

Grace and Glory

Declaring unto you the
whole Counsel of GOD

Volume 113

March 2023

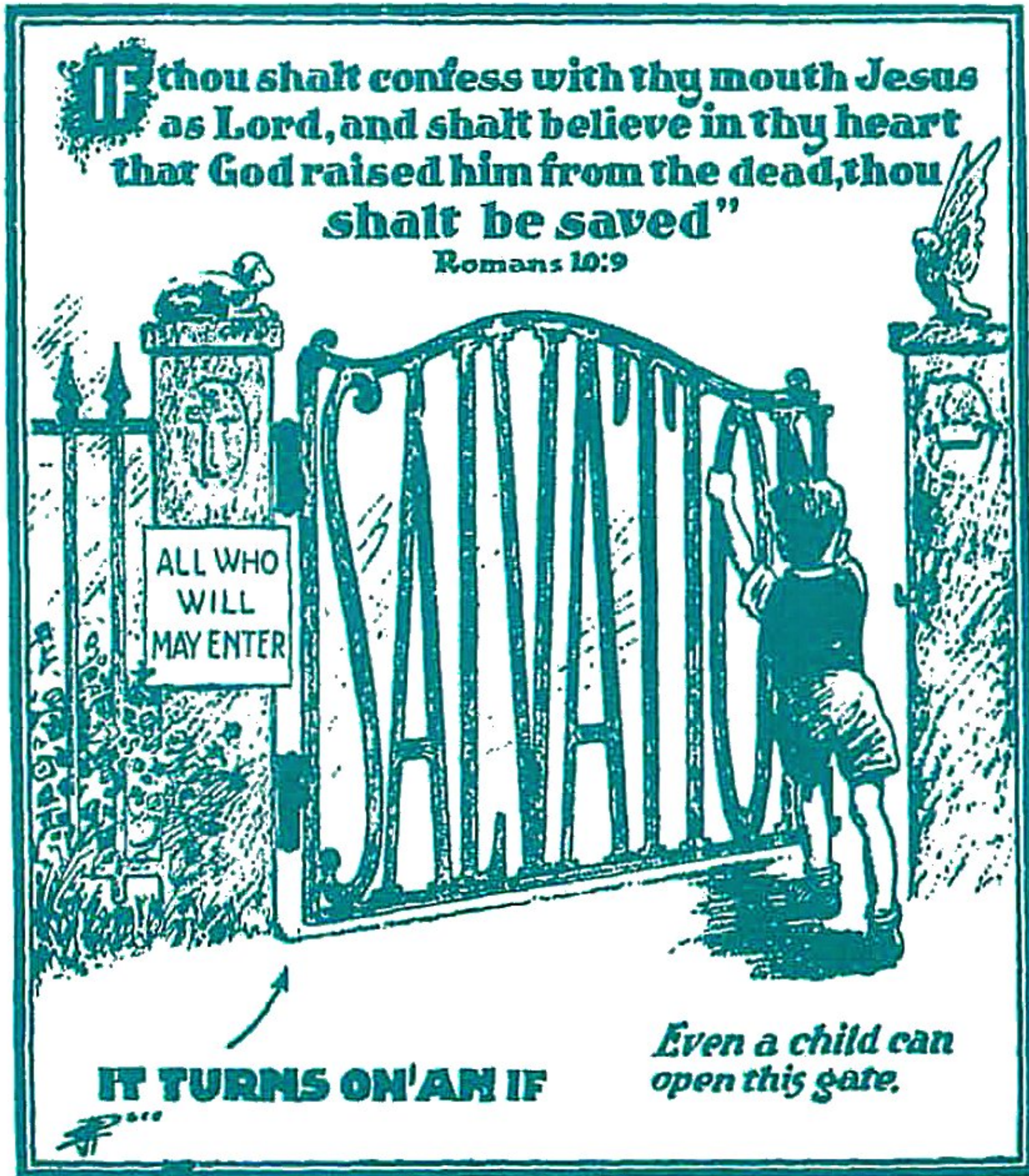
Number 3



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.
Song of Solomon 2:12.

Table Of Contents

Article	Author	Page
Definite Sign Posts of the End.....	Gene Hawkins.....	3
Miracles....Today.....	Paul N. Smith.....	11
God So Loved.....	Margaret Keener.....	16
Prepared For Battle (Con't.).....	Dr. Vicky Moots.....	20
Season Of Praise.....	Emily Sallee.....	26
Christ Went All The Way.....	C.H. Smith.....	29
The Descender.....	Jack W. Bannister.....	31



"Grace & Glory" (USPS # 224-300 ISSN # 279-6996) is published monthly by Grace & Glory Gospel Society, 13011 Grandview Rd. P.O. Box 831, Grandview, Missouri 64030.

PERIODICALS postage is paid at Grandview, Missouri.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to "Grace & Glory" P.O. Box 831, Grandview, Missouri 64030.

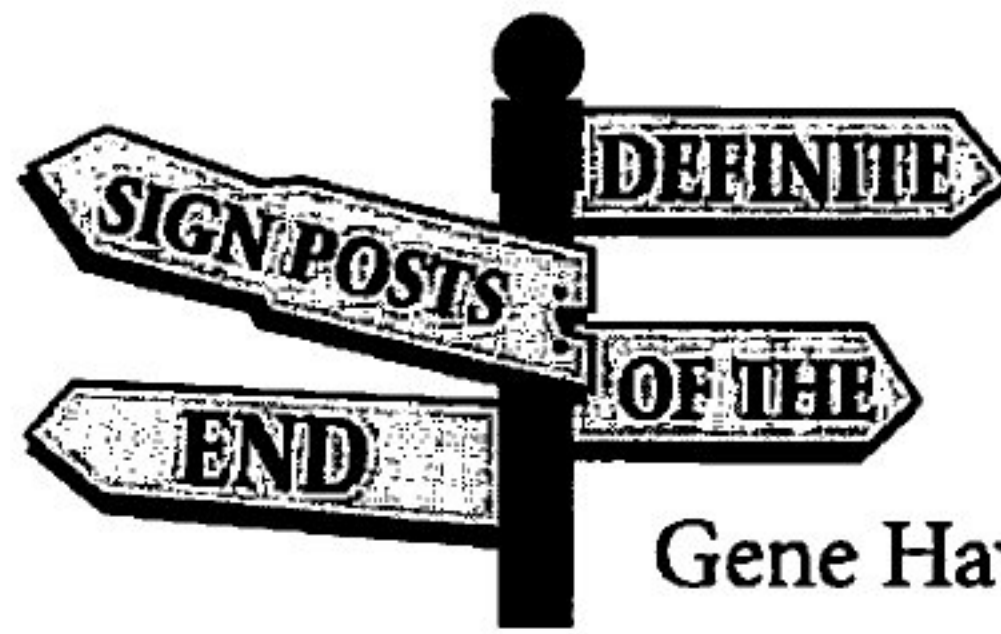
Telephone: 816-618-3306. E-mail gjhawk1@msn.com Print Shop # 816-322-2257

Web site: www.gracegod.org. Bible lessons and audio sermons are downloadable.

GRACE & GLORY is published for the purpose of proclaiming God's Holy Word. We believe that the Scriptures are inspired of God and were given to His holy apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit. (II Timothy 3:16, II Peter 1:21)

GRACE & GLORY has had continuous publication without subscription price since 1910. We are able to continue this ministry by your kind financial support.

Editor: Gene Hawkins



Gene Hawkins

“**F**or then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” Matt. 24:21

Some might assume at first glance that these words are directly contradictory to Solomon’s declaration that “...there is no new thing under the sun.” Eccl. 1:9 God’s Word, however, does not contradict itself and thus there is no discrepancy here. The assertion of Jesus in Matthew 24, and that of Solomon, simply bring to light two different perspectives. Solomon presents in great and specific detail throughout the book of Ecclesiastes the view “...under the sun,...” or of this world, through the eyes of men. Many have been encouraged throughout the ages by the first portion of the above verse from Ecclesiastes, as they were reminded that their own situation was not unique. “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done,...” thus “...there is no new thing under the sun,” which has not been experienced by someone who has gone before. Multitudes of God’s people have realized that scripture is filled with records of those who endured and triumphed over similar circumstances like unto their own. 3

However, Solomon’s conclusion in these words also conveys the idea that all these things are totally beyond the control of men for, “...that which is done is that which shall be done...” and indeed, none can alter it.

Jesus’ assertion concerning the unprecedented events of “...great tribulation...” and the fact that such things will never be repeated or “...ever shall be...” are from God’s point of view. Peter, likewise, presents this same scenario from God’s point of view and the observation of men as he exhorts his audience to “...be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of us the apostles of the Lord and Saviour: Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers,... (mockers) saying, Where is the promise of

his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” II Pet. 3:2-4 This attitude bespeaks the same truth as “...there is no new thing under the sun,” but it is prompted by unbelief rather than faith. Thus, Peter declares the fallacy of such mockery using the flood of Noah’s day to prove his point. “For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water: Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished:” II Pet. 3:5-6 Peter staunchly refutes the idea that “...all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation.” Note also that he specifically proclaims that this “intervention” is specifically because or “...**by the word of God...**” He then points to the future, declaring that “...the heavens and the earth, which are now, **by the same word** are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” V. 7 This would surely coincide with Jesus’ prophecy that there “...shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” It is also rather significant that Jude, who also speaks of these last days, follows the same pattern as Peter in regard to the “mockers.” One difference is that he uses three examples of God’s intervention through judgment to show that, “...all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation,” is **not** a true statement.

Conditions surrounding Hitler’s Germany will also be eclipsed by the unprecedented days of tribulation recorded in the opening text of this article. Many of that day undoubtedly thought that things could not get any worse, but a comparison of that time with present day characteristics, reveal that man’s conduct and the conditions of this world have most assuredly digressed. There seems to be no evidence from those long ago writers that Hitler or Mussolini were specifically named as “the antichrist,” but it is surely easy to understand why men of that day might think so. Hitler’s major purpose was to rid the entire world of the Jewish community, which is one major goal of the antichrist. His cruelty and godlessness is legendary, but there is quite a contrast in one particular area between that day and this as recorded by Wikipedia: “**Before 1933, homosexual acts were illegal**

in Germany under Paragraph 175 of the German Criminal Code.... After the Röhm purge in 1934, persecuting homosexuals became a priority of the Nazi police state. A 1935 revision of Paragraph 175 made it easier to bring criminal charges for homosexual acts, leading to a large increase in arrests and convictions....The Nazi regime considered the elimination of all manifestations of homosexuality in Germany one of its goals.... Between 1933 and 1945, an estimated 100,000 men were arrested as homosexuals.... Most of these men served time in regular prisons, and between 5,000 and 6,000 were imprisoned in concentration camps. The death rate of these prisoners has been estimated at 60 percent, a higher rate than those of other prisoner groups.... In 1928 the Nazi Party responded negatively to a questionnaire about their view of Paragraph 175, saying: "Anyone who even thinks of homosexual love is our enemy."Nazi politicians regularly railed against homosexuality, saying it was a Jewish conspiracy to undermine the German people."

It is well understood that the ungodly dictator of Nazi Germany was not trying to establish the righteousness of God by this stand against the ungodly practice of homosexual relationships which God abhors. Hitler was rather using it as one more excuse to annihilate the Jews who were blamed for it, as seen above. Note the contrast between that day and this, where such ungodliness has escalated into the "LGBTQ" movement, the acronym meaning "Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (or questioning.)" Ours is a time when some legislators are doing everything in their power, demanding that all their constituents embrace this abominable practice. Not only so, but such ungodly ideas have expanded to the point of literally teaching very young children that they can choose their own sex as they deem appropriate. It seems that Australia has dealt with this problem for years and now this report was submitted by one of Grace and Glory's faithful readers from that land. "Another thing happening is Lawyers are warning that a Palaszczuck Queensland Labour government plan to allow people to change their sex on their birth certificate every 12 months could cause serious problems for courts and government departments. Under the radical proposal, Queenslanders would not only be able to change their sex every 12 months on their birth certificate, but list no gender at all, or even make one up. Parents also would also have the ability to not list the sex of

their child on their birth certificate. The legislation is so extreme that even the Queensland Law Society has criticized it and says "We seek further clarification on how verification of identity processes are to be managed in the absence of a sex descriptor appearing on a person's birth certificate, where current procedures refer to 'gender,'" wrote the Queensland Law Society president in her submission on the bill."

It has been stated previously in these pages that one major blunder committed by this ungodly movement is that it denies the wisdom and decisions of man's Creator. It is simply one more of many examples which fulfill Isaiah's prophecy of men called into judgment for directly contradicting God's Word. "Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!" Isa 5:20-21 Men absolutely deny "...that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; ..."

6 There can be no question that this entire world has worsened in a number of ways since the time when Nazi Germany voiced their intention to bring forth a superior race threatening to exert dominion over planet earth. There can be no doubt that Hitler, along with Mussolini, was possessed by the very spirit of antichrist even as other world leaders, such as Vladimir Putin and Xi Jinping. All their desires are the same and more than one political leader over the years has been described as being "narcissistic" or overly occupied with self. That description clearly defines the antichrist who will ultimately demand that all men bow and worship before his image in the temple. Though it is an absolute surety that this man of sin is presently in this world, none of these men have displayed all the characteristics wherewith the real man of sin is defined in scripture. Many leaders, both past and present, have expressed the desire to reign supreme over others, but the antichrist will be a man who is literally "wondered after." "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Rev. 13:3 The word "...wonder..." literally means, "to admire or marvel." That cannot be said of these two prominent leaders of Russia and China, nor of any other world leader at this present time. These two are

rather in some cases hated and certainly all nations of the earth are very wary and suspicious of their intentions. It is without doubt, however, that one raised from the dead would merit such admiration and wonder, and that is exactly what will transpire with the wicked man of sin. The above text plainly asserts that he will be "...wounded to death..." and then healed. The answer to that mystery begins in Rev. 12. "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan,...was cast out into the earth,..." V. 7-9 This dynamic mystery is further unfolded in Rev. 9. "And the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit. And he opened the bottomless pit;... and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit." Rev. 9:1-2 These verses are very clear that Satan is cast out of heaven. He was then "...given the key to the bottomless pit." That can mean only one thing! Jesus, Who alone is said to "...have the keys of hell and of death," (Re 1:18) gave the key which would open the bottomless pit to Satan. This arch enemy will waste no time in using it, and our mystery concludes with the official revelation of the antichrist. It is from this point that the man of sin begins his 1260 day reign of terror. "The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; (because he was wounded unto death) and shall **ascend out of the bottomless pit**, ("...his deadly wound was healed...") and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall **wonder**, whose names were not written in the book of life ...when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." Rev. 17:8

Another characteristic attached to the antichrist is that he will present himself as a man of peace, sitting upon "...a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; (but no arrows) and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer." Rev. 6:2 Neither Putin or Xi Jinping command this kind of trust among the nations today, but, as noted above, that could change in a heartbeat were one of them raised from the dead.

8 One more point seems worthy of note in contrasting the Hitler era with that of today. Many parents have informed their children of the tremendous hardship, privation, and lack of provision for the necessities of life during WW2, but little emphasis was given to violence, which is front and center at this present time. Jesus declared plainly that, "... as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matt. 24:37 Wickedness and violence are glaring traits reflected in that time for, "...GOD saw that the wickedness (misery, wretchedness, wrong) of man was great in the earth,The earth also was corrupt (decayed, wasted) before God, and the earth was filled with violence." (maltreatment, injustice, violent) Gen. 6:5,11 All these adjectives describe the days of Noah and they are also rampant at this present time, the evidence appearing on TV screens daily. There are reports of ungodly men driving motorized vehicles into parades loaded with people. Children have been slain in their beds by stray bullets from drive-by shooters. Widespread evidence in regard to these violent acts outside the ravages of war, during the days of Hitler, is non-existent. However, such things are not sporadic in our day but actually express a universal way of life which includes every nation on planet earth. Many Americans are a bit anxious, both in their homes and out, due to the continued acts of violence committed against innocent people, even on a daily basis.

Men are often confused about facts of the tribulation period and the revelation of antichrist because they do not understand the timing attached to that era. It is no accident that the little word "**then**" is used 9 times in Matthew 24, signifying the fact that something will take place "at that time." The opening text of this article begins with "...**then** shall be great tribulation,..." signifying "at the time." The designated time for this portion of Matt. 24 is announced in V. 15. "When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, (whoso readeth, let him understand:)" This is a direct reference to Daniel 9:27 which specifically identifies **the time here** as the middle of the week. "And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: **and in the midst of the week** he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the

overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate.” The terms “...overspreading of abominations...” in Matt. 24, and “...the abomination of desolation...” recorded by Daniel are exactly the same, meaning that the antichrist shall set up his own image in the temple, demanding that all men fall down and worship him, for as Daniel asserts “...he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation (except for himself) to cease...”

This obnoxious act of antichrist will take place in the middle of the tribulation week, and thus Jesus exhorts “**Then** let them which be in Judaea flee into the mountains:” V.16 The attention of the whole world will be focused on Jerusalem at that time, in preparation for the most destructive battle ever fought: Armageddon. Jesus’ advice for all living in the city to flee, “**For then** (in the midst of the week) shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be.” Matt. 24:21

Calculations of days from Daniel and Revelation reveal that the antichrist will come to power exactly 250 days **BEFORE** the middle of the week and will thereafter reign for his allotted 1260 days, marking the end of the tribulation week. All believers should be comforted by this fact because it means that the entire Church will be in heaven before this ungodly man even comes to power.

However, as stated earlier, this man of sin is without doubt in the world today and his Satanic influence is most assuredly felt across the entire planet at this very hour. Peter has some marvelous advice for all believers and especially for those who would be caught out of the world before the tribulation even begins. This apostle has already informed us that the flood of Noah’s day was called forth “...**by the word of God...**” II Pet. 3:5 He then looks to the future, explaining how “...the heavens and the earth, which are now, **by the same word** are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment...” II Pet. 3:7 He then reaffirms the message of Jesus and other apostles that, “...the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night;...” V. 10 Using these facts of God’s Word as leverage, this wise man concludes: “Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner

of persons **ought ye to be** in all holy conversation and godliness,” His message is clear. Given the evidence described above on the authenticity and assurance of God’s Word, men must ensure that their own lives are conducted “...in all holy conversation and godliness.”

10 Scripture is clear that the fullness of the destruction outlined here will not be fully complete until AFTER the Millennium. However, the “day of the Lord,” found numerous times throughout the Word of God or “...the Lord’s day...” as seen in Rev. 1:10, will begin when Jesus takes His throne in heaven just prior to the beginning of the tribulation week. That “day” will last a thousand years and a great number of things will transpire during that time, beginning with the first rank of the Church being transported to glory before “...the hour of temptation,...” (Rev. 3:10) ever arrives. So it is that Peter’s next admonition is absolutely applicable to the faithful at this hour who are longing and looking for Jesus’ appearance. “Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God,...Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless.” V. 11,14

Some might be prone to argue the possibility of being found in such a condition as this, but let all those who purpose to be in that company, found “...in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne,...” (Rev. 4:6) claim Paul’s prayer for themselves. “And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” I Thess. 5:23

Redeemer

Jesus Christ, God’s Little Lamb
The Mighty Lord, the Great I AM
Redeemer, born of virgin birth.
Came to save us here on earth.
Immanuel, God with us,
Accept Him now, in Him trust.
For He’s coming back again,
To take us home to live with Him.

Ardith Lee Bratton

Miracles ... Today?

Paul N. Smith

“**T**his beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him.” Joh. 2:11.

We are writing this article because there is so much interest in miracles among religious people, and true saints of God. There are differences of opinion as to the time, extent, and feasibility of miracles. The only way to come to a clear understanding of this subject is to look at it from all viewpoints pertinent to Israel, the Church, and the world.

In our text, and throughout the Gospel records, we see that Jesus was a Man of miracles. His entire earthly sojourn was a continuous miracle, because He was God-Man. Jesus' credentials were His miracles. He was known and believed on more for His great deeds than for His teaching; and He often illustrated His teachings by performing a miracle. This was all in the will of God, and necessary to His ministry up to the cross. Let us read further in Luke 7:19,22.

"And John (in prison) calling unto him two of his disciples sent them to Jesus, saying, Art thou he that should come, or look we for another? . . . Then Jesus answering, said unto them. Go your way, and tell John what things you have seen and heard: how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the Gospel is preached." These miracles were a proof to John the Baptist that the Messiah had surely come. He was to look no further, but be content that his ministry had been completed and merged into the ministry of Jesus Christ. To John and to the nation of Israel, this manifestation of miraculous deeds was a sign that Jesus was the Son of God. At another time, Jesus said as much when addressing the rulers of Israel—"If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, tho ye believe not me, believe the works; that ye may know and believe that the Father is in me, and I in Him." John 10:37,38 Thus, the mighty works heralded the fact that the Man in their midst was truly the Son of God, their Messiah. We understand therefore the use of miracles in His day.

But Christ's whole time was not given over to miracles. One need only to read the record in the Scriptures to learn how He lived, and walked and talked. There were some occasions where

He was unable to manifest any miracle because of the people's unbelief. Such was the case as recorded in Matt. 13 after His wonderful discourse of the parables. The people marvelled at His wisdom, but because they knew Him as a child and knew also His family, they could not believe that He was the Son of God. Thus we read, "And He did not many mighty works there because of their unbelief"—V. 58.

As we continue to the book of Acts, we find that the Apostles were endued with power and continued the mighty works started by Jesus. These early Apostles were testifying to the nation of Israel as was also Jesus, and for the first few years after Christ's resurrection, mighty works were done by them. These first years after Pentecost were a miniature picture of the Millennial Age when the King will reign in righteousness. The message of salvation was being spread, first in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and to the uttermost parts of the world. And miracles played an important part in the spreading of the Gospel. They were introducing Christ and the power of God to the heathen lands where this had never been heard before.

12 Next we come to the ministry of Paul, the Apostle to the Church. We find that several outstanding miracles were performed in the first few years of his ministry—viz. Chs. 13,14,16. Later, on the island of Melita. God performed mighty works upon these barbaric people.

Also in the nineteenth chapter of Acts, we read of Paul's ministry in Ephesus, the city steeped in idolatry and witchcraft. Here it is stated, "And God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul"—V. 11. The works which were performed here were the same as had been done by the Lord Jesus in His earthly ministry. But here they are termed "special," partly because they were done through cloths passing from Paul's body to those oppressed, and partly because God did something special in this country which was a stronghold of evil spirits. And another important fact to notice is that the part which miracles once played in spreading the Gospel, was not now so important; although miracles still existed. We find this borne out in Paul's epistles where emphasis is not placed on miracles, but rather on the message to the Church. Whereas once miracles were abundantly noted because attention was to be focused on the Man, Christ Jesus, now attention was not to be drawn to the Apostle Paul, but rather to the message which was given to hint, which had been hidden from ages past.

What part do miracles play in Church order? We find that teaching concerning miracles is found in I Cor. 12. The only other Scriptures where miracles are mentioned in Paul's epistles are Gal. 3:5 and Heb. 2:4. The former verse simply teaches that miracles are performed thru faith, as is any other act of God. The latter refers to the early apostolic days of which we have already mentioned.

In I Cor. 12:10, the working of miracles is the fifth of the nine gifts of the Spirit. It occupies a place along with the other gifts. But none of these gifts can be profitably used without exercising the first three — wisdom, knowledge and faith. Paul points out the exercising of these gifts in the body of Christ, in verses 28-31. He arose from the dead and gave gifts to the Church, Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers (Eph. 4). These ministries are listed by their importance to the Church at a certain time. First, the Lord used Apostles, then prophets, then teachers, as the Age progressed, to exercise the different gifts listed in this chapter. All are important as being parts of a whole. No one gift or office apart from the others is of benefit to the body, any more than the members of the body. We cannot say that we need miracles or tongues more than knowledge or faith, any more than the eye can say to the foot, I have no need of thee. As Paul also expresses it, "Are all Apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all the gifts of healing?" etc. And further, as we read in Ch. 13, none of these gifts or ministries amount to anything without the motivation of divine love.

13

Thus, we are made to see that undue importance is not to be placed on one or two of the gifts, and the others neglected. Each has its place in the edification of the body of Christ. The gifts of the Spirit are for everyone's profit and edifying; not for any exploitation of one person above another. Generally, gifts draw attention to the individual unless those gifted exercise them in love. Too many miracles, therefore, would draw attention away from the other necessary gifts, and more specifically the gifts which are not vocal—knowledge, wisdom and faith.

Since the gifts and ministries are for the building up of the body of Christ, how long are they to be employed? The answer would be until that which is perfect is come. The beginning of this Age began with many outward manifestations of miracles, claiming the attention of multitudes, and this Age will end and

the next one begin with the same mighty phenomena. But, the Church of Jesus Christ, His body, is almost completed and ready for transportation to heaven. Where do miracles fit into the lives of those whose attention has been arrested long ago, and who have been feeding on the Word, growing into full stature? When the fullness of the Spirit was manifested anew some fifty years ago, miracles were the rule rather than the exception because they were necessary to attract attention. Out of this infusion has emerged a remnant of believers who have used these first manifestations as springboards to other, more necessary manifestations of God's power.

14 This power has been working inward miracles through the revelation of the truth of Paul's Gospel. Whereas the outward miracles have waned, the inward miraculous doings have increased, creating the exact image of Christ in those believers who take in the Word and submit to its working. Concerning this thought we would like to quote a few words from the commentary on Song of Solomon by A. S. Copley : "the rain is over and gone. The rain is truly over. We have no warrant to look for another, or greater outpouring of the Spirit. There is no Scripture for it. The Holy Spirit is here, giving moisture, life beauty, growth and fruitage wherever He is accorded His place and prerogatives." The once eye-popping, shouting, hilarious, walking on clouds experience has grown and deepened into a steady, unmovable, satisfying knowledge and experience of being the sons of God, controlled in all phases of life and service by the Holy Ghost. These saints are assured that what God does is best, and do not expect God to perform a miracle to deliver them every time they are in trouble. They rest in the knowledge that what happens is for their ultimate growth and glory. It is often a greater miracle to take the grace and strength of Christ to stand a trial than to be miraculously delivered.

And yet with this knowledge, many people of God are crying for the "good old days." To bring back the so-called good old days, would be to go backward in our experience and growth. Overcoming saints today do not need yesteryear's manifestations to take them on. They receive fresh incentive and strength every day for present day overcoming. It is much harder to overcome today in spite of apostasy and lethargy, and the absence of dynamics, than forty and fifty years ago. This does not mean

that the saints of that day did not overcome — many did; but the obstacles to overcoming are greater and more fierce today. And the ones who yielded to all the workings of the Spirit then are better able to overcome now. The devil is being allowed more dominion now than ever before. All this is brought out in Paul's letters to the Thessalonians and Timothy. Jude also is instructive as to conditions of the end time. The greatest manifested miracle of the Church Age will be the rapture of the overcomers — saints who will be like Christ — perfect in every detail.

What about miracles after the overcomers are gone? The book of Revelation records that period of time very realistically. God will be performing great, showy feats, and the devil will be duplicating those miracles for awhile. In Rev. 11, we read of the two witnesses who will be preaching on the earth during the early days of the tribulation. We read of them in verse 6: "These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy; and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will." These people will be killed by the anti-Christ, but God will raise them from the dead in view of the whole world and will take them to heaven.

15

On the other side, the devil will be performing great things thru the false prophet and anti-Christ. In Rev. 13:13: "And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire to come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men. And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles . . . And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast . . ." So if people are so anxious to get a view of great outward miracles, they may have the chance. We hear of great things being done today in religious circles. Maybe these are forerunners of the two witnesses or perhaps even Satan is deceiving people today by little samples of supernatural power.

We will be content to stay close to the comforting presence of the Holy Ghost, and keep our noses stuck in the Bible, instead of in spurious wonders. We still have miracles, many we could tell about, some we do not even realize have happened. But our attention is fixed --- not on miracles, gifts, ministries or what have you ---- but on the Lord Jesus Christ our lovely Redeemer and soon coming Bridegroom. He is all we want.

(Reprint 1959)

GOD SO LOVED

Margaret Keener

“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.

Love, alone, could prompt such a sacrifice, for God had made no promise of life to the disobedient. He was under no obligation. It was all of grace. In scope, it reaches from before creation — into eternity. Redemption was a mutual agreement between Father and Son. Christ offered Himself as the "Lamb slain" from before the foundation of the world. This Son was the Word of eternal life, which was with the Father in the beginning. I Jn. 1:3

16 God loved mankind that He had created. "Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created." Rev. 4:11 Not one thing that He pronounced "good," in the beginning — was untouched by the curse of sin when Adam and Eve sinned. "The heavens show forth His handiwork," but they are defiled by Satan and his wicked spirits. Plant and animal life — yes even the very ground from whence man came was cursed. Gen. 3:17 Yet in its fallen state, the world is still beautiful. No artist can do justice to the vivid coloring of the Grand Canyon — or picture the beauty of pine covered mountains by moonlight. What was earth's former beauty if it is so beautiful even after its marring?

The tree of Life was given the place of honor in the garden — for it typified Christ. He will always be the central figure in God's plans. His people are always at liberty to eat as much of Christ as they desire. The tree of knowledge of good and evil stood among the other trees until Eve's desire placed it in the midst of the garden of her mind. The fallen seek to bring others to their level. Thus it was that the Serpent beguiled Eve, and she in turn, tempted Adam.

The fruit was not poisonous that it would cause death, for it represented God's government and law and He pronounced it "good." By the law is the "knowledge" of sin. That is we know right from wrong. Their eyes were opened to know good and evil. "...I had not known sin, but by the law..." Rom. 7:7 Desire alone could not slay, but to perpetrate the act resulted in spiritual death. A holy law coming in contact

with the weakness of Eve's flesh, resulted in death. Rom. 7:13

God's wisdom so far surpassed the subtlety of Satan that He used him as a tool to promote His own plan, so "...where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." Rom. 5:20 In the sacrifice of His Son, God provided divine life to as many as believe — a life that cannot be touched by sin, hence it is eternal. "For in the ages to come, He shall show forth the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus." Eph. 2:7. The angels of heaven marvel at the results of redemption. All nature will be in harmony with God, and Christ will forever be the center of attraction. Rev. 3 :13

(Reprint 1948)

THE GAIN OF IDOL BREAKING

It is related that when Mahomet, the conqueror of India, came to a celebrated temple, he was entreated by the priests to spare the idol that stood at its entrance. He was offered a large sum of money also to buy him off. He paused a moment. Then he replied that he would rather be known as a destroyer of idols than a seller of them. He then lifted his mace and dealt the image a blow. His example was followed by members of his retinue. Under pressure of the blows rained upon it, the idol, which was hollow, burst open and discharged a veritable stream of precious stones, far exceeding in value the amount of the ransom offered by the cunning priests. 17

All life costs. The Christian life is no exception. But for every idol which a Christian destroys, he gains more than he loses. Some sorrows would be avoided if self-denial were practiced. Every idol destroyed, means fresh strength for the inner man, a greater sense of God's approval and an increase of usefulness to others. Successful Christian living means living for the spiritual at the expense of the natural; for the future at the expense of the present; for the higher at the expense of the lower. Spiritual success is sure, provided we are willing to pay the price.

* Our difficulties should be food for faith. Let us convert every difficulty into a blessing by taking it to God.

REFLECTIONS

...From the Editor

“Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.” Joh. 8:31-32

18 These verses reflect a glorious and all inclusive provision for believers who would qualify as disciples when they “... continue in my word...” The Master also promised that, “...when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:...” Joh. 16:13 These are promises of over-all marvelous blessings, but there are times in scripture when God literally “targets” certain messages. Paul followed this pattern when he wrote to Timothy, singling out a very specific time and message for his son in the faith. “This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.” II Tim. 3:1 The apostle then lists a number of “signs” announcing some specifics of that momentous time. The same tactic and message is also found in this entreaty. “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;” I Tim. 4:1 The term “...expressly...” carries the same thought and intensity as “...This know....” Paul then adds another list of those characteristics which will abound at the coming of Jesus.

David also followed this same pattern, addressing “...ye sons of men, how long will ye turn my glory into shame?” Psa. 4:2 These had apparently been oblivious to David’s experience with the Lord wherein he cried out, “...Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer.” Psa. 4:1

Thus, he singles them out with this instruction: “But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him. Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah.” V. 3-4 David surely felt the blessing of that separation unto God for himself and knew firsthand that the LORD would “...hear when I call unto him.”

Solomon also dictates a very targeted message for the

youth. “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 things God will bring thee into judgment.” Eccl 11:9 Solomon’s counsel to all young people is that “yes you do have the right and liberty to engage in whatever your heart may desire, **“BUT.... KNOW THIS... there will come a day of ‘...judgment...’ and you will be held accountable and may suffer some consequence for the decisions you make.”** He then offers this wise counsel, “Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity.” V. 10

Jesus also employed the expression “this know,” citing specific purpose and direction. “And this know, that if the goodman of the house had known what hour the thief would come, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be broken through. Be ye therefore ready also: for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not.” Lk. 12:39-40 Jesus here likens Himself to a thief, exhorting men to employ extreme urgency and awareness regarding His return. Peter asked the question, “...Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, (disciples) or even to all? And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing.” V. 41-43 It is imperative that those today who would be ready for His eminent return apply this urgency to their own lives and be diligently occupied “...to give them their portion of meat in due season,” meaning that there is no substitute for adhering diligently to God’s Word. His reward will quickly follow, for “Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath.” V. 44

ANNOUNCEMENT:

The Ladies High Calling Retreat will be held on Friday April 28 through Sunday April 30th at Grace Chapel Church in Carbondale, Kansas. There is no registration fee. Out of town guests please note, arrangements have been made with Spring Hill Suites by Marriott hotel. Room rate is \$50.00 per night including breakfast. Two queen beds per room.

Please do not contact the hotel to make registration arrangements as we will do that for you based on the information provided when you register.

For further information contact Pat Bryan at pbsunflower68@gmail.com or call 417-540-2088

Prepared For Battle (Cont'd.)

Dr. Vicky Moots

“...and having on the breastplate of righteousness.” Eph. 6:14b: The breastplate of the Roman soldier was not a solid piece of metal. It was composed of multiple interlocking and overlapping pieces of metal which were tied together with leather cords, similar in function to fish scales. Thus, it would provide protection but still allow movement. The lower portion of it was secured in place with the girdle, or belt.

Its main purpose was to prevent a fatal wound to the vital organs, especially the heart. The Word of God is also over-lapping and interlocking with itself and reveals to us the righteousness of God. It will guard our hearts and guide us into right living as we apply it to ourselves. Eph. 5:9 shows us that truth and righteousness are connected, just like the breastplate is held in place with the girdle: “(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;).” We learn the truth of God’s Word and how to live right by obeying it. The Pharisees knew the Scripture, and so does Satan, but were unable to live it. It is not
20 enough to know the truth; it must be applied personally and enter into the heart.

In order to live right, we must be righteous. But what is righteousness? According to the dictionary, it is “having the quality of being just and doing what is right and moral.” The breastplate is God’s righteousness, and it is given to us. Righteousness is not something which we could earn or achieve on our own, or Christ would have died in vain. (Gal. 2:21)

In Isa. 59:17 we read that God “...put on righteousness as a breastplate, and a helmet of salvation...” How, then, can we be considered worthy to wear God’s righteousness as our breastplate? Paul gives us the answer in Rom. 10:10: “For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

God’s righteousness is made possible for us by the death of Jesus on the cross, as Paul declares in II Cor. 5:21: “For he [God] hath made him [Jesus] to be sin for us, who [Jesus] knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him [Jesus].” Jesus took our sin upon Himself and imputed unto us His righteousness.

Our own righteousness is as filthy rags in God's eyes (Isa. 64:6) and could not be used as a breastplate. But in Christ we are made righteous, as Paul states in Phil. 3:9: "And be found in him [Christ], not having mine own righteousness...but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

In addition, Paul informs us in I Cor. 1:30 that Christ, Himself, is our righteousness. It is the life of Christ in us that makes us righteous in God's eyes as a new creation.

Can you see how all of these separate Scriptures regarding righteousness, in both the Old and New Testaments, overlap and interlock together to form a protective breastplate for our armor?

The breastplate protects the heart, but it is worn on the outside of our garments and is visible to the world. Likewise, the righteousness of God, through Christ, protects our heart but it needs to become practical in our lives so that it will be manifest on the outside, and others can see Christ in us through our "right living". Paul instructs us regarding this in Rom. 6:13: "Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God...and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God."

21

When we put on the breastplate of righteousness, we are actually putting on the new creation life of Christ (Who is our righteousness), as Paul admonishes us to do in Eph. 4:24: "And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."

The verb form in the Greek that is used in the phrase "having on the breastplate of righteousness" is the same as that used regarding girding our loins. It refers to a completed action (in the past) which you did for yourself (by accepting Christ), yet continues in the present. We are not only made righteous as a new creation by the blood of Jesus, but our walk is continually being cleansed of all unrighteousness as we confess our sins. I John 1:9

The breastplate of God's righteousness is impenetrable to the lies of Satan. He may be able to knock us down or cause us to stumble, but he cannot inflict a fatal wound to the heart of a believer who has been declared righteous by the High Court of Heaven. We do not have to fight to protect our righteousness; we are protected by His righteousness. If God has justified us, then no one can condemn us, as Paul declares in Rom. 8:1: "There

is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus...”

Therefore, we can safely stand against Satan’s accusations without fear, having put on the breastplate of God’s righteousness and securing it in place by girding our loins with the truth of God’s Word.

Our breastplate is not only intended for our protection but for us to put on display to the world the righteousness of Christ made practical in our lives as we live a life separated unto Him.

Eph. 6:15: “...And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.” It’s time to put on our shoes, no barefoot warriors allowed! What’s so important about our feet in our battle against Satan? Let me answer that question by discussing the importance of feet in the physical body and how they are constructed.

22 The foot is actually one of the most complex parts of the human body, because feet must bear the weight of the whole body. They are not simply rigid structures, but are flexible and are composed of 26 bones each, along with joints, muscles, soft tissue and nerves that provide balance and enable us to stand upright, and to perform activities such as walking, running and jumping.

Each foot is divided into 3 sections (a trinity: the forefoot, midfoot and hindfoot). The forefoot includes the toes and metatarsals (longbones), and the hindfoot consists of the ankle and heel bone (calcaneus). The midportion of each foot has a collection of 5 bones (the number of grace in the Scripture) that form an arch, which is considered to be one of the strongest structures in architecture. It is God’s grace that enables us to stand spiritually.

Feet can become diseased or deformed by wearing improperly fitting or non-supportive footwear. Shoes that are too tight, have pointed toes, high heels or that don’t support the arch will eventually result in such things as bunions, callouses, corns, hammertoes, plantar fasciitis or even foot ulcers. These things are not only painful and affect mobility, but can also become dangerous to our health.

In II Chron. 16:12-13 we read that King Asa became “exceedingly diseased” in his feet and died. In v. 12 it states that he died because he failed to seek the Lord and had only sought

the physicians for help. Spiritually speaking, we can become diseased in our feet (affecting our Christian walk and our ability to stand) if our feet are not properly shod and protected, or if we fail to seek God for help.

All soldiers need combat boots to protect and to support their feet. The footwear of the Roman soldier had a much different appearance than that of soldiers today, but it served the same purpose. Verse 15 of Eph. 6 is actually part of v. 14 which begins with "Stand therefore..." In order to stand very long, a soldier's feet and ankles must be properly supported with appropriate footwear.

The Roman soldiers wore sandals with thick leather soles which were studded with hobnails to provide a secure foothold. The sandals also had leather straps which wrapped around the arch and the ankles for added support to help protect them from twisting.

Proper footwear is equally important to us spiritually, and so we must be sure to protect our spiritual feet as soldiers in God's army. The shoes which we have been provided and commanded to wear have been designed to be guaranteed to fit properly, unless altered from their original design. The long-lasting material from which these shoes have been fashioned is not man-made; it has been imported from heaven. It is the "gospel of peace." Therefore, it is eternal and will never wear out.

23

Col 1:21 tells us that before we accept Christ as Savior, sin separates us from God and makes us His enemies. But the good news (the Gospel) is that Jesus died to make peace and to bring us to God: "having made peace through the blood of his cross..." (v. 20).

Paul then tells us in Rom. 5:1-2 how to put on these gospel shoes: "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand..." We must put them on by faith. Faith is the shoehorn we use to put on our shoes.

The "gospel of peace" shoes are the right size for each one of us. We cannot add anything to the gospel (such as our own works), or take anything away from it, or the shoes will not fit, and we will be unable to stand. Jesus is the only way to salvation and peace with God: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we

must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

That name was what made the lame man in Acts 3:6-7 whole and able to stand: "...In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk. And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up: and immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength." It is the same name whereby our feet and ankles have the strength to stand before Satan.

The word "preparation" in the Greek text means "foundation or firm standing", and the word "peace" means "that which has been bound together." Therefore, with our feet properly shod, by faith, we can stand firmly on the foundation, knowing that we have been made one with Christ, bound together with Him, and nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus.

24 The three pieces of armor described, in Eph. 6:14-15 are all necessary in order for us to be able to stand. David, in Ps. 18:32-33, appears to also be describing our armor, but in slightly different words: "It is God that girdeth me with strength [the girdle of truth], and maketh my way perfect [the breastplate of righteousness]. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet... [Our feet are shod for firm standing with the gospel of peace.]"

Another thing to realize about the term "gospel of peace" is that it reminds us that the war has already been won, and by faith we can claim that victory and take our stand.

(To Be Continued)

Enduring Thought

"Give God thy heart, thy service and thy gold;
The day wears on and time is waxing old."

This sundial inscription is found in a garden near
Gloucester Cathedral England.

* 65 muscles are put in use when we frown and it takes only 13 to smile. Let us smile and not work our face overtime.

* There must be always a seeking **after** God, a continuous conscious seeking, or there is an unconscious, inevitable, drifting **from** God.

Cursed Of God

Anon

"...he that is hanged is accursed of God..." Deut. 21:23

Here is the Lord's own interpretation of His death. The Holy Sinless Son of God, hanging on the cross, was accursed of God. The leaders of the Jews who crucified Him were aware of this, and thought that they had ended His claim of being the Messiah by thus having seen that He was nailed to a tree. They argued that one accursed of God could never be accepted by the Jews as their Anointed King. In their lack of a real knowledge of the Scriptures they erred so egregiously, for they were actually fulfilling the Law when they crucified the Man, Jesus. **THE KEY OF SUBSTITUTION** is the only one that can unlock the mystery as to how a man can be accursed and blessed at the same time. But Paul, deeply taught in the Jew's religion, and afterward interpreting the types and shadows of the Old Testament, gave us the key in these words, "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law being made a curse for us..."--Gal. 3:13

To realize what the curse of the Law teaches, read Deut. Chaps. 17-30. These are Moses' words to Israel, which Paul applies to all men saying, "As many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse, for it is written, **cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things that are written in the Law to do them.**" Gal. 3:10 That is, the curse of the broken law rests upon all men and there is only **ONE WAY OF ESCAPE** --- through faith in Him Who became a curse for us.

The earliest record of the message proclaimed by the Apostles after Pentecost were concerning Christ as having "been hanged on a tree." The Lord's death as a martyr, or by weakness in Gethsemane, or being thrown over the cliff, or drowned, or in any other manner than by being nailed to the cross would **not** have been the remedy, nor have atoned for man's deliberate disobedience of God's law. Sin against a holy God needs the atonement of blood. The death of Calvary was God's only way to save mankind. It was by propitiation --- by the carrying of the fallen Adam to the cross, cursed and corrupt as regards the sin question. Man must bear the curse of God forever unless he accepts the Man Who bore the Curse of God for him.

The Season of Praise

Emily Sallee

One major topic of the minds of so many today during this Christmas Season is, “What should I get so-and-so for Christmas? What will he or she like, what’s trendy, what is in season?”

The simple theme of this brief message is: “Praise is always in season.” That is the thought that kept returning to my mind as I reflected and prayed about this article.

My mind can be a pretty crowded place, so the fact that “praise is always in season” kept ringing in my ears is significant. In fact, if you could take a peek into my thought life, you would see me standing in the middle of a busy intersection, trying to direct traffic. The vehicles appear innumerable and all the drivers are in various states of confusion and are quickly getting irritated. They are shouting at me, and I am shouting back: “Hang on while I overthink this.”

26 Speaking of Christmas presents, my dear sister Sarah got me a T-shirt that reads, you guessed it, “Hang on while I overthink this.” Whether in the busy-ness of the holidays or, like me, in your everyday life, it can be tempting to analyze and overanalyze, to inventory, to problem-solve, to strategize, to organize and calendarize.

Wise counsellors have encouraged me throughout the years to “turn things over to the Lord.” Peter exhorts all men to cast, “...all your care upon Him, for He careth for you.” I Peter 5:6 I have always wondered—“How do I do that?” Then I think, “well, I better analyze that...” Oops, I’m right back to where I started.

The Spirit used a recent sermon by Bro. Roger Sadberry to turn on a light bulb for me about overthinking. My ears really pricked up when he explained that our tendency to analyze and overanalyze sometimes translates into our prayers. We want to make sure to inventory each care, say it just the right way, explain it fully and completely, repeat it over and over again. I even controlled the order in my younger days, starting with thankfulness, then inventory the needs, offer possible solutions,

make sure to explain everything very clearly, and then close in Jesus' Name.

In short, I sure saw myself in Roger's comments, for my "effectual fervent prayers" are hardly distinguishable sometimes from good old-fashioned worry sessions that end with me thinking, "Well, what do I do now?" I guess, rinse and repeat.

Did you notice? The focus of that kind of prayer is on me—what I pray, how I pray it—instead of on Christ. Our brother offered a different approach: praise, and, when I fact-checked his advice...I found out he was right. Note the following verses:

"I will extol the Lord at all times;
his praise will always be on my lips.

I will glory in the Lord;
let the afflicted hear and rejoice.

Glorify the Lord with me;
let us exalt his name together.

I sought the Lord, and he answered me;
he delivered me from all my fears."

Psa. 34:1-4 ESV.

27

Praise is always in season. But—and here's the overthinking again—if I'm just praising at all times, how will God know that I really need help...with these very specific things... along this very specific timeline...if I don't tell Him (specifically using the right words)? Consider this answer from God's Word.

"O Lord, You have searched me and known me.

You know my sitting down and my rising up;

You understand my thought afar off.

You comprehend my path and my lying down,

And are acquainted with all my ways.

For there is not a word on my tongue,

But behold, O Lord, You know it altogether."

Psalm, 139: 1-4 ESV

Oh...there is not a word on my tongue...that God does not already know... Praise is always in season. But I have solutions to offer. Consider Isaiah 25:1 ESV.

"Lord, you are my God;

I will exalt you and praise your name,

for in perfect faithfulness
you have done wonderful things,
things planned long ago.”

God’s faithfulness is not dependent on me. His solutions pre-date my proposals. God’s provisions are already there, even before I ask for them.

Paul loudly declares, “Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” Eph. 1:3

Praise is always in season. No caveats, no footnotes. One recent sermon proclaimed Psalm 100:4. “Enter His gates with thanksgiving and His courts with praise.” These words indicate that the gates are the very realm of thanksgiving...we are thankful for what God has given us, eternal life. In the innermost courts is the realm of praise...we praise Him for who He is. Let’s go in!

28 This requires, in my prayer life, getting the focus off of myself and onto Christ. When the focus is on me, doubts and feelings of unworthiness creep in...I think, “But...what about...” I focus on what I am bringing to the table, not what God has already provided...When the focus is on praise, it is on Him, Who He is, and His all sufficiency.

Paul also exhorts, “... let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.” Heb. 12:1 I’m not the author, nor the finisher...but let us all remember what is always in season and on trend:

PRAISE!

ONE OF THESE DAYS

One of these days I’m going home--

On this earth No more I’ll roam.

One of these days

I’m going to see Jesus

One of these days,

Oh, one of these days!

--Beula Clark

Christ Went All The Way

C.H. Smith

“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;” Rom.3:23 “...the wages of sin is death;...”

Rom. 6:23

Jesus knew from the beginning the price He would have to pay for man's redemption. He received the wages of sin which was due when He died upon the cross and darkness was over the face of the whole earth. But that darkness was nothing compared to the depth of darkness which He was plunged into, when the true light from God, the Father, was entirely cut off from Him, and He cried out, "...My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Matt. 27:46 The anguish He then endured far exceeded all other pain He suffered. I think the drops of blood, as it were, that dropped from His brow at Gethsemane were caused from the knowledge of this very period of anguish which He anticipated as just ahead. He was delivered up for our transgressions, our offenses, and now has the keys of hell and death.

Surely Christ went all the way, the way that all of us would have gone if He had not paid our debt in full. "He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification," which latter becomes ours by faith. I think Satan mustered together all the forces of his evil powers to try and hold the Lord Jesus in the power of death. But it is written in the Holy Scriptures that Christ arose and has those keys. Yea, when Christ arose He unlocked those doors for each one of us, and passed us out of death into life, eternal life. And not only so, Christ Jesus, the Lord of Life and glory, took us all the way with Him — "Far above all principality and power," and seated us in the heavenlies from where we shall later reign with Him.

Yes, "...we are more than conquerors..." through Christ Jesus, because He has overcome the world, the flesh and the devil for us. For many years after Calvary those Jewish disciples found it difficult to lay hold of the fullness of God's Grace, and many find it so today, clinging to many things which they have picked up in the synagogues, the teaching of the sects in Christendom. Many speak so ignorantly of the Scripture. One well-meaning Christian woman said to me, "There is one thing sure, every Christian has got to pay his own debts."

It is wonderful that the Lord looks upon and reads our hearts instead of just listening to the words uttered from our

mouths. Often I have heard folk end a prayer by saying: "In Jesus name we ask it," and I have done so myself. But we do not have to tell Him. He knows if we are praying as Jesus would pray or as He does pray. John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," reveals the condition required by Jn. 14:14 "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

Christians who do not yield themselves fully unto Him, and who are disobedient need not fool themselves by just repeating "...in Jesus Name,..." but note what that term signifies. "...My meat is to do the will of Him that sent me, and to finish His work..." Jn. 4:34. "...Lo, I come to do thy will O God..." Heb. 10:7 "Ye call me master and Lord: and ye say well, for so I am." Jn. 13:13 "Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." I Cor. 7:23. "Verily, verily, I say unto you, the servant is not greater than his Lord; neither He that is sent greater than He that sent Him." Jn. 13:16 "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance, for ye serve the Lord Christ." Col. 3 :23,24

30 Paul learned the secret of always yielding to the Spirit that the power of God might rest upon him continually. In his testimony before King Agrippa, he reveals the first step every child of the Lord must take when he said, "...I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision." Acts 26:19 He ever moved in the will of the Lord, and in order to do so he must "rightly divide the Word of God." He knew the Old Testament Scriptures, when he had this heavenly vision, but he received his Gospel of Grace for this Church Age, direct from the Lord Jesus. Gal. 1:11-12 He did that which he admonishes others to do. He "studied to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing THE WORD OF TRUTH.

What a privilege some saints have trampled in the dirt. They had the chance of winning the Prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, instead of being saved as by fire. As the days grow darker, as each day goes by and every condition of the world grows worse and worse, and scarcely any of the people of God have an ear to hear, and we groan within ourselves over their failure, I hear Him say, "Let not your heart be troubled. Behold I come quickly." And in spirit with John (after he had seen a picture of these last days) we also cry out, "Come Lord Jesus, come quickly."

(Reprint 1948)

The Descender

Jack W. Bannister

“Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” Phil. 2:6-8

This is a pen-picture of the descent of the Lord Jesus Christ from the heights of divine glory to the depths of divine judgment. This is an epitome of His life-day.

In the Bible we find many things that typify Jesus in His suffering, and His glory. For instance, the sacrifices portray Christ in different aspects of the cross. The Psalms are full of prophecies concerning His life and death, as Jesus Himself reiterates. Lk. 24:25-27,44 In fact, all New Testament doctrine is typified in the Old Testament. It is a word picture of New Testament truth and prophecies yet to be fulfilled. We derive many spiritual lessons from the physical structure of the promised land (Canaan). It speaks to us of our heavenly inheritance. The kings of Canaan are vivid reminders that we have opposition in holding that inheritance. These are a few truths we learn about this land. But there is another picture shown us in the only river of any consequence in Palestine. The entrance into that land flowing with milk and honey, as we see in the book of Joshua, was through the crossing of the river Jordan. Many historic events cluster near this body of water. It has been the scene of battles, escapes, and even healings. John baptized Jesus in this river. It was the eastern boundary of the land (Num. 34:12). This river, with its meaning, "the descender," is the subject of our article; and is a vivid geographical portrayal of the Scriptures quoted above. 31

This river has its source in Mt. Hermon, which is composed of three prominent peaks. This is sometimes referred to as the "sacred mountain." The three peaks suggest to us the three Persons of the God-head in divine counsel before the foundation of the world. This universe was not swung into existence haphazardly or on the spur of the moment. God does not operate in that manner. He purposed, planned and then performed His will. The Father

conceived the redemption plan whereby His Son would come into the world and die for lost humanity ; the Holy Spirit seconded the thought and the Son agreed to do it. Hermon "devoted" shows us why He agreed — His undying devotion to His Father. He was equal with God, for He was God; (John 1:1) but He laid aside His glory and descended into the world to fulfill His Father's plan. From this elevated plateau, (Hermon) the Jordan River begins its descent. Three lakes interrupt the rush of its downward course, and they reveal to us three outstanding parts of Jesus' life from boyhood to the cross.

The Waters Of Merom

32 The first lake we encounter in our journey is the waters of Merom. Merom signifies "high place or lifting up." In Luke 2:41-52, these waters are shown to us. It was at this juncture in His young life, at the age of twelve, that Jesus was in the temple astonishing the doctors and religious leaders of that day. His mother and Joseph, in seeking Him, and upon finding Him, received a pertinent answer to their question. "How is it that you sought me? Wist you not that I must be about my Father's business?" It was at this time no doubt, that the Holy Ghost revealed to Jesus that He was the Son of God. This episode unveils Him as truly human. He learned the Scriptures by having them taught to Him by His parents, and by reading them Himself. And He believed what the Holy Spirit showed Him. Having this glorious revelation that He was the Son of the living God, yet a phrase in verse 51 tells us another side of the story — "He went down." Thus, verse seven of our text begins to be fulfilled. We read no more of Him for eighteen years. Many have attempted to probe these silent years in the life of Jesus without success. We will not endeavor to do so, but in passing we will note this. This was His training period — this was His life lived before God. It was hidden from man. If God wanted us to know about it, He would have had it written so we could know. Men have written book after book about these silent years, but it can only be based on supposition, and sometimes even become devilish. Only recently we heard of a book about Jesus which portrays Him in a different way than the Bible does. Our flesh cringed at some of the cogitations of the depraved brain that thought of such things. We say again, if God

wanted us to know He would have told us. We had better stick to the Word as it is written if we want to know the truth.

Sea Of Galilee

From these waters of Merom, the Jordan descends over 600 feet until we reach the Sea of Galilee. Galilee's meaning "circuit," signifies the completeness of the public ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ. At that time there were no cities located in or near the regions of the Jordan River until we approach the Sea of Galilee. These cities that surround this body of water tell us by their meanings some wonderful, spiritual things.

Bethsaida, "house of provision" carries a pregnant thought. This was where most of His mighty works were done. Matt. 11: 20 Sad to say, the people of this city did not appreciate the message that He brought to them. However, we know of three men, Philip, Andrew and Peter (John 1:44) who were products of this infamous town. Listen to Peter's words upon Jesus' question, "Whom say ye that I am?" "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." At another time when people were deserting Jesus, He turned to His disciples and said, "Will you also go away?" and Peter answered those never to be forgotten words, "To whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Divine provision. There are citizens of Bethsaida living among us today, that are afraid of that phrase "eternal life." But that doesn't change the provision of God. Man may believe or not believe, but the provision remains the same.

33

The next city we encounter is Capernaum, "village of comfort." Mk. 1:21- 28 Again we find Him astonishing them with His teachings. In chapter two He enters a house where a crowd is assembled, and "preaches the Word" unto them. This alone begets faith and brings comfort. Paul exhorted Timothy to preach the Word. A man afflicted with the palsy received faith to receive healing because of the Word.

Magdala, "tower" suggests the worship that is due Him as the Savior. Mary Magdalene was from this city and she was one of the chief worshippers of Jesus. Jesus cast seven demons out of her. Mk. 16:9 She was the one to whom He first appeared after His resurrection. Those that worship Jesus receive a lot of first things from Him.

Jericho, "place of fragrance" tells us of that spiritual quality

that drew men to Himself. It was that spiritual fragrance emanating from Him that melted hearts and changed them, and provoked worship from His followers. Thank the Lord, that fragrance still permeates the atmosphere of faith, still the magnetic force which separates from death to life to glory.

Last Eventful Week

Leaving the Sea of Galilee en route to the next body of water (Dead Sea) we encounter twenty-seven rapids. This speaks to us of the time from Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem on the foal of an ass with the crowds crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David," and carries us through that week to His crucifixion. The rapid-fire happenings of those few days bring us to a glorious climax — His arrest in the garden of Gethsemane — His appearance and mock trial before the judgment seat of Pilate — His humiliation before the Roman soldiers and His subsequent crucifixion. Thus is fulfilled verse eight of our text. The descent of the Jordan River from its source to its end is over 3,000 feet. Jesus went down —down — down — from the highest and loftiest place in the glory, to be made sin for the human race. II Cor. 5:21

34

The Dead Sea

This body of water represents the cross. Nothing lives in this water. It is in reality a dead sea. All the waters from the Jordan River and its tributaries flow into it. And it has no effluent. Having no outlet tells us that God has shut man up to Calvary. "There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). It seems that men will go every direction, try everything except the cross. But the fact remains—there is no outlet. Now this Sea is rich in minerals. The deposits discovered there have been a source of amazement to men for many years. This reminds us of the riches that are afforded us in the cross (2 Cor. 8:9).

This One who descended has been exalted and has been given a name which is above every name. And He is going to descend again "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God" and we will be caught up to meet Him in the air. His descent paved the way for our ascent.

(Reprint 1960)



Our Corn Crib

"Buy The Truth, and Sell It Not"

Tracts

A Problem, Solution & Triumph	Freedom	Pauline Sanctification
Arrangement & End of Ages	Gifts of the Spirit	Pauls Superlatives
Attack against the Truth	Glossolalia	Phoebe
A Burning Truth	God- A Triunity	Preaching Another Jesus
A Growing Relationship	Gospel Records	Predestination
Caught up with Paul	Gospels, Acts & Epistles	Preparation of the Bride
Cherubim & Seraphim	Holy Spirit- Baptism & Anointing	Ranks in Resurrection
Chaste Virgin	How to Receive Holy Spirit	Resume of What we Teach
Comfort in Time of Sorrow	It is Finished	Salvation for the Body
Death, Hell & Lake of Fire	Jesus Heals Today	Scriptural Terms Defined
Destiny of the Wicked	Judgement Seat of Christ	Words on Eternal Security
Diamonds in the Rough	Law or Grace	The Adams Case
Dying Daily	Life Everlasting	The Two Adams
Earnest but Wrong	Light on the Law	The Sin Offering
Eternal Life	Living Ones	The Unforgiven Sin
Extra! Extra!	Made Sin for Us	This is That
Faith	Man Child- Rev. 12	Times of the Gentiles
Fear of the Lord	Mercy or Judgement	Tithing
First Day of the Week	New Birth	Water Baptism
Five Much Mores	Not Legislation, Revelation	Wheat and Tares
Five Consequences	Oneness of Christ	Why am I Not Healed

Books of the Bible

Genesis	Esther	Luke	1, 2 Thessalonians
Exodus	Job	John	1, 2 Timothy
Leviticus	Ecclesiastes	The Acts	Philemon
Numbers	Song of Solomon-A.S.Copley	Romans	Hebrews, James, Titus
Joshua	Paul's Gospel in S.O.S.-A.Mooneyhan	1, 2 Corinthians	2nd John
Judges	Isaiah	Galatians	Jude
Ruth	Prophets-Joel, Nahum, Hab, Malachi	Ephesians	Revelation
1, 2 Samuel	Zechariah	Philippians	
Ezra	Matthew	Colossians	

Music CD's

Wings of Faith - Live- '79 feat. Greg, Milita, Rick, Sue & Frank
 Tabernacle Choir Album- 1963- Beloved Grace & Glory Favorites

*All titles free of Charge. Call, Write, or e-mail your order

grace and glory

P.O. Box 831

Grandview, Missouri 64030

**WITH ONE
ACCORD IN
PRAYER**

