

THE NEW CREATION

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“Prove ALL things and hold fast to what is good.” – 1 Thess. 5:21.

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Pray



In his New York Times interview, Edgar Cayce claimed he started reading through the Bible at the age of twelve and had read the Bible from beginning to end around 56 times. He also said in that interview that he knew there were many people who had read through the Bible more times than that. He also said that reading the Bible encouraged him to want to help others.

Certainly, if one reads the Bible with an open mind, one will see that one of the admonitions of the Bible is to help others. In fact, many world organizations claim that Israel (along with the USA) is the first nation to provide aid to other countries when disasters occur from natural to man-made. GOD's promise to Abraham was that through your seed all the nations of the Earth will be blessed. The Bible tells us that Israel was to be a **light** unto the Gentiles and that the Messiah would come from Israel to carry out this mission.

In fact, the Messiah tells his disciples after His resurrection from the dead by His Heavenly Father (Luke 24:44-49):

"These are the words which I spoke unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the Law of Moses and in the Prophets and in the Psalms concerning Me." (The Holy Scriptures at that time.)

*Then opened He their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures, and said unto them, "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to be raised from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name among **all** nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And you are witnesses of these things. And behold, I send the **promise of My Father** upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."*

In this account, we recognize that Jesus gave the disciples understanding of the Scriptures. Before this time the disciples did not fully understand the Scriptures even though they had read some of them, been with the Messiah and had been taught by him. Jesus

often rebuked the Pharisees because they had read the Scriptures so many times and yet did not understand them.

He said to Nicodemus: “You are Israel’s teacher and you do not understand these things? Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things and you do not believe; how then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?”

When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them to pray, he gave them what is known as the ‘Lord’s prayer’. However, further in that chapter (Luke 11), he says”

“Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.’ And suppose the one inside answers, ‘Don’t bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can’t get up and give you anything.’ I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need. So I say to you: *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.* Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much **more** will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

Jesus is telling the disciples to pray for the Holy Spirit because the Holy Spirit is given through asking the Father, seeking the Father and knocking on the Father’s door. Jesus is also pointing how important it is to help your brother who is in need.

In Colossians 1:9-10 Paul writes:

“For this reason, since the day we heard about you, we have not stopped praying for you. We continually ask God to fill you with the knowledge of His will through **all** the wisdom and

understanding that the Holy Spirit gives, so that you may live a life worthy of the Lord and please Him in every way: bearing fruit in every good work, growing in the knowledge of God, being strengthened with all power according to His glorious might so that you may have great endurance and patience, and giving joyful thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of His holy people in the kingdom of light. For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son He loves, in whom *we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.*”

Here Paul is telling us how important it is to pray for knowledge, wisdom and understanding from the Holy Spirit of GOD for each other. He is verifying the words of the Messiah that we must pray that GOD give us the Holy Spirit in order that we have the **true** understanding of the Scriptures.

Prayer and the encouragement to pray is throughout the Holy Bible. God even asked strong characters in the Old Testament to pray for others. Some characters prayed for themselves, some prayed for others and others prayed for Israel. Clearly praying is how we communicate with God and should be done often and it is through the answer to prayers that God gives us the Holy Spirit to understand the mission of the Messiah and GOD’s ultimate plan for the world of mankind. In Luke 5:16 we are told that Jesus often went off by himself to pray to His Heavenly Father.

God told Abraham to pray for Abimelek. After Abraham prayed Abimelek was healed. (Genesis 20) Abraham’s servant prayed and he found Rebecca and brought her to Isaac. (Genesis 24) Isaac who knew the **promise** GOD gave to Abraham (through you shall **all** the nations of the Earth be blessed) prayed for Rebecca to have a child. Jacob and Esau were the answer to this prayer. (Genesis 25) Jacob prayed:

“O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, Lord, you who said to me, ‘Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper,’ I am unworthy of **all** the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps. Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. But you have said, ‘I will

surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.”

Yahweh answered Jacob’s prayer with a name change and what became the nation of Israel. Moses prayed often for this nation. Sometimes for God to forgive them and sometimes for God to deliver them.

In Judges 13 we read that Manoah prayed to God for Him to show Manoah and his wife how to raise Samson. In Judges 16 is the account of Samson praying to have the strength to destroy the Philistines. These two prayers were answered and gave inspiration to the Israelites.

Hannah prayed a powerful prayer and Yahweh answered her prayer with the righteous child Samuel. Samuel became a zealous leader of Israel who anointed Saul and then David. In Samuel 12 is the account of Samuel addressing the nation of Israel for asking for a king. Here is the account and what Samuel says:

“The people all said to Samuel, “Pray to the Lord your God for your servants so that we will not die, for we have added to all our other sins the evil of asking for a king.” “Do not be afraid. You have done all this evil; yet do not turn away from the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart. Do not turn away after useless idols. They can do you no good, nor can they rescue you, because they are useless. For the sake of His great name the *LORD will not reject His people*, because the LORD was pleased to make **you** His own. As for me, far be it from me that I should sin against the LORD by failing to pray for you. And I will teach you the way that is good and right.”

Samuel is stressing that he must pray for his nation; his brethren.

In 2 Samuel 7 King David prays:

“Who am I, O Sovereign Lord, and what is my family, that You have brought me this far? And now, Sovereign Lord, in addition to everything else, You speak of giving Your servant a lasting dynasty! Do You deal with everyone this way, O Sovereign Lord? What more can I say to You? You know what your servant is really like, Sovereign Lord. Because of your **promise** and according to Your will, You have done **all** these

great things and have made them known to Your servant. How great You are, O Sovereign Lord! There is no one like You. We have never even heard of another God like You! What other nation on earth is like Your people Israel? What other nation, O God, have you redeemed from slavery to be your own people? You made a great name for Yourself when you redeemed Your people from Egypt. You performed **awesome miracles** and drove out the nations and gods that stood in their way. You made Israel Your very own people forever, and You, O Lord, became their God.”

Notice how David is recognizing GOD for all He has done for David and Israel. He is pointing out what GOD has done in the past and what GOD is going to do in the future. Certainly, David’s God is an **AWESOME GOD!**

In 1 Kings 8 David’s son Solomon recognizes the answering by GOD of David’s above prayer. He also recognizes GOD’s grace and mercy. King Solomon prays to His Heavenly Father also in front of the Temple the Israelites have built. King Solomon offers many thanks and recognizes GOD’s greatness and he prays:

“In the future, foreigners who do not belong to Your people Israel will hear of You. They will come from distant lands because of Your name, for they will hear of Your great name and Your strong hand and Your powerful arm. And when they pray toward this Temple, then hear from heaven where You live, and grant what they ask of You. In this way, **all** the people of the earth will come to know and fear You, just as your own people Israel do.”

Unfortunately, His own people did not always follow His commandments and principles, but there were always some who had complete faith in the GOD of Israel. Again, prayer was the means to show the great power of GOD.

At the usual time for offering the evening sacrifice, Elijah the prophet walked up to the altar and prayed, “O Lord, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, prove today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant. *Prove that I have done all this at your command.* O Lord, answer me! Answer me so these people will know that you, O Lord, are God and that you have brought them back to yourself.”

Immediately the fire of the Lord flashed down from heaven and burned up the young bull, the wood, the stones, and the dust. It even licked up all the water in the trench! And when all the people saw it, they fell face down on the ground and cried out, “The Lord—**He is God!** Yes, the Lord is God!” (1 Kings 18:36-39)

Elisha who learned from Elijah and had the same faith as Elijah also relied on prayer.

“Don’t be afraid!” Elisha told him. “For there are more on our side than on theirs!” Then Elisha prayed, “O Lord, open his eyes and let him see!” The Lord opened the young man’s eyes, and when he looked up, he saw that the hillside around Elisha was filled with horses and chariots of fire. As the Aramean army advanced toward him, Elisha prayed, “O Lord, please make them blind.” So the Lord struck them with blindness *as Elisha had asked.* (2 Kings 6:16-18)

The Assyrians came upon Jerusalem to destroy it. They mocked the God of Israel. King Hezekiah prayed:

“O Lord, God of Israel, you are enthroned between the mighty cherubim! You **alone** are God of **all** the kingdoms of the Earth. You **alone** created the Heavens and the Earth. Bend down, O Lord, and listen! Open your eyes, O Lord, and see! Listen to Sennacherib’s words of defiance against the living God. It is true, Lord, that the kings of Assyria have destroyed all these nations. And they have thrown the gods of these nations into the fire and burned them. *But of course the Assyrians could destroy them! They were not gods at all—only idols of wood and stone shaped by human hands.* Now, O Lord our God, rescue us from his power; then all the kingdoms of the Earth will know that you alone, O Lord, are God.” (2 Kings 19:14-19)

Isaiah came to king Hezekiah and told him that GOD would deliver Jerusalem from the Assyrians and God did it just like Isaiah prophesied.

Manasseh, the son of Hezekiah, did not learn from his father how wonderful and powerful the God of Israel was. He disobeyed the commandments of GOD and worshipped idols. However, the Lord spoke to Manasseh and His people, but they ignored all His warnings. So the Lord sent the commanders of the Assyrian armies,

and they took Manasseh prisoner. They put a ring through his nose, bound him in bronze chains, and led him away to Babylon. But while in deep distress, Manasseh sought the Lord his God and sincerely humbled himself before the God of his ancestors. And when he prayed, the Lord listened to him and was moved by his request. So the Lord brought Manasseh back to Jerusalem and to his kingdom. Then Manasseh finally realized that the Lord alone is God! (2 Chronicles 33:10-13)

Manasseh learned that if he truly repented and prayed to God for forgiveness that God would answer his prayers. This lesson is not only for Israel, but for the whole world of mankind. God answers the prayers of the truly repentant and those who *strive* to be like His Son.

Ezra and Nehemiah both prayed to God for Israel. Nehemiah loved the GOD of Israel very much and wanted to rebuild the temple in Jerusalem. He prayed:

“O Lord, God of heaven, the great and awesome God who keeps His covenant of unfailing love with those who love Him and obey His commands, listen to my prayer! Look down and see me praying night and day for Your people Israel. I confess that we have sinned against you. Yes, even my own family and I have sinned! We have sinned terribly by not obeying the commands, decrees, and regulations that you gave us through Your servant Moses. Please remember what You told Your servant Moses: ‘If you are unfaithful to Me, I will scatter you among the nations. But if you return to Me and obey My commands and live by them, then even if you are exiled to the ends of the Earth, I will bring you back to the place I have chosen for My name to be honored.’ The people You rescued by Your great power and strong hand are Your servants. O Lord, please hear my prayer! Listen to the prayers of those of us who **delight** in honoring You. Please grant me success today by making the king favorable to me. Put it into his heart to be kind to me.”

Notice the humility and sorrow in this prayer and the recognition of Israel’s backsliding and God’s promise to Israel. Of course, the book of Nehemiah is the fulfillment of this prayer.

Job listened to God and prayed for those who failed to comfort him and to say the truth about God’s character. God answered this prayer of Job and then blessed Job.

Isaiah was also a prophet of God who prayed for Israel. He prayed:

“Because I love Zion, I will not keep still. Because my heart yearns for Jerusalem, I cannot remain silent. *I will not stop praying for her until her righteousness shines like the dawn, and her salvation blazes like a burning torch.* The nations will see Your righteousness. World leaders will be blinded by your glory. And you will be given a new name by the Lord’s own mouth. *The Lord will hold you in His hand for all to see - a splendid crown in the hand of God.* Never again will you be called “The Forsaken City” or “The Desolate Land.” Your new name will be “The City of God’s Delight” and “The Bride of God,” for the Lord delights in you and will claim you as His bride. Your children will commit themselves to you, O Jerusalem, just as a young man commits himself to his bride. Then God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride. O Jerusalem, I have posted watchmen on your walls; they will pray day and night, **continually**. *Take no rest, all you who pray to the Lord.”*

In the book of Daniel we read of the great faith of Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego and some others. We are told that Daniel is a devout prayer to the GOD of Israel. God delivers Daniel from those who hate him. Ezekiel mentions Noah, Job and Daniel for their righteousness and Jesus recognizes Daniel’s prophecies. In Daniel 9 we are given one of Daniel’s prayer to the GOD of Israel. After his prayer, Daniel is visited by the angel Gabriel and given prophecies regarding Israel and the coming kingdom of GOD.

Jonah was ordered by God to go tell Nineveh of their great sins and the punishment that was going to come upon them. Jonah refused to do this. He was thrown into the sea and swallowed by a great fish. From inside the fish Jonah prayed. Part of his prayer was:

“As my life was slipping away, I remembered the Lord. And my earnest prayer went out to You in Your holy Temple. Those who worship false gods turn their backs on all God’s mercies. But I will offer sacrifices to you with songs of praise, and I will fulfill all my vows. For my salvation comes from the Lord alone.”

Jonah is recognizing the mercy of his God and that salvation **only** comes from this God. God answers Jonah's prayer and Jonah gives the message to Nineveh. Nineveh repents and turns to the God of Israel. This is God's commission to us and the commission Jesus Christ gave to the disciples: 'Repent and turn to the God of Israel – the God of Noah, Abraham, Isaac and the many other prophets that came from Israel.

The prayers of the faithful, the kings, and the prophets of Israel in the Old Testament were recorded not only for the Israelites, but for those who would follow the Messiah of God – GOD's only begotten Son, those who want to be the Bride of His Son, those who will sit on the right hand of the Son who is sitting on the right hand side of His Father – our AWESOME God!

Jesus not only talked to His disciples about prayer, as mentioned earlier He taught them how to pray, why to pray, and to pray humbly. In John 10 the words of Jesus regarding His disciples are:

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep. I know My own sheep, and they know Me, just as My Father knows Me and I know the Father. So I sacrifice My life for the sheep. *I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also.* They will listen to My voice, and there will be **one** flock with **one** shepherd. The Father loves Me because I sacrifice My life so I may take it back again. No one can take My life from Me. *I sacrifice it voluntarily.* For I have the authority to lay it down when I want to and also to take it up again. *For this is what My Father has commanded.*" My sheep listen to My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. I give them eternal life, and they will never perish. No one can snatch them away from Me, for My Father has given them to Me, and He is the most powerful. **No one** can snatch them from the Father's hand."

Jesus is telling the apostles who He is and who His Heavenly Father is and what His Heavenly Father's plan is. Some are brought into the flock now, but others will be brought in later and at the end all of them will be in ONE flock. Those in the flock are those who listen to the voice of Jesus -- a voice of peace and security that the sheep appreciate. Jesus is also foretelling of His voluntary sacrifice for the sins of the world. The flock is to pray for all of this.

In John 17 is the record of the prayer Jesus gives to His Heavenly Father to verify all of this. Matthew, Mark and Luke all record the internal struggle Jesus has with His voluntary sacrifice for the sins of the world. Jesus prays that GOD consider delivering Him from what is to take place, but that it not be His will, but rather the will of His Father. This is so important to remember; we are to pray that ultimately it be **God's will** and not our will. All the recorded prayers in the Bible verify that if it is **God's will** it will eventually bring glory to God and to His people. Jesus notes that the will of the Father glorifies both the Father and the Son and, eventually, the FLOCK.

In Acts 1, after Jesus is resurrected from the dead by GOD, the apostles ask Jesus, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore **our** kingdom?" Jesus replies:

"The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the Earth."

This is an affirmation to the commandment Jesus gave to the apostles that they would succeed in carrying out the gospel message throughout the Earth. In Acts 2 we read the following words of Peter:

"People of Israel, listen! God publicly endorsed Jesus the Nazarene by doing powerful miracles, wonders, and signs through Him, as you well know. But God knew what would happen, and His prearranged plan was carried out when Jesus was betrayed. With the help of lawless Gentiles, you nailed Him to a cross and killed Him. But God released Him from the horrors of death and raised Him back to life, for death could not keep Him in its grip. *God raised Jesus from the dead*, and we are all witnesses of this. Now He is exalted to the place of highest honor in heaven, **at God's right hand**. And the Father, as He had promised, gave Him the Holy Spirit to pour out upon us, just as you see and hear today. Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to

you, to your children, and to those far away - all who have been called by the Lord our God."

And after these words of Peter, we are told all the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer.

The prayers of Jesus to God are answered in Acts 1 and 2. Not only are the prayers answered, but we are told that this was God's prearranged plan and that the promise is to them, their children and to all those who believe and live lives showing this belief.

One of the first prayers recorded in Acts relates to the saint named Stephen:

But Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, gazed steadily into heaven and saw the glory of God, and he saw Jesus standing in the place of honor at God's right hand. And he told them, "Look, I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing in the place of honor at **God's right hand!**" Then they put their hands over their ears and began shouting. They rushed at him and dragged him out of the city and began to stone him. His accusers took off their coats and laid them at the feet of a young man named Saul. As they stoned him, Stephen **prayed**, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." He fell to his knees, **shouting**, "Lord, don't charge them with this sin!" And with that, he died.

In Acts 9 and 10 we read of the praying that took place in the conversion of Saul and the Apostles bringing Gentiles to God through Jesus. In Acts 12 the brethren prayed long and hard for the release of Peter.

Throughout his letters Paul encouraged prayer. He prayed for the brethren in general. He also prayed for specific brothers and sisters in the Lord. In particular, the letter to the Ephesians has much on prayer and its benefits

Remember to pray for the brethren, Israel, and most of all the coming kingdom of Yahweh.

James encourages and inspires us (James 5:16-18):

“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. *The earnest prayer of a righteous person has great power and produces **wonderful** results.* Elijah was as human as we are, and yet when he prayed earnestly that no rain would fall, none fell for three and a half years! Then, when he prayed again, the sky sent down rain and the Earth began to yield its crops.”

J. Sochacki

A Prayer of Jesus John 17

“Father, the hour has come. *Glorify Your Son, that Your Son may glorify You.* For You granted Him authority over all people that He might give eternal life to all those You have given Him. Now this is eternal life: **that they know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom You have sent.** I have brought You glory on earth by finishing the work You gave Me to do. And now, Father, glorify me in Your presence with the glory I had with You before the world began.

I have revealed you to those whom *You gave Me* out of the world. They were Yours; You gave them to Me and they have obeyed Your word. Now they know that everything You have given Me comes from You. For I gave them the words You gave Me and they accepted them. *They knew with certainty that I came from You, and they believed that You sent Me.* I pray for them. I am **not** praying for the world, but for those You have given Me, for they are Yours. All I have is Yours, and all You have is Mine. And glory has come to Me through them. I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to You. *Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.* While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name You gave Me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.

I am coming to You now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have *the full measure of My joy within them.* I have given them Your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. Sanctify them by the truth; **Your word is truth.** As *You sent Me* into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify Myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

My prayer is not for them alone. *I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as You*

are in Me and I am in You. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that You have sent Me. I have given them the glory that You gave Me, that they may be one as we are one. I in them and You in Me - so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that You sent Me and have loved them even as You have loved Me.

Father, I want those You have given Me to be with Me where I am, and to see My glory, the glory you have given Me because You loved Me before the creation of the world. Righteous Father, though the world does not know You, I know You, and they know that You have sent Me. I have made You known to them, and will continue to make You known in order that the love You have for Me may be in them and that I may be in them.”

Hannah’s Prayer

1 Samuel 2

“My heart rejoices in the Lord; in the Lord my horn is lifted high. My mouth boasts over my enemies, for I delight in Your deliverance. There is no one holy like the Lord; there is no one besides You there is no Rock like our God.

Do not keep talking so proudly or let your mouth speak such arrogance, for the Lord is a God who knows, and by Him deeds are weighed.

The bows of the warriors are broken, but those who stumbled are armed with strength. Those who were full hire themselves out for food, but those who were hungry are hungry no more. She who was barren has borne seven children, but she who has had many sons pines away. The Lord brings death and makes alive; He brings down to the grave and raises up. The Lord sends poverty and wealth; He humbles and He exalts. He raises the poor from the dust and lifts the needy from the ash heap; He seats them with princes and has them inherit a throne of honor.

For the foundations of the Earth are the Lord’s; on them He has set the world. He will guard the feet of his faithful servants, but the wicked will be silenced in the place of darkness. It is not by strength that one prevails; those who oppose the Lord will be broken.

The Most High will thunder from heaven; the Lord will judge the ends of the Earth. He will give strength to His king and exalt the horn of His anointed.”

The Fullness of Faith

“Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen!” (Heb 11:1)

The above is the scriptural definition of faith, one of the very few scriptural definitions given. A bit further in verse 6 we read, *“Without faith it is impossible to please God. He who comes to Him must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.”*

If one wants to please God because he trusts in Him, then he is immediately faced with an urgent need to know what faith is, and how he can have it in his life. So the definition of faith again becomes an important need for the seeking Christian. Let's consider the definition verse a bit further. And let's consider it in a more personal way, applied to oneself. Then it is read, *“Faith is now in me as the reality of things I hope to receive from God; the proof in me of things God has promised to me that I cannot see.”* Because I have faith in me now, I know that all God promises through that faith will come true in changes to me now, and in glories that are to follow.

Faith then is a “substance” or “reality” to each one in the sense that it is so real that it affects changes in one's life. These changes in one's life that are brought about by this faith are also the evidence in him that the faith is real. That faith is based on a strong trust in God and a certainty that all God has promised, which all become each one's hope, will in absolute fact take place; some in changes in his life now, and some in what will be brought to be in him in future glory.

So faith then is ALL the information God gives to each one to help him to understand His will; what He wants him to do and to become throughout his life. The accumulation of this faith is a lifelong process through which God guides each one as he develops into the person God wants him to be, full of knowledge and understanding. Not only is he changed now, he is also perfected in time and thus qualified for the inheritance

God has planned for him in spiritual realms from before the foundation of the world. (2 Cor 3:18; Col1:12).

All faith is primarily revealed to us through God's word. But much of it cannot be fully understood, and certainly not appreciated apart from experience, and so God leads us through experiences each day that are designed to teach us lessons, and to give us opportunities to apply all the lessons we learn, especially in helping others.

Even though faith is a developing process in the knowledge and understanding we gain from God, one thing that does not change about it is that God expects us always to actively live all the faith we know and understand at any given time. Faith needs to be continually and fully lived, and not just put on a shelf as something we only believe. At this point, it needs to be clarified that there is a good deal of faith we can only know and understand but not live. Such would be what we understand of God and his dealings with mankind in the past, and his proposed dealing with mankind in the future. We can know and understand all these things to varying degrees, but we cannot live them. But still, these are all "substance" and "evidence" to us, and thus are strongly also our faith.

This "knowledge" faith cannot be "lived", but it still does have a very important role in our lives. The broad understanding of God and Christ, and the understanding of God's plans for mankind lead us to not only understand and greatly appreciate all the love and wisdom they show in this, but these convictions of faith also strongly motivate us to want to serve them in all the ways that we can live our faith toward them. And this faith that we can live, we need to live each day, for only in this can we please God in doing his will for us that we might be conformed to it.

To see and appreciate the full extent to which we have to live this faith, let us consider first a lesson in faith and then three scriptures that very well define this path of faith that we need walk in this life.

Romans 14 speaks of those who eat only certain foods compared to those who eat all foods. And it speaks of those who see one day as special above others (a Sabbath), and others who see each day the same (all as Sabbaths). Verse 6 declares that each of these should be done to God's glory. Verse 3 confirms "*God has received him.*" Verse 4 confirms "*God is able to make him stand.*" Verse 5 confirms "*Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.*" Verses 3 and 10 tell us not to despise or show contempt to those who live by restrictions in their lives, and also to not judge those who do not live by restrictions in their lives. Verse 22 sums up the individuality of the faith that each is to have in how they live their lives. "*Do you have faith, have it to yourself before God. Happy is the man who does not condemn himself in what he approves!*"

The sum of this is to realize that faith that is to be lived can be very individual in some parts, and it must conform to one's conscience concerning himself; that is it must be lived in his own integrity. He cannot follow the faith of another, and he cannot expect others to follow his faith. As important as his integrity is to him, so he must realize the integrity of each other one is just as important to them. Each must learn fully to respect the faith of others and their individual integrity in that faith! There are three important scriptures that define the fullness of the faith we must live. Let us look at these.

Romans 14:23 says that if one doubts, he is self-condemned, for he does not do what he does from faith! Then it concludes with this confirming principle, "*Whatsoever is not of faith is sin!*" That defines one whole aspect of our life of faith. If we do anything, and don't have faith that God will approve what we do, because our conscience does not approve it, then we commit a sin of commission! Thus, we can only do what we do on the condition that we have a clear conscience concerning it, thereby knowing that God approves it. Living this keeps us from one whole category of sin in our lives!

Another scripture with a defining principle concerning faith is James 4:17, "*If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do*

and doesn't do it, it is sin for them!" This states a principle opposite of that in Romans 14:23. This states that if one has faith of a good thing to do; that is his conscience convicts him that he is to do it, and thus he knows that this is God's will for him, and yet he does it not, then he commits a sin of omission! This then shows us that ALL that we have by faith we need to live, and this then keeps us from another whole category of sin in our lives!

These scriptures are two guiderails that keep us from falling off of our path of faith and into sin. We find we must do ONLY what we have by faith and a clear conscience and ALL that we have by faith and a clear conscience. The actual path of faith that we walk each day is well defined in the third scripture, quoted earlier, Heb. 11:6, *"Without faith it is impossible to please God. He who comes unto God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him."* This path of walking only in faith and fully in faith each day is the only way to live pleasing to God and to grow daily in greater faith and greater pleasing to Him.

Can we see the fullness of faith? Can we see our need to live only by faith, but also to fully live that faith? Can we see the wisdom of God to fill our consciences with His principles of righteousness, that by these we might know His will and be guided into it? Our faith and conscience mature daily, but our integrity in these must remain full each day! Let us live fully in our faith and integrity each day, and let us respect and encourage our brethren to do the same.

J. Knapp

Psalm 42:8

By day the Lord directs his love,
at night his song is with me,
a prayer to the God of my life.

Psalm 102:17

He will respond to the prayer of the destitute;
he will not despise their plea.

Proverbs 15:8

The Lord detests the sacrifice of the wicked,
but the prayer of the upright pleases him.

1 Corinthians 7:5

Do not deprive each other except perhaps by mutual consent and for a time, so that you may devote yourselves to prayer.

Hebrews Verses

The First Three Verses of Each Chapter

Notice the harmony in these verses in showing God's character, the role of His Son, and our place in God's plan for the world of mankind. All glory is to God.

- 1) In the past God spoke to our ancestors through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days He has spoken to us by His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, and through whom also He made the universe.
- 2) We must pay the most careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. For since the message spoken through angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment.
- 3) Therefore, holy brothers and sisters, who share in the heavenly calling, fix your thoughts on Jesus, whom we acknowledge as our apostle and high priest. He was faithful to the one who appointed Him, just as Moses was faithful in all God's house.
- 4) Therefore, since the promise of entering His rest still stands, let us be careful that none of you be found to have fallen short of it. For we also have had the good news proclaimed to us, just as they did; but the message they heard was of no value to them, because they did not share the faith of those who obeyed.
- 5) Every high priest is selected from among the people and is appointed to represent the people in matters related to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. He is able to deal gently with those who are ignorant and are going astray, since he himself is subject to weakness.
- 6) Therefore, let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in

God, instruction about cleansing rites, the laying on of hands, the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

- 7) This Melchizedek was king of Salem and priest of God Most High. He met Abraham returning from the defeat of the kings and blessed him, and Abraham gave him a tenth of everything. First, the name Melchizedek means "king of righteousness"; then also, "king of Salem" means "king of peace."
- 8) Now the main point of what we are saying is this: We do have such a high priest, who sat down at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in heaven, and who serves in the sanctuary, the true tabernacle set up by the Lord, not by a mere human being.
- 9) Now the first covenant had regulations for worship and also an earthly sanctuary. A tabernacle was set up. In its first room were the lampstand and the table with its consecrated bread; this was called the Holy Place.
- 10) The law is only a shadow of the good things that are coming - not the realities themselves. For this reason it can never, by the same sacrifices repeated endlessly year after year, make perfect those who draw near to worship. Otherwise, would they not have stopped being offered? For the worshipers would have been cleansed once for all, and would no longer have felt guilty for their sins.
- 11) Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see. This is what the ancients were commended for. By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible.
- 12) Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him He endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
- 13) Keep on loving one another as brothers and sisters. Do not forget to show hospitality to strangers, for by so doing some people have shown hospitality to angels without knowing it.

Giving Thanks in Everything.

*Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in **all** circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.*

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 (ESV)

“Give thanks in **all** circumstances.” Is this possible? The answer is “Yes, it is possible.” It is important to note what the text states and what it doesn’t say. The text does not say we should give thanks **for** every circumstance, but it does say that we should “give thanks **in** every circumstance.” There is a big difference between the two. God would not require us to do the impossible.

While we are not required to be thankful for sickness, pain, loss of love ones, possessions, etc., how is it possible to give thanks while in or undergoing any of these unwanted circumstances?

Before going further, let us look at the three words: sympathy, compassion, and empathy:

- *Sympathy* moves you to feel for the other person’s situation or condition.
- *Compassion* moves you not only to feel for another’s situation but to do something for them.
- *Empathy* moves you to enter into the feelings and become one with that person in their distress or situation.

There is something that we can learn in any circumstance. Any of the above three mentioned can be learned best by experiences. Unless we have experienced something, there is no way that we can truly enter deeply into the feelings of what someone else is experiencing. But if we have, then we can be used of the Lord to be a real blessing to them in their need. Sympathy, compassion and empathy aren’t something that comes about naturally. By nature, most of us have inherited a hardness of heart that only can be softened by divine love through personal experiences. This can happen only as we look to the Lord for why He has us undergoing these experiences.

Someone who has never had financial needs, normally has little compassion for someone less fortunate, even though they may feel obliged to give something to help them. Feeling sympathy, compassion or empathy are quite different than just feeling obligated.

Someone who has never lost a “cherished” loved-one can never enter into the feelings of someone who is grieving for a spouse, a child, or a friend that was especially close. Without the experience, we can only imagine what

they are going through. They can be sympathetic only in a limited degree and in offering help and comfort.

Anyone who has never suffered severe pain or a life-threatening illness, such as cancer, can only imagine what another who is suffering is thinking and experiencing. But if someone has suffered similarly, it will make all the difference in his or her ability to help the one suffering. This being the case, enables one to not only sympathize but to also enter a much deeper level of empathizing because they have been in their shoes and know much of what the other person is experiencing and is then able to offer wiser counsel and encouragement (2 Cor. 1:3, 4).

What are some ways we can give thanks in a situation that would not seem something we would normally do? In the grieving for someone who has lost a loved one, it may be helpful to share some personal experiences and memories that you remember having when one you loved died. Contrary to the way some think, that we should avoid mentioning their names, it is good and helpful to freely talk about the one that is temporarily gone; for this is telling the grieving person that they are not alone in remembering them; that they have not been forgotten and that we are thankful that we were blessed to have known them.

Our theme text says, *“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances...”* It is always good to remember that we are never alone in any of our circumstances. To truly realize this, should bring us comfort and peace, something we can be grateful for and give thanks for in our prayers. To remember that the Scriptures hold out to us many promises such as *“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid”* (John 14:27). Jesus said, *“I will never leave you, nor forsake you...”* (Heb. 13:5). May we take such promises to heart and give thanks as we pass through difficult circumstances knowing that our Lord is there beside us.

Not only are we to be thankful and rejoice that we always have the Lord with us in all circumstances, but to realize also that we have brothers and sisters in Christ who understand and are praying and supporting us. This is surely another great blessing for which to give thanks and render to God our praise.

E. Weeks

2 Peter 3:9

The Lord is not slow in keeping His promise, as some understand slowness. Instead He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but wanting everyone to come to repentance.

A Prayer of Daniel

Daniel 9

“Lord, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love with those who love Him and keep His commandments, we have sinned and done wrong. We have been wicked and have rebelled; we have turned away from Your commands and laws. We have not listened to Your servants the prophets, who spoke in Your name to our kings, our princes and our ancestors, and to all the people of the land.

Lord, You are righteous, but this day we are covered with shame - the people of Judah and the inhabitants of Jerusalem and all Israel, both near and far, in all the countries where You have scattered us because of our unfaithfulness to You. We and our kings, our princes and our ancestors are covered with shame, Lord, because we have sinned against You. The Lord our God is merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against Him; we have not obeyed the Lord our God or kept the laws He gave us through His servants the prophets. All Israel has transgressed Your law and turned away, refusing to obey You.

Therefore the curses and sworn judgments written in the Law of Moses, the servant of God, have been poured out on us, because we have sinned against You. You have fulfilled the words spoken against us and against our rulers by bringing on us great disaster. Under the whole heaven nothing has ever been done like what has been done to Jerusalem. Just as it is written in the Law of Moses, all this disaster has come on us, yet we have not sought the favor of the Lord our God by turning from our sins and giving attention to Your **truth**. The Lord did not hesitate to bring the disaster on us, for the Lord our God is righteous in everything He does; yet we have not obeyed Him.

Now, Lord our God, who brought your people out of Egypt with a mighty hand and who made for yourself a name that endures to this day, we have sinned, we have done wrong. Lord, in keeping with all your righteous acts, turn away Your anger and Your wrath from Jerusalem, Your city, Your holy hill. Our sins and the iniquities of our ancestors have made Jerusalem and Your people an object of scorn to all those around us.

Now, our God, hear the prayers and petitions of Your servant. For Your sake, Lord, look with favor on Your desolate sanctuary. Give ear, our God, and hear; open Your eyes and see the desolation of the city that bears your Name. We do not make requests of You because we are righteous, but because of Your great mercy. Lord, listen! Lord, forgive! Lord, hear and act! For Your sake, my God, do not delay, because Your city and Your people bear Your Name.”

The Gospel Message

Good News

The Bible tells us that God has four perfect attributes, namely, Wisdom, Justice, Love, and Power and that each one harmonizes with the others. Our Lord Jesus Christ came to earth in harmony with God's will and of His own accord without being pressed or forced to do so (John 10:15-17). God is Love (1 John 4:8), and Jesus is filled with love also for suffering humanity, which has been dragged into the abyss of sin and death by its archenemy, Satan. This enemy through falsehood deceived our mother Eve. She then tempted Adam to disobey God. Thus, both Adam and Eve were cut off from the only Source of life. See Genesis 3:1-9; John 10:10.

Satan is called by our Lord Jesus "*the father of lies*" (John 8:44) because there is no truth in him. Today, he still deceives mankind in many ways by mentally blinding them to God's truth (2 Cor. 4:4). But those who have been called and chosen by God and who continue faithful will not be deceived by this enemy because of the unction and abiding of the Holy Spirit of Truth in them. Fully tested, they will live and reign with Jesus to bring to pass the resurrection of the dead and the restoration of all things. See John 5:28, 29; Acts 3:19-23.

The term *Gospel* means *good news*, the good news being that Jesus Christ died "*a ransom for all to be testified in due time*" (1 Timothy 2:3-6), and not just for believers in this age alone. When men will be raised from the grave during the Millennial Kingdom, they will be instructed and guided into all truth as we read in Isaiah 26:9: "*When your judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness.*" These, will then be given every opportunity to have life in all its fullness, leading them to make a final decision: obey and live forever on the earth, or disobey and return to death, (destruction); but this time it will be the "second death" from which there is no recovery. See Psalm 145:20; Proverbs 2:21, 22; Acts 3:23; Revelation 21:8.

Our God is a God of pure, selfless love for all His creatures. He hates sin in any form because of the destruction it brings. When our Lord Jesus was on earth, he obeyed God's laws perfectly. While loving sinners, He never excused sin, but came to conquer and destroy it and its author, Satan.

Mankind continues to live under Satan's tragic influence. He uses every ancient and modern device to keep people under his control, especially by trying to destroy the character of our Creator. Thus people, unless touched by God's spirit, are in the dark concerning God's true character and wonderful plan for the eventual blessing of all the families of the earth.

Present world governments, institutions and systems continue to be under Satan's influence for we still live in "this present evil world" which will soon be completely destroyed (Dan. 2:34, 35) to be replaced by a new government (a "new heavens and new earth") in which righteousness and peace shall rule supreme under Christ as King. See 2 Peter 3:13; Revelation 19:9-11.

For His faithfulness to His Father's will, even unto death on the cross, Jesus was highly rewarded. He is not only Lord, Savior, Redeemer and King over His church, but by His precious blood He has purchased back all mankind...who by right of purchase belong to Him. All the evil and sorrow that Satan has brought upon the world will be forgotten by mankind in the ages to come, only the lessons learned will remain. Lessons of what the sin of disobedience to God brings have been great and painful, but will be engraved on the minds and hearts of all people forever. They will come to understand and appreciate God's wisdom in permitting evil for a limited time.

Our Lord Jesus Christ, God's Beloved Son (John 3:16) was brought forth before the foundation of the earth and universe itself. See John 1:1-10 and Proverbs 8:22-36. He is called the wisdom and power of God in 1 Cor. 1:24. As the Logos (Word), He was with the Father at the creation of Adam and Eve (Gen. 1:26) who were made in God's image and likeness, with reasoning powers and freedom to choose to either obey or disobey their Creator. They were placed in a perfect and beautiful Garden created just for them, filled with flowers and fruit trees to enjoy which would have sustained life eternally, provided they were obedient to God. See Genesis 2:15-17.

Who can imagine or describe the physical beauty of our first parents or the beauty of their perfect surroundings? We are all disfigured by sin, suffering, sorrow and other evils, being far from the original beauty and perfection. Nevertheless, it is God's Eternal Plan, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to restore mankind, during the coming Millennial Kingdom, back to that original beauty and perfection of

body, mind, and spirit along with a perfect environment and removal of all the evil conditions that have led man to the grave. Death itself shall be no more. See Acts 3:17-21; Isaiah 35; 1 Corinthians 15:25; Revelation 21:4.

Beautiful as all this is, God has provided a still greater and far more wonderful blessing for those who now, during this Gospel age repent of their sins, accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, Lord and King and who dedicate their entire lives to God in full obedience to His will as “a living sacrifice” (Romans 12:1,2). They have now been translated out of the kingdom of darkness and into the Kingdom of the Son He loves! (Colossians 1:12, 13).

If they prove faithful unto death, they are promised a Heavenly home (John 14:1-4), along with glory, honor, and immortality -- the divine nature (Romans 2:7; 2 Peter 1:4) when the Lord returns (1 Thes. 4:13-18). They will live and reign with Christ a 1,000 years (Rev. 20:6). They will “see him as he is and be like him” (1 Jn. 3:1-3).

For Christians to die means to fall asleep in Jesus quietly, without fear, knowing their resurrection has been assured and guaranteed to them by Jesus’ own resurrection. The Bible called this the “first resurrection” because it takes place before the general resurrection of the world of mankind. See John 5:28, 29; Revelation 20:12.

In God’s Kingdom on earth, those resurrected will come to an accurate knowledge of the truth (1 Tim 2:3-6) concerning God, His glorious character and His purpose to restore all obedient mankind to full life, health, peace and joy. It will be then that the prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray, “Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” will be fulfilled (Mt. 6:10). Praise His Name!

Does this all sound incredible? Remember that nothing is impossible to God. This plan, made before the foundation of the world, is a manifestation of God’s justice, wisdom, power and love for each of us and we have His Word that all will be fulfilled to the letter. See Jer. 31:34; Isa. 40:8; 45:23; 55:11; Matt. 24:35; Mk. 13:31; Lk. 21:33. ***Praise our God ~ for He is Good!***

G. Boccaccio

Question and Answer

What Takes Place When You Die?

Let's go back to creation and refresh our understanding. In Genesis 2:7, *"And the LORD GOD formed man of the dust of the ground and then breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; man became a living soul."* So, we will "go out on a limb" and say that every human being, who has been born since Adam, has the "breath of life" (God's breath) in him or her. (Job 27:3).

Physiologically speaking, we breathe in oxygen into our lungs and exhale carbon dioxide, but we do not empty our lungs completely. There is what physiologists call residual air remaining in our lungs after expiration; otherwise, our lungs would collapse.

When a person dies, this residual air leaves the lungs. On Calvary, (Luke 23:46) Jesus shouted, *"Father, I entrust my spirit into Your hands!"* And with those words He breathed His last. Jesus gave up his residual air and died.

We, too, when we die, lose our residual air. Our life returns to the Creator. The writer of Ecclesiastes says (9:5): *'The living at least know they will die, but the dead know nothing. They have no further reward, nor are they remembered.'* Their present life is over and there is nothing that can be done to their history.

Jesus depicts death as a sleep. Being dead is like being asleep (Matthew 9:24, Luke 8:52). When Jesus was talking to the disciples, he said, *'Our friend Lazarus is asleep, but we must go so that I can waken him from his sleep.'* The disciples said, *'If Lazarus is sleeping he will be fine.'* Jesus then told them directly, *'Lazarus is dead.'* (John 11:11-14).

Many translations use sleep and death interchangeably. Some translations have Job saying, *'I will sleep in the dust.'* Others say, *'I shall die in the dust.'* Similarly, in Acts 7:60 after Stephen asks GOD to forgive them, some translations say he fell asleep, others say he died.

The apostle Paul's famous and encouraging words are: *'Brothers and sisters, we do not want you to be uninformed about those who sleep in death, so that you do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have*

no hope. For we believe that Jesus died and rose again, and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him. According to the Lord's word, we tell you that we who are still alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will certainly not precede those who have fallen asleep. For the Lord himself will come down from heaven, with a loud command, with the voice of the archangel and with the trumpet call of God, and the dead in Christ will rise first. After that, we who are still alive and are left will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And so we will be with the Lord forever. Therefore, encourage one another with these words.' (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18)

Therefore, we see that death is compared to sleep in the scriptures, by Jesus and by Paul. When we go to sleep and wake up not remembering anything, we are like in a state of death. If you have had surgery and been put under anesthesia then you know what death is like. The writer of Ecclesiastes tells us: *'Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might, for in the realm of the dead, where you are going, there is neither working nor planning nor knowledge nor wisdom.'* (9:10). This sleep can last a long time, but when you wake it seems as though time has not passed.

D. Donnarummo

Following Jesus

Matthew 11:28-30

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

Jesus did not supervise the construction of churches, or write creeds that must be followed or write vows that people had to recite. He did not put anyone in charge and he told His followers to be servants. He met in people's homes and went to public places to tell people the Gospel message of the coming kingdom of God and its blessings. In Matthew 23: 4-15, are words of warning from Jesus on what God's people should be like and who should be their only master, teacher and father. In fact, Jesus says in this passage that His followers (disciples) are equal as brothers and sisters. Jesus did not create a religion and His disciples were first called Christians in Antioch by others. (Acts 11:26)

A Portrait of Jesus: Jesus is Present in our Pain

“And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:20



After Jesus had died, there were two disciples walking on the road to Emmaus from Jerusalem. It was a 7 miles walk. As they walked away from Jerusalem, they were leaving their hopes and dreams behind. A stranger joined them and inquired what they were discussing and they shared their heartache, their disappointment, and their grief over the loss of Jesus with this stranger. What they didn't realize was that the hope they thought was lost was walking right beside them. Only seeing the tragedy of the events that had transpired in Jerusalem a few days earlier, they missed the reality of who was walking that dusty road with them.

The stranger then began to open up the Old Testament scriptures to them, telling of the suffering that the Messiah must go through to enter his glory. *“Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself,”* Luke 24:27. This stranger's words were powerful and surprising to them and when they neared their destination, they asked the stranger to stay and break bread with them. Only then when he broke the bread and prayed did these two men realize who had been walking beside them all afternoon. It was Jesus, the Messiah, alive and well, and suddenly as the reality of Jesus resurrection took hold of their hearts, their hope was raised from the grave!

How often, when we are overwhelmed with our pain and grief, do we miss the fact that Jesus is walking right beside us. Just because we don't recognize Him at our side, does not mean He is not there. Just because we don't see Him working doesn't mean He isn't right there with us working behind the scenes. Jesus assured us with these words, *“And be sure of this: I am with you always!”* He gave us His word, but first He gave His life for us. There should be no doubt in our minds that what He has promised is true! He is walking beside us every moment of every day...He is present in our pain whether we see Him or not. Hallelujah what a Savior!

D. Mathewson

Children's Story Corner: Our Evil World



Dear Ones,

With all the evil in our world, my granddaughter asked, 'If God can control everything, why doesn't He control Satan?' Many of you are probably wondering about this, too. The good news is God is controlling everything. He is even controlling Satan.

God controls the universe so that no other planet crashes into earth, keeping earth safe for mankind. As the Bible tells us at Ecclesiastes 1:4, "*..the earth remains forever.*" Whenever God chooses to, He controls the animals. Daniel the prophet was put into a den full of hungry lions, but God kept the lions from eating Daniel. God "*shut the lions' mouths...*" (Daniel 6:22) There are many examples in the Bible of God controlling the weather. One is in Genesis when God caused the wind to blow so the water of Noah's flood would go down and the ground would dry out.

God is controlling Satan. Satan is not allowed to destroy the earth or all mankind. God does not allow Satan to take us away from God's love for us. Romans 8:38 says, "*neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" God is only allowing Satan to be evil for a limited time, not forever. Revelation chapter 20 says at just the right time, God will send an angel who will bind Satan and throw him into a deep pit, where Satan will be shut up for 1000 years. Finally, Satan will be thrown into a lake of fire, never to be seen again.

Until God puts Satan away for good, we are in a war. We must fight off Satan. He is trying to win us away from God. Satan won the battle for the first people God made, Adam and Eve, by lying and by tricking Eve into thinking a snake was talking to her. Eve believed Satan's lie instead of continuing to believe what God said. Satan is fighting to make us prisoners of war by telling many lies and by performing many tricks. We must stay close to God by believing what He and Jesus have said in the Bible and by keeping God's commandments. We must pray often and meet with other Christians. As Paul said, "*Put on the full armor of God so that you*

may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the Devil." (Ephesians 6:11) Paul tells us that our armor is our belt of truth, our shoes of the good news of peace, our shield of faith, our helmet of salvation, and our sword of the spirit, which is the word of God.

We must pray for God's help in our battle against Satan. We want to fight the good fight and win. When Satan is put away forever, we will understand how God is working everything out for good to those who love Him.

Please keep on asking questions and sending them to the editor of this magazine.

Your Aunt Nancy

Isaiah 2:4

"He will judge between the nations and will settle disputes for many peoples. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore."

Isaiah 11:9

"They will neither harm nor destroy on all My holy mountain, for the Earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea."

Isaiah 65:25

"The wolf and the lamb will feed together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox, and dust will be the serpent's food. They will neither harm nor destroy on all my holy mountain," says the Lord."

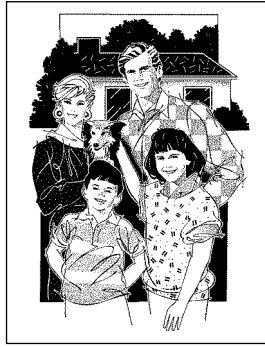
Joel 3:10

"Beat your plowshares into swords and your pruning hooks into spears. Let the weakling say, "I am strong!"

Micah 4:3

"He will judge between many peoples and will settle disputes for strong nations far and wide. They will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation will not take up sword against nation, nor will they train for war anymore."

The Family Corner: Teach Your Children



Children love to hear stories from adults, especially stories from their parents on what it was like when they were children. The Jews were instructed to teach their children about the miracles God performed for them in order that they would never forget that they were God's chosen people. In Exodus 10:1-2 the words of God are: *"Return to Pharaoh and make your demands again. I have made him and his officials stubborn so I can display my miraculous signs among them. I've also done it so you can tell your children and grandchildren about how I made a mockery of the Egyptians and about the signs I displayed among them—and so you will know that I am the LORD."*

The Jews were reminded often to obey God and His commandments and to teach their children to live righteously and to take care of each other, especially the downtrodden. The book of Deuteronomy is filled with these reminders, In Deuteronomy 4:9 we have: *"Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them fade from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them."* In Deuteronomy 11:18-21 we have: *"Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land the LORD swore to give your ancestors, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth."*

God's design from the beginning was to have a father and a mother who would teach their children His ways. Too often, especially in the USA, the father does not spend time with his

children. The strongest and most loving families have a father who teaches the children the ways of God. The book of Proverbs written by the wise King Solomon reminds us repeatedly that the discipline of a father and mother is good for both the parents and the children. In Proverbs 23, we have: *“Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old. Buy the truth and do not sell it, wisdom, instruction, and insight as well. The father of a righteous child has great joy; a man who fathers a wise son rejoices in him. May your father and mother rejoice; may she who gave you birth be joyful!”*

Jesus rebuked His disciples for not letting the children come to Him and to learn from Him. Jesus was eagerly learning and sharing about His Heavenly Father at a very young age. Children ask your parents to talk to you about their childhood and what things they learned and what things they can teach you.

The apostle Paul wrote about the family relationship in Ephesians 6:1-4, *“Children, obey your parents because you belong to the Lord, for this is the right thing to do. Honor your father and mother. This is the first commandment with a promise: ‘If you honor your father and mother, things will go well for you, and you will have a long life on the earth’. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.”* The responsibility of the father to discipline and love his children is an example to each of us of how the heavenly Father disciplines those whom He loves and those whom He wants to follow in His Son’s footsteps. The heavenly Father wants His children to have a glorious life and earthly fathers should want the same for their children.

Hebrews 12 is an excellent account of the relationship between the heavenly Father and His children and how it is shown in the relationship between an earthly father and his children. Hebrews 12:1-5: *“And have you forgotten the encouraging words God spoke to you as his children? He said,*

'My child, don't make light of the LORD's discipline, and don't give up when he corrects you.' For the LORD disciplines those he loves, and he punishes each one he accepts as his child. As you endure this divine discipline, remember that God is treating you as his own children. Who ever heard of a child who is never disciplined by its father? If God doesn't discipline you as he does all of his children, it means that you are illegitimate and are not really his children at all. Since we respected our earthly fathers who disciplined us, shouldn't we submit even more to the discipline of the Father of our spirits, and live forever? For our earthly fathers disciplined us for a few years, doing the best they knew how. But God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way.'"

J. Sochacki

Matthew 18:2-5

"And He called a child to Himself and set him before them, and said, 'Truly I say to you, unless you are converted and become like children, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever then humbles himself as this child, he is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.'"

Luke 9:47-48

"But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took a child and stood him by His side, and said to them, 'Whoever receives this child in My name receives Me, and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me; for the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great.'"

Matthew 18:10

"See that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that their angels in heaven continually see the face of My Father who is in heaven."

Matthew 18:14

"So it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones perish."

Prayer List

"Far be it from me that I should sin against the Lord by failing to pray for you." (1 Samuel 12:23)



Let us be Prayer Warriors for our Brethren!

Anas, Julie - FL	Ibasfalean, George – FL
Allen, Peggy & Russell – VT	Jones, Arlene - VA
Anderson, Family– WI (d)	Karavas, Anna - CA
Andrada, Delores & Family – CA	Knapp, Jamie – NH
Bews, Sandra and Family TX (d)	Knapp, Joseph & Pat – IL
Boswell, Arlene – IL	Ketko, Marion – MI
Buxton, Jean & Family - UK	Leavitt, Denise & Richard – ME
Carpenter, Gloria – KY	Lepitre Family - IL
Caudle, James – WA	Howes, Paul & Carla - UK
Cline, Ruth – MO	Kingsmith, Beresford - UK
Collins, Bert - NJ	Mazzotta, Eva – FL
Cooper, Carmela – NJ	Miller, Alain – Canada
Csutor, Judith – CT	Mitchell, Mitch - France
Day, Ronald – PA	Moore, Ralph & Maryellen – CA
Dickson, Roberta Jo – CA	Munoz, Sue - NY
Dobbins, Esther - NH	Newling, Roseanna – NH
Donnarummo, Joan & Dan – OH	Niewiowski, Elaine – NY
Duhaime, George & Martha – CT	Parker, Geraldine – CA
Dunn, Kim - IL	Penton, Jim – Canada
Fantuzzo, Sharon - NY	Phillips, Stella – OK
Feliciano, Carmen - NY	Riggio, Fran – NH
Fischer, Mike & Liz – WI	Rowe, Bryan - UK
Foster, Jean – IL	Schultz, Dan – MN
Gary, Inez – VA	Schwartz, Ruth – TX
Hauslein, Karen – MD	Seminoff, Brenda - CA
Hawk, Barbara – PA	Tuscia, Priscilla – FL
Hildebrandt, Lois - FL	Trent, Frank & Thelma - FL
Hogrebe, Joan – MO	Teunis, Doris – IL
Hopkins, Linda & Andrew – VA (d)	Weaver, Eddie - NY
Iannaccone, Bob & Marie – IL	White, Ken & Joan - NY
	Wisdom Hezekiah Ikpo - Nigeria
	Zychal, Ruth & Craig– NJ

(d) = death in the family

Entered into rest: No notices

Important: If you know anyone in the names listed above whom no longer need special prayers, please advise us so we may remove their names. Thank you.

Bible Correspondence Course New Graduates & Notices

Congratulations to the following students who have completed their course and have been awarded a Certificate.



Basic Course

Nelson Kinyua – Kenya
David Lacombe - Iowa

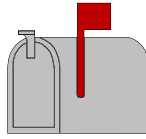
Ransom Course

Marco Soranno - Italy
Pastor Vincent Onkoba Oigara - Kenya
Ekobe Emmanuel Nembe - Republic of Cameroon
Dom Lenya Bokowe Sammy - Republic of Cameroon
Ernesto L. Agonoy - Hawaii
David Lacombe - Iowa

You are invited to view the following websites:

<http://www.cdmi.org> (Christian Discipling Ministries International)
<http://www.cbchurch.com> (Christian Believers Fell. in NH)
<http://www.biblefellowshipunion.co.uk> (Bible Fellowship in UK)
<http://www.bbschurh.org> (Lombard, IL)
<https://sites.google.com/site/quietwatersdevotions/home>
<http://www.cartyorkshire.co.uk> (CART)
<http://www.campblessing.com> (Camp Blessing)
<http://www.homechristians.net> (Fraser Valley, B.C.)
<http://www.christianrespondent.com> (R. Frye)
<http://www.bibelgemeinde.at> (Free Bible Students, Austria)
<http://www.bibelgemeinde.org> (Mission Work Bible Students, Austria)
<http://www.kronline.at/bibelstudien> (Free Bible Students, Germany (English))
<http://www.softgrafic.com/bibbia> (Italian Bible Students)
<http://www.newcovenantfellowship.org.au> (New Covenant News- Australia)

Letters from Our Fellowship and Readers



From Our Mail Box

We thank you for your correspondence. Please send us your comments, questions, and article:

I always enjoy reading the magazine, I find it encouraging. May our Father richly bless you all. Keep up the good work.

Guilford Tompkins of England

I do enjoy reading the New Creation Magazine, keep up the good work!

Janice Highway of Michigan

In our beloved Jesus' name, I greet you with a prayer for your peace and continued reliance upon Jesus for all things:

*"My body, soul and spirit thus redeemed,
Sanctified and healed I give, O Lord, to thee,
A consecrated offering yours evermore to be...
That all my powers with all their might
In your sole glory may unite--Hallelujah!"*

By Henry Wilson

"His" Servant

Conferences & Conventions

Note: If you would like to have your Convention, Conference, Camp, or Seminar published in The New Creation Magazine, send information or a program **at least three months in advance of the issue month of the magazine.**

Send to: Jim Sochacki, 475 Green St, Harrisonburg, VA 22802;

or email to: wyojimmy@yahoo.com

Donations

Many people around the world appreciate the New Creation magazine. For many, it is their only source of Christian communication. Also, for many, they only have it through the generous contributions of others. If you feel moved to help them in continuing to get the New Creation, please consider a donation to CDMI.