, with whom he was at war, would kill him.

When Saul learned that Michal had eyes for David, he, then, planned to use her as a trap. First, he had to have his servants convince David that Saul, and everybody at court, really loved him. The only dowry he wanted was a hundred foreskins of the Philistines. This was acceptable to David as it was something he could accomplish. Saul thought the Philistines would surely kill him, but, underestimated the power, and protection, from the Spirit of the LORD which David was blessed with.

David came back with two hundred foreskins. Saul did not go back on his word, and David claimed his bride. The Law did not prohibit this marriage. They were both Jewish. Unfortunately, Michal had been raised in a home that allowed idol worship, and had little regard for the Laws of God, Passover, or the Sacrifices. They were not looking forward to the Cross. In other words, Michal was not a believer.

The more God blessed David, the more people held David in high esteem, the more Saul feared him, and determined to kill him. It became an obsession. He instructed Jonathan, and all his servants, to kill David.

Jonathan was able to talk Saul out of it, “And Saul hearkened unto the voice of Jonathan: and Saul sware, As the LORD liveth, he shall not be slain. (6) And Jonathan called David, and Jonathan shewed him all those things. And Jonathan brought David to Saul, and he was in his presence, as in times past.” (1 Samuel 19:6,7). It was only temporary. The evil spirit (demon) returned, and Saul attempted to pin David to the wall with his javelin, again. God prevented the demon from killing David, again.

David fled to his home where Michal told him, “...If thou save not thy life tonight, tomorrow thou shalt be slain.” She lets him down out of a window. That is the last time they were to be together for many years. The Bible says, “Michal took an image and laid it in the bed, covering it. Saul sent men to take him, but Michal told them, “He is sick.” When the men went back to Saul, and told him, he said, “Bring him up to me in the bed, that I may slay him.”

When Saul asked Michal why she had deceived him, she pretended that David had threatened to kill her if she did not help him to escape.

Actually, under the Law, David should have been able to take a year off from military duty. God knew newlyweds need time to bond. Because God’s Law meant nothing to Saul, they never had that chance.

“When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken.” (Deuteronomy 24:5)

Michal did not seek to join David. Perhaps the thought of spending her days with a fugitive, who would be hunted like a wild animal in the wilderness, was too much for a princess. We should not judge her too harshly. She came from a family that appeared to be godly on the outside, but, inwardly they were pagan.

As the times of their lives move on, at nearly the same time, David is taking Abigail and Ahinoam as wives, Michal is married off to Phalti, the son of Laish, which was of Gallim. (1 Samuel 25:42-44). Neither Michal's, nor David's, marriages were ones God would approve, as they were still legally married.

Let us fast forward thirty-some years. Saul has been killed, and replaced by Ishbosheth for a short time. Michal and her husband Phalti were living to the east of Jordan. Abner wanted to make a league with David to bring the remaining eleven tribes, uniting the whole nation with David as king. David made the restoration of Michal the one condition of the league. So despite Phalti's sorrowful protest, Michal was forcibly restored to David. Evidently, he had some feelings for Michal, and she probably thought, as the first wife taken, she could have had some status in Hebron.

How pathetic it is to read of Phalti's sorrow as he went with her, in tears, only to be rudely sent back by Abner! (2 Samuel 3:16). We do not read of Michal weeping as she left the man who showered so much affection upon her. It did not require much force to make her leave Phalti.

The "closing scene" between Michal and David is disturbing. Whatever love Michal might have had for David, now turns to scorn. After making Jerusalem his capital, David brought the sacred Ark of the covenant to the city of David.

"And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart. (2 Samuel 6:16)

On the day of the Ark's return David was so joyful that, stripping himself of his royal robes, he donned the linen robes of the commoner, and "danced before the Lord with all his might." Michal watched from a window and seeing David—the *King*—of all people, leaping and dancing before the Lord, she "despised him in her heart." Although she had loved him, and had risked her life for his safety, she now hates him for what she considers his loss of royal dignity.

Michal waited until David returned to his household. When they met, she sneeringly said, "How glorious was the king of Israel to day, who uncovered himself to day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself." (2 Samuel 6:20).

She did not care about the return of the Ark to Zion. Like her father, Saul, she had no regard for the Ark of God.

"And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for WE ENQUIRED NOT AT IT IN THE DAYS OF SAUL" (1 Chronicles 13:3).

But David made it clear, in no uncertain terms, that he was not ashamed of what he had done "before the Lord."

"And David said unto Michal, It was before the LORD, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the LORD, over Israel: therefore will I play (my harp) before the LORD. (21)

And I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight: and of the maidservants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour. (22)

Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death. (2 Samuel 6:21-23).

After such a bitter accusation, we read that “Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death” (23). Such a final flat statement means that she had to continue living apart from David. (2 Samuel 6:16).

The estrangement between them, no doubt, grew because of the other wives now sharing David’s prosperity. Childless till her death was a punishment appropriate to her transgression. David was given many sons and daughters, and her sister Merab bore five sons, but Michal never achieved the great attainment of being a mother. She ended her days without the love and companionship of a husband, caring for her dead sister’s five children, all of whom were ultimately beheaded.

Michal’s vicious words, possibly delivered with a face to match, made David consider another gruesome possibility. There was always the chance she could roll over in the night and, happily, slit his throat while he was sleeping. She would, then, slip out into the night to be rescued by someone from her father’s family. After all, she was Saul’s daughter.

What can we learn from this story of Michal and David? Had Michal shared David’s faith in God, how different life would have been for both of them. But Michal made no effort to understand her husband’s love for the Lord, and so passed a wrong judgment upon him.

What if Michal had been as committed to serving the Lord as David was. He was a great king anyway, but, what a great king he would have been with her beside him. What did she rob herself of? God’s blessings.

Further, had Michal loved David enough, she should have sought his forgiveness after he had explained his actions before the Lord. She loved him when he was poor and unknown, but, now, that he is King “she despised him in her heart. David realized they did not love the same God. Therefore he cut her from his heart.

Let us not overlook a very telling clue as to whom Michal worshipped. The large image she placed in the bed, the night she saved David from Saul, was an idol, a teraphim, or family idol.

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”
(1 Corinthians 6:14).

A wife for a king is just as important as one for a pastor. There have been two in modern times that have stood out as helpmeets for their husband. One was Queen Noor, of King Hussein of Jordan. The other is the present Queen of Jordan, and married to King Abdullah, King Hussein’s son. Of course, they are just helpmeets of the Islamic faith, and not Christian.

Did anyone notice? Even though she was a modern Islamic queen, when Hussein’s funeral procession passed by, she watched from the door of the House of Women. It was not accepted that she could ride in the funeral procession for her husband, as any wife in our country would have been.

I have been asked this question many times. “Should a pastor’s wife have a job?” Yes, a job, just to make a little extra money, temporarily. A pastor’s wife should never embark on a career. Little by little, it will drag you away from God’s calling on your life. Yes. When your husband is called, you, as his helpmeet, are called, too.

I would “fall in step” to serve with your husband in one of the most rewarding “careers” you can ever have. I will be the first one to say, “It is not easy.” There are heart aches, pitfalls, and trials, all the way. But, if you serve with your husband 100%, other women will look at you and say, “If she can do it, with the Lord’s help, I can, too.”

Many are the great, qualified, pastors who do not go into the ministry, or leave the ministry, because the wife pulls back. If there is anything the world needs now, it is well-trained pastors who teach the whole counsel of the Word of God, and have the Gospel straight. But...they must have a wife who is “signed on for the duration,” and totally committed to her place in her husband’s ministry.

You may keep, or cast away my words. Take it from me. Being a pastor’s wife is the most fulfilling and wonderful job in the world. I get to work alongside the love of my life (62 years, now), and see the miracle of souls being saved every day! I meet the most wonderful people. I have been able to travel and live in the most beautiful places. All this, and Heaven, too!

But...I heard the most gratifying words from someone just this week. She said, “Praise the Lord! You’re still here.” And she followed it up with a hug.

It doesn’t get any better than that!

Chapter Seven

"...And a Time to Laugh;

Summer time is a time of staying with Grandma and Grandpa at the farm, and catching lightning bugs at night. Then, there are baseball games, Fourth of July Parades, and ice cream. Summer is a time to laugh, and when life is carefree.

Summers on the Farm

Are spent sittin' on the front porch,
Slowly swingin' in the swing,
Watchin' Grandkids catchin' fireflies,
Listenin' to hoot owls on the wing.

There's no Fox or CNN,
All we ever need to know,
We get from Nightly News,
On the parlor radio.

When shadows grow too dark for games,
"Allie, allie, in free," we hear at last.
They quench their thirst with the old tin cup,
Summer at Grandma's will soon be past.

Lying stretched out on the ground,
Staring up into the night time sky,
The stars flash like a thousand diamonds,
Set in a giant pin wheel circling by.

"Look, Grandpa, I can see,
The Big Dipper in the sky.
Another said, "I see the North Star!
The one you can travel by.

Grandpa, do you think that's the star,
The Wise Men followed long ago?"
"No, My Child, It was quite different.
It had a special path to show.

It marked the way to God's own Son,
The Perfect Lamb of Sacrifice.
Who paid for the sin of everyone,
Even for haters, He paid the price.

Remember the wolf that chased the lamb;
But, the Mother Ewe ended up dead?
She gave her life for her run away,
That's why he's alive instead."

"In times past, ...we were children of wrath...
Satan was seeking whom he may devour."
Just like a wolf after run away lambs,
Without Christ, we were in his power.

But if you believe Jesus paid your price,
You'll go to Heaven with your sins forgiven!"
They all chimed in, "I believe he did that for me!
That's why I know I'm going to Heaven!"

Grandma stood up, "It's about that time,
For all children to say "Good Night."
So, up those stairs, you Sleepy Heads!"
Say your prayers; and, then, sleep tight!

Tomorrow, your folks are coming;
And, we have to give you back.
There's a very big day ahead;
And you've a lot of things to pack."

"Oh, Grandma, A little longer, please,
We'll miss you so much when we go!"
But up they go with a kiss "Good Night."
She'll miss them more than they'll ever know.

He lays his arm across her shoulders,
Her head rests lightly on his arm.
They are united in one blessed thought
About summers at the farm.

There will always be fireflies;
And Hoot Owls on the wing.
But time spent with grandchildren
Is an irreplaceable thing!
...Marjorie A. Younce

Scriptural Allusions: Ephesians 5:3; 1 Peter 5:8

Father For a Day Baseball Game

It looked like business as usual
At the City Daily News.
Reporters were filing their stories,
And editors writing their views.

Just as the action peaked,
And the big press began to run.
The front door suddenly opened.
A young boy surprised everyone.

“Where’s the “Help Wanted”?
“I need to place an ad.
“I am looking for a Father,”
Is what the young boy said.

“Here is my advertisement.
The job only lasts for a day.
I am hoping to find someone
That I won’t have to pay.”

So, “Father for a day,” said the Editor,
“Is what you’re looking for.”
“What does he have to do,
You must list each and every chore.”

“My school has planned a baseball game;
Where the Fathers play the Sons.
They want to see which team
Can make the most Home Runs.”

“Every guy that’s on my team
Will have his Father there;
But, my Father is far away,
And this day he cannot share.

He told me there’d be someone
Who’d be glad to take his place.
Someone good at batting
And getting to Home Base.”

“He said he really wished that he
Could play for me that day;
But, he’s fighting for our freedom
In a country far away.

And, I can't get just anyone,
They must be just like him.
One who does not fight or swear;
Or bend the rules to win.

He put some coins on the counter.
"The game is just two days away."
"I need a "stand-in" Father soon;
And, this is all that I can pay."

The Editor gave his money back.
"Son, you've no need to run that ad.
I'd be honored to be a substitute;
And play baseball for your Dad."

"You see, my son is fighting, too,
In that country far away.
I will play on your team,
And you'll be my "son for a day."

Give me the time and place
Of this "Father/Son" ball game.
I promise you that I'll be there,"
And gave the boy his name.

Soon the day arrived,
And the Editor kept his word.
He was a player of past fame.
Soon his home run bat was heard.

The ball game ended in a tie;
And it was good fun all the way.
Each received the special gift
Of "Father," or "Son" for the day.

When the Editor wrote his story
There was a lesson there to learn;
Of how to help our fellowman,
Who for Father, or Son, does yearn.

Just by spending a little time
With a soldier's, or anyone's, son;
You'll give a Father peace of mind,
And your blessings have just begun!

The example is our Heavenly Father
Who unselfishly gave His Son
To pay for our sin on a cruel cross,
Providing Salvation for everyone.

So, as you mentor a Father or Son;
There's no greater help you can give,
Than to explain the Gospel clearly;
So, for Eternity in Heaven they'll live.

...Marjorie A. Younce

The Fourth of July - The Cost of Liberty

The doors were barred to prevent surprise.
Curtains drawn against prying eyes.
A group of men huddled deep in thought
Around the parchment one had brought.

They argued and wrangled into the night,
Freedom of speech is surely a right,
The right to bear arms we must affix,
Said the Continental Congress of '76.

To craft their demands was a monumental feat,
And when the Declaration was complete,
A holy silence fell upon them there,
As they petitioned Heaven with a mighty prayer.

Then each man put his life on the line;
As one by one they bent to sign.
They pledged their honor, fortunes and lives.
They jeopardized family, homes, and wives.

The Revolution against tyranny had begun,
Much blood was shed before it was won,
And Washington accepted Cornwallis' sword,
And a prayer of gratitude sent Heaven-ward.

If you visit Yorktown on any day,
You'll see rows of crosses where the sacrificed lay.
That's the price of Liberty,
Many men die so many can be free.

Blood is still being spilled today
In lands where the tyrant has his sway.
Lives are still going on the line
To protect this freedom of yours and mine.

The "fireworks" are a danger real,
Causing wounds that may not heal.
As our "Star Spangled Banner" waves in the air,
While on parade, for them say a prayer.

Let's not waste what's so dearly bought
By each Mother's child who lies in their plot,
By spiraling down into moral decay,
A nation on notice for Judgment Day.

Let us remember that freedom's not free,
And resolve not to waste our liberty.
The freedom to live each day for the Lord,
Reading His Bible, giving out His Word.

Let us serve Christ, our Righteous King,
Who sacrificed Himself, He paid everything
To ransom us back, our freedom win,
From Satan's evil slave market of sin.

He is the Way, the Truth and the Life.
Accept Him today and have eternal life.
Believe in His truth and He'll set you free,
No longer lost, you have true Liberty.

...Marjorie A. Younce

Chapter Eight

A Time to Cast Away Stones, A Time to Gather Stones Together

Never Throw Stones at a King!

As David was trying to get his family and forces out of Jerusalem, and away from the threat of war with Absalom, to a mountain retreat in Ammon, he had to endure the insults and cursing of a young man from the family of King Saul, a Benjamite. Not only did the young man keep up a barrage of insults, he was throwing stones and dust at David.

“And when king David came to Bahurim, behold, thence came out a man of the family of the house of Saul, whose name was Shimei, the son of Gera: he came forth, and cursed still as he came. (5)

And he cast stones at David, and at all the servants of king David: and all the people and all the mighty men were on his right hand and on his left. (6)

And thus said Shimei when he cursed, Come out, come out, thou bloody man, and thou man of Belial: (7)

The LORD hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul, in whose stead thou hast reigned; and the LORD hath delivered the kingdom into the hand of Absalom thy son: and, behold, thou art taken in thy mischief, because thou art a bloody man. (8)

Then said Abishai the son of Zeruiah unto the king, Why should this dead dog curse my lord the king? let me go over, I pray thee, and take off his head. (9)

And the king said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the LORD hath said unto him, Curse David. Who shall then say, Wherefore hast thou done so? (10)

Abishai objected to the insults, and offered to cut off the head of the stone-thrower. David said, “What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah? Zeruiah was his sister, and the mother of Abishai, Joab, and Asahel. They were his nephews, and he was their Uncle David.

And David said to Abishai, and to all his servants, Behold, my son, which came forth of my bowels, seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? let him alone, and let him curse; for the LORD hath bidden him. (11).

In effect, this is David’s response. “Look, my own son is seeking to kill me and take my kingdom, and you want me to worry about this little Benjamite squirt. The Lord has told him to do it. Maybe the more he curses, and I don’t respond, the Lord will bless me by working out my troubles.

It may be that the LORD will look on mine affliction, and that the LORD will requite me good for his cursing this day. (12)

And as David and his men went by the way, Shimei went along on the hill's side over against him, and cursed as he went, and threw stones at him, and cast dust.”

(2 Samuel 16:5-13)

There is more to the story of this Benjamite stone-thrower. After the battle in the wood of Ephraim, and the death of Absalom, David was crossing Jordan on his return to Jerusalem. All Judah was there to meet him, and to ferry his entire procession over. 1,000 men of Benjamin also came to “bring back the king,” and guess who was with them? One very apologetic Shimei.

And said unto the king, Let not my lord impute iniquity unto me, neither do thou remember that which thy servant did perversely the day that my lord the king went out of Jerusalem, that the king should take it to his heart.(19)

For thy servant doth know that I have sinned: therefore, behold, I am come the first this day of all the house of Joseph to go down to meet my lord the king”

(2 Samuel 19:19,20)

Once again, Nephew Abishai offers to put Shimei to death “because he cursed the Lord’s anointed.” (21). David let it be known that he was celebrating his first day back as king, and was allowing no man to be put to death. Shimei was saved.

Even though Shimei begged for forgiveness, David doubted his sincerity. A man who would throw stones at a king could just as easily throw a knife.

It would be great if the story stopped here, wouldn’t it? But, David knew, even with Shimei’s apparent change of attitude, there was still held a deep-seated resentment over the long war with the family of Saul.

Therefore, when he turned the kingdom over to Solomon, he gave this instruction.

“And, behold, thou hast with thee Shimei the son of Gera, a Benjamite of Bahurim, which cursed me with a grievous curse in the day when I went to Mahanaim: but he came down to meet me at Jordan, and I sware to him by the Lord, saying, I will not put thee to death with the sword. (8) Now therefore hold him not guiltless: for thou art a wise man, and knowest what thou oughtest to do unto him; but his hoar head bring thou down to the grave with blood.” (1 Kings 2:8,9)

Solomon does not proceed to act immediately on his father’s orders, but gives Shimei space to prove that he has truly changed. He restricts Shimei to the confines of Jerusalem, offering it to him for a city of refuge.

Shimei is told to build a house in Jerusalem, and never to go further than the Brook Kidron. (37). Three years later, two of his servants run away, and Shimei went after them. (39). The court of a king has “eyes and ears” everywhere, and Solomon learned that Shimei had gone from Jerusalem and returned, breaking the oath of the refuge city. (41). He then reminds him of what he did to his father, King David, and now the Lord is returning thy wickedness upon thy own head. (44). He was executed by Benaiah, captain of the bodyguard. (46).

Here is what Solomon has to say about “taking an oath,” or “vowing a vow.”

“When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for he hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. (4). Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay” (Ecclesiastes 5:4,5).

What can we learn from this? Shimei left the city to reclaim two slaves which had escaped. Slaves usually do not run away, unless they are treated badly. They were his property, they owed him their lives. Did he constantly remind them of that, or consider

that he was in the same position to Solomon. He was Solomon's prisoner, indebted to him for the continuation of his life. He should have treated his servants the way that he wanted to be treated. Freely taking Solomon's pardon, he was unwilling to grant the same to his servants.

How similar to one of the parables of Jesus where a servant is forgiven a debt of ten thousand talents, but refuses to forgive one who owes him a few pence. In the parable, the basis for man's judgment was based on the judgment he used for others.

"Then his lord, after that he had called him, said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou desiredst me: (32) Shouldest not thou also have had compassion on thy fellowservant, even as I had pity on thee? (33) And his lord was wroth, and delivered him to the tormentors, till he should pay all that was due unto him" (Matthew 18:32-34).

That is under the Law, my Friend. We no longer need refuge cities. We are already forgiven as we have the grace of God.

When we think of stones, we remember Christ is our Cornerstone, elect, and precious. If we believe that He died on the Cross to pay for our sins, and that he arose from the grave, three days and three nights later, eternal life is yours. Your salvation is 'bought and paid for by the blood of Christ,' as my husband says.

"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.(7) But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (8) Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath (hell) through him" (Romans 5:7-9)

"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded"
(1 Peter 2:6)

Here's a stone, not to throw, but to rely on.

"Be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand here before you whole. (10) This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. (11) Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:10-12).

Chapter Nine

A Time to Embrace, and A Time to Refrain from Embracing

The death of a child is especially heart-rending, no matter if the parents are King David, and Bathsheba, of the Bible, or your friends next door.

A young couple in a former church experienced the shock of waking up to find their child dead in his crib. They had put him to sleep as any other night, but the tragedy of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome, or SIDS, had crept into their home and taken their child. My husband was able to assure them, from the account in the Bible about the death of David and Bathsheba's first child, that their child was in Heaven and they would see him again.

It's a familiar account in Scripture, but let's have another look.

This was a time in David's life when he was somewhere he was not supposed to be. Home, with time on his hands, instead of leading his troops into battle. During an evening stroll on his palace rooftop, he observed a beautiful woman bathing. This would have been a good time to remember the Tenth Commandment. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife. (Exodus 20:17; Deuteronomy 5:21). As Solomon would say in the future, "...the eye is not satisfied with seeing." (1:8).

If that was the mood David was in, he could have visited his own house of women, where his wives and concubines lived. He could have beckoned to any one of them, and they would have happily accommodated the king.

The eyes of David were not satisfied with just looking, and he sent for Bathsheba, even after being told she was another man's wife. We all know the rest of it, Bathsheba conceived, and David was the one in trouble. He tries to hide this sin from Israel, but God's eyes see everything. David certainly knew Job 28:24, for Job is the oldest book of the Bible. He had put his position as king in jeopardy, and was more terrified of the people of Israel than he was of God.

"For he looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven;"
(Job 28:24).

David called her husband home from battle, but, Uriah slept at the very door of David's palace out of loyalty to the troops. David keeps him another day, getting him drunk, thinking he will then go home to his wife. It doesn't happen.

Now, David does the unthinkable! He sends Uriah back to the battle lines with a letter to General Joab. It is Uriah's own death warrant. Joab is ordered to place Uriah in the thick of the battle, then withdraw, leaving him without cover. As a result, men are killed, and Uriah as well.

And when the wife of Uriah heard that Uriah her husband was dead, she mourned for her husband. (26) And when the mourning was past, David sent and fetched her to

his house, and she became his wife, and bare him a son. But the thing that David had done displeased the LORD” (2 Samuel 11:26, 27).

When Nathan was ushered into his presence, I am sure that David knew something was up by the look on the prophet’s face. The LORD (Jehovah) had sent David a message. There was no happy greeting. The prophet plunged right into what David thought was a case he was going to have to pass judgment on.

“There were two men in one city; ...the one rich, and the other poor. (1) The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: (2) But the poor man had nothing, save one little pet ewe lamb,...(3)

A traveller came unto the rich man, and (he took)... the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for his guest. (4)

And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die. (5)

(Self-righteousness is so much fun, isn't it?)

And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity” (2 Samuel 12:1-6).

The prophet pointed an accusative finger at David,

“Thou art the man: Thus saith the LORD GOD of Israel to you...” (2 Samuel 12a).

God had a message for David. He reminded him of all he had done for him. “You are only here by my grace and mercy. All that you have, I have given you the ability to get.” (7, 8)

(That is a lesson we all should remember. “We are what we are by the grace of God (2 Corinthians 15:10), and “our times are in His hands...” (Psalm 31:15).

The Accusation:

“Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD...thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon.” (9)

The Sentence:

Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house;...(10)

...I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give *them* unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. (11)

“For thou didst *it* secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun.” (2 Samuel 12:9-12)

What David foolishly thought he could hide, God will show the whole world. David admits that he has sinned against the LORD. Nathan assures David he is not going to die, as he should have for committing adultery. He is going to take the child instead. Why? Because David has made the Lord an open shame in front of the world. (14).

The day came and David and Bathsheba's baby was born, and the Bible says, "And the LORD struck the child that Uriah's wife bare unto David, and it was very sick." (15)

What does David do? What we all should do at a time like this. Pray Even though God had brought the sickness, David prayed for grace. He did not eat, but prayed for the seven days of the baby's illness. The elders of his house tried to raise him up by the arms to get him to eat. He simply laid on the ground and prayed for seven days.

There are those who say, "Well, David should not have prayed." We must remind them of what our Savior did before His Crucifixion. He was God and knew "the end from the beginning." Still, he went into the Garden of Gethsemane and prayed "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." (Matthew 26:39).

David knew there are times when God will relent and say "Yes." This time God said, "No."

The child died on the seventh day. The servants were afraid to tell David. They reasoned among themselves, "He would not listen to us when the child was alive, what will he do to himself, now that the child has died. David, hearing them whisper, "perceived that the child was dead." (2 Samuel 12:18,19).

And, now, dear parents, we come to the sweetest part of this account. If you have lost a child, please read carefully, and realize that you will see your child again.

"Then David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the LORD, and worshipped: then he came to his own house; and when he required, they set bread before him, and he did eat. (20)

Then said his servants unto him, What thing is this that thou hast done? thou didst fast and weep for the child, while it was alive; but when the child was dead, thou didst rise and eat bread. (21)

And he said, While the child was yet alive, I fasted and wept: for I said, Who can tell whether GOD will be gracious to me, that the child may live? (22)

But now he is dead, wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (2 Samuel 12:20-23).

When David said, "I shall go to him," where was David going to go? Look with me to the very last verse of Psalm 23. This should be a very precious verse to everyone who has lost a child before the age of accountability.

"Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever." (Psalm 23:6).

Where is David going to be "for ever"?

Where is your child going to be "for ever"?

They are going to be in the house of the LORD

In Psalm 51, David's heart cry is,

"Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. (9) Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. (10) Cast me not away from

thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. (11) Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit” (Psalm 51:9-12).

Observe, he did not say “restore unto me thy salvation.” He begged, “Restore unto me the JOY of thy salvation.” He wanted to walk in close fellowship with the LORD as before his great sin.

My friend, sometimes that is the cry of our heart, too.

Always remember this. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16). How long is everlasting life? It is not life until you sin again, it is life eternal. When we believe in Christ as our Savior, we become his child, and he becomes our Heavenly Father with the right to discipline.

Unfortunately, just like King David, we often do things terribly displeasing to God. Does he kick us out of the family?

“But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:” (John 1:12)

No, he does, not. But, he does discipline His children, just as discipline fell on King David. His sin gave great “occasion for the enemies of God to blaspheme.”

“For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.(6) If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?” (Hebrews 12:6,7).

No matter what God chastens a Christian for, and he may take them to Heaven sooner so His work is not sabotaged, He always refers to us as a “Son.” That person is always a child of the King. He may not have many rewards at the Judgment Seat of Christ, but,

“If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but HE HIMSELF SHALL BE SAVED; yet so as by fire.” (1 Corinthians 3:15).

This is my point. Once you have everlasting life, there is no sin that will keep you out of Heaven. However, you may arrive there, sooner than you think. Adultery and murder did not keep King David out of Heaven, but the discipline of God did fall. That is for another chapter.

Let us take a look at what being in “the House of the Lord forever” meant for King David.

“And thine house and thy kingdom shall be established for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.” (2 Samuel 7:16)

This meant that as long as there was a Nation of Israel ruled by a Jewish king, it would be someone descended from King David. The greatest descendant from his line would be the Lord Jesus Christ. The Davidic Kingdom is a part of the Davidic Covenant, an unconditional Covenant through which God will keep all his promises to Israel. They will have their land back, all of it.

“Moreover I will appoint a place for my people Israel, and will plant them, that they may dwell in a place of their own, and move no more; neither shall the children of wickedness afflict them any more, as beforetime” (2 Samuel 7:10).

And what does a throne and a kingdom, forever, mean to King David? He will rule all Israel in the Kingdom, just as he did when he was alive. Only this time, he will not have the old nature. There will be Laws to be enforced during the Millennial Reign of Christ. King David will reign over the Nation of Israel in the Kingdom, just as he did during life, and this time, he will do it right.

The Nation of Israel is one part of the Millennial Reign, or Kingdom. The whole world is involved and the King, who reigns over Israel, and the rest of the world is the King of Kings, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Every Christian has a part in the Kingdom, as Revelation 1:5,6 tells us,

“And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,(5)

And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

To all the dear parents who have lost children, do not worry. They are safe in the arms of Jesus. They are in Heaven, as David said, “in the House of the Lord, and He is caring for them until you get there. They are safe in the arms of Jesus.

Let us use an example, from real life, of a little girl named Caylee. We saw her sweet little face in the news daily. Who could forget those beautiful eyes? No one knows with certainty who, or what, caused the child’s death. We can say, with certainty, that Jesus loves her, and is keeping her safe, now. She is waiting for her “Grammy and Grampy, and Mommy, too.

The application here is, to believe like a child. What is the mind of a child like? The mind of a child is not like that of a grown person, too full and too noisy to observe everything: it is a vessel always ready to receive, and always receiving. That is how we should be when we hear the truth of the Gospel.

Justice for Caylee

No justice for Caylee,
None, it seems, here on the earth!
Jesus took her up to Heaven
Where precious children have great worth.

Probably, for a moment,
She sat upon His knee,
While He healed her of memories
That never should be.

Then He showed her the nail prints,
On each foot and hand,
And explained His death for her,
In a way she'd understand.

With those beautiful eyes
Fastened full upon His face,
"I love you, Jesus," she whispered.
"I just love this place."

Then, looking all around
At the crowd gathered there,
"Where's my Mommy?
I want her to come here.

Jesus said, "Perhaps, after while,
She will believe in Me,
As the One who paid her sin debt
Upon the Cross of Calvary.

It's certainly not my will,
That *anyone* should perish;
She could change her mind,
And be one that I can cherish."

Then, He gently patted the top
Of that little, curly head,
Took her by the hand,
As He gently led.

Down a golden pathway
To a Heavenly street
Where other children played
That she could run to meet.

"Off you go now,"
And she ran to join the fun.
For sweet, little Caylee,
Eternity had just begun.

But, what about her mother?
Is judgment just ahead?
When the Books are opened,
And every deed is read?

There will be no attorney
To stand with her that day.
She'll stand at that bar alone,
With no excuse to say.

The Book of Life will witness
That her name's not written there,
And the severity of her punishment
Will be only what is fair.

Or, could some faithful Christian,
Share God's Word with her,
That Jesus paid for all sin,
No matter what events occur?

Then, He'll give to her His Righteousness,
To make her fit for Heaven.
Then, she'll never stand in judgment.
All her sins will be forgiven.

Don't you think, in Caylee's eyes,
This is also justice fair,
Since she is up in Heaven, now,
And, someday, Mother could be there.

Before you begin to judge, my Friend,
Heaven is a perfect place.
No sin will ever enter there.
All we sinners must accept His grace.

Or, we'll stand at the same judgment bar,
Searching vainly to find our name,
Sentenced with these awful words,
"Depart, Ye Cursed, to everlasting flame."

Judgment rendered, or saved by grace,
Which will it be?
Any way you look at it,
It's justice for God and sweet Caylee.

Written on behalf of all children who go to Heaven... "too soon."

...Marjorie A. Younce

A Time to Embrace

This certainly fits the category of a time to embrace, as Bathsheba is now David's wife. We go to the birth of Solomon in 2 Samuel 12:25, where we learn he is known by two names. Believe it or not, someone having two names is often a point of confusion in the Bible. So, I thought I would clarify this one for the record.

And David comforted Bathsheba his wife, and went in unto her, and lay with her: and she bare a son, and he called his name Solomon: and the LORD loved him.(24)

And he sent by the hand of Nathan the prophet; and he called his name Jedidiah, because of the LORD" (2 Samuel 12:24, 25).

Bathsheba was not a loose woman. Her husband, Uriah, was a commander and armor bearer to the chief commander, Joab. Archaeologists have located the site of David's Palace, in the City of David, outside of the city walls of today's Jerusalem. It was a fortress, topping a sheer cliff, overlooking the Valley of Kidron. Military quarters were probably located near the palace, but Uriah and Bathsheba would have had a private, enclosed courtyard, with a well, or cistern, at which to bathe. It was evening, and the Scriptures do not say that she was naked.

The Scriptures do say that David was where he was not supposed to be. He should have been on the battlefield, leading his armies. He became sleepless, and bored, on a hot night, and went out to take in the marvelous view of the Kidron Valley from the roof. Look up the "City of David" on your computer, and take a look yourself. It is a breathtaking view!

She came from a respected family. Her grandfather was Ahithophel, trusted advisor to King David, whose counsel was viewed "as the oracles of God." How was Bathsheba, a commoner, to know the king was not where he should have been? When she was summoned, she was not aware of what the king wanted. Once there, she was in the powerful presence of the most honored man in Israel. Whatever Bathsheba's thoughts were, Scripture does not say. When she discovered she was pregnant, in a day when women were regarded as property, she knew her fate was in the king's hands. She would have known that Uriah was back, but refused to return home to her. She probably wondered what he knew. Was the king now washing his hands of her? To his shame, David was certainly looking for a way out. She, probably, felt betrayed, and wondered what was coming next.

We have to salute Bathsheba that she quietly waited. There was no bargaining, no complaints, no threats, and no tears. She displayed tremendous calm and faith. She just...waited. She left her destiny in the hands of God. By God's grace, she, later, became the favored wife, and honored mother, who stood by the side of the King. She reaped the blessings that David's first wife, Michal, could have had, but despised, as beneath her.

Bathsheba trusted, but Israel's greatest king began to show the depth of his sin. Hearing the news of Uriah's death, he told the messenger, "...say unto Joab, Let not this

thing displease thee, for the sword devoureth one as well as another:" (2 Samuel 11:25).

As time passed, it became evident to David that Bathsheba was different. He took no other wives after her, and they had four living sons, together. He depended on her. When David was told that Adonijah was about to steal his throne, he bellowed, "Call me Bathsheba!" That should tell you something. He was the king, and surrounded with countless beauties, but here was a woman he counted on so much their marriage lasted until "death do us part." Bathsheba was that "one wise woman" among a "thousand men" that Solomon could not find.

"Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, counting one by one, to find out the account: (27) Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found" (Ecclesiastes 7:27,28).

Proverbs 9:10, tells us where wisdom is found. "The fear of the LORD *is* the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy *is* understanding." That was Bathsheba's secret, and that was what drew David to her. She was a wise woman, who trusted in the Lord. Her reward was that two of their sons were ancestors of Christ. Joseph, the husband of Mary, was from the lineage of Solomon (Matthew 1:6), and Mary, virgin wife of Joseph, was a direct descendent of Nathan (Luke 3:31).

What can we learn from Bathsheba? We can always trust the Lord to do what is best for us.

"Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. (5) In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths"
(Proverbs 3:5,6).

And, remember, "...there is nothing new under the sun. " Anyone can fall to the depth of sin that King David fell to. He was due for "an attitude adjustment" from an angry God. The punishment that fell on David was devastating to Bathsheba, too, as anyone who has lost a child knows. She mourned the loss of her baby, and was left in a marriage that had, at best, a rough start, not uncommon for women in her day.

When young people marry today, they think, "If I give 50% of my effort to making our marriage work, and my husband gives his 50%, it will be "happily ever after." That is not the real world. If both keep the Lord in the center of the marriage, and both give it their all...with the Lord's help, that is what can make marriage work. Sadly, that is not the mindset of young people, today. We live in an era of "disposable" marriage.

We see a sad lesson in the account of David and his first wife, Michal. On Michal's part, "absence did not make the heart grow fonder." Time apart gives Satan's influences time to operate. Satan always "walks about as a roaring lion." (1 Peter 5:8).

Following this same theme, in the New Testament, Paul gives some marital advice to couples. He is saying, to the wife, or the husband, "Don't say I have a headache," falsely, and deny your partner. You should not deny your marriage partner, says Paul, unless there is a mutual agreement. He feels that one, or the other, marriage partner may be tempted by Satan to cast their eyes outside of the marriage bond, if they stay apart, too long.

The perfect example of this is Israel's greatest king, wandering around on the rooftop one night, with too much time on his hands. It can happen to anyone.

“Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency” (1 Corinthians 7:5).

Nowadays, fasting and prayer does not seem to be what causes the lack of intimacy in marriage. The wife can be exhausted from a day of chasing toddlers, or the husband could have just returned from 1,000 miles on the road, and he is exhausted. There are many other reasons we could give. Paul gives the answer. There should be communication about the situation so there can be mutual consent. And, it should not be for too long.

Since I feel I have approached that situation delicately enough, we will leave it there. And, remember, “There is nothing new under the sun.” (Ecclesiastes 1:9)

Chapter Ten

“A Time to Get”

King Solomon’s “Biography – Part 1”

As we read King Solomon’s biography, we find that he began like most of us do, with the best of intentions. He was the son of the charismatic, able administrator, warrior-king, David. The man who will share the throne with our Savior, Himself, in the Kingdom. It becomes evident immediately—Solomon was not the man his father was, but he was willing to learn.

Solomon did have one, huge advantage. King Saul, and David, had grown up in their villages, among the people. Solomon had been born in the palace in Jerusalem, and had grown up, with eyes wide open, in the arena of political power. Still, he had “big sandals to fill.” He took a look at the kingdom he had inherited, and knew he needed to know a lot more than he did. So, he headed off to talk to the Lord, accompanied by the whole congregation, and a thousand head of cattle.

“And the king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there; for that was the great high place: a thousand burnt offerings did Solomon offer upon that altar” (1 Kings 3:4).

“So Solomon, and all the congregation with him, went to the high place that was at Gibeon; for there was the tabernacle of the congregation of God, which Moses the servant of the LORD had made in the wilderness” (2 Chronicles 1:3).

At this time, the altar was still in place at the tabernacle tent which the Israelites traveled with on their wilderness journeys. If we only read the passage in 1 Kings 3, we could believe this was a heathen alter in a high place. However, taking all Scripture on the subject, specifically, 2 Chronicles 1:3, we learn this was the tabernacle where Israel met God at the altar, until the temple was completed later in Solomon’s reign.

“And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: ONLY he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. (1 Kings 3:3)

I imagine the Holy Spirit, Himself, hesitated when he directed the author of 1 Kings to write, “And Solomon loved the LORD...ONLY he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places.” The true character of King Solomon is beginning to come out. Even, with all the wisdom and riches he receives from God, he remains a half-hearted servant, and, what begins well, does not end well for Solomon, or the Nation of Israel.

We will let God, Himself, tell the rest of this.

“ In that night did God appear unto Solomon, and said unto him, Ask what I shall give thee. (7)

And Solomon said unto God, Thou hast shewed great mercy unto David my father, and hast made me to reign in his stead. (8)

Now, O LORD God, let thy promise unto David my father be established: for thou hast made me king over a people like the dust of the earth in multitude. (9)

Give me now wisdom and knowledge, that I may go out and come in before this people: for who can judge this thy people, that is so great? (10)

And God said to Solomon, Because this was in thine heart, and thou hast not asked riches, wealth, or honour, nor the life of thine enemies, neither yet hast asked long life; but hast asked wisdom and knowledge for thyself, that thou mayest judge my people, over whom I have made thee king: (11)

Wisdom and knowledge is granted unto thee; and I will give thee riches, and wealth, and honour, such as none of the kings have had that have been before thee, neither shall there any after thee have the like” (2 Chronicles 1:7-12).

If Solomon were alive today, he would be a featured speaker on the public channels during their fund drives. Since his abilities were God-given, it is not hard to imagine that, in a time without the distractions of television, radio, internet, etc., audiences could listen by the hour.

Like every other celebrity in the world since time began, he has been misquoted. When Solomon said, “Eat, drink, and be merry, for tomorrow we die,” he was not advising everyone, “Let’s all go out and live it up.” He was giving a logical proposition to which there would be a conclusion. The “Eat, drink, and be merry” philosophy was the human reasoning of the natural man, “under the sun, “ who was living only for himself. He only feels “emptiness,” or “vanity, when he comes to the end of his life, because he has accomplished nothing.

He also did not say that there is no afterlife, and men and animals just go back to the grave, and “Die like dogs,” as Madelyn Murray, the atheist, contended.

The “one event” that happens to men, and animals, is that the physical body returns to the dust. Ecclesiastes 3:21 adds a different event for each. “...the spirit of man goes upward, and the spirit of the beast goes downward...,” as it is connected to the body.

“All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again. (20).

Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?” (Ecclesiastes 3:20-21).

This demonstrates the importance of the context.

We know from 2 Corinthians 5:8 that, when a Christian leaves this earthly life,

“We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.”

There is much good advice in the Book of Ecclesiastes. For instance:

“Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil” (Ecclesiastes 8:11).

“Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary (perfumer) to send forth a stinking savour: so doth a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom and honour.” (Ecclesiastes 10:1).

Solomon makes reference to scientific principles.

1. The sun goes around the earth.

“The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose” (Ecclesiastes 1:5).

2. The wind has circuits.

“The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits” (Ecclesiastes 1:6).

King Solomon’s goal was to build up the Nation of Israel with the truth of wise words. If education were the solution to the world’s problems, with the many institutions of higher learning that exist today, the world would have no problems. Solomon knew there is only one place from which to seek the right kind of wisdom.

“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him” (James 1:5).

Solomon was appointed king by his father, King David. There was no campaign, or election. Solomon did not have to worry about saying what people wanted him to say, just to get the throne. No one could possibly observe the forty-year reign of his father, King David, and say, “Hey! That job is a “piece of cake.” Solomon was desperately seeking the abilities needed to rule the Nation of Israel. What a blessing to our nation it would be if our leaders sought the wisdom of God.

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34).

Most of us are hesitant to serve the Lord because we believe we are not qualified. My friend, God can use anyone! When He calls you, He equips you. If he can use a hypocrite like Solomon who “...loved the LORD...ONLY he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places,” he can use anyone.

There was a former boxer who came to our church to speak, named “Country Boy Ferguson.” He could have been world champion, but, no one could defeat him and he was not allowed a title shot. Though his boxing skills were legendary, he was a very humble man.

Everyone mumbled under their breath, “I wonder what this is going to be like?”

It was wonderful! Country Boy Ferguson’s sermons were just as straight to the point as his famous left hook. And when he prayed— you could hear the doors of Heaven swing open. He was an inspiration! He preached the greatest message on how to pray you have ever heard.

Back to Solomon, who seems to be getting off to a very good start.

And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, and set in order many proverbs. (9)

The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and that which was written was upright, even words of truth. (10)

The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails fastened by the masters of assemblies, which are given from one shepherd. (11)

And further, by these (wise words), my son, be admonished: (Ecclesiastes 12:9-12).

When an ox is jabbed with a sharp ox goad, it sends the ox in the right direction. In just the same way, wise words keep us from wandering. Nails in a wall fasten it in be-

place and keep it standing. Wise words are the nails that keep us from moving, or compromising on the Word of God. We have only to look in the 23rd Psalm to discover who the “one shepherd” is.

“The LORD (JEHOVAH) *is* my shepherd; I shall not want.” (Psalm 23:1).

In the Old Testament, Jehovah in the One Shepherd, or the Chief Shepherd. In the New Testament, Jesus is Jehovah in human flesh. Solomon is advising them to live as those who will one day face judgment. Though the Apostle Paul was not yet born, Solomon knew the principle. A life lived for yourself results in emptiness, or vanity. Being human, he knew from experience.

“For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:13).

From the added light of the New Testament, we know the Christian never stands in danger of hell-fire, but the Judgment Seat of Christ awaits. When the fire of God tests your works, will they all burn up?

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. (10) Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; (11) Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. (12) If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. (13) If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire” (1 Corinthians 3:10-14).

We must look at Solomon's conclusions in the light of 1 Corinthians 15, the great Resurrection Chapter of the Bible. If death really ends it all, then life would not be worth living, and everything truly would be “vanity” and emptiness. 1 Corinthians 15:54-57 makes it clear that death is not the end. Because Christ arose from the dead, we shall also be raised.

“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. (54) O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? (55) The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. (56) But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

(1 Corinthians 15:54-57)

And the glory and rewards we enjoy in eternity will depend on the lives we have lived here on earth. Therefore, our labor is not “in vain in the Lord.” (v. 58)

Let us not give King Solomon a “bad rap” by neglecting to view Ecclesiastes in the light of the New Testament. Ecclesiastes is not a “pessimistic” book that denies the joys of life. Rather, it proves that, though there are many mysteries in life we cannot explain, we can live our lives for the Lord, enjoy God's blessings and glorify God's name.

Because we want to quote him accurately, here is King Solomon’s conclusion of the matter, in his own words.

“Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man. (13)

For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:13-14).

Wouldn't it be great if we could say, “Solomon did all that was right in the sight of the Lord for the rest of his days?” Sadly, this is not the case. The wisest king of Israel was just as capable of being the most foolish one.

“The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction” (Proverbs 1:7)

“And a Time to Lose,”

King Solomon’s Biography – Part 2 - Matthew 16:25-27

"For whosoever shall save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it." (25).

Verses 24 to 27 are speaking of a Christian’s faithfulness to the Lord, not their salvation. The Lord Jesus is showing that, if Christians lives their lives only for themselves, and not for the Lord, it will be a totally wasted life. Now, Verse 25,

"For whosoever will save his life (i.e., live only for his own pleasure) shall lose it:" (25a).

If the Christian lives only for his own pleasure, as Solomon did, they will lose all the blessings, happiness, and eternal rewards, which they could have received for serving the Lord.

"...and whosoever will lose his life for my sake" (My life is hidden in Christ, He is first in my life.) shall find it." (25b).

Christians find out how much life is worth living when they put Christ first. In Verse 26, Christ contrasts gaining the world, and wasting your life.

"For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (26). (KJT)

Or, as translated in the Revised Standard Version of the Bible:

“For what will it profit a man, if he gains the whole world and forfeits his life? Or what shall a man give in return for his life?” (Matthew 16:26) (RSV)

Remember, the words, "soul," and "life," are from the same Greek word, “psyche.” Once a soul is saved, it can never be lost, therefore, the context is speaking about your life. In Verse 27, Christ promises "...he shall reward every man according to his works." As we have pointed out, Matthew 16:24-27 is speaking of our service to the Lord after we are saved, not as a condition to be saved.

Before the Cross, we are in the Dispensation of Law. After the Cross, Resurrection, and Pentecost (the Birthday of the Church), we are in the Dispensation of Grace.

The celebration of Passover, and the sacrifices made by the Old Testament believers only covered sin.

“For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins”
(Hebrews 10:4).

Their sacrifices looked forward to the Cross, and the “Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.” (John 1:29). They receive their rewards at the Judgment of the Nations. This occurs at the end of the Tribulation Period, before the Millennium. (2 Timothy 4:1; Matthew 24:26). New Testament believers, in the Dispensation of Grace, or the Church Age, receive their rewards after the Rapture, at the Judgment Seat of Christ in Heaven.



“For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. (22) So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom” (1 Kings 10:22).

“Life” in Verse 25 is translated from the same word as “soul” in Verse 26. I repeat, we cannot lose our soul, but we can waste our life by living for the world, and not living for the Lord. This is exactly what Solomon did. After building the temple, and having a great victories spiritually, he became spiritually discontented. As he would say,

“All things are full of labour; man cannot utter it: the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.” (Ecclesiastes 1:8)

Solomon was not content with the abundance of blessings God had given him, and sent away for even greater luxuries to satisfy his heart. In fact, he sent away “every three years.” It probably took that amount of time to gather the cargo, and then make the return trip.

“For the king had at sea a navy of Tharshish with the navy of Hiram: once in three years came the navy of Tharshish, bringing gold, and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks. (22) So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom” (1 Kings 10:22).

It seemed the whole world rained gold on Solomon.

“And all the earth sought to Solomon, to hear his wisdom, which God had put in his heart. (24) And they brought every man his present, vessels of silver, and vessels of gold, and garments, and armour, and spices, horses, and mules, a rate year by year” (1 Kings 10:24-25).

Apes for entertainment (for Solomon's zoo); peacocks for beauty; gold, silver, and ivory for magnificent decorations. This is the tragic condition of Solomon's kingdom. He is called to give a witness to the world, and the world is coming to his door. What does he do? He spends his time and energy with apes and peacocks simply to satisfy a whim.

“So king Solomon exceeded all the kings of the earth for riches and for wisdom” (1 Kings 10:23).

His salary was 666 talents of gold a year. We are talking approximately 1 Billion, 33 million, in today's money. (1 Kings 10:14).

Unfortunately for Solomon, God does care about the Nation of Israel. He hears their cries.

“And God heard their groaning, and God remembered his covenant with Abraham, with Isaac, and with Jacob.” (Exodus 2:24).

In His foreknowledge, God had laid down specific guidelines for their kings in Deuteronomy 17:14-20.

“When thou art come unto the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee, and shalt possess it, and shalt dwell therein, and shalt say, I will set a king over me, like as all the nations that are about me; (14)

Thou shalt in any wise set him king over thee, whom the LORD thy God shall choose: one from among thy brethren shalt thou set king over thee: thou mayest not set a stranger over thee, which is not thy brother. (15)

But he shall not MULTIPLY HORSES TO HIMSELF, nor cause the PEOPLE TO RETURN TO EGYPT, to the end that he should multiply horses: forasmuch as the LORD hath said unto you, Ye shall henceforth return no more that way. (16)

Neither shall he MULTIPLY WIVES TO HIMSELF, that his heart turn not away: neither shall he greatly multiply to himself silver and gold. (17)

And it shall be, when he sitteth upon the throne of his kingdom, that he shall write him a copy of this law in a book out of that which is before the priests the Levites: (18)

And it shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the LORD his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them: (19)

That his heart be not lifted up above his brethren, and that he turn not aside from the commandment, to the right hand, or to the left: to the end that he may prolong his days in his kingdom, he, and his children, in the midst of Israel” (Deuteronomy 17:14-20).

What does Solomon do? He multiplies horses and chariots. He multiplies money, and he multiplies wives. And where did he do his best horse-trading and kicking of chariot wheels? Why, Egypt, of course! Perhaps he thought that his building of the temple was enough service to God for one lifetime, and he could afford to "coast" on past blessings. Read Chapter Two of Ecclesiastes and you will see the extent Solomon's quest for riches.

1 Kings, Chapter 11, is the final chapter of King Solomon's biography. The chapter begins with the words, "But King Solomon..." When you see those words, drastic change is coming! In Verses 1 and 2, we see that "King Solomon loved many strange women.... (1)

"Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love" (2).

He had 700 wives, who were princesses, and 300 concubines. 700 wives! He could visit two different wives each day, and a different concubine each day. This would get him completely around his harem in about a year. God had already forbidden marriage to the women of these nations, but Solomon married them anyway. Large harems were a status symbol for kings in the Middle East, and very expensive to maintain.

"Neither shalt thou make marriages with them; thy daughter thou shalt not give unto his son, nor his daughter shalt thou take unto thy son" (Deuteronomy 7:3).

As Solomon himself said in Ecclesiastes 4:1

"Better is a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished."

Solomon clave (clung) to them in love, and as God predicted, they "turned his heart away after their gods." The wisest man in the world became an old fool.

We have our Savior to thank for rescuing women from just being regarded as property.

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28)

In his days of wisdom, it would have been useless to argue with Solomon on behalf of these idols. With his God-given wisdom he would have annihilated all infidel argu-

ments, and established the existence of God. But, step by step, by the silken cords of lust, he was drawn away to other gods.

Other prominent men in the Old Testament had concubines, but this is not God's plan for marriage. God's plan is one man and one woman. See Matthew 19:4-6; and Genesis 2:23-24.

Solomon went after the goddesses Ashtoreth, and Milcom. He built a high place for Chemosh, and for Molech. Chemosh and Molech are two names for the same idol, both associated with prostitution and child sacrifice. 1 Kings 11:7 reveals a terrible crime committed by Solomon! He put the high place for these heathen gods right in front of Jerusalem. That is like sticking your finger right in God's eye!

“Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon”
(1 Kings 11:7).

Had Solomon remained true to the Lord, his later years would have been filled with blessing and victory, instead of chastening and defeat. Now, God is going to take the kingdom away, not from Solomon, but from Rehoboam, his son, and successor.

(1 Kings 11:11-13).

He left to his son, Rehoboam, the problem of winning back the love of the people, and lifting the heavy tax burdens that helped to make Solomon so wealthy. However, Rehoboam's harshness with the people of Israel, after refusing the wisdom of the older counselors in the kingdom, led to the division of the nation. Rehoboam was to rule only Judah and Benjamin from Jerusalem. Jeroboam became king of the ten northern tribes.

Yes, Israel seemed to be basking in great glory and splendor before Solomon's death, but all was not well. It was a hollow glory that could not last, and the once-great nation was divided.

The description in Revelation 3:17-18 fits the situation well.

“Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: (17) I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and *that* the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see”
(Revelation 3:17-18).

Israel's, supposedly, wisest king became a fool with the whole world watching, and the great kingdom of Israel extended by David to its furthest reach, was now divided. Israel's Golden Age was over, destroyed by a man with God-given abilities, but who could not control his fleshly appetites.

Solomon gave away his life for the world, and died a fool, and a fraud.

“For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil” (Ecclesiastes 12:14).

Solomon had everything going for him. God endowed him with everything he needed to succeed as king of Israel, and more. His father, King David had left him more than he needed to build the Temple, and the United Kingdom of Judah and Israel, with its borders to their greatest extent, and at peace. There were no wars during the time of Solomon's reign.

Sadly, toward the end of his life he became a foolish king. His excesses, both morally, financially, and the worship of heathen gods sowed the seeds of destruction for the great Nation of Israel. After Solomon's death, the once-great nation founded by King David, divided and headed for disaster.

What caused Solomon's failure? He was not completely dedicated to serving the Lord.

“And Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of David his father: ONLY he sacrificed and burnt incense in high places. (1 Kings 3:3)

Let us resolve not to live for the luxuries of life, with its many pleasures, as Solomon did. That is a slippery slope, and it goes only one way. Down!

Instead, let us live in the light of Calvary, with eternity's values in view.

Do not say, “That could never happen to me. I could never be drawn away from the Lord like Solomon. I could never turn my back on the Lord and indulge in the sin of the world.” My friend, unless you read your Bible consistently, and regularly attend a good Bible-teaching church that is straight on the Gospel, you can be worse than Solomon.

I have seen Christians I thought would never turn their back on the Lord, get carried away with false doctrine, steal, lie, and become homosexuals or lesbians. You name it, and an out-of-fellowship Christian is just as likely to do it as a lost person.

“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. (11) Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.”(1 Corinthians 10:11,12).

We thank the Lord for His Grace and that He never kicks us out of His family. We should not forget that...

“...whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. (6) If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?” (Hebrews 12:6,7).

Even though He disciplines us, He always calls us a son. God is very acquainted with our human frailties.

“It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. (22) They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. “

(Lamentations 3:22,23)

Chapter Eleven

A Time to Keep, and a Time to Cast Away

Now, it is time to see what we have learned from this book. I have to say I was certainly blessed from studying to write the book. It got me deep into the Bible, and there is not a more interesting textbook in the world than the Bible.

Everyone you read about in this book was a real person. They were human beings with the same trials of life that we have. They had to live their lives. We have the advantage of looking at their lives and deciding, “Well, that did not work for him. I don’t believe I will try it either.” Anyone can be a bad example.

We can also learn from the discipline that God sends for certain sins, what God thinks of that particular sin. We do learn from the Bible that adultery (David and Bathsheba), rebellion (Saul), incest (Amnon) and homosexuality (Lot), are all offenses that you can be stoned for. Stoning was the Jewish form of capital punishment.

When we learn God’s opinion of a certain sin, we will not be inclined to “sweep it under the rug.” Our nation, today, does not care what God thinks about anything. Today, in our country, we are worse than Sodom and Gomorrah! We cannot expect God to bless our nation. We are not giving God anything to bless us for.

I am doing this, so when I mention an event from History, or something the Bible says will occur in the future, you will know what I am talking about. After all, that is what this book is all about. The times of life.

God’s Word says explicitly that nothing should be added to His Word, or taken away. It is time to keep all of God’s word from the original manuscripts, and to cast away man’s idea of what he thinks God should have said.

Biblical criticism is like hearing a political speech, after which the announcers come on and tell you what they wanted you to hear. God says,

“Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar.”
(Proverbs 30:6)

Here is someone who wanted to “cast away” something. Martin Luther did not believe in the Rapture, the Tribulation Period, or the Millennium. He attempted to remove Hebrews, James, Jude, and Revelation, and Ezekiel from Chapter 40 on, from the Canon of the Bible. He did not believe them. Lutheran churches do not teach anything from these books, so I have included a diagram, with an outline, that explains Bible Prophecy, and gives the reference to where it is found in the Bible.

For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: (18)

“And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” Revelation 22:18,19

When these verses are quoted, they should be explained. These verses describe the lost who, made a decision during their lifetime not to believe God’s Word, and have died without trusting Christ as their Savior. Their names were in the “book of life” when they were born, but, they were “blotted out of the “book of the living” the day they died in unbelief.

Add iniquity unto their iniquity: and let them not come into thy righteousness. (27) Let them be blotted out of the book of the living, and not be written with the righteous” (Psalm 69:27,28).

Their names are not in the Lamb’s Book of Life, nor are they residents of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, because they have already stood before the Great White Throne Judgment, and have received their final sentence.

“And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” (Revelation 20:15).

Adding to the Scriptures.

Many add to the Scriptures, for example, in 1 Corinthians 13:10, "But when that which is perfect (teleios) is come, then that which is in part (knowledge, prophecy, and tongues) shall be done away."

For example, Dr. Charles Ryrie says, and I quote, "the perfect" is reference to Christ's second coming. Some understand this to refer to the completion of the canon of Scripture, but that would mean that we now see more clearly than Paul did." (Ryrie Study Bible.)

Notice Dr. Ryrie puts the article "the" in front of the word, "perfect." That means he is translating the word, "teleios," as a noun. According to Strong's Exhaustive Concordance, in 1 Corinthians 13:10, the Greek word, "teleios," is an adjective, NOT a noun.

Further, If the word, "perfect," translated from the Greek, "teleios," meant the Second Coming of Christ, we could add to God's Word, continuously, by claiming the gifts of special knowledge, prophecy, and tongues. This contradicts the Bible which says in 1 Corinthians 13:8,

Charity never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, **THEY SHALL FAIL**; whether there be tongues, **THEY SHALL CEASE**; whether there be knowledge, it shall **VANISH AWAY**."

Before the Bible was complete, certain ones in a meeting were given inspired words from God, instantaneously, on the spot. The New Testament was not complete at that time.

In 1 Corinthians 13:10, "that which" is in the neuter gender. That means it has to be referring to an object. If it were in the male, or female gender, it would be referring to a person. It is not. Since "that which" is in the neuter gender, it cannot be referring to Christ, or His Second Coming.

Dr. Robert G. Gromacki further says, "The word "perfect" (teleios) does refer to the end of a process or development ... the Second Coming of Christ is not a process, it is an instantaneous event. The word "perfect" cannot be referring to Christ because "perfect" definitely has reference to the end of a process, or development of something. THE something, of course, is the Word of God."

Dr. Gromacki was Professor of Bible and Greek and Chairman of the Division of Biblical Education at Cedarville College in Ohio.

1 Corinthians 13:10 simply tells us that, since, we have the completed Word of God, there is no more special knowledge, prophecy, or tongues. The Bible is complete, and nothing should be added to it.

Taking Away From the Scriptures.

Here is an example of taking away from the Word of God. Martin Luther quotes 1 Peter 3:21 in his Catechism, "The like figure whereunto baptism doth also now save us ... " and leaves off the last twenty-five words of the verse. This is an example of "taking away" from the Word of God.

If you die believing water baptism will save you, your name which was in the Book of Life from birth, will then be blotted out, and you will have no part in the wonderful things of the Book of Revelation. The plagues which will be added will be those by your name in the Book of Works, just before you are cast into the Lake of Fire. (Revelation 20:12- 13).

Remember God's Word is more important to Him than His Name. Without the Bible, we would not even know God's name.

" .. for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name" (Psalm 138:2).

When Martin Luther adds water baptism to the gospel of salvation, he gave us a "Passport to Hell," that many mistake for a "Passport to Heaven.'

I pray this is one trip you do not make!

The Passport to Heaven

Said a sweet Grandmother,
As death drew near,
Dear Family,
"You've no need to fear.

I well remember
My baptismal grace.
I know I am going
To a better place.

I was just born,
Still an infant small,
When our Lutheran minister
Came to call.

Reminding my parents
Of church tradition;
For babies who die in
Unbaptized condition.

He felt a loving God
Wouldn't send me to Hell;
But, the certainty of this,
He could not tell!

My loving parents,
Wanting the best for me,
Had me baptized next Sunday
For all to see.

And as the baptismal drops
On my brow I received,
My Godparents answered
that I believed.

My baptismal certificate
still hangs on the wall.
It's my "Passport to Heaven,"
When Death comes to call

I have lived out my baptism
All of my days,
That's how I am sure
Of God's amazing grace.

Many are those
Who've told me I'm wrong.
I said, "Look at the wall,
My faith is so strong."

"It was finished," they said,
"When Christ died in our place.
Accept Him as Savior;
That's how you receive grace.

You have been deceived,
Tradition is cursed!
You will end up in Hell,
That is the worst."

"This is my answer,
It is always the same.
Don't worry about me;
It's all in the frame.

My baptismal certificate
Still hangs on the wall.
It's my "Passport to Heaven,"
When Death comes to call."

What's this? Two angels
Appear on each side;
But no appearance of joy
On their faces abide.

We seem to hover
Over fiery, dark space,
This can't be Heaven,
I'm in the wrong place.

As I'm hurtling downward,
I scream, "This is wrong!"
Their answer: "This is the end
Of all the deceived throng,

Who've rejected the Savior
For baptism's "Passport to Heaven;"
And missed out on God's grace
On Calvary given."

How could my parents
And church all be wrong?
I've followed their tradition
All my life long.

The answer from Heaven
Came loud and clear,
Even though I'm in Hell,
I wish my family would hear.

"Howbeit in vain
Do they worship me," when;
They are "teaching for doctrines
The commandments of men.

"Through Christ is preached unto you
The forgiveness of sin."
Your baptismal "Passport to Heaven"
Will not get you in!"

...Marjorie A. Younce

Heart breaking, isn't it? Yet, this has been happening to thousands of sweet, little grandmothers since the time of Martin Luther. It's a very somber note to end on, but taking from Scripture, or adding to Scripture, can very well result in a person believing they are going to Heaven, when they are not! What a betrayal. It must break God's heart.

Chapter Twelve

A Time to Mend Fences, and a Time to Stitch Together Families

In families, relationships sometimes become strained when children grow older. You raise your children in your home church, hoping to keep them strong on doctrine, and straight on the Gospel, when they grow up.

My husband will not marry a Christian to a non-Christian, as it is not Scriptural.

“Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?”

(1 Corinthians 6:14).

The first marriage of King David to Saul’s daughter, Michal, was not a happy one, as she, like her father, had no regard for the Ark of God, or the things of God. She was not a believer.

“And let us bring again the ark of our God to us: for WE ENQUIRED NOT AT IT IN THE DAYS OF SAUL” (1 Chronicles 13:3).

But, when children leave your home with a mind of their own, they will sometimes marry into other families with a different belief system. The family may seem to be believers, but you begin hearing things like, “Oh, there is more to salvation than just believing.” Or, other false doctrines will begin to leak out in the conversation.

This is the time for parents to be “wise as a serpent, and harmless as a dove.” Your first inclination might be to march right in, and inform “those people” that is not the way your son or daughter was raised. “That is not what your family believes! Then, you make the mistake of thundering out an ultimatum.

“For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God” (James 1:20).

Well, it may be a long time before you get to see those grandchildren! You may never be invited to family get-togethers. You can be absolutely right in what you are saying, but that son or daughter will usually defend the beliefs of the family they have married into. I’ve heard it a thousand times. I just want to keep peace in the family!

What can you do? First, you go to the foot of the throne in earnest prayer.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need (Hebrews 4:16).

In whatever way you can, win the other family over. You don’t compromise your stand, but you build a bridge to them by:

1. Being respectful when they give their stand. After all, this is America, and everyone has a right to their beliefs. As my husband says, “I would fight for your right to be wrong.
2. Begin with other topics of mutual agreement. You can work up to talking about the Bible.

Don't be like a very sincere gentleman we knew. He viewed church visitation night as "cordon and knock." He knocked on the door, "Hello, we're from XXX Church, I have a card here with your name on it, so you must be lost." While the person's mouth was still hanging open, he would throw his Bible down on the nearest table, which, conveniently fell open to the "Romans Road."

He would, then, cover the "required" points he had learned in visitation class, closing with, "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Romans 10:9). At that point, he would clap his Bible shut, and, looking his prospect squarely in the eye, say, "OK, what about it?"

Let's just leave it there, and say that some of the true soul winners of the church "mentioned" his technique to the pastor.

3. "...Speak... the truth in love..." (Ephesians 4:15) You can casually drop into the conversation what a blessing it is to know I'm going to Heaven. Not because I'm good enough, but because Jesus Christ died for me. What a peace it is to know, if I don't wake up tomorrow morning, I'll be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. But, don't rush it." My husband is one of those people that, whatever word you throw at him, he can turn it into an opening for the Gospel.

4. Unfortunately, they may come at you, fast and hard, with their belief system. Well, that would be great! You don't back up for anything, and let the chips fall where they may. Have your answers ready, but with a right attitude.

"But sanctify (*set apart*) the Lord God in your hearts: and *be* ready always to *give* an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:" (1 Peter 3:15).

The believer must be ready to give an account of how this hope arose in him, and on what it rests. "Meekness" means "humble," not "wimp," because of what it cost Christ to pay for the world's sin. He does not need your temper to uphold His Gospel.

5. Be sure to include everyone, even the most obnoxious relatives, in your family get-togethers.

6. Homemade gifts always come from the heart, even if they are not the greatest craftsmanship. I don't know how many pairs of slippers I have crocheted over the years. I did not make them to mend strained relationships. I was just making Christmas gifts, because I didn't have the money to buy them. I loved every stitch that went into them, because I made all sizes, and thought about, and prayed for, every person they were going to.

Oh, you should have seen the first ones. They went from teeny-tiny to Size Twelve. My children, and grandchildren, were very kind, and told me they were great. My youngest son thanked me for his, but I understand that none of them have ever been out of his sock drawer since that Christmas. And, then, there was the year of scarves! We will say no more about that.

Finally, there is the tragedy of those who trust Christ as their Savior, after their family has been devoutly raised in another religion. They must do what they can to win

those children and grandchildren to the Lord. Wouldn't we all like to say that we have done everything right? Unfortunately, and may the Lord forgive me, I have not, either. We always feel we could have done more. Those are exactly the concerns of the mother, on her way to Heaven, in the next poem, "A Mother's Journey Home."

A Mother's Journey Home

An aged mother neared the end
Of her journey here on earth.
She smiled at the faces around her bed,
Of the children she had birthed;

Then she closed her eyes in peace,
Knowing that Heaven was her Home.
The "transport" angels came to take her,
So through the skies she would not roam.

As they were soaring by a cloud,
She looked back, exclaiming, "Wait!"
Mothers have a tone of voice,
That even makes an angel hesitate.

What's troubling you? one Angel asked;
As he brushed a tear from her face.
"One son has not accepted Jesus!
He does not know God's grace!

I must go back to try once more.
Perhaps I did not explain it clearly.
I just can't think of eternity
Without the son I love so dearly!"

Since they were passing by a cloud,
They paused upon its edge.
"Beloved Mother, Do not worry
You have our Savior's solemn pledge."

His Word will not return unto Him void.
Your son must believe the truth he's been told.
The proof of a job well-done is,
All, but one, are in the fold.

You have taught your children well,
That all are sinners and need God's grace;
And the only way they could receive it
Is to believe Christ died in their place."

The angels gently resumed the journey,
"Beloved Mother, you still must go.
Trust the Pledge of our Precious Savior,
Who paid for His sin so long ago.

In a moment, she was on Heaven's Threshold,
Joyously uniting with loved ones there.
Her peace was found in trusting God's Word.
Never again did she have an earthly care.

In this poem, we'll say, the son believed;
That Jesus died to pay for his sin;
Receiving the perfection needed for Heaven.
And the assurance he'll see Mother again.

If you're someone whose Mother's in Heaven;
But, you're not sure that you would go.
Accept Christ's payment for your sin on the Cross;
Then, you too, a heavenly home will know.

Marjorie A. Younce

One of my granddaughters used to go around saying, "Well, Cry me a river, and build me a bridge, and get over it" It was just a saying, but it made me think. When you begin to build that bridge, don't wait for people to meet you half-way. You go to the other side, and, meet them where they are.

And what is the name of that Bridge? The name of that bridge is "Communication." Keep the conversation going.

In order to have a chance to present the Gospel, or talk about anything that divides, you must win people over as friends, first. It can be difficult, as they are sometimes very unfriendly. What are the stakes? You want to win those precious children and grandchildren to the Lord.

So, build those bridges! Determine to be a unifier with the Gospel. It could be the difference between Heaven and Hell.

The Bridge Builder

An old man going a lone highway,
Came, at the evening cold and gray,

To a chasm vast and deep and wide.
Through which was flowing a sullen tide

The old man crossed in the twilight dim,
The sullen stream had no fear for him;

But he turned when safe on the other side
And built a bridge to span the tide.

“Old man,” said a fellow pilgrim near,
“You are wasting your strength with building here;

Your journey will end with the ending day,
You never again will pass this way;

You’ve crossed the chasm, deep and wide,
Why build this bridge at evening tide?”

The builder lifted his old gray head;
“Good friend, in the path I have come,” he said,

“There followed after me to-day
A youth whose feet must pass this way.

This chasm that has been as naught to me
To that fair-haired youth may a pitfall be;

He, too, must cross in the twilight dim;
Good friend, I am building this bridge for him!”

Source Unknown

In today’s world, family bonds can be stretched to the limit by members who decide God’s Word about homosexuality, the role of women, same-sex marriage, transgenderism, “relationships” without marriage, and morality, in general, is not relevant for today. Put on your “hard hat,” as taking a stand for Christian values often results in extreme resistance from the younger generation. Remember... “For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven” (Psalm 119:89). God’s Word is always relevant.

We may have to face the fact that our children will divorce, and marry again. What then? You can lend a sympathetic ear, and, tactfully, let them know divorce is not God’s answer to a troubled marriage. You can encourage them to work at their marriage. Most parents try not to take their son’s, or daughter’s, side. There will be extreme cases in which a parent may have to lend a hand to that son, or daughter, when abuse is involved. You need a good church, and pastor, to fall back on during times like these, as well as a lawyer who is as “mean as a junk yard dog.”

Then, after the divorce, come the step-parents. I have to say I had a wonderful step-dad. He was a true hero, one of the Greatest Generation, a Veteran of WWII. He was a Lawson Army Medic, and we buried him with full military honors at Fort Snelling. Now, he is up in Heaven with my Mother. My Father married again, too. I can picture the four of them sitting on a couple of park benches in Heaven, rejoicing that the blood the Lord Jesus Christ shed for them, on Calvary, is why they are here at all.

And, when that son, or daughter, brings the new spouse home, sometimes with children, you welcome them all with open arms, and set a few more places at the table. If you call me "Grandma," or G.G., you're mine. We have plenty of beautiful grandchildren, and great grandchildren, and all of them are "smarter than the average," as Garrison Keillor says.

If the circumstances allow, you can assure the spouse who is now divorced, and alone, your feelings toward them have not changed. Sometimes the circumstances of the divorce have been so bitter, or illegal, that communication with the divorced spouse by the in laws is impossible. But, time can change things. Remember, they have a claim on your grandchildren, too, and might have control over whether you get to see them, or not.

There are many step-dads around the world. This poem is for them. Perhaps it will mend a little of the resentment held against them.

Dedicated to Stepdads Everywhere

A Step-Dad's role in life,
Is a very rough row to hoe.
He's competition with the first guy,
In the kid's eyes, as they grow.

If he truly loves their mother,
He'll love them as his own,
Seeing to their every need;
Until the nest they've flown.

It's a great Step-Dad who raises you
By the truths in God's Word he's believed,
Takes you to a Gospel-preaching church,
And makes sure the Gospel you've received.

"You don't have the right to chasten me!"
A complaint Step-Dads often hear;
Still they bravely discipline in love,
With scoffing going in and out each ear.

He must do what is best for you,
As unpleasant as it may have to be,
Though step-children are just loaned to him,
He has accepted "father responsibility."

He must tread lightly through your heart,
Remembering that you love your Father, too,
And whether you lost him by Death, or Divorce;
The choice definitely wasn't up to you!

He must stand before our Heavenly Father,
When he reaches Heaven's door.
And, since he came in as a "sub" for Dad,
His responsibilities have required much more.

So, we honor on this very special day,
The men who've "stepped in" without fuss;
The men who guided family and home.
The Step-Dads who "stepped-in" for us!

Other folks may not understand
How you can love him as your Dad.
They may view you as disloyal;
As two parents they've always had.

They just don't know the way kids feel.
When their Step-Dad is quite a guy,
Who guides them through all their years,
And is hero enough to try!

Marjorie A. Younce

Our Savior lived in a blended family, but, Joseph was more guardian, than stepfather. Our Savior let them know when they found him in the temple, at age twelve, who his father was.

“And he (Christ) said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's (God's) business?” (Luke 2:49)

As each day goes by, we must decide how the times of our life will be used. Will we fill them up with chauffeuring children to athletic events, dance classes, and other school events, or will we make time to feed our souls by reading the Bible, and attending church with our families?

Many parents, and I don't mean to put them down for this, just want what they have been told is best for their child. Those who want their child in the best colleges, tend to go overboard for the extra-curricular things, as well as urging their children to keep their academic grades up. Before you can say, “Jesus wept,” they are caught up in a whirlwind of activities which leave no time for church, or for the family to be together. Many parents turn to home schooling as a remedy (or defense!). There is just no time for a family to bond.

Family bonds are those stitches that hold Christian families together during the hard times. You can counter the damage done by public schools by insisting that your children must attend church with you. This is America, and you can also make the effort to express your opinion to the School Board. It is sad to say, but in today's Ameri-

ca, the education systems of our country are very powerful, and are a “sign of the times” in their anti-God slide toward destruction. “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”

Further, you as a parent, must make sure each child knows Jesus Christ as his Savior, and as someone he can always come to in prayer. How do you do that, Mom and Dad? You begin explaining how to go to Heaven to them, even before they can talk. There are children’s books to help you. What is your goal? When the Church goes up at the Rapture, you want everyone in your family to go, too.

Have your children take turns saying the Prayer of Thanks for every meal. Not those memorized little prayers—which mean nothing. Help them to say what they are thankful for. You will love the words which come out of those little mouths! You will probably write them down, and send them to Art Linkletter for his program, “Kids Say the Darndest Things.” Speaking of words, here’s a poem about the Ideal Dad.

The Ideal Dad

The ideal Dad gets up every day;
If his knees will permit, he kneels down to pray,

Asking God's blessing on that day's path,
And not to provoke his children to wrath.

Searching for wisdom to nurture and lead,
A chapter or two of God's Word he'll read.

The ideal Dad heads out to work he must do,
To provide for his family things old and new.

Going out, he pats each sleeping child's cheek,
Waving goodbye as their sleepy eyes peek.

He kisses the wife and heads out the door,
Into the world and into the war.

The ideal Dad keeps his path straight.
Role model for life is a task that won't wait.

The toddler goes clopping in Daddy's big shoes,
Perhaps when he's grown, Dad's path he will choose;

So Dad leads by example, "Just watch what I do."
Actions speak louder than words, it is true.

The ideal Dad speaks words fit to be heard,
No swearing and cussing, he lives out God's Word.

His words build up his children for life,
Not tearing them down in critical strife.

He takes his family to church every Sunday,
And goes out to live for the Lord every Monday.

The ideal Dad teaches work must done;
As his children grow up and leave one by one.

Little boys fix the car and go fishing with Dad.
That makes mowing the lawn not quite so bad.

Little girls do the dishes and help with house;
And dream of the day God brings a wonderful spouse.

The ideal Dad cherishes tears on his shoulder,
Dollies will break; and hearts, too, when they're older.

Games will be lost and games will be won,
Life's not always fair, and not always fun.

Talking to Dad reveals the way you should go,
How is he so wise? How does he know?

It all goes back to how Dad starts his day,
Reading his Bible and stopping to pray.

His children will watch and probably feel,
"My Dad is not perfect; but, he's sure my ideal!"

...Marjorie A. Younce

If this were a perfect world, there would be no divorce, or strained relationships, in families. Not in the times of David and Solomon, and not in our times, today. One thing is certain. We do not live in a perfect world, but, we do serve a powerful God. The Lord still can use broken pieces to make something beautiful out of our lives.

"The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have *it* more abundantly" (John 10:10).

And everything is beautiful in it's own way
Like a starry summer night
Or a snow covered winter's day,
Everybody's beautiful in their own way
Under God's Heaven, The world's gonna find a way.
Composer – Ray Stevens

Chapter Thirteen

A Time to Keep Silence, And a Time to Speak

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.” (Romans 1:16).

There is always time to share the Gospel. At least, that’s what my husband tells me. He’s the type of person that, if you poke him, he’ll witness to you. That’s how we all should be.

When we share the Gospel, the Cross and Resurrection has to be there. This is how Paul gives it.

“Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; (1)

By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. (2)

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; (3)

And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:” (1 Corinthians 15:4).

Let’s just clarify something from the start.

First: The Gospel includes the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

Those that “believed in vain” did not “keep in memory” what Paul had preached to them. What did Paul preach? He was preaching the Resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:12,

“Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?

The ones who believe “in vain” did not believe Paul’s preaching about the Resurrection, as it says in 1 Corinthians 15:17,

And if Christ be not raised, YOUR FAITH IS VAIN; ye are yet in your sins.

The Gospel that saves is believing that Christ died to pay for your sins, he was buried, and rose again after three days and three nights.

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, there are two groups: one that received the Gospel, the death, burial, and Resurrection, and that is their standing. The second group did not believe in the Resurrection, therefore their faith is empty, “vain,” null and void.

I like to use other verses. My favorite is 2 Corinthians 5:21, because I tell them Heaven is a perfect place, and no one can enter without being perfectly righteous.

Well, no one can do that.

I tell them, you don't have to. Christ has already made the payment for us. If you believe he died on the Cross to make the payment for your sin, he gives you the righteousness you need to go to Heaven.

“For he (God) hath made him (Christ) to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Max uses John 3:16, and he, usually, has the person read it phrase by phrase. For example:

“For God so loved the world,” – Does that include you? he asks the person.

“...that he gave his only begotten Son,” He asks, Do you celebrate Christmas? Yes. That's when Christ took on human flesh. Do you celebrate Easter? Yes. That is when he died on the Cross to pay for our sin, and, then, He came out of the grave three days, and three nights later. Please read the next phrase.

“...that whosoever believeth in him...” If you believe He did that for you, He makes you two promises:

1. “...should not perish,” You will not go to Hell.
2. “...but have everlasting life.” You will have everlasting life.

Does that make sense to you? Yes, it does.

Then he tells them, Our whole time system is dated from Christ's birth. That is historical proof that He was here. Every time you date a check, it is 2016 A.D. A.D. stands for the Latin words “Anno Domini,” and mean “the Year of our Lord.” No other person in History can make that claim. That is proof that Jesus Christ was here, personally, to pay for our sins.

Do you believe that He died to pay for your sins?

Yes, I do.

Then, what does this verse say you have?

I have everlasting life! Usually, the truth hits them about now.

They will say, I have never heard that before. They always said I had to come to church, go forward, be baptized, take communion, or be confirmed.

Max will say, What does that verse in the Bible say you have to do?

Believe..

Now, I possibly have not done justice to this example. You would just have to be with him. It is simply amazing!

If you want to know more about soul-winning, go to our website, heritagebbc.com, and download Dr. A. Ray Stanford's book, Personal Evangelism.

The Lighthouse of God's Word

God's Word is like a lighthouse revealing rocks of sin,
Illuminating false doctrine, before it enters in.

"God so loved the world," that's each and every man
"Not willing ... any should perish" was purpose of His Plan.

Ordained before the world began and accomplished by our Lord.
"Whosoever will may come" is the message of God's Word.

If you live in shadows where the lighthouse does not glow,
False doctrine may wreck your vessel before His truth you know.

"Predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son,"
At the Rapture this will happen, First John Three, Verse One.

God did not choose some for Heaven and others to go to Hell,
That's what they mean by "T-U-L-I-P," they just don't want to tell.

They do despite to the Grace of God, and Christ's death sacrificially.
"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

Read Isaiah, Chapter 53, Verse Six. Read it very carefully.
"Go in at the first all...come out at the last all, you'll be saved eternally."

Thank God for the "whosoever" and the "alls" revealed in His Word.
You have no excuse to reject the truth because you now have heard.

Believe Christ died for you as full payment for your sin,
And when the time comes to go to Heaven, you will enter in.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ,
and thou shalt be saved, ... " Acts 16:31

Chapter Fourteen

A Time to Love, And a Time to Hate

If any *man* come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26)

This does not mean we must hate our family to serve the Lord. It means that we love our Lord so much that our familial love for our families seems like hate.

“Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son *to be* the propitiation for our sins” (1 John 4:10).

The Greek word, *agapaō*, is used in this verse for the love that God has for us. It is the highest form of love.

No Greater Love

On the way to Gethsemane that evening long ago,
The Savior began to teach as He was wont to do.
His lesson in the vineyard became the "Parable of the Vine,"
A lesson that we all should learn, ev'ry precious line.

It's not a lesson about Salvation; but, how to serve the Lord.
A parable has just one point; not a doctrine in each Word.
Christ is the Vine, and the Branches are all who have believed.
We are clean through his Word, as the Gospel we've received.

In a vineyard, the Husbandman has chores by the score.
Every branch that bears fruit is pruned; so it will bear much more.
But to bear any fruit at all, we must be attached to the Vine,
That is where we get our strength to serve, and lay all upon the line.

If we abide in Him, we shall have strength much fruit to bear.
If our branch begins to wither, and we do not the Gospel share,
Our branches will be gathered up, and our branches men will burn,
As useless as wood, hay, and stubble, is the lesson we must learn.

Only is the Father glorified if His vineyard bears much fruit.
With a bountiful harvest of souls hanging upon each shoot.
"As the Father hath loved me, so have I loved you..."
"Continue ye in my love," a commandment tried and true.

If you do not love one another; but, instead bite and devour,
The fruit that grows upon your branch will leave a taste most sour.
A watching world will give no heed to the words that you say;
But cast them all aside, and go upon their merry way.

"This is my commandment, that ye love one another,"
Even to the point that you lay down your life for a brother.
Christ has called us to go forth, and bear fruit that will remain.
And a soul bound for Heaven, cannot be lost again.

"For God so loved the world," for all mankind was lost,
"That he gave his only begotten son," upon a rugged cross.
"That whosoever believeth in him," that's you and I, my Friend.
"Should not perish, but have everlasting life." Life without end.

...Marjorie A. Younce

Chapter Fifteen

“A Time of War, and a Time of Peace”

Contrary to what we sometimes hear, when we believe Christ paid for our sin on the Cross, and receive eternal life, it is not going to be Heaven on earth! We have just enlisted in the Lord’s Army, and there are battles to fight.

“Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. (3) No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier” (2 Timothy 2:3,4).

There will be no lasting peace, no matter how many Peace Accords are signed by presidents, and prime ministers, until the Prince of Peace returns at the end of the Tribulation and sets up the Millennial Kingdom Reign.

The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. (6) And the cow and the bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. (7) And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice’ den. (8) They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. (Isaiah 11:6-9).

The word “millennial” is not found in the Bible, but it is a Scriptural truth. It comes from the Latin words “mille,” and “anum,” and simply means “a thousand.” Then we will have a 1,000 years of perfect peace with Christ ruling the nations of the world as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, with designated rulers in the other nations who serve in His strength.

During the Millennial Reign of Christ, Israel will have their land back, all of it. What is often not made clear, Israel is not the only nation in existence during the Millennial Reign of Christ. Christ reigns over the whole world as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. There are many other nations in existence around the world.

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. (11)

His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself. (12)

And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God. (13)

And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. (15)

And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. (16)

And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.” (Revelation 19:11-16)

Psalms 2:7-10 describes how the Millennial Reign will be administered.

“I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me (Christ), Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (7)

Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen (nations) for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. (8)

Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. (9)

Be wise now therefore, O ye kings (rulers of the nations): be instructed, ye judges (resurrected Christians carrying out the orders of the rulers of the nations) of the earth. (10).”

Here is what King David will do in the Kingdom, or Millennium.

“But they (Israel) shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.” (Jeremiah 30:9).

“And I (Jehovah) will set up one shepherd over them (Israel)), and he shall feed (tend) them, even my servant David; he shall feed (tend) them, and he shall be their shepherd. (23) And I the LORD will be their (Israel's) God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it.” (Ezekiel 34:23, 24).

A prince is someone who serves under a king. David will be again ruling Israel, from Jerusalem, and Christ will be King of Kings over him.

“Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.” (Hosea 3:5).

When Christ came to die on a Roman cross to pay for the sins of the world, He was a servant. After His Ascension back to Heaven, he assumed His rightful place on God, the Father's, right hand. When he returns at the end of the Tribulation Period, He is “King of Kings and Lord of Lords.” Notice who is speaking here. “And I the LORD...” That is Jehovah and the “house of Israel” is His Flock.

“And I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. (23) And I the LORD will be their God, and my servant David a prince among them; I the LORD have spoken it. (24) And I will make with them a covenant of peace, and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land: and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods. (25) And I will make them and the places round about my hill a blessing; and I will cause the shower to come down in his season; there shall be showers of blessing. (26)

And the tree of the field shall yield her fruit, and the earth shall yield her increase, and they shall be safe in their land, and shall know that I am the LORD, when I have broken the bands of their yoke, and delivered them out of the hand of those that served themselves of them. (27) And they shall no more be a prey to the heathen, neither shall the beast of the land devour them; but they shall dwell safely, and none shall make them afraid. (28) And I will raise up for them a plant of renown, and they shall

be no more consumed with hunger in the land, neither bear the shame of the heathen any more. (29)

Thus shall they know that I the LORD their God am with them, and that they, even the house of Israel, are my people, saith the Lord GOD. (30) And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men, and I am your God, saith the Lord GOD.”
(Ezekiel 34:23-31).

That is what a throne, and a kingdom, forever, mean to King David. He will rule all Israel in the Kingdom, just as he did when he was alive. There will be Laws to be enforced during the Millennial Reign of Christ. King David will reign over the Nation of Israel in the Kingdom, just as he did during life. Only this time, he will not have the old nature, and he will do it right.

The Nation of Israel is one part of the Millennial Reign, or Kingdom. The whole world is involved, and the King who reigns over Israel, and the rest of the world is the ultimate King, our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

As my husband says, “Read it and believe it.”

Finally, as Solomon reminds us in Ecclesiastes 12:12,

“ And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books there is no end; and much study is a weariness of the flesh.”

Now, it is time to end this book. I have had the “time of my life” writing it. Thank you for taking the time to read it.

Will you join me in a challenge? Any one of us can be a “Solomon,” and end our lives, having lived them completely for ourselves as “the man under the sun” does, and accomplish nothing for the Lord. King Solomon said it, himself, in Ecclesiastes 1:2,3,

“Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.
What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?”

Let us resolve to use “the time of our lives” to serve the Lord to the best of our abilities, for “...ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

Solomon began the Book of Ecclesiastes by saying, “Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all *is* vanity.” In other words, “Emptiness of emptiness...”

Solomon now ends the Book of Ecclesiastes by giving us the answer to the question first proposed in Ecclesiastes 1:3, “What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?”

There is no profit. None. All is vanity. Why? The man “under the sun” was not looking forward, in belief, to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” on the Cross (John 1:29); nor, is he looking back to “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world” on the Cross.

Does this describe you?

Looking forward to Christ's death on the Cross, or looking back to Christ's death on the Cross, only gives eternal life when you believe Christ did that to pay for your sins, plus nothing.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." (2 Corinthians 5:21).

Our Savior is speaking to you, today, just as He did to Nicodemus, on that rooftop, in Jerusalem long ago,

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: (14) That whosoever believeth in him (Christ) should not perish, but have eternal life" (John 3:14,15).

"Look and live...in belief that Christ died on that Cross to pay for your sins, was buried, and came out of that tomb three days, and three nights, later, to show God accepted that payment.

There are no unbelievers in Hell. They should have believed before they died. The most important decision you will ever make, while you are alive, will determine whether you spend eternity in Heaven, or the Lake of Fire.

"Now is the accepted time," while you are alive, to decide who you will spend eternity with. Will you spend it with your Savior, Jesus Christ, in heavenly peace and glory, or Satan, the deceiver, in the Lake of Fire?

"...now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."
(2 Corinthians 6:2)

The Touch of the Master's Hand

This often-quoted poem reminds us that the worst sinner, or the most self-righteous saint, can be used by the Lord, if we will allow Him to touch our lives.

'Twas battered and scarred, And the auctioneer
Thought it hardly worth his while,
To waste his time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.

"What am I bid, good people" he cried,
"Who starts the bidding for me?"
"One dollar, one dollar, Do I hear two?"
"Two dollars, who makes it three?"

"Three dollars once, three dollars twice,
Going for three," But No,

From the room far back, a gray bearded man
Came forward and picked up the bow.

Then wiping the dust from the old violin
And tightening up the strings,
He played a melody, pure and sweet
As sweet as the angel sings.

The music ceased and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said "Now what am I bid for this old violin?"
As he held it aloft with its' bow.

"One thousand? One thousand? Do I hear two?"
"Two thousand? Who makes it three?"
"Three thousand once, three thousand twice,
Going and gone." said he.

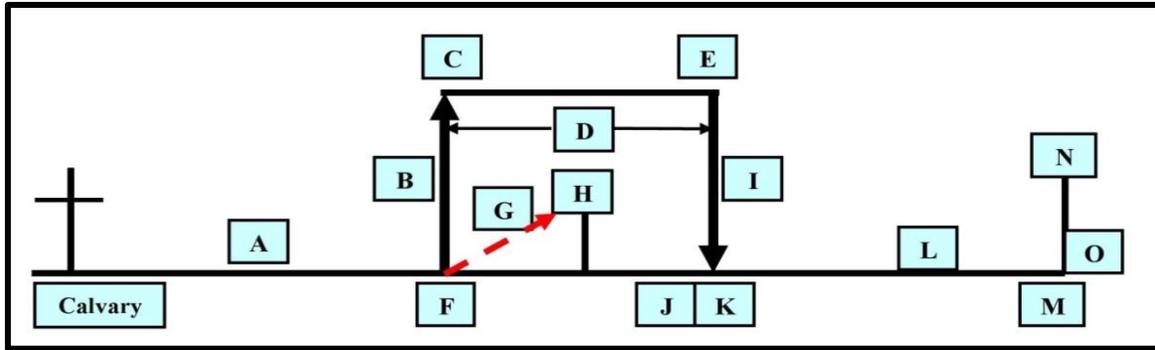
The audience cheered, But some of them cried,
"We just don't understand."
"What changed its' worth?" Swift came the reply.
"The Touch of the Masters Hand."

And many a man, with life out of tune,
All battered and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd
Much like that old violin.

A mess of pottage, a glass of wine,
A game and he travels on.
He is going once, he is going twice,
He is going and almost gone.

But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand,
The worth of a soul, and the change that is wrought,
By the Touch of the Masters' Hand.

By Myra Brooks Welch, Circa 1921



Prophecy Outline

A. Church Age.

1. The Building (Ephesians 2:19-22).
2. The Bride (Revelation 19:7,8).
3. The Church (Ecclesia, Assembly) (Ephesians 5:25).

B. Rapture (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Corinthians 15:50).

C. Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Corinthians 5:10; 1 Corinthians 3:11-15).

D. Seven-year Tribulation Period (Daniel 9:25-27).

E. Marriage Supper of the Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9).

F. First Battle of Gog & Magog (Ezekiel, Chapters 38 and 39).

G. Antichrist's Rise To Power (Daniel 11:21 & 32; Daniel 8:23).

H. Antichrist Breaks His Covenant with Israel.

1. The Abomination of Desolation spoken of in Daniel 9:27; Matthew 24:15-20.
2. Start of the Great Tribulation – The Last 3 ½ Years (Matthew 24:21,22).
3. Antichrist Declares Himself to Be God. (2 Thessalonians 2:3,4).
4. The One-World Church and the One-World Government (Revelation, Chapter 13).

I. Christ Returns To The Earth.

1. Location, the Mount of Olives (Zechariah 14:4).
2. Saints of God Will Come With Christ (Jude 14).
3. Christ Upon His Throne (Matthew 25:31).
4. Purpose, To Judge The Nations (2 Timothy 4:1).

J. Battle of Armageddon (Revelation 14:15-20; 16:16; 19:15-21).

K. Judgment of the Nations (Matthew 24:38-44; 25:32-46).

L. Reign of Christ On Earth.

1. Length (1,000 years (Revelation 20:1, 2)).

2. Peace (Isaiah 11:6-9).
 3. Nations will have to be represented in keeping the Feast of Tabernacles in Jerusalem once a year. (Zechariah 14:16-19).
 4. The Marriage Supper of The Lamb (Revelation 19:7-9).
- M. Second Battle of Gog And Magog (Revelation 20:8-10).
- N. Great White Throne Judgment (Revelation 20:11-15).

Chronology of King David's Life

1040 BC: Saul reigns from roughly 1040-1000 BC

1035 BC: David is likely born in Bethlehem between 1040 and 1030 BC.

1030 BC: Jonathan is a mighty warrior his own father is jealous of. (1Sam 13-14). He is fiercely, and loyally, defended by his men against Saul's intent to kill him.

1025 BC: David is anointed by Samuel (1Sam 16:13) at about age 15-17, which Saul, undoubtedly, hears about. He later keeps David nearby for observation, and for an easy target.

1023 BC: David, serves Saul in an a musical capacity (1Sam 16:17, "provide me a man"). He returns to his father's house to tend sheep, but comes to Saul when needed – (1Sam 17:15).

1020 BC: David defeats Goliath at 17 to 18 years of age (1Sam 17)

1020 BC: Jonathan, who is older than David, becomes a loyal friend. (1Sam 18:1).

1015 BC: Because of his reputation, David is appointed armor-bearer to Saul (1Sam 16:21).

1010 BC: Saul banishes David from his court, yet he makes him commander of a thousand (1Sam 18:13). He hopes David will die in battle. David is perhaps 25 years old.

1008 BC: His success as a warrior has made Saul offer him the hand of his daughter Michal "as a snare." (1Sam 18:21). Michal marries him, and she loves him (1Sam 18:27-28).

1007 BC: At Jonathan's warning (and Michal's), David flees from Saul to Samuel at Ramah (1Sam 19). Michal remains behind with Saul. An evil spirit caused Saul to pursue David, but he is stopped by the Spirit of God at Ramah. (Ps 59:1,2)

"Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God: defend me from them that rise up against me.

(1) Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men. (2).

1006 BC: David and Jonathan covenant together at Ramah (1Sam 20:8).

1006 BC: David flees to Nob, and is helped by Ahimelech, the priest (1Sam 21:5,6). He gives David the consecrated bread, and the sword of Goliath. Doeg the Edomite is present. (1Sam 21:7) "In God have I put my trust: I will not be afraid what man can do unto me." (Ps 56:11).

1006 BC: David flees to Achish, king of the Philistine city of Gath, the first time (1Sam 21:10). He feigns madness to protect himself and his men, and he is expelled. (Ps 34:6) "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard *him*, and saved him out of all his troubles."

1005 BC: David hides at the Cave at Adullam (1Sam 22:1-5) where he is joined by 30 chiefs. Three enter the camp of the Philistines to get David an off-handed request for a drink of water (1Chr. 11:15). His father's household joins him there. Ps 142.

1005 BC: David takes his parents to Mizpah of Moab leaving them with the king (1Sam 22:3-4)

1005 BC: Doeg the Edomite, at Saul's command, kills Ahimelech the priest who helped David and hismen. He also kills 85 priests and everyone at Nob for helping David. Abiathar, the son of the priest flees to David with the ephod (1Sam 22:6-23). Ps 52.

1005 BC: David liberates Keilah from the Philistines (1Sam 23:6). Saul hears of it and gathers his forces against David at Keilah. Using the ephod, David learns that the people of Keilah will betray him to Saul, and so he flees again. Jonathan visits him at Ziph and covenants with him again (23:16). Ziphites betray David, but God hides him from Saul in the Desert of Ziph. Ps 63.

1005 BC: Saul pursues David at en-Gedi. Ps 54. David cuts off a corner of his robe in the cave near the Crags of the Wild Goats. When Saul leaves the cave, David pleads his cause and his intent not to harm Saul (1Sam 24). He returns to his stronghold (Masada?). Ps 57. This is just before Samuel dies (1Sam 25:1).

1005 BC: David is living "off the land" as he encounters Nabal and Abigail at Carmel (1Sam 25). His men kindly provide protection for Nabal's flocks expecting to be paid, but Nabal rebuffs them. David threatens to kill Nabal for his affront, until Abigail diplomatically intercedes with food and praise. David survives this incident, David marries Abigail as well. In David's absence, Saul gives Michal to Paltiel in Gallim, which is near the border near Jerusalem.

1004 BC: David encounters Saul and his 3000 men in his camp at Hakilah, having been betrayed by the Ziphites a second time. He spares Saul's life again (1Sam 26). Saul "repents" of his pursuit of David, but David doesn't trust him.

1004 BC: David flees to Gath a second time with 600 men and their families. Saul stops his pursuit of David (1Sam 27:4).

1003 BC: After living with Achish at Gath probably for a month or two, David asks to move to Ziklag with his men (1Sam 27:6). David "serves" the Philistines for over a year (see 1Sam 29:3). Achish defends David against his officers ((1Sam 29:1-11).

1000 BC: Samuel dies (1Sam 28:3). Saul solicits the witch of Endor to call up Samuel (1Sam 28:4-7). He prophesies Saul will die the next day. In a battle with the Philistines on Mt. Gilboa, three of Saul's sons die; Saul is wounded and falls on his sword (1Sam 31). David's Lament (2Sam 1:17-27). David's service is "dismissed" by the Philistines. The Amalekites burn Ziklag and take the wives of David's men (1Sam 28-2Sam 1). David, and 400 men recapture the women, but 200 men cannot go. David shares the plunder equally with them, and with the elders of Judah.

1000 BC: David, with the help of his allies assumes control of Judah, and is anointed its king with Hebron as his capital (2Sam 2:7). He reigns for 7 years and 6 months (2Sam 2:11). While there, he marries Maacah, daughter of the king of Geshur. He also marries Haggith, Abital, and Eglah (2Sam 3:1-5) and has sons and daughter by all but Michal (2Sam 6:23).

David's Sons:

Amnon	by Ahinoam of Jezreel
Kileab	by Abigail (Nabal's widow)
Absalom	by Maacah the Canaanite

Adonijah by Haggith
Shephatiah by Abital
Ithream by Eglah

998 BC: Ishbosheth, with Abner as his general, has liberated the remainder of the Western territory from the Philistines over a two-year period. He is declared king over Israel, the northern kingdom (2Sam 2:9- 10). Abner slays Asahel at Gibeon (where the sun stopped for Joshua) which begins five and a half years of war with David (2Sam 2:12-32; 3:1).

After Ishbosheth accuses Abner of infidelity with Saul's concubine, Abner threatens his life and covenants with David, who has Michal returned to David by Ishbosheth (3:14). Joab, David's general, murders Abner at Hebron (3:22,27).

997 BC: David conquers Jerusalem (2Sam 5:6). He rebuilds it, and moves there from Hebron.

993 BC: Ishbosheth is murdered by two cut-throats. David is publicly anointed king over all of Israel, north and south (2Sam 5:17). Battle of Baal Perazim (2Sam 5:17-25; 1Chr 14:8-17; Ps 18). David's 33- year reign at Jerusalem begins (1Chr 3:4). His total kingship lasts 40 years (1Kgs. 2:11)).

992 BC: Ark returned to Jerusalem to a tent (2Sam 6). The tabernacle remains in Gibeon (1Chr 16).

David desires to build a temple to house the ark (2Sam 7; 1Chr 17). God sends Nathan to David with the Davidic Covenant instead, promising a throne to the House of David forever. (2Sam 7:12-29). Ps 105, 96.

982 BC: After 7-10 years of war, David has solidified his empire (2Sam 8). Mephibosheth is found and David honors his pledge to Jonathan (2Sam 9).

981 BC: Ammon and Syria conquered by Joab and Abishai after David's ambassadors are humiliated by the young king of Ammon (2Sam 10).Ps 60.

980 BC: While indulging his children, and allowing his generals to run their own war, David falls prey to the temptations of the flesh, of peace, and of plenty: he sleeps with Bathsheba (2Sam 11). Uriah is slain in April. Nathan confronts David and he repents. The child dies (2Sam 11-12; Ps 51).

979 BC: Solomon is born, youngest of David's sons, at that time, and future heir to the throne. Bathsheba bore David three more sons, later. (2Sam 12:24 - clearly shows that Solomon (Jedididah) was born after the first son dies. (1Chr 3:5 gives a list of sons born by Bathsheba to David in Jerusalem, they are not in chronological order.)

979 BC: David returns to his duties, conquering Rabbah-Ammon (2Sam 12:26-31; 1Chr 20:1-3;).

The "Sword begins to fall."

978 BC: Amnon rapes his half-sister Tamar, who is Absalom's sister (2Sam 13:1-22).

976 BC: Absalom murders Amnon (2Sam 13:23-38). He flees from the king's presence to Geshur for 3 years.

974 BC: Absalom pleads for, and is returned to Jerusalem via Joab's intercession, and conniving use of the woman of Tekoa (2Sam 14); but he does not see his father, David, for 2 more years.

972 BC: Absalom coerces Joab into interceding, yet again, that Absalom might see the king's face. Not satisfied with the outcome, he begins his 4-year plot against David. (2Sam 14:28-33; 15:1-7).

969 BC: Absalom's revolt steals the hearts of the people from David (2Sam 15-19). David weeps on the Mount of Olives ((15:30). Shimei, a relative of Saul, curses David on his way out of the city, but Hushai offers to be David's ally in the palace. Ps 3. Absalom lies with his father's concubines as Abner had done with Saul's (16:22). Hushai, against Ahithophel, advises Absalom not to pursue David immediately. As a result, David is able to conquer Absalom's army. Ahithophel hangs himself. While riding a mule, Absalom's hair (symbol of his pride) is caught in a tree where he hangs helplessly (18:14) until slain by Joab, against David's wishes. David mourns his son's death excessively and discourages the army, "Absalom, Absalom!" (19:1).

969 BC: No sooner has one rebellion been quashed than another arises by Sheba (2Sam 20). Amasa who was appointed over the army by Absalom in place of Joab, is considered by David to be a threat in this conflict. Amasa is sent on an errand by David, but David also gives orders to Abishai to have Amasa killed. Joab kills Amasa at Gibeon and Sheba flees to Abel Beth Maacah. A wise woman of the city has his head delivered to Joab to preserve the city (2Sam 20:4:-22).

968 BC: A three-year famine occurs as a result of Saul's attack on the Gibeonites (2Sam 21:1). The attack violated a covenant made with them by Joshua (Josh 9:16). The Lord does indeed hear the prayers of the oppressed.

966 BC: David makes amends with the Gibeonites by having seven sons of Saul executed except Jonathan's son, Mephibosheth, whom he vowed to protect (2Sam 21:2-14).

965 BC: Battles with the Philistines. David is almost killed by a giant, and he is asked to stay home for his own safety. Four giants are killed in these battles (2Sam 21:15-22). They no longer terrorize Israel or mock God as they had in David's youth under Saul. David's Eulogy (2Sam 23:1-7).

964 BC: David takes 9 months to number the people as if to quantify his security (2Sam 24:10). Joab, curiously, is the voice of reason here, asking David not to do it. David changes his mind about it, but God demands a price: pestilence takes 70,000 (24:15). God then instructs David to buy the threshing floor of Araunah (Ornan) for an altar (24:18-25; 1Chr 21:1-17). David offers sacrifices on the threshing floor which God accepts with an angel's fiery sword. David fears approaching God in the tabernacle, because it now sits on the high place at Gibeon (1Chr 21:26-30). He begins the preparations to construct the temple around the altar, gathering all the materials according to the pattern God shows him (1Chr 22; 28). Ps 30.

963 BC: David charges Solomon and the princes with the task of construction (1Chr 22:6-19).

962 BC: David's health begins to fail him (1Kgs 1:1-4). A beautiful young woman is sought to serve him and keep him warm in his old age (Abishag). Adonijah, 4th born son of David, attempts a coup with Joab.

Nathan and Bathsheba warn the ailing David in time to declare Solomon, co-regnant, until his David can do it officially. (per the promise in 2Sam 11:24-25; 1Chr 22:9), and have him assume the throne in his own right. (1Kgs 1:5-53; 1Chr 23:1; 26:31).

961 BC: David calls for a Solemn Assembly, and passes to Solomon his pattern for the temple (1Chr 28). He exhorts the people to give willingly, in joyful worship (1Chr 29:10-20). Solomon is anointed a second time, publicly, and is still co-regnant. (1Chr 29:1-25). In private, David instructs Solomon to walk with God, and after his death, to deal with Joab and Shimei son of Gera, the traitors (1Kgs 2:1-98). Solomon follows his father's request, to the letter.

961 BC: David dies a natural death at about 70. David began to rule at age 30, and ruled for 40 years. (2Sam 5:4-5; 1Kgs 2:10-11; 1Chr 29:26-30; see Ps 90:10). David is buried in Jerusalem (2Sam 5:4-5; 1Kgs 2:10-12; 1Chr 29:26-30), having served God's purposes in his own generation (Ac 13:22, 36).

As we have seen, we shall see King David, again, during the Millennial Reign of Christ.

“But they (Israel) shall serve the LORD their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them.” (Jeremiah 30:9).

People You Will Meet In the Book

King Saul, the first king of Israel.

King David, second king of Israel.

King Solomon, third king of Israel.

Bathsheba, believed to be David's last wife.

Michal, daughter of Saul, and David's first wife.

Tamar, David's daughter, who was assaulted by David's son, Amnon.

Amnon, probably David's first son.

Absalom, who killed Amnon, went to war against David and almost succeeded in taking the Kingdom from David. Joab also killed Absalom, despite David's instructions to the armies to "Deal gently."

Adonijah, also attempted to take the throne, with the help of Abiathar, David's trusted counselor, and Joab, one of David's military leaders.

The three sons of Zeruah, David's sister: Joab, Abishai, and Asahel.

Abner, Saul's military leader who managed to take control of Saul's kingdom from his weak son, Ishbosheth. Murdered by Joab.

Ishbosheth, one of Saul's sons.

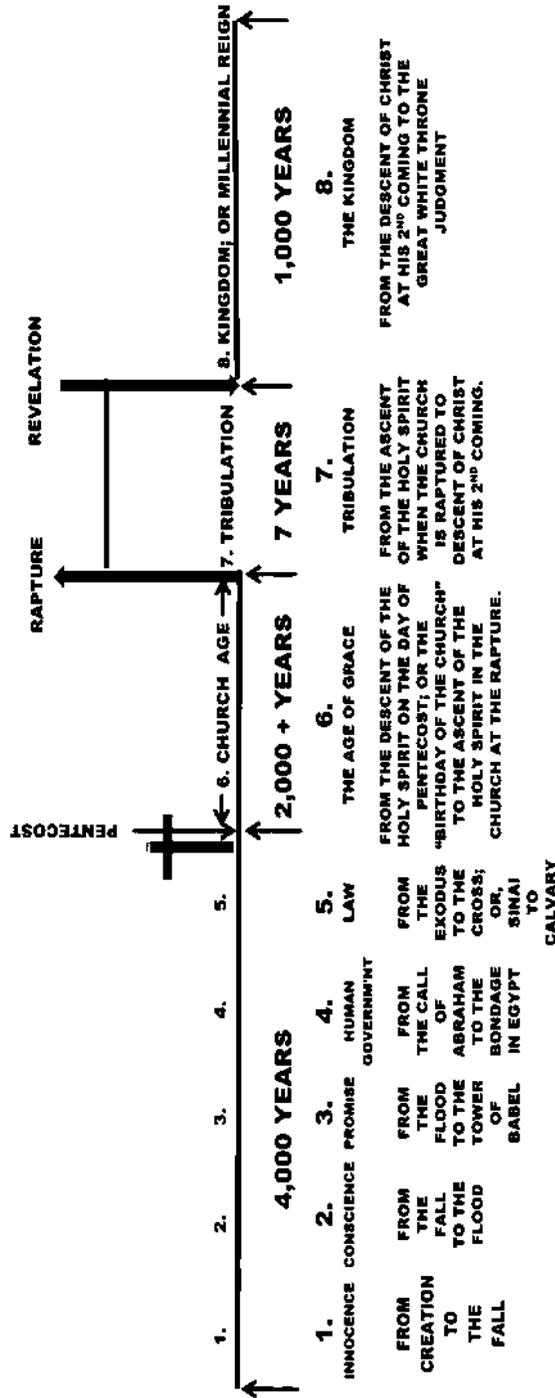
Amasa, another military leader prominent in the civil war that broke out between Judah and Benjamin, aided by the rest of the tribes. Also, murdered by Joab.

Samuel, last of the Judges and first of the writing prophets.

Nathan, the prophet who levied God's indictment against David for his great sin.

Eight Dispensations

The 8 Dispensations



Ecclesiastes Cross Reference

1:1 The words of the Preacher, the son of David, king in Jerusalem.	1 Kings 2:12 Then sat Solomon upon the throne of David his father; and his kingdom was established greatly.
1:2 Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity.	1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.
1:3 What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?	John 6:27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.
1:4 <i>One</i> generation passeth away, and <i>another</i> generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever.	Matthew 24:35 Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.
1:5 The sun also ariseth, and the sun goeth down, and hasteth to his place where he arose.	Genesis 8:22 While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.
1:6 The wind goeth toward the south, and turneth about unto the north; it whirleth about continually, and the wind returneth again according to his circuits.	John 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.
1:7 All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea <i>is</i> not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again.	Job 38:10,11 And brake up for it my decreed <i>place</i> , and set bars and doors, (10) And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed?
1:8 All things <i>are</i> full of labour; man cannot utter <i>it</i> : the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear filled with hearing.	Matthew 5:6 Blessed <i>are</i> they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.
1:9 The thing that hath been, it <i>is that</i> which shall be; and that which is done <i>is</i> that which shall be done: and <i>there is</i> no new <i>thing</i> under the sun.	Luke 17:26-30 And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. (26) They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. (27) Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; (28) But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed <i>them</i> all. (29) Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed.
1:10 Is there any thing whereof it may be said, See, this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.	Revelation 21:1 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (30)
1:11 <i>There is</i> no remembrance of former <i>things</i> ; neither shall there be <i>any</i> remembrance of <i>things</i> that are to come with <i>those</i> that shall come after.	Isaiah 42:9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.
1:12 I the Preacher was king over Israel in Jerusalem.	1 Kings 11:42 And the time that Solomon reigned in Jerusalem over all Israel <i>was</i> forty years.
1:13 And I gave my heart to seek and search out by wisdom concerning all <i>things</i> that are done under heaven: this sore travail hath God given to the sons of man to be	Genesis 3:19 In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou <i>art</i> , and unto dust shalt thou return.

exercised therewith.	1 Timothy 4:15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.
1:14 I have seen all the works that are done under the sun; and, behold, all <i>is</i> vanity and vexation of spirit.	Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean <i>thing</i> , and all our righteousnesses <i>are</i> as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.
1:15 <i>That which is</i> crooked cannot be made straight: and that which is wanting cannot be numbered.	Isaiah 40:4 Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low: and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain:
1:16 I communed with mine own heart, saying, Lo, I am come to great estate, and have gotten more wisdom than all <i>they</i> that have been before me in Jerusalem: yea, my heart had great experience of wisdom and knowledge.	Hebrews 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, <i>even</i> those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.
1:17 And I gave my heart to know wisdom, and to know madness and folly: I perceived that this also is vexation of spirit.	1 Thessalonians 5:21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.
1:18 For in much wisdom <i>is</i> much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.	1 Corinthians 3:18-20 Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. (18) For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. (19) And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. (20)
Chapter Two	
2:1 I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also <i>is</i> vanity.	Luke 12:19, 20 And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, <i>and</i> be merry.(19) But God said unto him, <i>Thou</i> fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? (20)
2.2 I said of laughter, <i>It is</i> mad: and of mirth, What doeth it?	Proverbs 14:13 Even in laughter the heart is sorrowful; and the end of that mirth <i>is</i> heaviness. 1 Peter 4:2-4 That he no longer should live the rest of <i>his</i> time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.(2) For the time past of <i>our</i> life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: (3) Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with <i>them</i> to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of <i>you</i> : (4)
2:3 I sought in mine heart to give myself unto wine, yet acquainting mine heart with wisdom; and to lay hold on folly, till I might see what <i>was</i> that good for the sons of men, which they should do under the heaven all the days of their life.	Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Ephesians 5:18 - And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
2:4 I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards:	1 John 2:15-17 - Love not the world, neither the things <i>that are</i> in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. (15) For all that <i>is</i> in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (16) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. (17)
2:5 I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all <i>kind of</i> fruits:	
2:6 I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees:	
2:7 I got <i>me</i> servants and maidens, and had servants born in my house; also I had great possessions of great and	

small cattle above all that were in Jerusalem before me:	
2:8 I gathered me also silver and gold, and the peculiar treasure of kings and of the provinces: I gat me men singers and women singers, and the delights of the sons of men, <i>as</i> musical instruments, and that of all sorts.	Revelation 3:17,18 - Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: (17) I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and <i>that</i> the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. (18) Ephesians 5:18 - And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
2:9 So I was great, and increased more than all that were before me in Jerusalem: also my wisdom remained with me.	1 Corinthians 1:27 - But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty;
2:10 And whatsoever mine eyes desired I kept not from them, I withheld not my heart from any joy; for my heart rejoiced in all my labour: and this was my portion of all my labour.	Romans 4:5 - But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.
2:11 Then I looked on all the works that my hands had wrought, and on the labour that I had laboured to do: and, behold, all <i>was</i> vanity and vexation of spirit, and <i>there was</i> no profit under the sun.	1 John 2:16-17 For all that <i>is</i> in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. (16) And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.
2:12 And I turned myself to behold wisdom, and madness, and folly: for what <i>can</i> the man <i>do</i> that cometh after the king? <i>even</i> that which hath been already done.	Revelation 21:1 - And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. 2 Corinthians 5:21 - For he hath made him <i>to be</i> sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him. But God said unto him, <i>Thou</i> fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?
2:13 Then I saw that wisdom excelleth folly, as far as light excelleth darkness.	Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:
2:14 The wise man's eyes <i>are</i> in his head; but the fool walketh in darkness: and I myself perceived also that one event happeneth to them all.	1 John 2:11 But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes.
2:15 Then said I in my heart, As it happeneth to the fool, so it happeneth even to me; and why was I then more wise? Then I said in my heart, that this also <i>is</i> vanity.	Hebrews 9:2 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:
2:16 I said in mine heart, Go to now, I will prove thee with mirth, therefore enjoy pleasure: and, behold, this also <i>is</i> vanity.	Hebrews 11:25 Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season;
2:17 Therefore I hated life; because the work that is wrought under the sun <i>is</i> grievous unto me: for all <i>is</i> vanity and vexation of spirit.	Philippians 1:23-25 For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: (23) Nevertheless to abide in the flesh <i>is</i> more needful for you. (24) And having this confidence, I know that I shall abide and continue with you all for your furtherance and joy of faith; (25)
2:18 Yea, I hated all my labour which I had taken under the sun: because I should leave it unto the man that shall be after me.	Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, <i>Thou</i> fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?
2:19 And who knoweth whether he shall be a wise <i>man</i> or a fool? yet shall he have rule over all my labour wherein I have laboured, and wherein I have shewed myself wise	Luke 15:13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.

under the sun. This <i>is</i> also vanity.	
2:20 Therefore I went about to cause my heart to despair of all the labour which I took under the sun.	1 Corinthians 15:19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.
2:21 For there is a man whose labour <i>is</i> in wisdom, and in knowledge, and in equity; yet to a man that hath not laboured therein shall he leave it <i>for</i> his portion. This also <i>is</i> vanity and a great evil.	Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, <i>Thou</i> fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?
2:22 For what hath man of all his labour, and of the vexation of his heart, wherein he hath laboured under the sun?	1 Peter 5:7 Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you.
2:23 For all his days <i>are</i> sorrows, and his travail grief; yea, his heart taketh not rest in the night. This is also vanity.	Job 14:1 Man that is born of a woman is of few days, and full of trouble.
2:24 <i>There is</i> nothing better for a man, <i>than</i> that he should eat and drink, and <i>that</i> he should make his soul enjoy good in his labour. This also I saw, that it <i>was</i> from the hand of God. Illustration – “A friend told me that when he was in a hotel in Florida, he saw John D. Rockefeller, Sr., sitting and eating his meal. He had just a few little crumbs, some health food, that had been set before him. Over at a side table my friend saw one of the men who worked as a waiter in the hotel sitting with a big juicy steak in front of him. The man who could afford the steak couldn't eat one; the man who could not afford the steak had one to eat because he worked for the hotel. It is better to have a good appetite than a big bank account! - J. Vernon McGee's Thru the Bible	1 Timothy 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 1 Corinthians 15:32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die. Luke 12:31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.
2:25 For who can eat, or who else can hasten <i>hereunto</i> , more than I?	Luke 12:23, 24 The life is more than meat, and the body <i>is more</i> than raiment. (23) Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?
2:26 For <i>God</i> giveth to a man that <i>is</i> good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy: but to the sinner he giveth travail, to gather and to heap up, that he may give to <i>him that is</i> good before God. This also <i>is</i> vanity and vexation of spirit.	2 Corinthians 9:6,7 But this <i>I say</i> , He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. (6) Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, <i>so let him give</i> ; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.
Chapter Three	
3:1 To every <i>thing there is</i> a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:	Ephesians 5:16,17 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. (16) Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord <i>is</i> . (17)
3:2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up <i>that which is</i> planted;	(Born) Galatians 4:4 But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, Luke 1:36 And, behold, thy cousin Elisabeth, she hath also conceived a son in her old age: and this is the sixth month with her, who was called barren.
	(Die) Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: John 7:30 Then they sought to take him (Christ): but no man laid hands on him, because his hour was not yet come.
	(Plant) John 4:35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and <i>then</i> cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you,

	<p>Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.</p> <p>(Pluck up) Revelation 14:14,15 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud <i>one</i> sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. (14) And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. (15)</p>
<p>3:3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;</p>	<p>(Kill) Luke 9:54-56 And when his disciples James and John saw <i>this</i>, they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven, and consume them, even as Elias did? (54) But he turned, and rebuked them, and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. (55) For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save <i>them</i>. And they went to another village. (56)</p> <p>Romans 13:1,4 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. (1)</p> <p>For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to <i>execute</i> wrath upon him that doeth evil. (4)</p> <p>(Heal) Matthew 12:15 But when Jesus knew <i>it</i>, he withdrew himself from thence: and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them ALL; (Not just those “who had enough faith,” as phony faith healers say.)</p> <p>(Break Down & Build up) Acts 5:15,16 And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written, (15)</p> <p>After this I will return, and will build again the tabernacle of David, which is fallen down; and I will build again the ruins thereof, and I will set it up: (16)</p>
<p>3:4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;</p>	<p>(Weep) Romans 12:15 Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep.</p> <p>Psalms 126:5,6 They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. (6) He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves <i>with him</i>.</p> <p>Psalms 30:5 For his (the LORD'S) anger <i>endureth</i> but a moment; in his favour <i>is</i> life: weeping may endure for a night, but joy <i>cometh</i> in the morning.</p> <p>(Laugh) Luke 1:58 And her (Elizabeth's) neighbours and her cousins heard how the Lord had shewed great mercy upon her; and they rejoiced with her.</p> <p>Sarah Genesis 21:6 And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, <i>so that</i> all that hear will laugh with me.</p> <p>(Mourn) Matthew 9:15 And Jesus said unto them, Can the children of the bride chamber mourn, as long as the bridegroom is with them? but the days will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, and then shall they fast.</p> <p>(Dance as children playing a game of weddings and funerals.) Matthew 11:17 And saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you,</p>

	<p>and ye have not lamented. 2 Samuel 6:16 And as the ark of the LORD came into the city of David, Michal Saul's daughter looked through a window, and saw king David leaping and dancing before the LORD; and she despised him in her heart.</p>
<p>3:5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;</p>	<p>(Cast away stones) Mark 15:46 And he (Joseph of Arimithea) bought fine linen, and took him (Christ) down (from the Cross), and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of a rock, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre. Mark 16:4 And when they looked, they saw that the stone was rolled away: for it was very great.</p> <p>(Gather stones, as Joshua gathered stones for an altar.) Joshua 4:9 - And Joshua set up twelve stones in the midst of Jordan, in the place where the feet of the priests which bare the ark of the covenant stood: and they are there unto this day.</p> <p>(Embrace "Welcome home," from Jesus in Heaven.) Matthew 25:23 - His lord said unto him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy lord.</p> <p>(Not embrace) 1 Corinthians 7:5 Defraud ye not one the other, except <i>it be</i> with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency.</p>
<p>3:6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;</p>	<p>(Get, or seek) Mark 8:35-37 For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake and the gospel's, the same shall save it. (35) For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul (life)? (36) Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul (life)? (37). Note: "Life" in V. 35 is translated from the same word as "soul" in Vss. 36,37. We cannot lose our soul, but we can waste our life by living for the world, and live for the Lord.</p> <p>(Lose) Matthew 19:29 And every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my name's sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.</p> <p>(Keep) John 10:27-29 My sheep hear my (Christ's) voice, and I know them, and they follow me: (27) And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any <i>man</i> pluck them out of my hand. (28) My Father (God), which gave <i>them</i> me, is greater than all; and no <i>man</i> is able to pluck <i>them</i> out of my Father's hand. (29)</p> <p>(Cast away) 1 Corinthians 9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring <i>it</i> into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. Note: "Castaway" does not mean lose salvation. It is translated from "adokimos" meaning "not well approved." "I am doing things in my life of which the Lord does not approve, and cannot reward me for.</p>
<p>3:7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;</p>	<p>(Tear) Joel 2:13 And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he <i>is</i> gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil.</p>

	<p>(Sew) Acts 9:39 Then Peter arose and went with them. When he was come, they brought him into the upper chamber: and all the widows stood by him weeping, and shewing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.</p> <p>(Keep silence) Psalm 141:3 Set a watch, O LORD, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.</p> <p>(Speak) Never be ashamed of the Gospel! Romans 1:16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.</p>
<p>3:8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.</p>	<p>(Love) Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;</p> <p>(Hate) Luke 14:26 If any <i>man</i> come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Note: This does not we must hate our family to serve the Lord. It means that we love our Lord so much that our familial love for our families seems like hate.</p> <p>(War) Joshua 11:23 So Joshua took the whole land, according to all that the LORD said unto Moses; and Joshua gave it for an inheritance unto Israel according to their divisions by their tribes. And the land rested from war.</p> <p>(Peace) John 14:27 Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid. Philippians 4:6,7 Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. (6) And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.</p>
<p>3:9 What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth?</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 15:18 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.</p>
<p>3:10 I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it.</p>	<p>Romans 8:18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time <i>are</i> not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.</p>
<p>3:11 He hath made every <i>thing</i> beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.</p>	<p>Paul knew. Romans 1:19,20 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed <i>it</i> unto them. (19) For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, <i>even</i> his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: (20)</p> <p>1 Corinthians 2:9 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.</p> <p>John knew. Revelation 21:1,2 And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. (1) And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.</p> <p>King David knew. Psalm 23:6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.</p>

<p>3:12 I know that <i>there is</i> no good in them, but for a <i>man</i> to rejoice, and to do good in his life.</p>	<p>Acts 20:35 I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. 1 Thessalonians 5:15,16 See that none render evil for evil unto any <i>man</i>; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all <i>men</i>. (15) Rejoice evermore. (16) Ephesians 2:8,9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: <i>it is</i> the gift of God: (8) Not of works, lest any man should boast.</p>
<p>3:13 - And also that every man should eat and drink, and enjoy the good of all his labour, <i>it is</i> the gift of God.</p>	<p>Psalm 128:2 For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy <i>shalt</i> thou <i>be</i>, and <i>it shall be</i> well with thee. James 1:17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.</p>
<p>3:14 I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever: nothing can be put to it, nor any thing taken from it: and God doeth <i>it</i>, that <i>men</i> should fear before him.</p>	<p>Romas 9:20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed <i>it</i>, Why hast thou made me thus? Isiah 45:18 For thus saith the LORD that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited: I <i>am</i> the LORD; and <i>there is</i> none else.</p>
<p>3:15 That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.</p>	<p>Isaiah 42:9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.</p>
<p>3:16 And moreover I saw under the sun the place of judgment, <i>that</i> wickedness <i>was</i> there; and the place of righteousness, <i>that</i> iniquity <i>was</i> there.</p>	<p>James 2:6 But ye have despised the poor. Do not rich men oppress you, and draw you before the judgment seats? Isaiah 59:4 None calleth for justice, nor <i>any</i> pleadeth for truth: they trust in vanity, and speak lies; they conceive mischief, and bring forth iniquity.</p>
<p>3:17 I said in mine heart, God shall judge the righteous and the wicked: for <i>there is</i> a time there for every purpose and for every work.</p>	<p>Revelation 20:11,12 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. (11) And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is <i>the book</i> of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. (12).</p>
<p>3:18 I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men, that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts. These are the natural man, their natural condition from Adam is that they have been born sinners. (Romans 3:23)</p>	<p>2 Peter 2:12 But these, as natural brute beasts, made to be taken and destroyed, speak evil of the things that they understand not; and shall utterly perish in their own corruption; Psalm 73:22 So foolish <i>was</i> I, and ignorant: I was <i>as</i> a beast before thee.</p>
<p>3:19 For that which befalleth the sons of men befalleth beasts; even one thing befalleth them: as the one dieth, so dieth the other; yea, they have all one breath; so that a man hath no preeminence above a beast: for all <i>is</i> vanity.</p>	<p>Psalm 49:12,20 Nevertheless man <i>being</i> in honour abideth not: he is like the beasts <i>that</i> perish. (12) Man <i>that is</i> in honour, and understandeth not, is like the beasts <i>that</i> perish. (Psalm 49:20) Note: A man who does not believe (understandeth not) that Jesus died on the Cross to pay for His sin, and was raised from the dead to show God accepted the payment is lost. He is only like “the beasts that perish” in one way. The physical body dies and goes back to the dust. End of similarity. The soul and spirit either goes to Heaven or Hell.</p>
<p>3:20 All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again.</p>	<p>Genesis 3:19 - In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou <i>art</i>, and unto dust shalt thou re-</p>

	turn.
3:21 - Who knoweth the spirit of man that goeth upward, and the spirit of the beast that goeth downward to the earth?	2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.
3:22 - Wherefore I perceive that <i>there is</i> nothing better, than that a man should rejoice in his own works; for that <i>is</i> his portion: for who shall bring him to see what shall be after him?	Philippians 3:20,21 For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: (20) Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. (21)
Chapter Four	
4:1 So I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun: and behold the tears of <i>such as were</i> oppressed, and they had no comforter; and on the side of their oppressors <i>there was</i> power; but they had no comforter.	James 5:4 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth.
4:2 Wherefore I praised the dead which are already dead more than the living which are yet alive. Solomon is saying, if you were saved and died quickly, you would not have to look at all the tears of the uncomforted oppressed. The burden is getting to be overwhelming, even for Israel's wisest king	In John 10:10, Christ gives the answer, The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have <i>it</i> more abundantly. Our Savior is going to come back as King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. When the oppressors stand before him, justice will be meted out. Don't even give it a second thought, Solomon. It will be handled! Revelation 1:8, 18 - I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. (8) I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death. (18)
4:3 Yea, better <i>is he</i> than both they, which hath not yet been, who hath not seen the evil work that is done under the sun.	Luke 23:29 For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck. Matthew 24:19 And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days! Note: "Those days" are the Great Tribulation, last 3 ½ yrs.
4:4 Again, I considered all travail, and every right work, that for this a man is envied of his neighbour. This <i>is</i> also vanity and vexation of spirit.	1 John 3:12 Not as Cain, <i>who</i> was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous.
4:5 The fool foldeth his hands together, and eateth his own flesh.	Proverbs 13:4 The soul of the sluggard desireth, and <i>hath</i> nothing: but the soul of the diligent shall be made fat.
4:6 - Better <i>is</i> an handful <i>with</i> quietness, than both the hands full <i>with</i> travail and vexation of spirit.	Proverbs 15:16,17 Better <i>is</i> little with the fear of the LORD than great treasure and trouble therewith. (16) Better <i>is</i> a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith.
4:7 Then I returned, and I saw vanity under the sun.	Psalms 78:33 Therefore their days did he consume in vanity, and their years in trouble.
4:8 There is one <i>alone</i> , and <i>there is</i> not a second; yea, he hath neither child nor brother: yet <i>is there</i> no end of all his labour; neither is his eye satisfied with riches; neither <i>saith he</i> , For whom do I labour, and bereave my soul of good? This <i>is</i> also vanity, yea, it <i>is</i> a sore travail.	Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, <i>Thou</i> fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided? 1 John 2:16 For all that <i>is</i> in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.
4:9 Two <i>are</i> better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour.	Genesis 2:18 And the LORD God said, <i>It is</i> not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him.

	<p>John 4:36 And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.</p> <p>Mark 6:7 And he called <i>unto him</i> the twelve, and began to send them forth by two and two; and gave them power over unclean spirits;</p>
<p>4:10 For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him <i>that is</i> alone when he falleth; for <i>he hath</i> not another to help him up.</p>	<p>Galatians 6:1,2 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted. (1) Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.</p>
<p>4:11 Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm <i>alone</i>?</p>	<p>1 Kings 1:1,3 Now king David was old and stricken in years; and they covered him with clothes, but he gat no heat. (1)</p> <p>So they sought for a fair damsel throughout all the coasts of Israel, and found Abishag a Shunammite, and brought her to the king. (3)</p>
<p>4:12 And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken. There is strength in numbers? Not a bad idea!</p>	<p>Daniel 3:16,17 Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, answered and said to the king, O Nebuchadnezzar, we <i>are</i> not careful to answer thee in this matter. (16) If it be <i>so</i>, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver <i>us</i> out of thine hand, O king. (17)</p>
<p>4:13 Better <i>is</i> a poor and a wise child than an old and foolish king, who will no more be admonished.</p>	<p>Proverbs 28:6, 15,16 Better <i>is</i> the poor that walketh in his uprightness, than <i>he that is</i> perverse <i>in his</i> ways, though he <i>be</i> rich. (6)</p> <p>As a roaring lion, and a ranging bear; <i>so is</i> a wicked ruler over the poor people. (15) The prince that wanteth understanding <i>is</i> also a great oppressor: <i>but</i> he that hateth covetousness shall prolong <i>his</i> days. (16)</p>
<p>4:14 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also <i>he that is</i> born in his kingdom becometh poor.</p>	<p>Genesis 41:14 Then Pharaoh sent and called Joseph, and they brought him hastily out of the dungeon: and he shaved <i>himself</i>, and changed his raiment, and came in unto Pharaoh.</p>
<p>4:15 For out of prison he cometh to reign; whereas also <i>he that is</i> born in his kingdom becometh poor.</p>	<p>2 Samuel 9:1, 6, 10, 13 And David said, Is there yet any that is left of the house of Saul, that I may shew him kindness for Jonathan's sake? (1)</p> <p>Now when Mephibosheth, the son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, was come unto David, he fell on his face, and did reverence. And David said, Mephibosheth. And he answered, Behold thy servant! (6)</p> <p>Thou therefore, and thy sons, and thy servants, shall till the land for him, and thou shalt bring in <i>the fruits</i>, that thy master's son may have food to eat: but Mephibosheth thy master's son shall eat bread alway at my table. Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants. (10)</p> <p>So Mephibosheth dwelt in Jerusalem: for he did eat continually at the king's table; and was lame on both his feet. (13)</p>
<p>4:16 <i>There is</i> no end of all the people, <i>even</i> of all that have been before them: they also that come after shall not rejoice in him. Surely this also <i>is</i> vanity and vexation of spirit.</p>	<p>1 Kings 5:7 And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed <i>be</i> the LORD this day, which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people.</p>
Chapter Five	
<p>5:1 Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.</p>	<p>Matthew 21:12,13 And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the moneychangers, and the</p>

	seats of them that sold doves, (12) And said unto them, It is written, My house shall be called the house of prayer; but ye have made it a den of thieves. (13)
5:2 Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter <i>any</i> thing before God: for God <i>is</i> in heaven, and thou upon earth: therefore let thy words be few.	Matthew 12:36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.
5:3 For a dream cometh through the multitude of business; and a fool's voice <i>is known</i> by multitude of words.	Job 4:12-21 Now a thing was secretly brought to me, and mine ear received a little thereof. (12) In thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth on men, (13) Fear came upon me, and trembling, which made all my bones to shake.(14) Then a spirit passed before my face; the hair of my flesh stood up: (15) It stood still, but I could not discern the form thereof: an image <i>was</i> before mine eyes, <i>there was</i> silence, and I heard a voice, <i>saying</i> , (16) Shall mortal man be more just than God? shall a man be more pure than his maker? (17) Proverbs 15:2 The tongue of the wise useth knowledge aright: but the mouth of fools poureth out foolishness. Proverbs 10:19 In the multitude of words there wanteth not sin: but he that refraineth his lips <i>is</i> wise.
5:4 When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for <i>he hath</i> no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed.	Matthew 5:33 Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thyself, but shalt perform unto the Lord thine oaths:
5:5 Better <i>is it</i> that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay.	
5:6 Suffer not thy mouth to cause thy flesh to sin; neither say thou before the angel, that it <i>was</i> an error: wherefore should God be angry at thy voice, and destroy the work of thine hands?	James 3:2 For in many things we offend all. If any man offend not in word, the same <i>is</i> a perfect man, <i>and</i> able also to bridle the whole body.
5:7 For in the multitude of dreams and many words <i>there are</i> also <i>divers</i> vanities: but fear thou God.	Matthew 12:36 But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment.
5:8 If thou seest the oppression of the poor, and violent perverting of judgment and justice in a province, marvel not at the matter: for <i>he that is</i> higher than the highest regardeth; and <i>there be</i> higher than they.	James 5:2-7 Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. (4) Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. (5) Ye have condemned <i>and</i> killed the just; <i>and</i> he doth not resist you. (6) Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. (17)
5:9 Moreover the profit of the earth is for all: the king <i>himself</i> is served by the field.	Proverbs 28:19 He that tilleth his land shall have plenty of bread: but he that followeth after vain <i>persons</i> shall have poverty enough.
5:10 He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this <i>is</i> also vanity.	1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
5:11 When goods increase, they are increased that eat them: and what good <i>is there</i> to the owners thereof, saving the beholding <i>of them</i> with their eyes?	Psalm 119:36,37 Incline my heart unto thy testimonies, and not to covetousness. (36) Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity; <i>and</i> quicken thou me in thy way. (37)
5:12 The sleep of a labouring man <i>is</i> sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not	Psalm 4:8 I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, LORD, only makest me dwell in safety.

suffer him to sleep.	
5:13 There is a sore evil <i>which</i> I have seen under the sun, <i>namely</i> , riches kept for the owners thereof to their hurt.	Luke 16:11-13 And if ye have not been faithful in that which is another man's, who shall give you that which is your own? (11) No servant can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. (12) Ye cannot serve God and mammon. (13)
5:14 But those riches perish by evil travail: and he begetteth a son, and <i>there is</i> nothing in his hand.	Prodigal Son Luke 15:13 And not many days after the younger son gathered all together, and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living.
5:15 As he came forth of his mother's womb, naked shall he return to go as he came, and shall take nothing of his labour, which he may carry away in his hand.	1 Timothy 6:7 For we brought nothing into <i>this</i> world, <i>and it is</i> certain we can carry nothing out.
5:16 Keep thy foot when thou goest to the house of God, and be more ready to hear, than to give the sacrifice of fools: for they consider not that they do evil.	Matthew 13:15 For this people's heart is waxed gross, and <i>their</i> ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with <i>their</i> eyes, and hear with <i>their</i> ears, and should understand with <i>their</i> heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them.
5:17 All his days also he eateth in darkness, and <i>he hath</i> much sorrow and wrath with his sickness.	Acts 12:23 And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost.
5:18 Behold <i>that</i> which I have seen: <i>it is</i> good and comely <i>for one</i> to eat and to drink, and to enjoy the good of all his labour that he taketh under the sun all the days of his life, which God giveth him: for it <i>is</i> his portion.	1 Timothy 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;
5:19 Every man also to whom God hath given riches and wealth, and hath given him power to eat thereof, and to take his portion, and to rejoice in his labour; this <i>is</i> the gift of God.	James 1:17 And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning <i>here</i> in fear:
5:20 - For he shall not much remember the days of his life; because God answereth <i>him</i> in the joy of his heart.	Hebrews 12:2 - Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of <i>our</i> faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.
Chapter Six	
6:1 There is an evil which I have seen under the sun, and it <i>is</i> common among men:	1 Corinthians 10:13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God <i>is</i> faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear <i>it</i> .
6:2 A man to whom God hath given riches, wealth, and honour, so that he wanteth nothing for his soul of all that he desireth, yet God giveth him not power to eat thereof, but a stranger eateth it: this <i>is</i> vanity, and it <i>is</i> an evil disease.	1 Timothy 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; 1 Corinthians 15:32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die. Luke 12:31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.
6:3 If a man beget an hundred <i>children</i> , and live many years, so that the days of his years be many, and his soul be not filled with good, and also <i>that</i> he have no burial; I say, <i>that</i> an untimely birth <i>is</i> better than he.	Proverbs 17:6 Children's children <i>are</i> the crown of old men; and the glory of children <i>are</i> their fathers.
6:4 For he (the lost man of Verse 3) cometh in with	Matthew 22:13 Then said the king to the servants, Bind

vanity, and departeth in darkness, and his name shall be covered with darkness.	him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Matthew 13:41-42 The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; (41) And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. (42)
6:5 Moreover he hath not seen the sun, nor known <i>any thing</i> : this hath more rest than the other.	Psalm 90:7,9 For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled. (7) For all our days are passed away in thy wrath: we spend our years as a tale <i>that is told</i> . (9)
6:6 Yea, though he live a thousand years twice <i>told</i> , yet hath he seen no good: do not all go to one place?	Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:
6:7 All the labour of man <i>is</i> for his mouth, and yet the appetite is not filled.	John 6:27 Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.
6:8 For what hath the wise more than the fool? what hath the poor, that knoweth to walk before the living?	1 Timothy 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;
6:9 Better <i>is</i> the sight of the eyes than the wandering of the desire: this <i>is</i> also vanity and vexation of spirit.	Proverbs 30:15-16 The horseleach hath two daughters, <i>crying</i> , Give, give. There are three <i>things that</i> are never satisfied, <i>yea</i> , four <i>things</i> say not, <i>It is</i> enough: (15) The grave; and the barren womb; the earth <i>that is</i> not filled with water; and the fire <i>that</i> saith not, <i>It is</i> enough. (16)
6:10 That which hath been is named already, and it is known that it <i>is</i> man: neither may he contend with him that is mightier than he.	Romans 9:19-20 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? (19) Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed <i>it</i> , Why hast thou made me thus?
6:11 Seeing there be many things that increase vanity, what <i>is</i> man the better?	Luke 12:31 But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you.
6:12 For who knoweth what <i>is</i> good for man in <i>this</i> life, all the days of his vain life which he spendeth as a shadow? for who can tell a man what shall be after him under the sun?	James 4:14 Whereas ye know not what <i>shall be</i> on the morrow. For what <i>is</i> your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.
Chapter Seven	
7:1 A good name <i>is</i> better than precious ointment; and the day of death than the day of one's birth.	Psalm 22:1 My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? <i>why art thou so</i> far from helping me, <i>and from</i> the words of my roaring?
7:2 <i>It is</i> better to go to the house of mourning, than to go to the house of feasting: for that <i>is</i> the end of all men; and the living will lay <i>it</i> to his heart.	Psalm 90:12 So teach us to number our days, that we may apply <i>our</i> hearts unto wisdom.
7:3 Sorrow <i>is</i> better than laughter: for by the sadness of the countenance the heart is made better.	James 1:2-4 My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; (2) Knowing <i>this</i> , that the trying of your faith worketh patience. (3) But let patience have <i>her</i> perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. (4) Romans 5:3-4 And not only <i>so</i> , but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; (3) And patience, experience; and experience, hope: (4)
7:4 The heart of the wise <i>is</i> in the house of mourning;	Psalm 84:10 For a day in thy courts <i>is</i> better than a

but the heart of fools <i>is</i> in the house of mirth.	thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.
7:5 <i>It is</i> better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than for a man to hear the song of fools.	Proverbs 15:31,32 The ear that heareth the reproof of life abideth among the wise. (31) He that refuseth instruction despiseth his own soul: but he that heareth reproof getteth understanding. (32)
7:6 For as the crackling of thorns under a pot, so <i>is</i> the laughter of the fool: this also <i>is</i> vanity.	Psalm 58:8-10 As a snail <i>which</i> melteth, let <i>every one of them</i> pass away: <i>like</i> the untimely birth of a woman, <i>that</i> they may not see the sun. (8) Before your pots can feel the thorns, he shall take them away as with a whirlwind, both living, and in <i>his</i> wrath. (9) The righteous shall rejoice when he seeth the vengeance: he shall wash his feet in the blood of the wicked. (10)
7:7 Surely oppression (injustice) maketh a wise man mad (rage); and a gift (bribe) destroyeth the heart. The heart in Scripture is the seat of the emotions and appetites. That is where the rage emanate from. He is so angry it almost destroys him physically. Have you ever felt like this when you view the injustices of our world?	Exodus 23:8 And thou shalt take no gift: for the gift blindeth the wise, and perverteth the words of the righteous. Deuteronomy 16:19 Thou shalt not wrest judgment; thou shalt not respect persons, neither take a gift: for a gift doth blind the eyes of the wise, and pervert the words of the righteous.
7:8 Better <i>is</i> the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: <i>and</i> the patient in spirit <i>is</i> better than the proud in spirit. (Everything has a beginning, a middle, and an end.)	Hebrews 10:36 For ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise. James 5:8 Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.
7:9 Be not hasty in thy spirit to be angry: for anger resteth in the bosom of fools.	James 1:19 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath:
7:10 Say not thou, What is <i>the cause</i> that the former days were better than these? for thou dost not enquire wisely concerning this.	Isaiah 42:9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.
7:11 Wisdom <i>is</i> good with an inheritance: and <i>by it there is</i> profit to them that see the sun. “See the sun,” or “under the sun” is Solomon’s phrase that means the natural man, who, having the Adamic nature, is born a sinner in need of a Savior.	1 Timothy 6:17-19 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy; (17) That they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to distribute, willing to communicate; (18) Laying up in store for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. (19)
7:12 For wisdom <i>is</i> a defence, <i>and</i> money <i>is</i> a defence: but the excellency of knowledge <i>is</i> , <i>that</i> wisdom giveth life to them that have it.	Philippians 3:8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things <i>but</i> loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them <i>but</i> dung, that I may win Christ, John 17:3 And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent.
7:13 Consider the work of God: for who can make <i>that</i> straight, which he hath made crooked?	John 5:13 And he that was healed wist not who it was: for Jesus had conveyed himself away, a multitude being in <i>that</i> place.
7:14 In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him.	John 16:22-23 And ye now therefore have sorrow: but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you. (22) And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give <i>it</i> you. (23)
7:15 All <i>things</i> have I seen in the days of my vanity: there is a just <i>man</i> that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked <i>man</i> that prolongeth <i>his life</i> in his wickedness.	John 16:2,3 They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. (2) And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. (3)

7:16 Be not righteous over much; neither make thyself over wise: why shouldest thou destroy thyself?	Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think <i>of himself</i> more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.
7:17 Be not over much wicked, neither be thou foolish: why shouldest thou die before thy time?	Proverbs 10:27 The fear of the LORD prolongeth days: but the years of the wicked shall be shortened.
7:18 <i>It is</i> good that thou shouldest take hold of this; yea, also from this withdraw not thine hand: for he that feareth God shall come forth of them all.	Luke 1:50 And his mercy <i>is</i> on them that fear him from generation to generation.
7:19 Wisdom strengtheneth the wise more than ten mighty <i>men</i> which are in the city.	2 Corinthians 10:4 (For the weapons of our warfare <i>are</i> not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)
7:20 For <i>there is</i> not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not.	Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;
7:21 Also take no heed unto all words that are spoken; lest thou hear thy servant curse thee:	Romans 14:4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.
7:22 For oftentimes also thine own heart knoweth that thou thyself likewise hast cursed others.	James 3:9 Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God.
7:23 All this have I proved by wisdom: I said, I will be wise; but it <i>was</i> far from me.	Romans 1:22 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 1 Corinthians 1:20 Where <i>is</i> the wise? where <i>is</i> the scribe? where <i>is</i> the disputer of this world? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world?
7:24 That which is far off, and exceeding deep, who can find it out?	Romans 11:33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable <i>are</i> his judgments, and his ways past finding out!
7:25 I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason <i>of things</i> , and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness <i>and</i> madness:	1 Corinthians 1:27-29 But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; (27) And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, <i>yea</i> , and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are (28) That no flesh should glory in his presence. (29)
7:26 And I find more bitter than death the woman, whose heart <i>is</i> snares and nets, <i>and</i> her hands <i>as</i> bands: whoso pleaseth God shall escape from her; but the sinner shall be taken by her.	Proverbs 5:3-5 For the lips of a strange woman drop <i>as</i> an honeycomb, and her mouth <i>is</i> smoother than oil: (3) But her end is bitter as wormwood, sharp as a two-edged sword. (4) Her feet go down to death; her steps take hold on hell. (5)
7:27, 28 Behold, this have I found, saith the preacher, <i>counting</i> one by one, to find out the account: (27) Which yet my soul seeketh, but I find not: one man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found. (700 Concubines and 300 wives make a 1,000, but evidently Solomon could not trust a one of them.) (28) Most of Solomon's marriages were political unions with former enemies to solidify his borders. He longed for was a wife who would love him for himself.	Proverbs 12:4 A virtuous woman <i>is</i> a crown to her husband: but she that maketh ashamed <i>is</i> as rottenness in his bones. Proverbs 31:10-12 Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies. (10) The heart of her husband doth safely trust in her, so that he shall have no need of spoil. (11) She will do him good and not evil all the days of her life. (12).
7:29 Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.	Ephesians 2:2,3 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: (2) Among whom also we all had

	our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. (3)
Chapter Eight	
8:1 - Who <i>is</i> as the wise <i>man</i> ? and who knoweth the interpretation of a thing? a man's wisdom maketh his face to shine, and the boldness of his face shall be changed.	2 Peter 1:20 Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,
8:2 I <i>counsel thee</i> to keep the king's commandment, and <i>that</i> in regard of the oath of God. 8:3 Be not hasty to go out of his sight: stand not in an evil thing; for he doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.	Romans 13:1-5 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. (1) Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. (2) For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: (3) For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to <i>execute</i> wrath upon him that doeth evil. (4) Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. (5).
8:4 Where the word of a king <i>is</i> , <i>there is</i> power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?	Luke 12:4,5 And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. (4) But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. (5)
8:5 Whoso keepeth the commandment shall feel no evil thing: and a wise man's heart discerneth both time and judgment.	1 Peter 3:13,14 And who <i>is</i> he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? (13) But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy <i>are ye</i> : and be not afraid of their terror, neither be troubled; (14)
8:6 Because to every purpose there is time and judgment, therefore the misery of man <i>is</i> great upon him.	Luke 13:25 When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are:
8:7 For he knoweth not that which shall be: for who can tell him when it shall be?	1 Thessalonians 5:1-3 But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. (1) For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. (2) For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them, as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape. (3)
8:8 <i>There is</i> no man that hath power over the spirit to retain the spirit; neither <i>hath he</i> power in the day of death: and <i>there is</i> no discharge in <i>that</i> war; neither shall wickedness deliver those that are given to it.	2 Corinthians 5:8 We are confident, <i>I say</i> , and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.
8:9 All this have I seen, and applied my heart unto every work that is done under the sun: <i>there is</i> a time wherein one man ruleth over another to his own hurt.	When he must condemn a friend to death.
8:10 And so I saw the wicked buried, who had come and gone from the place of the holy, and they were forgotten in the city where they had so done: this <i>is</i> also vanity.	Luke 16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried;
8:11 Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is	Matthew 24:49-50 And shall begin to smite <i>his</i> fellowservants, and to eat and drink with the drunken;

fully set in them to do evil.	(49) The lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for <i>him</i> , and in an hour that he is not aware of, (50)
8:12 Though a sinner do evil an hundred times, and his <i>days</i> be prolonged, yet surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God, which fear before him:	Matthew 25:34 Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world:
8:13 But it shall not be well with the wicked, neither shall he prolong <i>his days</i> , <i>which are</i> as a shadow; because he feareth not before God.	John 5:29 And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.
8:14 There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just <i>men</i> , unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked <i>men</i> , to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous: I said that this also <i>is</i> vanity.	Psalms 73:3 - For I was envious at the foolish, <i>when</i> I saw the prosperity of the wicked.
8:15 Then I commended mirth, because a man hath no better thing under the sun, than to eat, and to drink, and to be merry: for that shall abide with him of his labour the days of his life, which God giveth him under the sun.	1 Timothy 6:17 Charge them that are rich in this world, that they be not highminded, nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God, who giveth us richly all things to enjoy;
8:16 When I applied mine heart to know wisdom, and to see the business that is done upon the earth: (for also <i>there is that</i> neither day nor night seeth sleep with his eyes:)	Psalms 127:2 <i>It is</i> vain for you to rise up early, to sit up late, to eat the bread of sorrows: <i>for</i> so he giveth his beloved sleep.
8:17 Then I beheld all the work of God, that a man cannot find out the work that is done under the sun: because though a man labour to seek <i>it</i> out, yet he shall not find <i>it</i> ; yea further; though a wise <i>man</i> think to know <i>it</i> , yet shall he not be able to find <i>it</i> .	Isaiah 40:28 Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, <i>that</i> the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? <i>there is</i> no searching of his understanding.
Chapter Nine	
9:1 For all this I considered in my heart even to declare all this, that the righteous, and the wise, and their works, <i>are</i> in the hand of God: no man knoweth either love or hatred <i>by</i> all <i>that is</i> before them.	Psalms 37:5,6 Commit thy way unto the LORD; trust also in him; and he shall bring <i>it</i> to pass. And he shall bring forth thy righteousness as the light, and thy judgment as the noonday.
9:2 All <i>things come</i> alike to all: <i>there is</i> one event to the righteous, and to the wicked; to the good and to the clean, and to the unclean; to him that sacrificeth, and to him that sacrificeth not: as <i>is</i> the good, so <i>is</i> the sinner; <i>and</i> he that sweareth, as <i>he</i> that feareth an oath.	Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:
9:3 This <i>is</i> an evil among all <i>things</i> that are done under the sun, that <i>there is</i> one event unto all: yea, also the heart of the sons of men is full of evil, and madness <i>is</i> in their heart while they live, and after that <i>they go</i> to the dead.	Jeremiah 17:9 - The heart <i>is</i> deceitful above all <i>things</i> , and desperately wicked: who can know it?
9:4 For to him that is joined to all the living there is hope: for a living dog is better than a dead lion. (To a Jew, Gentiles were no better than dogs. A living dog is a perfect as a description of a lost sinner. Even though the lion is regarded as the King of Beast, it is dead. As long as there is life, there is hope that someone can explain the Gospel to them. In Solomon's case, become a proselyte to Judaism, make the sacrifices and keep the feasts that looked forward to the Lamb of God who would not just cover their sins, but take away the sin of the world.)	2 Corinthians 6:2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now <i>is</i> the accepted time; behold, now <i>is</i> the day of salvation.)
9:5 For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten.	Hebrews 9:27 And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment:

<p>9:6 Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any <i>thing</i> that is done under the sun. Note: The lost who die without Christ are “dead men walking” to the Great White Throne Judgment.</p>	<p>Proverbs 10:28 The hope of the righteous <i>shall be</i> gladness: but the expectation of the wicked shall perish.</p>
<p>9:7 Go thy way, eat thy bread with joy, and drink thy wine with a merry heart; for God now accepteth thy works. Note: The Great White Throne is the only place God will accept your works, but only to determine your degree of punishment on earth.</p>	<p>Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is <i>the book</i> of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.</p>
<p>9:8 Let thy garments be always white; and let thy head lack no ointment.</p>	<p>Revelation 19:8 And to her (the Church, or Bride of Christ) was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.</p>
<p>9:9 Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest all the days of the life of thy vanity, which he hath given thee under the sun, all the days of thy vanity: for that <i>is</i> thy portion in <i>this</i> life, and in thy labour which thou takest under the sun.</p>	<p>Proverbs 18:22 <i>Whoso</i> findeth a wife findeth a good <i>thing</i>, and obtaineth favour of the LORD.</p>
<p>9:10 Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do <i>it</i> with thy might; for <i>there is</i> no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the <u>grave</u>, whither thou goest.</p>	<p>Colossians 3:23 And whatsoever ye do, do <i>it</i> heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men;</p>
<p>9:11 I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race <i>is</i> not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favour to men of skill; but time and chance hap-peneth to them all. Note: Finish later – Football winners – on any given Sunday.</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 9:24-2 Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. (24) And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they <i>do it</i> to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. (25) I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: (26) But I keep under my body, and bring <i>it</i> into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway. (27) Note: “Castaway” does not mean lose salvation. It is translated from “adokimos” meaning “not well approved.” “I am doing things in my life of which the Lord does not approve, and cannot reward.</p>
<p>9:12 For man also knoweth not his time: as the fishes that are taken in an evil net, and as the birds that are caught in the snare; so <i>are</i> the sons of men snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.</p>	<p>Luke 12:20 But God said unto him, <i>Thou</i> fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?</p>
<p>9:13 This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it <i>seemed</i> great unto me:</p>	<p>Daniel 2:20-21 Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: (20) And he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: (21) 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 - For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, <i>are called</i>: (26) But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; (27) And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, <i>yea</i>, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: (28) That no flesh should glory in his presence. (29)</p>

<p>9:14 <i>There was</i> a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it:</p> <p>9:15 Now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor man.</p> <p>9:16 Then said I, Wisdom <i>is</i> better than strength: nevertheless the poor man's wisdom <i>is</i> despised, and his words are not heard.</p> <p>9:17 The words of wise <i>men are</i> heard in quiet more than the cry of him that ruleth among fools.</p> <p>9:18 Wisdom <i>is</i> better than weapons of war: but one sinner destroyeth much good.</p>	<p>2 Samuel 20:13-22 - When he was removed out of the highway, all the people went on after Joab, to pursue after Sheba the son of Bichri. (13) And he went through all the tribes of Israel unto Abel, and to Bethmaachah, and all the Berites: and they were gathered together, and went also after him. (14) And they came and besieged him in Abel of Bethmaachah, and they cast up a bank against the city, and it stood in the trench: and all the people that <i>were</i> with Joab battered the wall, to throw it down. (15) Then cried a wise woman out of the city, Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee. (16) And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, <i>Art</i> thou Joab? And he answered, I <i>am</i> he. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. And he answered, I do hear. (17) Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely ask <i>counsel</i> at Abel: and so they ended <i>the matter</i>. (18) I <i>am one of them that are</i> peaceable <i>and</i> faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the LORD? (19) And Joab answered and said, Far be it, far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. (20) The matter <i>is</i> not so: but a man of mount Ephraim, Sheba the son of Bichri by name, hath lifted up his hand against the king, <i>even</i> against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall. (21) Then the woman went unto all the people in her wisdom. And they cut off the head of Sheba the son of Bichri, and cast <i>it</i> out to Joab. And he blew a trumpet, and they retired from the city, every man to his tent. And Joab returned to Jerusalem unto the king. (22)</p>
<p>Chapter Ten</p>	
<p>10:1 Dead flies cause the ointment of the apothecary (perfumer) to send forth a stinking savour: <i>so doth</i> a little folly him that is in reputation for wisdom <i>and</i> honour.</p>	<p>Titus 3:8,14 <i>This is</i> a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men.(8)</p> <p>And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful. (14)</p> <p>A Christian is to “maintain good works,” or live a life that the lost expect a Christian to live, it is so they will not be “unfruitful” in their witnessing. They are “good and profitable to men” because we will be rewarded for them at the Judgment Seat of Christ. (1 Corinthians 3:12-15).</p>
<p>10:2 A wise man's heart <i>is</i> at his right hand; but a fool's heart at his left.</p>	<p>Right hand is place of honor, the left hand is bad.</p>
<p>10:3 Yea also, when he that is a fool walketh by the way, his wisdom faileth <i>him</i>, and he saith to every one <i>that</i> he <i>is</i> a fool.</p>	<p>Matthew 23:16,17 Woe unto you, <i>ye</i> blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! (16) <i>Ye</i> fools and blind: for whether is greater, the gold, or the temple that sanctifieth the gold? (17)</p>
<p>10:4 If the spirit of the ruler rise up against thee, leave not thy place; for yielding pacifieth great offences.</p>	<p>Proverbs 25:15 By long forbearing is a prince persuaded, and a soft tongue breaketh the bone.</p>
<p>10:5 There is an evil <i>which</i> I have seen under the sun, as an error <i>which</i> proceedeth from the ruler:</p> <p>Note: Solomon had seen it all. He would have been at his father's knee when David sent Hushai the Archite back to Absalom's court in Jerusalem as a counter-spy to defeat the counsel that David's once-trusted counselor was giving</p>	<p>2 Samuel 17:14 And Absalom and all the men of Israel said, The counsel of Hushai the Archite <i>is</i> better than the counsel of Ahithophel. For the LORD had appointed to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, to the intent that the LORD might bring evil upon Absalom.</p>

<p>to the usurper, Ahithophel. Absalom made war against David, and, as a result was killed. David returned in triumph to his throne in Jerusalem.</p>	
<p>10:6 Folly is set in great dignity, and the rich sit in low place.</p>	<p>James 2:1-4 My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, <i>the Lord</i> of glory, with respect of persons. (1) For if there come unto your assembly a man with a gold ring, in goodly apparel, and there come in also a poor man in vile raiment; (2) And ye have respect to him that weareth the gay clothing, and say unto him, Sit thou here in a good place; and say to the poor, Stand thou there, or sit here under my footstool: (3) Are ye not then partial in yourselves, and are become judges of evil thoughts? (4)</p>
<p>10:7 I have seen servants upon horses, and princes walking as servants upon the earth. Note: Since Solomon grew up in the palace, surrounded by men of power, he well remembered the treachery of Absalom, and his father, King David, fleeing with his whole household of servants. Solomon knew well the treachery and intrigue of the oriental, royal court politics. They are just as vicious as today.</p>	<p>2 Samuel 15:1 And it came to pass after this, that Absalom prepared him chariots and horses, and fifty men to run before him. 2 Samuel 15:14 And David said unto all his servants that <i>were</i> with him at Jerusalem, Arise, and let us flee; for we shall not <i>else</i> escape from Absalom: make speed to depart, lest he overtake us suddenly, and bring evil upon us, and smite the city with the edge of the sword.</p>
<p>10:8 He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh an hedge, a serpent shall bite him.</p>	<p>Psalms 7:15,16 He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch <i>which</i> he made. (15) His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate. (16)</p>
<p>10:9 Whoso removeth stones shall be hurt therewith; <i>and</i> he that cleaveth wood shall be endangered thereby. Note: Moving large stones and cutting wood are dangerous occupations. Accidents happen. That's just the way things are. Of course, we are to judge between accidental deaths and murder. God made provision for that in the Law.</p>	<p>Numbers 35:22-25 But if he thrust him suddenly without enmity, or have cast upon him any thing without laying of wait, (22) Or with any stone, wherewith a man may die, seeing <i>him</i> not, and cast <i>it</i> upon him, that he die, and <i>was</i> not his enemy, neither sought his harm: (23) Then the congregation shall judge between the slayer and the revenger of blood according to these judgments: (24) And the congregation shall deliver the slayer out of the hand of the revenger of blood, and the congregation shall restore him to the city of his refuge, whither he was fled: and he shall abide in it unto the death of the high priest, which was anointed with the holy oil. (25)</p>
<p>10:10 If the iron be blunt, and he do not whet the edge, then must he put to more strength: but wisdom <i>is</i> profitable to direct.</p>	<p>James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all <i>men</i> liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.</p>
<p>10:11 Surely the serpent will bite without enchantment; and a babler is no better.</p>	<p>James 3:6 And the tongue <i>is</i> a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell.</p>
<p>10:12 The words of a wise man's mouth <i>are</i> gracious; but the lips of a fool will swallow up himself.</p>	<p>Colossians 4:6 Let your speech <i>be</i> always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man.</p>
<p>10:13 The beginning of the words of his mouth <i>is</i> foolishness: and the end of his talk <i>is</i> mischievous madness.</p>	<p>Proverbs 29:9 <i>If</i> a wise man contendeth with a foolish man, whether he rage or laugh, <i>there is</i> no rest.</p>
<p>10:14 A fool also is full of words: a man cannot tell what shall be; and what shall be after him, who can tell him?</p>	<p>Isaiah 42:9 Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.</p>
<p>10:15 The labour of the foolish wearieth every one of</p>	<p>Psalms 107:7 And he led them forth by the right way,</p>

them, because he knoweth not how to go to the city.	that they might go to a city of habitation.
10:16 Woe to thee, O land, when thy king <i>is</i> a child, and thy princes eat in the morning!	Isaiah 3:12 <i>As for</i> my people, children <i>are</i> their oppressors, and women rule over them. O my people, they which lead thee cause <i>thee</i> to err, and destroy the way of thy paths.
10:17 Blessed <i>art</i> thou, O land, when thy king <i>is</i> the son of nobles, and thy princes eat in due season, for strength, and not for drunkenness!	Proverbs 31:3,5 Give not thy strength unto women, nor thy ways to that which destroyeth kings. (3) Lest they drink, and forget the law, and pervert the judgment of any of the afflicted. (5)
10:18 By much slothfulness the building decayeth; and through idleness of the hands the house droppeth through.	Proverbs 14:1 Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.
10:19 A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all <i>things</i> .	Ephesians 5:18,19 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;
10:20 Curse not the king, no not in thy thought; and curse not the rich in thy bedchamber: for a bird of the air shall carry the voice, and that which hath wings shall tell the matter.	Exodus 22:28 If the thief be not found, then the master of the house shall be brought unto the judges, <i>to see</i> whether he have put his hand unto his neighbour's goods.
Chapter Eleven	
11:1 Cast thy bread upon the waters: for thou shalt find it after many days.	2 Corinthians 9:6 But this <i>I say</i> , He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully.
11:2 Give a portion to seven, and also to eight; for thou knowest not what evil shall be upon the earth.	1 John 3:17 But whoso hath this world's good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels <i>of compassion</i> from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?
11:3 If the clouds be full of rain, they empty <i>themselves</i> upon the earth: and if the tree fall toward the south, or toward the north, in the place where the tree falleth, there it shall be.	Isaiah 55:10,11 - For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: (10) So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper <i>in the thing</i> whereto I sent it. (11)
11:4 He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. Note: Simple! If you sow on a windy day, the wind will blow your seed away. If you reap when it rains, your crop will be wet and mold. There is a right time for everything. That's just how it is.	James 3:18 And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace. John 4:35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and <i>then</i> cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.
11:5 As thou knowest not what <i>is</i> the way of the spirit, <i>nor</i> how the bones <i>do grow</i> in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.	John 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.
11:6 In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both <i>shall be</i> alike good.	2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.
11:7 - Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun:	Proverbs 15:30 The light of the eyes rejoiceth the heart: <i>and</i> a good report maketh the bones fat.
11:8 But if a man live many years, <i>and</i> rejoice in them	John 12:25 He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he

<p>all; yet let him remember the days of darkness; for they shall be many. All that cometh <i>is</i> vanity.</p>	<p>that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.</p>
<p>11:9 Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these <i>things</i> God will bring thee into judgment.</p>	<p>2 Corinthians 6:2 (For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succoured thee: behold, now <i>is</i> the accepted time; behold, now <i>is</i> the day of salvation.)</p>
<p>11:10 Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth <i>are</i> vanity.</p>	<p>2 Timothy 2:22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.</p>
<p>Chapter Twelve</p>	
<p>12:1 Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them; 12:2 While the sun, or the light, or the moon, or the stars, be not darkened, nor the clouds return after the rain: 12:3 In the day when the keepers of the house shall tremble, and the strong men shall bow themselves, and the grinders cease because they are few, and those that look out of the windows be darkened, 12:4 And the doors shall be shut in the streets, when the sound of the grinding is low, and he shall rise up at the voice of the bird, and all the daughters of musick shall be brought low; 12:5 Also <i>when</i> they shall be afraid of <i>that which is</i> high, and fears <i>shall be</i> in the way, and the almond tree shall flourish, and the grasshopper shall be a burden, and desire shall fail: because man goeth to his long home, and the mourners go about the streets: 12:6 Or ever the silver cord be loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel broken at the cistern. 12:7 Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it.</p>	<p>Isaiah 46:4 And <i>even</i> to <i>your</i> old age I <i>am</i> he; and <i>even</i> to hoar hairs will I carry <i>you</i>: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver <i>you</i>.</p> <p>A double image to represent approaching <i>death in old age</i>:</p> <p>(1) A <i>lamp</i> of frail material, but <i>gilded</i> over, often in the East hung from roofs by a <i>cord</i> of silk and <i>silver</i> interwoven; as the lamp is dashed down and broken, when the cord breaks, so man at death; the golden bowl of the lamp answers to <i>the skull</i>, which, from the vital preciousness of its contents, may be called "golden"; "the silver cord" is <i>the spinal marrow</i>, which is white and precious as silver, and is attached to the brain.</p> <p>(2) A <i>fountain</i>, from which water is drawn by a <i>pitcher</i> let down by a rope wound round a <i>wheel</i>; as, when the pitcher and wheel are broken, water can no more be drawn, so life ceases when the vital energies are gone. The "fountain" <i>may</i> mean the right ventricle of the heart; the "cistern," the left; the pitcher, the veins; the wheel the aorta, or great artery [SMITH].</p> <p>The circulation of the blood, whether known or not to Solomon, <i>seems</i> to be implied in the language put by the Holy Ghost into his mouth. This gloomy picture of old age applies to those who have not "remembered their Creator in youth." They have none of the consolations of God, which they might have obtained in youth; it is now too late to seek them. A good old age is a blessing to the godly</p> <p><u>Genesis 15:15</u> - And thou shalt go to thy fathers in peace; thou shalt be buried in a good old age.</p> <p><u>Job 5:26</u> - Thou shalt come to <i>thy</i> grave in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in in his season.</p> <p>Proverbs 16:31 - The hoary head <i>is</i> a crown of glory, <i>if</i> it be found in the way of righteousness.</p> <p>Proverbs 20:29 - The glory of young men <i>is</i> their strength: and the beauty of old men <i>is</i> the gray head.</p> <p>2 Corinthians 5:8 - We are confident, <i>I say</i>, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord.</p>
<p>12:8 Vanity of vanities, saith the preacher; all <i>is</i> vanity.</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 15:58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in</p>

	vain in the Lord.
12:9 And moreover, because the preacher was wise, he still taught the people knowledge; yea, he gave good heed, and sought out, <i>and</i> set in order many proverbs.	And he spake three thousand proverbs: and his songs were a thousand and five. Kings 4:32
12:10 The preacher sought to find out acceptable words: and <i>that which was</i> written <i>was</i> upright, <i>even</i> words of truth.	Colossians 1:5 For the hope which is laid up for you in heaven, whereof ye heard before in the word of the truth of the gospel;
12:11 The words of the wise <i>are</i> as goads, and as nails fastened <i>by</i> the masters of assemblies, <i>which</i> are given from one shepherd.	John 10:14 I am the good shepherd, and know my <i>sheep</i> , and am known of mine.
12:12 And further, by these, my son, be admonished: of making many books <i>there is</i> no end; and much study <i>is</i> a weariness of the flesh.	John 21:25 And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.
12:13,14 Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this <i>is</i> the whole <i>duty</i> of man. (13) For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether <i>it be</i> good, or whether <i>it be</i> evil.	1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God.