

Ever Lasting Life



The Heart of Courage...

By Terrilyn H. (Internet)

The greatest test of courage on the earth is to bear defeat without losing heart.

In attempting to do anything worthwhile, temporary setbacks and defeats are inevitable along the way. The true test of our conviction and faith in the vision, comes at these times. Viewing them merely as opportunities to learn, change and adapt, are critical to ultimate success. The only lasting defeat comes in giving up. Things often look the most bleak, just prior to tremendous breakthrough. Press on...Press through!

Only you be strong and very courageous, that you may do according to all the law which Moses My servant commanded you. Turn not from it to the right hand or to the left, that you may prosper wherever you go. This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night, that you may observe and do according to all that is written in it. For then you shall make your way prosperous, and then you shall deal wisely and have good success. Have not I commanded you? Be strong, vigorous, and very courageous. Be not afraid, neither be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. ~Joshua 1:7-9

Wait and hope for and expect the Lord; be brave and of good courage and let your heart be stout and enduring. Yes, wait for and hope for and expect the Lord. ~Psalm 27:14

(Continued on Pg. 5)

Cinnamon by Internet

Honey and Cinnamon

Bet the drug companies won't like this one getting around.

Facts on honey and cinnamon:

It is found that a mixture of honey and cinnamon cures most diseases. Honey is produced in most of the countries of the world. Scientists of today also accept honey as a 'Ram Ban' (very effective) medicine for all kinds of diseases.

Honey can be used without any side effects for any kind of diseases. Today's science says that even though honey is sweet, if taken in the right dosage as a medicine, it does not harm diabetic patients.

Weekly World News, a magazine in Canada, in its issue dated 17 January, 1995 has given the following list of diseases that can be cured by honey and cinnamon as researched by western scientists:

HEART DISEASES:

Make a paste of honey and cinnamon powder, apply on bread, instead of jelly and jam, and eat it regularly for breakfast. It reduces the cholesterol in the arteries and saves the patient from heart attack.

Also those who have already had an attack, if they do this process daily, they are kept miles away from the next attack. Regular use of the above process relieves loss of breath and strengthens the heart beat.

In America and Canada, various nursing homes have treated patients successfully and have found that as you age, the arteries and veins lose their flexibility and get clogged; honey and cinnamon revitalize the arteries and veins.

(Continued on Pg 3)

The Seed by internet

A successful business man was growing old and knew it was time to choose a successor to take over the business.

Instead of choosing one of his Directors or his children, he decided to do something different. He called all the young executives in his company together.

He said, "It is time for me to step down and choose the next CEO. I have decided to choose one of you.

"The young executives were Shocked, but the boss continued. "I am going to give each one of you a SEED today - one very special SEED.

I want you to plant the seed, water it, and come back here one year from today with what you have grown from the seed I have given you.

I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one I choose will be the next CEO."

One man, named Jim, was there that day and he, like the others, received a seed. He went home and excitedly, told his wife the story. She helped him get a pot, soil and compost and he planted the seed.

Everyday, he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other executives began to talk about their seeds and the plants that were beginning to grow.

Jim kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew. Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by, still nothing.

By now, others were talking about their plants, but Jim didn't have a plant and he felt like a failure.

Six months went by -- still nothing in Jim's pot. He just knew he had killed his seed. Everyone else had trees and tall plants, but he had nothing. Jim didn't say anything to his colleagues, however... He just kept watering and fertilizing the soil - He so wanted the seed to grow.

A year finally went by and all the young executives of the company brought their plants to the CEO for inspection. Jim told his wife that he wasn't going to take an empty pot.

But she asked him to be honest about what happened. Jim felt sick to his stomach, it was going to be the most embarrassing moment of his life, but he knew his wife was right.

He took his empty pot to the board room. When Jim arrived, he was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other executives. They were beautiful -- in all shapes and sizes.

Jim put his empty pot on the floor and many of his colleagues laughed, a few felt sorry for him!

When the CEO arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted his young executives.

Jim just tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees, and flowers you have grown," said the CEO. "Today one of you will be appointed the next CEO!"

All of a sudden, the CEO spotted Jim at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered the Financial Director to bring him to the front.

Jim was terrified. He thought, "The CEO knows I'm a failure! Maybe he will have me fired!"

When Jim got to the front, the CEO asked him what had happened to his seed - Jim told him the story.

The CEO asked everyone to sit down except Jim. He looked at Jim, and then announced to the young executives, "Behold your next Chief Executive Officer! His name is Jim!"

Jim couldn't believe it. Jim couldn't even grow his seed.

"How could he be the new CEO?" the others said. Then the CEO said, "One year ago today, I gave everyone in this room a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds; they were dead - it was not possible for them to grow.

All of you, except Jim, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you.

Jim was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. Therefore, he is the one who will be the new Chief Executive Officer!"

* If you plant honesty, you will reap trust

* If you plant goodness, you will reap friends

* If you plant humility, you will reap greatness

* If you plant perseverance, you will reap contentment

* If you plant consideration, you will reap perspective

* If you plant hard work, you will reap success

* If you plant forgiveness, you will reap reconciliation

* If you plant faith in God, you will reap a harvest

So, be careful what you plant now; it will determine what you will reap later..

"Whatever You Give To Life, Life Gives You Back"

Jesus
The Father, The Son, The Holy Ghost!

(Continued from Pg 1) Cinnamon)

ARTHRITIS:

Arthritis patients may take daily, morning, and night, one cup of hot water with two spoons of honey and one small teaspoon of cinnamon powder. If taken regularly even chronic arthritis can be cured. In a recent research conducted at the Copenhagen University, it was found that when the doctors treated their patients with a mixture of one tablespoon Honey and half teaspoon Cinnamon powder before breakfast, they found that within a week, out of the 200 people so treated, practically 73 patients were totally relieved of pain, and within a month, mostly all the patients who could not walk or move around because of arthritis started walking without pain.

BLADDER INFECTIONS:

Take two tablespoons of cinnamon powder and one teaspoon of honey in a glass of lukewarm water and drink it. It destroys the germs in the bladder.

TOOTHACHE:

Make a paste of one teaspoon of cinnamon powder and five teaspoons of honey and apply on the aching tooth. This may be applied three times a day until the tooth stops aching.

CHOLESTEROL:

Two tablespoons of honey and three teaspoons of Cinnamon Powder mixed in 16 ounces of tea water, given to a cholesterol patient, was found to reduce the level of cholesterol in the blood by 10 percent within two hours. As mentioned for arthritic patients, if taken three times a day, any chronic cholesterol is cured. According to information received in the said journal, pure honey taken with food daily relieves complaints of cholesterol.

COLDS:

Those suffering from common or severe colds should take one tablespoon lukewarm honey with 1/4 spoon cinnamon powder daily for three days. This process will cure most chronic cough, cold, and clear the sinuses.

UPSET STOMACH:

Honey taken with cinnamon powder cures stomach ache and also clears stomach ulcers from the root.

GAS:

According to the studies done in India and

Japan, it is revealed that if honey is taken with cinnamon powder the stomach is relieved of gas.

IMMUNE SYSTEM:

Daily use of honey and cinnamon powder strengthens the immune system and protects the body from bacteria and viral attacks. Scientists have found that honey has various vitamins and iron in large amounts. Constant use of honey strengthens the white blood corpuscles to fight

INDIGESTION:

Cinnamon powder sprinkled on two table-spoons of honey taken before food relieves acidity and digests the heaviest of meals.

INFLUENZA:

A scientist in Spain has proved that honey contains a natural Ingredient which kills the influenza germs and saves the patient from flu.

LONGEVITY:

Tea made with honey and cinnamon powder, when taken regularly, arrests the ravages of old age. Take four spoons of honey, one spoon of cinnamon powder and three cups of water and boil to make like tea.

Drink 1/4 cup, three to four times a day. It keeps the skin fresh and soft and arrests old age. Life spans also increases and even a 100 year old, starts performing the chores of a 20-year-old.

PIMPLES:

Three tablespoons of honey and one teaspoon of cinnamon powder paste. Apply this paste on the pimples before sleeping and wash it next morning with warm water. If done daily for two weeks, it removes pimples from the root.

SKIN INFECTIONS:

Applying honey and cinnamon powder in equal parts on the affected parts cures eczema, ring-worm and all types of skin infections.

WEIGHT LOSS:

Daily in the morning one half hour before breakfast on an empty stomach and at night before sleeping, drink honey and cinnamon powder boiled in one cup of water. If taken regularly, it reduces the weight of even the most obese person. Also, drinking this mixture regularly does not allow the fat to accumulate in the body even though the person may eat a high calorie diet.

(Continued on Pg 8)

Lessons on The Holy Spirit; 3of 13
By Bruce Cameron: gobible.com

Jesus and the Holy Spirit (Luke 1 & 4, John 14)

Lesson 3

Introduction: If I asked you whether you would like to be smarter, wiser, stronger, and in general, more powerful, what would you say? This month our study opens our eyes to the enormous power that Jesus enjoyed while here on earth. Is that same power is available to us? Let's dive into our study to find out!

1. The Holy Spirit and Conception

1. Read [Luke 1:26-28](#). What do we learn about Mary? (That the Lord was with her. She was highly favored by God. She was engaged to be married and had kept herself pure, even though she lived in a town with a bad reputation. See John 1:46.)

1:a How would you like to have an angel say those words to you?

2. Read [Luke 1:29](#). What was Mary's reaction to those words? Why did she have a different reaction than you would have? (She probably had a greater gift of humility than we have!)

2:a Imagine someone comes up to you and says, "You look (insert an age 10 years younger than you are), your clothes look so wonderful, you are the most intelligent person I've ever met and it would be hard to imagine a nicer person than you." What would you say? "Thank you," or, "what do you want?" Would you "wonder what kind of greeting this might be?"

3. In [Luke 1:30-33](#) the angel explains to Mary the overwhelming news that she will be the mother of the Messiah. She has a question. Read [Luke 1:34](#).

4. Read [Luke 1:35](#) for the answer. Who caused Mary to be pregnant with Jesus? (The Holy Spirit.)

4:a Large numbers of people doubt this account. What makes you believe it? An answer more detailed than "I believe the Bible" would be helpful.

4:b What did we learn from [Psalms 104:30](#) when we studied the first lesson in this series?

(We learned from this text, and [Genesis 1:1-3](#), that the Holy Spirit was active in the Creation of the world. If the Holy Spirit can create the world and all that is in it, how can this task be too great for Him?)

4:c Read [Romans 8:11](#) and [1 Peter 3:18](#).

What do we learn here about the Holy Spirit and life? (That the Holy Spirit is the power of the resurrection.)

4:d Friend, do you see how these three beliefs are interlocked? (The Creation, the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection all turn on a belief in the power of the Holy Spirit. If you believe one, it is illogical not to believe in all three.)

5. Notice again in [Luke 1:35](#) that it refers to the "power of the Most High." Is that a reference to the Holy Spirit? Does this text teach us that the Holy Spirit is the means by which God delivers His power to us?

5:a If that is one of the messages of this text, how important is the Holy Spirit to your spiritual life?

5:b A repeating theme of books and movies is the "super-hero" with exceptional powers. If you had the opportunity to "borrow" the powers of a super-hero would you do it?

5:c If your answer is, "yes," then consider how much greater is the available power of the Holy Spirit? Why not pray earnestly for that power in your life?

6. Read [Luke 1:38](#). What kind of attitude is necessary for the Holy Spirit to come into our lives in power?

7. We have been focusing on Mary when our lesson is about Jesus. What does this method of conception teach us about Jesus?

7:a What does it teach us about the role of the Holy Spirit in His life on earth? (The Holy Spirit was with Him from the very start. Now you know why He was able to do such great things!)

2. The Holy Spirit in Jesus' Life

1. Read [Luke 4:18-19](#). What was the basis for Jesus' miracles here on earth? (The Spirit of the Lord.)

1:a What was the basis for Jesus' preaching here on earth? (The Spirit of the Lord.)

1:b What is the connection between the miracles and the gospel? (The common thread is the Holy Spirit, but the purpose of both is to lead the people to a relationship with Jesus. Both preaching and miracles release the people from the effects of sin.)

2. In the first lesson of this series, we studied the healing of the demon-possessed man who was blind and mute. Recall the discussion between the Pharisees and Jesus about the source of His power? Let's read this again in Matthew 12:27-29. Who does Jesus say is the source of His power to heal?

3. The Promise of Power

1. Read [John 14:11-12](#). We have just touched on the miracles which Jesus performed through the power of the Holy Spirit. What power does Jesus say is available to us?

1:a How does Jesus describes those to whom this power is available? ("Anyone who has faith in me." This is not just a promise to the 12 disciples. This is not just a promise to the early church. This says "anyone" with faith in Jesus.)

2. Read [John 14:13-14](#). From where does the power to do these miracles come? (Jesus says that He "will do it.")

3. Read [John 14:15-18](#). What further explanation does Jesus give about the power He is willing to give us? (Notice that immediately after Jesus says "I will make these things possible, He launches into a discussion of the Holy Spirit being given to us. The power of the Holy Spirit is not something separate from the Trinity, but He is the means by which heavenly power is exercised here on earth.)

4. Is the power of the Holy Spirit limited to just doing miracles? (Remember in [Luke 4:18](#) Jesus tells us the Holy Spirit helped Him in preaching.)

5. Read [John 20:21-23](#). Is there a relationship between having the power of the Holy Spirit and forgiving sins?

5:a Can Spirit-filled Christians forgive the sins of others?

5:b Read [Matthew 16:19](#), [Job 1:4-5](#) and [1 John 5:16-17](#). Do we have the power to ask forgiveness for certain types of sins in other people?

(These three texts and John 20 all suggest that Christians can have some sort of impact on the sins of others. Nowhere in the Bible do I see anyone (other than Jesus) forgiving the sins of others. Indeed the whole idea of one person repenting for the sins of another person is contrary to the entire theme of the Old and New Testaments. If this were possible, Jesus would simply have just repented for us and declared everyone forgiven. He would not have personally paid the penalty for our sins. What I think these texts suggest is that using the power of the Holy Spirit we can help bring others to repentance of sin.)

5:c Read [John 16:7-8](#). If you have available to you the power of the Holy Spirit to help convict another person of sin, have you used that power?

Friend, can you see that the Holy Spirit was with Jesus from His beginning here on earth through His entire life? Can you also see that the great things that Jesus did here through the Spirit's power are also available to you through the Spirit's power? Will you pray that the Holy Spirit will come on you in power?

Next Month: The Promise of the Holy Spirit.

(Courage—Continued from Pg 1)

I have told you these things, so that in Me you may have [perfect] peace and confidence. In the world you have tribulation and trials and distress and frustration; but be of good cheer [take courage; be confident, certain, undaunted]! For I have overcome the world. [I have deprived it of power to harm you and have conquered it for you.]
~Jesus / John 16:33

And let us not lose heart and grow weary and faint in acting nobly and doing right, for in due time and at the appointed season we shall reap, if we do not loosen and relax our courage and faint.
~Galatians 6:9

Lesson 4 The Crucibles
By Min. Price

Seeing the Goldsmith's Face

([Romans 8](#), [Job 23](#), [Daniel 12](#),
[1 Peter 1](#))

Introduction: "A bad day in paradise is like a good day anywhere else." I'm sure I don't have this quote exactly right, but it is something that I've heard from people who believe they live in a pretty nice place. The sense I get of this quote is that they like where they live even when things are not perfect. Our lesson this week is about a similar idea. Even when the Christian is "having a bad day," his character is being refined. Even bad days are good! Let's dive into our lesson and learn more about "living in paradise!"

1. Groaning

1. Read [Romans 8:22-25](#). Are we the only ones who are having a "bad day" from time to time? (No, "the whole creation" is groaning.)

1. Notice that the "pain" is compared to the pain of childbirth. What does that suggest? (Childbirth pain is limited in time, and gives wonderful results.)

2. What are the "firstfruits of the Spirit?" The text says we have them. What are they? (Christians have a taste of heaven through the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives. Taking a vacation in paradise ("tasting,") makes us wish we could live there. Having the Holy Spirit in our life makes us wish more strongly we were in heaven.)

3. To me, this sounds like a complaint about what we don't have, as opposed to suffering real pain. Is that true? (Childbirth is real pain) The sense I get of this is that if we were just suffering in this old world, we would get used to it and be "content" with it. But, since Christians have the

hope of eternal life and we have the Holy Spirit doing great things in our life, we are not content with the troubles of this world.)

2. Read [Romans 8:26-27](#). What does prayer have to do with our weakness and discomfort?

1. Have you ever had a problem with your car and you could not clearly describe the problem to the mechanic? (Or, like me, who knows enough to be dangerous - I tell the mechanic to fix the wrong thing!) How important to the ultimate solution is getting your request for help right? (Romans is still on the same issue of us having a "bad day" on earth. Part of the solution is having the Holy Spirit direct us in understanding the nature of the problem. Helping us to correctly ask God for the best solution.)

2. Hope for Groaning

1. Read [Romans 8:28](#). What comfort can we have whenever we have a "bad day?" (God is working for our good.)

2. Read [Romans 8:29-30](#). What is our ultimate good? (To be conformed to the likeness of "His Son" (Jesus).)

1. What does this suggest to you about what "our good" means? (Working towards "our good" could be painful. But, eternal life is the goal. It is the ultimate "good.")

2. I thought we were saved by grace. What is this "no pain, no gain" approach to eternal life? Why can I use the word "working" and "pain" as part of our eternal life and still believe in grace? ([Romans 8:30](#) shows us that we are on a path. God has in mind eternal life for us. God calls us to follow Him. God justifies us by nailing our sins to the cross, covering our failures with His blood. Then God calls us to be glorified by right living, and ultimately, heaven.)

3. Read [Romans 8:31-37](#). What past action of God gives us absolute confidence that He is "on our side" in trouble? (That He gave His Son for us!)

1. Notice the catalogue of potential "bad day" problems we might have? (They are very serious problems, but [Romans 8:32](#) promises us that in those problems, God will "give us all things.")

3. Unlocking Groaning

1. Job, a great man of the Bible, helps us to understand the type of problems that cause us to "groan." Read [Job 23:1-5](#). For whom is Job looking? (God.)

1. Why is Job looking for God? (He wanted to "state his case before Him.")

2. What case does Job have? (Job is suffering and he believes that God has made him suffer. Since he does not deserve to suffer, Job wants to argue his righteousness before God.)

3. How can anyone argue that they are righteous? (Read [Job 1:8](#). God affirmed Job was blameless and upright. Job had something to argue before God!)

4. Wait a minute! If God knew that Job was blameless and upright, why would Job need to argue that before God? (Job wrongly believed that his suffering was brought on him by God because of his sin.)

2. Read [Job 23:6-7](#). If Job got to present his case before God, did he think he would win? Would he be acquitted of the charges against him that caused his suffering? (Yes. He says he would be delivered "from my judge.")

1. Who does Job think is "his judge?" (He does not say, but it must be God. The logic of this is not clear. It seems that Job thinks that God does

not know all of the facts or has not been paying close attention to his situation.)

3. Read [Job 23:8-9](#). Can Job find God? (No!)

1. Is this a problem in our suffering? (How many times do we get discouraged because God does not seem to be listening to our prayers. He is not answering our cries for help.)

2. Is God really absent from Job's life? (Far from it! Job 1 & 2 show us that God is very involved in what is happening in Job's life.)

4. Read [Job 23:10](#). What reason for suffering does Job consider next? (That he is being tested and refined.)

1. Is this consistent with his prior argument about how he does not deserve to be punished? That he is an upright man and if God knew all the facts or paid close attention he would be "delivered forever from my judge?" (This is a very important point. Job is obviously a great guy - God said he was. Yet, in the midst of suffering Job's mind races all over the place to figure out why it is he is suffering. "Is it because I deserve it? No! I'll find God and convince him I'm innocent." "Where is God? I cannot find Him. He is not listening to me." "Maybe what is happening to me is a test? Maybe God wants to see that I am gold." This is how we react to suffering. These are stages through which we pass when we suffer.)

2. Should we react the same way Job reacted? (No normal person wants to suffer. But, in every difficult circumstance we need to first ask ourselves if we are suffering because of our sins. If so, we need to turn from those sins. If we are not directly suffering from our sins, sin has some role in our suffering.)

Either our character is being refined by suffering. Or, we suffer because of the general sin in the world. Whatever the cause of our suffering, we need to look for the opportunity for character development.

4. Groaning: Worth It!

1. Read [Daniel 12:1-4](#). What is connected with the end of time on earth? ("A time of distress such as has not happened from the beginning of } nations." This distress is followed by the salvation of the righteous! The righteous will be delivered.)

2. Read [Daniel 12:8-10](#). What makes the difference between the wicked and the righteous? (The righteous are "purified, made spotless and refined." While the wicked just remain wicked.)

3. Read [1 Peter 1:3-9](#). How are we saved? Daniel wrote about us being spotless. Is a spotless character, which results from our suffering, necessary for salvation? (I like the way Peter puts this together. He makes it very clear that we are saved by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Our faith in Jesus is refined by fire. Suffering shows whether our faith is genuine or not. Suffering does not make us perfect so that we are entitled to enter heaven on our own merits. Rather, suffering tests and refines our faith in Jesus. It is by the merits of His perfect life and death that we will be resurrected!)

4. Friend, are you suffering today - Just know for the Christian, it is to purify and refine you. For the sinner, it is to cry unto the Lord for your deliverance. It may appear to be difficult, but look on it as a blessing to refine your character and your faith.

Next Month: Extreme Heat.

*Definition: Crucible (kroo se bel).
A severe, searching test.*

CANCER:

Recent research in Japan and Australia has revealed that advanced cancer of the stomach and bones have been cured successfully.

Patients suffering from these kinds of cancer should daily take one tablespoon of honey with one teaspoon of cinnamon powder for one month three times a day.

FATIGUE:

Recent studies have shown that the sugar content of honey is more helpful rather than! than being detrimental to the strength of the body.

Senior citizens, who take honey and cinnamon powder in equal parts, are more alert and flexible. Dr. Milton, who has done research, says that a half tablespoon of honey taken in a glass of water and sprinkled with cinnamon powder, taken daily after brushing and in the afternoon at about 3:00 P.M. when the vitality of the body starts to decrease, increases the vitality of the body within a week.

BAD BREATH:

People of South America, first thing in the morning, gargle with one teaspoon of honey and cinnamon powder mixed in hot water, so their breath stays fresh throughout the day.

HEARING LOSS:

Daily morning and night honey and cinnamon powder, taken in equal parts restore hearing.

Remember when we were kids?

We had toast with real butter and cinnamon sprinkled on it!

GEN 22:8-12 KJV

AND ABRAHAM SAID, MY SON, GOD WILL PROVIDE HIMSELF A LAMB FOR A BURNT OFFERING: SO THEY WENT BOTH OF THEM TOGETHER.

AND THEY CAME TO THE PLACE WHICH GOD HAD TOLD HIM OF; AND ABRAHAM BUILT AN ALTAR THERE, AND LAID THE WOOD IN ORDER, AND BOUND ISAAC HIS SON, AND LAID HIM ON THE ALTAR UPON THE WOOD.

AND ABRAHAM STRETCHED FORTH HIS HAND, AND TOOK THE KNIFE TO SLAY HIS SON.

AND THE ANGEL OF THE LORD CALLED UNTO HIM OUT OF HEAVEN, AND SAID, ABRAHAM, ABRAHAM: AND HE SAID, HERE AM I.

AND HE SAID, LAY NOT THINE HAND UPON THE LAD, NEITHER DO THOU ANY THING UNTO HIM: FOR NOW I KNOW THAT THOU FEAREST GOD, SEEING THOU HAST NOT WITHHELD THY SON, THINE ONLY SON FROM ME.

KJV

1. The Promise of Resurrection from the Dead

by Dr. Ralph F. Wilson (www.joyfulheart.com)

I would guess that many Christians today believe more in the "immortality of the soul" than in resurrection. A belief in "going to heaven" is much more in mind than one's body being physically raised from the dead. But resurrection from the dead -- especially Jesus' own bodily resurrection from the dead after his crucifixion -- is the centerpiece of Christianity.

In these coming series we're going to examine resurrection carefully. We'll begin by looking its Old Testament roots, Jesus' teaching on the subject, and Jesus' own resurrection from the dead. Then we'll explore the meaning and significance for us of Jesus' resurrection, as well as the proofs we have that his resurrection actually took place. Finally, we'll consider what the Bible says about the resurrection of our own bodies.

Resurrection Defined

Let's begin by defining some terms. By "life after death" people are usually referring to the state of being alive, conscious, or something, after the physical phenomenon of death. But by "resurrection" we are referring not just to the soul or spirit, but specifically to the physical body in some way. The Greek word for resurrection (*anastasis*), comes from the verb *anistēmi*, "to raise, arise." The other verb used occasionally is *egeirō*, "to awaken, rise." Not that the Greeks believed in resurrection. They didn't. The New Testament uses these words to describe a raising up of the body after a period of being dead. The New Testament teaches a raising of our physical bodies at the Last Day to even more life than they had when we were "alive" before.

Gathered to their Fathers

But such a belief wasn't always the case. When we turn back to the era of the Old Testament, in the earliest days, we don't see a belief in resurrection. In Genesis, for example, when Abraham died, he was "GATHERED TO HIS FATHERS" (GENESIS 25:8). This probably meant that his bones would be stored with theirs, referring to the ancient and widespread practice of secondary burials, collecting and storing the bones after the flesh has decomposed.¹

Sheol, the Shades

In the earlier part of the Old Testament we also find the Hebrew word *she'ol*, the place of the dead, both good and bad. While the KJV often translates it as "hell," more recent translations render it "the grave" (NIV) or the "realm of the death," or just leave it untranslated and render it as "Sheol"² (NRSV). Sheol seems to refer to "the dark, deep regions, the land of forgetfulness ... a place of gloom and despair, a place where one can no longer enjoy life, and where the presence of Yahweh himself is withdrawn."³ Thus we find in the Psalms:

"NO ONE REMEMBERS YOU WHEN HE IS DEAD. WHO PRAISES YOU FROM THE GRAVE (SHE'OL)?" (PSALM 6:5)

"DO YOU SHOW YOUR WONDERS TO THE DEAD? DO THOSE WHO ARE DEAD RISE UP AND PRAISE YOU?"

IS YOUR LOVE DECLARED IN THE GRAVE,⁴ YOUR FAITHFULNESS IN DESTRUCTION?⁵

ARE YOUR WONDERS KNOWN IN THE PLACE OF DARKNESS, OR YOUR RIGHTEOUS DEEDS IN THE LAND OF OBLIVION?" (PSALM 88:10-12)

The First Glimmers in Job

But gradually, slowly, God begins to reveal to his prophets that there is something more than darkness beyond death. Theologians call this revealing of more truth as time goes on, "progressive revelation." Job wonders:

"IF A MAN DIES, WILL HE LIVE AGAIN? ALL THE DAYS OF MY HARD SERVICE I WILL WAIT FOR MY RENEWAL TO COME." (JOB 14:14)

Later he declares with longing:

"I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES, AND THAT IN THE END HE WILL STAND UPON THE EARTH.

AND AFTER MY SKIN HAS BEEN DESTROYED, YET IN MY FLESH I WILL SEE GOD;

I MYSELF WILL SEE HIM WITH MY OWN EYES -- I, AND NOT ANOTHER. HOW MY HEART YEARNS WITHIN ME!" (JOB 19:25-27)

This passage is notoriously difficult to translate.⁶ But is Job beginning to see something beyond the grave? I think so.

Psalms 16 Refers to Resurrection

A Psalmist declares:

"THEREFORE MY HEART IS GLAD AND MY TONGUE REJOICES; MY BODY ALSO WILL REST SECURE, BECAUSE YOU WILL NOT ABANDON ME TO THE GRAVE (SHE'OL), NOR WILL YOU LET YOUR HOLY ONE SEE DEGRAY. YOU HAVE MADE KNOWN TO ME THE PATH OF LIFE; YOU WILL FILL ME WITH JOY IN YOUR PRESENCE, WITH ETERNAL PLEASURES AT YOUR RIGHT HAND." (PSALM 16:9-11)

Resurrection in Hosea

In the Prophet Hosea we read:

"I WILL RANSOM THEM FROM THE POWER OF THE GRAVE (SHE'OL); I WILL REDEEM THEM FROM DEATH. WHERE, O DEATH, ARE YOUR PLAGUES? WHERE, O GRAVE, IS YOUR DESTRUCTION?" (HOSEA 13:14)

In Hosea 6, we see an intriguing passage, apparently interpreted in terms of resurrection by Jesus himself:

*"COME, LET US RETURN TO THE LORD: FOR IT IS HE WHO HAS TORN, AND HE WILL HEAL US; HE HAS STRUCK DOWN, AND HE WILL BIND US UP. AFTER TWO DAYS HE WILL REVIVE US; ON THE THIRD DAY HE WILL RAISE US UP, THAT WE MAY LIVE BEFORE HIM." (HOSEA 6:1-2)**

It is the first passage that seems to make the explicit statement that Yahweh will give his people a new bodily life on the other side of death.⁹

The Resurrection in Isaiah

Isaiah the Prophet speaks even more clearly of a bodily resurrection:

"BUT YOUR DEAD WILL LIVE; THEIR BODIES WILL RISE. YOU WHO DWELL IN THE DUST, WAKE UP AND SHOUT FOR JOY. YOUR DEW IS LIKE THE DEW OF THE MORNING; THE EARTH WILL GIVE BIRTH TO HER DEAD." (ISAIAH 26:19)

At the conclusion of the Suffering Servant passage of Isaiah 53, we see an wonderful glimmer of hope, brought out best by the New International Version:

"AFTER THE SUFFERING OF HIS SOUL, HE WILL SEE THE LIGHT OF LIFE AND BE SATISFIED; BY HIS KNOWLEDGE MY RIGHTEOUS SERVANT WILL JUSTIFY MANY, AND HE WILL BEAR THEIR INIQUITIES." (ISAIAH 53:11)

The phrase "light of life" (NIV) doesn't occur in the Masoretic Hebrew text, but is found in both the Greek Septuagint translation as well as the Hebrew text of the Isaiah scroll found among the Dead Sea Scrolls.¹⁰ The Servant's contemporaries saw him as "CUT OFF FROM THE LAND OF THE LIVING" (53:8). But 53:11 indicates that the Servant will see "light" -- that is, life outside the grave -- even after his atoning death. I expect that Jesus also saw this promise, which underlies his teaching to his disciples that "it is written" that the Son of Man would be raised from the dead (Luke 24:25-27; 8:31; 9:31; 10:32-34; 14:21).

The Valley of Dry Bones in Ezekiel

In Ezekiel we see a kind of resurrection:

"I SAW A GREAT MANY BONES ON THE FLOOR OF THE VALLEY, BONES THAT WERE VERY DRY. HE ASKED ME, 'SON OF MAN, CAN THESE BONES LIVE?' I SAID, 'O SOVEREIGN LORD, YOU ALONE KNOW.' THEN HE SAID TO ME, 'PROPHESY TO THESE BONES AND SAY TO THEM, "DRY BONES, HEAR THE WORD OF THE LORD! THIS IS WHAT THE SOVEREIGN LORD SAYS TO THESE BONES: I WILL MAKE BREATH ENTER YOU, AND YOU WILL COME TO LIFE. I WILL ATTACH TENDONS TO YOU AND MAKE FLESH COME UPON YOU AND COVER YOU WITH SKIN; I WILL PUT BREATH IN YOU, AND YOU WILL COME TO LIFE. THEN YOU WILL KNOW THAT I AM THE LORD.'"" (EZEKIEL 37:2B-6)

This may not be an actual prophecy of resurrection as much as a figure of the restoration of a nation. Nevertheless, it added to the Israelites' consciousness of resurrection.

Daniel 12:1-2

Probably the clearest reference in the Old Testament to resurrection is found in Daniel:

"THERE WILL BE A TIME OF DISTRESS SUCH AS HAS NOT HAPPENED FROM THE BEGINNING OF NATIONS UNTIL THEN. BUT AT THAT TIME YOUR PEOPLE -- EVERYONE WHOSE NAME IS FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK -- WILL BE DELIVERED. MULTITUDES WHO SLEEP IN THE DUST OF THE EARTH WILL AWAKE: SOME TO EVERLASTING LIFE, OTHERS TO SHAME AND EVERLASTING CONTEMPT." (DANIEL 12:1B-2)

First Century Judaism

By the time the first century rolled around, resurrection -- which had just a few references in the Old Testament -- was now held by the largest number of people in Judaism. There were essentially three beliefs about the resurrection in Jesus' world.

Sadducees

The Sadducees represented the aristocrats, a minority group that held a good deal of power in Judaism. They held a considerable number of seats on the Sanhedrin, the ruling council. The high priests' families were also Sadducees (Acts 5:17). They denied the resurrection of the dead on the last day, and held to a view that the dead were in Sheol, as some of the earlier portions of the Old Testament had taught. They didn't take this position because they were the "liberals"; rather they were the "conservatives" of the time. Since the resurrection wasn't clearly mentioned in the Pentateuch (the first five books of the Bible) and the historical books, they refused to accept it (Matthew 22:23; Acts 23:8). However, the Sadducees didn't exist as a major group in Judaism after the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

Pharisees

The Pharisees strongly held the view that there was a resurrection. They were a reform party in Judaism, who believed in a serious commitment to holiness and obedience to every command in the Bible. However, their reformation had become hardened into a brittle and self-serving personal righteousness that tended to keep the letter of the law, but often missed the spirit of the command. Some of Jesus' most scathing commentaries on contemporary Judaism were directed at the Pharisees -- though he agreed with them about the resurrection of the saints at the Last Day.

The Greeks and Romans

The third major group was represented by the Greco-Roman beliefs held by the Roman governor and the army of occupation. They weren't Jews, of course, but represented the dominant worldview met by the apostles when they began to preach the resurrection of Christ outside of Israel in the Mediterranean world. Greeks believed in the immortality of the soul, but scorned the resurrection of the body as a silly belief (Acts 17:18, 32).

Previous Resurrections

There had been restorations to life before in the history of Israel. Elijah had restored the son of the widow of Zarepheth (1 Kings 17:17-21). Elisha had raised the son of the Shunnamite woman (2 Kings 4:32-35). Jesus had raised Jairus' daughter (Mark 5:40-42) and the son of the widow of Nain (Luke 7:11-15). Of course, Jesus' friend Lazarus was raised after having been dead four days (John 11). At the hour of Jesus' death, Matthew records that the bodies of "many holy people" were raised to life (Matthew 27:51-53). These resurrections are treated as harbingers of Jesus' coming resurrection, proof that Jesus had death in his own control.¹¹ The difference between these resurrections and the resurrection of Jesus and the saints on the Last Day was that these people later died.

Jesus' Teaching on the Resurrection of the Dead

Now let's examine what Jesus himself taught about the resurrection from the dead. He affirmed that:

"THOSE WHO HAVE DONE GOOD WILL RISE TO LIVE, AND THOSE WHO HAVE DONE EVIL WILL RISE TO BE CONDEMNED." (JOHN 5:28-29)

Jesus' statement echoed Daniel's prophecy and paralleled the Pharisees' teaching of "a resurrection of both the righteous and the wicked." (Acts 24:15). Jesus taught that this would be a time of reward for those who had followed the Lord: *"YOU WILL BE REPAID AT THE RESURRECTION OF THE RIGHTEOUS"* (LUKE 14:14).

When the Sadducees asked Jesus a trick question to try to poke fun at the resurrection, Jesus told us something about state of believers at the resurrection:

"THE PEOPLE OF THIS AGE MARRY AND ARE GIVEN IN MARRIAGE. BUT THOSE WHO ARE CONSIDERED WORTHY OF TAKING PART IN THAT AGE AND IN THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD WILL NEITHER MARRY NOR BE GIVEN IN MARRIAGE, AND THEY CAN NO LONGER DIE; FOR THEY ARE LIKE THE ANGELS. THEY ARE GOD'S CHILDREN, SINCE THEY ARE CHILDREN OF THE RESURRECTION." (LUKE 20:34-36)

On that occasion, Jesus also taught that the resurrection of the dead is implied even in the Pentateuch that the Sadducees claimed to honor above all other scriptures:

"BUT IN THE ACCOUNT OF THE BUSH, EVEN MOSES SHOWED THAT THE DEAD RISE, FOR HE CALLS THE LORD 'THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB.' HE IS NOT THE GOD OF THE DEAD, BUT OF THE LIVING, FOR TO HIM ALL ARE ALIVE." (LUKE 20:37-38)

Jesus as the Agent of Resurrection

For Jesus, however, the resurrection wasn't just a belief about a future event. He would be intricately involved himself as the Agent of Resurrection. At the time of Lazarus' death, the following exchange took place between Jesus and Lazarus' sister Martha:

"JESUS SAID TO HER, 'YOUR BROTHER WILL RISE AGAIN.' MARTHA ANSWERED, 'I KNOW HE WILL RISE AGAIN IN THE RESURRECTION AT THE LAST DAY.'

JESUS SAID TO HER, 'I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. HE WHO BELIEVES IN ME WILL LIVE, EVEN THOUGH HE DIES; AND WHOEVER LIVES AND BELIEVES IN ME WILL NEVER DIE.'" (JOHN 11:23-25)

Another place, Jesus said:

"I TELL YOU THE TRUTH, A TIME IS COMING AND HAS NOW COME WHEN THE DEAD WILL HEAR THE VOICE OF THE SON OF GOD AND THOSE WHO HEAR WILL LIVE... A TIME IS COMING WHEN ALL WHO ARE IN THEIR GRAVES WILL HEAR HIS VOICE AND COME OUT -- THOSE WHO HAVE DONE GOOD WILL RISE TO LIVE AND THOSE WHO HAVE DONE EVIL WILL RISE TO BE CONDEMNED." (JOHN 5:25, 28-29)

In the discourse about bread, Jesus asserted that he himself would raise up his disciples on that day:

"AND THIS IS THE WILL OF HIM WHO SENT ME, THAT I SHALL LOSE NONE OF ALL THAT HE HAS GIVEN ME, BUT RAISE THEM UP AT THE LAST DAY. FOR MY FATHER'S WILL IS THAT EVERYONE WHO LOOKS TO THE SON AND BELIEVES IN HIM SHALL HAVE ETERNAL LIFE, AND I WILL RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY... WHOEVER EATS MY FLESH AND DRINKS MY BLOOD HAS ETERNAL LIFE, AND I WILL RAISE HIM UP AT THE LAST DAY." (JOHN 6:39-40, 54)

Jesus' Promise of His Own Resurrection

Even more striking is Jesus' teaching that he himself would be raised from the dead on the third day. Jesus predicts both his death and resurrection three times during the latter part of his ministry:

"FROM THAT TIME ON JESUS BEGAN TO EXPLAIN TO HIS DISCIPLES THAT HE MUST GO TO JERUSALEM AND SUFFER MANY THINGS AT THE HANDS OF THE ELDERS, CHIEF PRIESTS AND TEACHERS OF THE LAW, AND THAT HE MUST BE KILLED AND ON THE THIRD DAY BE RAISED TO LIFE." (MATTHEW 16:21; CF. LUKE 9:22)

"When they came together in Galilee, he said to them, 'THE SON OF MAN IS GOING TO BE BETRAYED INTO THE HANDS OF MEN. THEY WILL KILL HIM, AND ON THE THIRD DAY HE WILL BE RAISED TO LIFE.'" (MATTHEW 17:22-23)

"NOW AS JESUS WAS GOING UP TO JERUSALEM, HE TOOK THE TWELVE DISCIPLES ASIDE AND SAID TO THEM, 'WE ARE GOING UP TO JERUSALEM, AND THE SON OF MAN WILL BE BETRAYED TO THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE TEACHERS OF THE LAW. THEY WILL CONDEMN HIM TO DEATH AND WILL TURN HIM OVER TO THE GENTILES TO BE MOCKED AND FLOGGED AND CRUCIFIED. ON THE THIRD DAY HE WILL BE RAISED TO LIFE.'" (MATTHEW 20:17-19; CF. LUKE 18:31-33)

The Third Day, Three Days

Jesus used two figures to speak elliptically of his resurrection on the third day. First, the figure of the temple:

"THEN THE JEWS DEMANDED OF HIM, 'WHAT MIRACULOUS SIGN CAN YOU SHOW US TO PROVE YOUR AUTHORITY TO DO ALL THIS?'

JESUS ANSWERED THEM, 'DESTROY THIS TEMPLE, AND I WILL RAISE IT AGAIN IN THREE DAYS.'

THE JEWS REPLIED, 'IT HAS TAKEN FORTY-SIX YEARS TO BUILD THIS TEMPLE, AND YOU ARE GOING TO RAISE IT IN THREE DAYS?' BUT THE TEMPLE HE HAD SPOKEN OF WAS HIS BODY. AFTER HE WAS RAISED FROM THE DEAD, HIS DISCIPLES RECALLED WHAT HE HAD SAID. THEN THEY BELIEVED THE SCRIPTURE AND THE WORDS THAT JESUS HAD SPOKEN." (JOHN 2:18-22)

Jesus' enemies remembered this saying at his trial (Matthew 27:40; Mark 14:58). The second figure Jesus used was the story of Jonah's three days in the fish's belly as a sign of his own resurrection (Matthew 12:39-40).

Though it didn't really seem to register with his disciples (Luke 24:7-8), his words weren't lost on the Pharisees and chief priests:

"THE NEXT DAY, THE ONE AFTER PREPARATION DAY, THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND THE PHARISEES WENT TO PILATE. 'SIR,' THEY SAID, 'WE REMEMBER THAT WHILE HE WAS STILL ALIVE THAT DECEIVER SAID, "AFTER THREE DAYS I WILL RISE AGAIN." SO GIVE THE ORDER FOR THE TOMB TO BE MADE SECURE UNTIL THE THIRD DAY. OTHERWISE, HIS DISCIPLES MAY COME AND STEAL THE BODY AND TELL THE PEOPLE THAT HE HAS BEEN RAISED FROM THE DEAD. THIS LAST DECEPTION WILL BE WORSE THAN THE FIRST.'" (MATTHEW 27:62-64)

And so Pilate ordered a guard to be placed. We make a distinction between three days and the third day, but in Greek, these two phrases meant the same.¹² After his resurrection, Jesus explained: "This is what is written: *THE CHRIST WILL SUFFER AND RISE FROM THE DEAD ON THE THIRD DAY...*" -- PROBABLY A REFERENCE TO BOTH HOSEA 6:1 AND ISAIAH 53:11.

The resurrection of the dead was the strong expectation and hope of Jesus. Is yours? In the next lesson we will examine Jesus' own resurrection from the dead.

Prayer

Lord, implant in us the strong faith in the resurrection that Jesus himself held. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

Key Verses

"I KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVES, AND THAT IN THE END HE WILL STAND UPON THE EARTH. AND AFTER MY SKIN HAS BEEN DESTROYED, YET IN MY FLESH I WILL SEE GOD; I MYSELF WILL SEE HIM WITH MY OWN EYES -- I, AND NOT ANOTHER. HOW MY HEART YEARNIS WITHIN ME!" (JOB 19:25-27)

"THERE WILL BE A TIME OF DISTRESS SUCH AS HAS NOT HAPPENED FROM THE BEGINNING OF NATIONS UNTIL THEN. BUT AT THAT TIME YOUR PEOPLE -- EVERYONE WHOSE NAME IS FOUND WRITTEN IN THE BOOK -- WILL BE DELIVERED. MULTITUDES WHO SLEEP IN THE DUST OF THE EARTH WILL AWAKE: SOME TO EVERLASTING LIFE, OTHERS TO SHAME AND EVERLASTING CONTEMPT." (DANIEL 12:1B-2)

"JESUS SAID TO HER, 'I AM THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE. HE WHO BELIEVES IN ME WILL LIVE, EVEN THOUGH HE DIES; AND WHOEVER LIVES AND BELIEVES IN ME WILL NEVER DIE.'" (JOHN 11:25-26)

Satan's Call by Internet

Satan called a worldwide convention of demons. In his opening address he said, "We can't keep Christians from going to church." "We can't keep them from reading their Bibles and knowing the truth." "We can't even keep them from forming an intimate relationship with their saviour."

"Once they gain that connection with Jesus, our power over them is broken." "So let them go to their churches; let them have their covered dish dinners, BUT steal their time, so they don't have time to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.."

"This is what I want you to do," said the devil: "Distract them from gaining hold of their Saviour and maintaining that vital connection throughout their day!"

"How shall we do this?" his demons shouted.

"Keep them busy in the non-essentials of life and invent innumerable schemes to occupy their minds," he answered.

"Tempt them to spend, spend, spend, and borrow, borrow, borrow." "Persuade the wives to go to work for long hours and the husbands to work 6-7 days each week, 10-12 hours a day, so they can afford their empty lifestyles."

"Keep them from spending time with their children." "As their families fragment, soon, their homes will offer no escape from the pressures of work!" "Over-stimulate their minds so that they cannot hear that still, small voice." "Entice them to play the radio or cassette player whenever they drive." To keep the TV, VCR, CDs and their PCs going constantly in their home and see to it that every store and restaurant in the world plays non-biblical music constantly." "This will jam their minds and break that union with Christ." "Fill the coffee tables with magazines and newspapers." "Pound their minds with the news 24 hours a day." "Invade their driving moments with billboards." "Flood their mailboxes with junk mail, mail order catalogs, sweepstakes, and every kind of newsletter and promotional offering free products, services and false hopes.." (Continued. Pg 19)

OVERCOMING of A MATTER OF FAITH

by Terrilyn H. (Internet)

Crying out to God, asking Him to do some Good Thing usually gets His attention. Saying to Him... "Your Will be done in my life Father, not my own", with you saying I dedicate my life for Your service, places you in a position which draws you closer to Him and also will increase various attacks from the enemy. Satan will do everything he can to derail you from accomplishing The Will of God in your life. Satan will come in the form of various distractions bait, a man, work, pleasure seeking, TV or whatever comes your way.

When you stand in prayer both for yourself in accomplishment of His Will and in intercession for others, great things will happen. You will notice God showing up here and there, you may hear a still small voice, which as time goes by becomes clearer and clearer. Those who are His hear His voice. You will experience different things occurring, some Supernatural. You may even encounter, visiting angels, visions, prophetic dreams, the delicate smell of The Holy Spirit like roses. Whatever the occurrence, you can be certain that God is with you by reason of The Presence of God being near by, in the person of The Holy Spirit. When you get into The Word, read The Word as if you were reading it for the very first time, as a child would read and ask The Lord to reveal what He has to say to you each time you read. This will increase your understanding of Him and His goals for your life. He may even just come right out and tell you what He wants to accomplish in your life or it may be as subtle as a knowing down deep inside you or a yearning to do some good thing. Always live a life for love of God and love for others; a life of virtue and valour, never condemning and always forgiving with mercy and grace. Doing the above will help you be an overcomer in your life and will be a light to those in darkness to show them The Glory of God and the pathway towards Christ and The Kingdom of Heaven.

The Blessing of Surrender

Quit quarreling with God! Agree with him and you will have peace at last! His favor will surround you if you will only admit that you were wrong. Job 22:21 (LB)

The Bible is very clear about how we benefit when we worship God through surrender: "Agree with him and you will have peace at last! His favor will surround you if you will only admit that you were wrong" (Job 22:21 LB).

In surrender, you begin to really live the life God intended: "Only those who throw away their lives for my sake and for the sake of the Good News will ever know what it means to really live" (Mark 8:35 LB).

You are set free, liberated from self-preoccupation: "But offer yourselves to the ways of God and the freedom never quits. All your lives you've let sin tell you what to do. But thank God you've started listening to a new master, one whose commands set you free to live openly in his freedom!" (Romans 6:16-18 MSG).

God is able to use you in great ways.

Why did God choose Mary, of all women, to be the mother of Jesus? It was because she was totally surrendered to God. When the angel explained God's improbable plan, she humbly responded, "I am the Lord's servant! Let it happen as you have said" (Luke 1:38 CEV).

Nothing is more powerful than a surrendered life in the hands of God.

THE WISDOM OF GOD

(Cp Isa 29.14)

For the message about the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. For it is written, "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the discernment of the discerning I will thwart." Where is the one who is wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe. For Jews demand signs and Greeks desire wisdom, but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For God's foolishness is wiser than human wisdom, and God's weakness is stronger than human strength.

(Continued on Pg 16)

The Cosmic Conflict
Between Christ & Satan
By Bruce Cameron: gobible.com

Satan Vs Jesus Lesson 6 Of 13

Lesson 6

Faith Amid Turmoil (Daniel 6, Esther 3 & 4)

Introduction: Last month we discussed real people who were caught up in the cosmic conflict between good and evil. In the cases we studied (David, Samson, Elijah) we found people of faith who gave in to sinful impulses. This week we look at real people who suffered through no apparent fault of their own, but remained faithful. Let's jump in.

1. Daniel

1. Read [Daniel 6:1-3](#). What position did Daniel hold in the kingdom of Medo-Persia? (Daniel had a remarkable career. If you look at [Daniel 5:29](#) you will discover that Daniel was promoted to "third highest ruler" in Babylon the night it fell to Darius the Mede. However, when Darius organized his new kingdom, he made Daniel one of the three top administrators that reported directly to King Darius.)

1:a How good was Daniel at his job? (Verse 3 tells us that Darius intended to further reorganize and make Daniel the number one administrator. He would be second in charge to the king.)

2. Read [Daniel 6:4](#). What does "at this" mean? What is motivating these leaders to plot against Daniel? (When they learned that the King intended to promote Daniel over all of them, they were jealous and plotted against him.)

2:a What was the problem they faced in plotting against Daniel? (He was "neither corrupt nor negligent.")

3. Read [Daniel 6:5](#). What is their only angle of attack against Daniel? (A potential conflict between the law of God and the law of the government.)

3:a Friend, can this be said about you? There is nothing in your work that others can attack? The only way to attack you is to find a conflict between your obligations to God and your obligations to the government?

4. Based on this only approach, a plot is hatched. Let's read on: [Daniel 6:6-9](#). While Daniel's "weakness" was his allegiance to God, what is the weakness of King Darius? (Pride. Maybe a little mental weakness too, since one of his principal advisors was missing from this group -- the one who prayed to a different God.)

5. Let's read on. [Daniel 6:10-11](#). To whom does Daniel turn for help? (Verse 11 says he was asking God for help.)

5:a Wouldn't a little "self-help" have been appropriate here? For example, why not close the windows? Nothing requires you to pray with the windows open! Indeed, Jesus said ([Matthew 6:6](#)) to pray behind closed doors.

5:b Read the story in [Matthew 17:24-27](#). Was Jesus' approach to this "governmental regulation" the same as that of Daniel? (It seems not. Jesus was willing to compromise (not give offense) as much as possible without compromising the principle (which was who Jesus was).)

5:c Why do you think Daniel refused to change anything about the way he prayed to God? (I think he viewed this as a test of his allegiance to God. It was an open challenge to his faith. The context of Jesus' statement to pray behind closed doors was to those hypocrites who were praying just to be seen by men. Since they were doing this only for self-glory, you can be sure they would have closed the door if death were the reward for public prayer.)

5:d Why did the other administrators (v.11) go "as a group" to find Daniel violating the law by praying? (These guys were schemers and cowards. Since the King liked Daniel, if just one reported this, the King might have ignored the report and punished the one who gave the report.)

If a whole group of the administrators reported this, King Darius would be trapped.)

6. [Daniel 6:12-13](#) records that the group then reported Daniel's praying to King Darius. Let's read [Daniel 6:14](#). What do you think is going on in the King's mind right now? What were his views about Daniel? His views about his decree on worship? His views about his advisors? (He clearly knows he has been tricked and trapped. He still has a very high view of Daniel because verse 14 tells us that he "made very effort" to rescue Daniel. The King thinks killing Daniel is unfair and not in his best interests.)

6:a The advisors keep reminding King Darius that his edicts cannot be changed (vv. 12, 15). Consider the situation: the King and his most trusted advisor (Daniel) agree that Daniel should not be killed - yet Daniel is going to be thrown in the lions' den. What does this teach us about relying on men for our freedom and welfare? (This shows why Daniel, in verse 11, was "asking God for help." We cannot depend on the state, powerful friends or any other person. We must depend upon God not only for our salvation, but for every other aspect of our life.)

7. Read [Daniel 6:16-17](#). If we must depend on God, why didn't God work something out before Daniel got thrown in the den? I am not a procrastinator. I am not a "last minute" guy. Is God a procrastinator or a "last minute" guy? (God often lets matters get to their worst point before He intervenes. His thinking on this is revealed in the story of Gideon fighting the Midianites. In [Judges 7:2](#) God tells Gideon to get rid of some of his soldiers "in order that Israel may not boast against me that her own strength saved her." God wants us to be clear on who saved us. In [Daniel 6:16](#), the ruler of the empire acknowledged that the matter of Daniel's life had come down to a miracle from his God.)

7:a What lesson do we learn from this for the problems in our life?

8. Read [Daniel 6:19-22](#). Now, what do you think about the idea of Daniel just shutting the doors when he prayed?

8:a Read [Daniel 6:25-27](#). (I believe that God impressed Daniel that praying privately was not the right answer. As a result of Daniel's faithfulness, the power of God is clearly displayed to King Darius and to the entire empire.)

8:b Did Daniel suffer just so that God would look good? (Daniel obeyed. If this event had not happened, Daniel would always have had his jealous competitors trying to harm him. Instead, [Daniel 6:24](#) reports that they were no longer a part of Daniel's life. Daniel 6:28 reveals "So Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and the reign of Cyrus the Persian." This event also caused the King to be converted and to announce the empire was now "Christian.")

2. Esther

1. Read [Esther 3:13](#). Do you know why this edict to kill the Jews was issued? (There was a rising young star in the empire of Medo-Persia, a man named Haman. He was like Daniel in that the King elevated him above all of the other nobles. The King ordered all to bow down to Haman when he passed by them. A guy named Mordecai refused - probably because of the first two of the Ten Commandments. When Haman saw this he decided to kill not only Mordecai, but everyone with his same religious background. (See, generally, Esther 3)

2. The Queen, a lady named Esther, was a Jew who had been raised by Mordecai. He turned to her for help. Read Esther 4:12-14. What did Mordecai want Esther to do? (Intervene with the King about the edict to kill all the Jews.)

2:a What did Mordecai warn would happen if she did not? (He said she would die.)

2:b Read [Esther 4:10-11](#). What was Esther worried about if she intervened with the King? (That she would die. She was facing death either way.)

2:c What do you think about Mordecai's warning? Was this just "scare tactics?" (It is hard to imagine that the Queen would be killed as part of the decree to kill Jews. However, we learned about the absolute nature of the Medo-Persian royal edicts in the story of Daniel.)

2:d How do the problems in your life compare with the problems facing Esther?

2:e Let's go back and look at [Esther 4:14](#) again. Was Mordecai worried about being killed? (He says that God would find a way to deliver His people regardless of whether Esther helped.)

2:f Are the problems we face obstacles or opportunities? (This story suggests that God will have his way. The only question is whether we will be co-laborers with Him in resolving the problems in life.)

3. Read [Esther 4:15-16](#). What were Esther's two approaches to resolving this national religious liberty problem? (I say "religious liberty problem" because lives were being threatened because of Mordecai's obedience to God. Esther turned to God (fasting and prayer) and direct political action (approaching the King).)

3:a Are these two approaches to religious liberty problems still valid? (They certainly reflect the Biblical blueprint for any country where individuals have a say in the nature of the laws and individuals can express their views without risk of harm. Beyond that, this is a blueprint for individuals who can influence government, even at the peril of their life. This would not seem to be the blueprint (the direct political action part) for individuals who have no real influence on government and are simply risking their lives. Prayer and fasting would be appropriate for all situations.)

3:b Read [Esther 8:11](#), 16-17. What was the outcome of prayer, fasting and courageous political action? (God intervened - He worked with Esther to save the lives of His people.)

3:c Friend, in these two stories we see people who remained faithful to God even at the risk of their lives. Do you face life-threatening problems in your life because of your allegiance to God? God calls on you to trust, obey and be co-laborers with Him through the most difficult of times.

Next Month: Jesus Models Victory.

(Continued from Pg 13 Devotionals)

Consider your own call, brothers and sisters: not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, things that are not, to reduce to nothing things that are, so that no one might boast in the presence of God. He is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, in order that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord."



"God will provide the Lamb"
Isaiah 53:7

**Comprehensive Bible Study
Used for Sunday Morning Bible School
And a Daily Bread for the Month of April
By David Cook**

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April 5, 2009

Finding God's Purposes

Lesson Focus:

Remember you were saved for His purposes.

'Power for Growth'

2 Peter 1:3-4

'Qualities for Growth'

2 Peter 1:5-11

'Motivation for Growth'

2 Peter 1:12-15

Make Every Effort

Peter said to "make every effort" (2 Pet. 1:5, NIV) to have a progressing, active faith. That can be costly, taking us out of our comfort zone as we accept His purposes for our lives rather than our own. God has given us everything we need" (vs. 3), but will we use it to live lives marked by goodness, self-control, perseverance, kindness, and a greater knowledge of Him?

Key Verse:

ACCORDING AS HIS DIVINE POWER HATH GIVEN UNTO US ALL THINGS THAT PERTAIN UNTO LIFE AND GODLINESS, THROUGH THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIM THAT HATH CALLED US TO GLORY AND VIRTUE: 2 PETER 1:3 KJV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Mon. 1 Peter 2:13-17; Live as Servants of God.

Tues. 1 Peter 2:18-21; Treat Those in Authority with Respect.

Wed. 1 Peter 2:22-25; Jesus Showed Us How to Handle Suffering.

Thurs. John 19:16-27; Jesus is Led away to be Crucified.

Fri. John 19:28-42; Jesus Dies on the Cross and Is Buried.

Sat. John 20:1-9; Mary Arrives at the Tomb.

Sun. John 20: 10-18; Mary tell the Disciples, " I Have Seen the Lord!"

April 12, 2009

The Suffering, Submissive Savior

Lesson Focus:

We can rejoice when we suffer as Christ did for His sake.

'Submitting to Human Government'

1 Peter 2:13-14

'Submitting to Human Masters'

1 Peter 2:19-20

'Following the Example of Christ'

1 Peter 2:21-25

I Will Rejoice!

Rejoicing in suffering sounds crazy from a worldly perspective. But for the Christian, Rejoicing is a perfect way to respond in the face of suffering. Of course, we don't rejoice because we enjoy pain. We rejoice because we are not alone in our pain. We rejoice because God is working through our pain to produce good fruit in our lives . We rejoice because this world and the injustice, pain, and cruelty we endure in it will be the final word in our lives.

Key Verse:

FOR EVEN HEREUNTO WERE YE CALLED: BECAUSE CHRIST ALSO SUFFERED FOR US, LEAVING US AN EXAMPLE, THAT YE SHOULD FOLLOW HIS STEPS: 1 PETER 2:21 KJV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Mon. Matthew 24:1-14; Jesus Warns of False Teaching.

Tues. Matthew 24:15-25; Manu Will Be Deceived.

Wed. 2 Peter 2: 1-8; Unrepentant Sinners Will Not Escape God's Judgment.

Thurs. 2 Peter 2:9-12; False Teachers Will Receive Their Punishment.

Fri. 2 Peter 2:13-16; Some delight in Sinning, Not Caring Who Sees.

Sat. 2 Peter 2:17-22; If You Are God's, Don't Turn from Him.

Sun. 1 Timothy 4:1-10; Have Nothing to Do with false Teachings.

April 19, 2009

Do Not Be Deceived

Lesson Focus:

Keep on the lookout for false teachers.

'The Threat of False Teachers'

2 Peter 2: 1-3

'The Fate of False Teachers'

2 Peter 2:4-10

'The Strategy of False Teachers'

2 Peter 2:17-19

Be Alert

Even within the first-century church there were those who promoted distorted Christian doctrines. The apostle Peter not only warned Christians to beware of these false teacher but also condemned these evil people, particularly for their misleading views about Christ. We are not immured to the evil schemes and work of false teachers who can creep into our churches .

Birthdates and Events of: April

- 5th Palm Sunday
BD: Bro. Hassan (Romeo) Thomas #
- 9th Jewish Passover
- 10th Good Friday
- 12th Easter Sunday
BD: Elderess Minnie Charleston
BD: Felicia Mason
- 18th BD: Deaconess Alice Dunbar
BD: Deshonette Jackson *
- 19th BD: Jon Townson
- 21st BD: Daron Watkins
- 23rd BD: Shanta Jackson *
- 29th BD: Bro. Michael DeVore
- 30th BD: Bro. James Harley #

MAY

- 1st Pierre Paris Mason *
- 4th BD: Sis. Tara Davis
- 5th Cinco De Mayo
Deaconess Wanda Townsend
Rishee Jackson
- 10th Mothers Day
- 11th Kadir Wright *
- 14th Malik Nath *
- 18th Sis. Regina Townsend
Tayshanicka Harrison*
- 19th Sis. Kimala Simmons
- 25th Memorial Day
- 29th Anniversary, Earl & Lynndaysia Perry

Daily Scripture Reading:
Read the Holy Bible in a Year.

April

- 1. ΔMt 25:1-3 ΔNum 30-31 ΔJob 1
- 2. ΔMt 25:31-46 ΔNum32-34 ΔJob 2
- 3. ΔMt 26:1-25 ΔNum 35-36 ΔJob 3
- 4. ΔMt 26:26-46 ΔDeut 1-2 ΔJob 4
- 5. ΔMt 26:47-75 ΔDeut 3-4 ΔJob 5
- 6. ΔMt 27:1-31 ΔDeut 5-6 ΔJob 6
- 7. ΔMt 27:32-66 ΔDeut 7-8 ΔJob 7
- 8. ΔMt 28 ΔDeut 9-10 ΔJob 8
- 9. ΔActs 1 ΔDeut 11-12 ΔJob 9
- 10. ΔActs 2:1-13 ΔDeut 13-14 ΔJob 10
- 11. ΔActs 2:14-47 ΔDeut 15-16 ΔJob 11
- 12. ΔActs 3 ΔDeut 17-18 ΔJob 12
- 13. ΔActs 4:1-22 ΔDeut 19-20 ΔJob 13
- 14. ΔActs 4:23-37 ΔDeut 21-22 ΔJob 14
- 15. ΔActs 5:1-16 ΔDeut 23-24 ΔJob 15
- 16. ΔActs 5:17-42 ΔDeut 25-27 ΔJob 16
- 17. ΔActs 6 ΔDeut 28 ΔJob 17
- 18. ΔActs7:1-22 ΔDeut 29-30 ΔJob 18
- 19. ΔActs 7: 23-8:1a ΔDeut 31-32 ΔJob 19
- 20. ΔActs 8:1b-25 ΔDeut 33-34 ΔJob 20
- 21. ΔActs 8:26-40 ΔJosh 1-2 ΔJob 21
- 22. ΔActs 9:1-25 ΔJosh 3:1-5:1 ΔJob 22
- 23. ΔActs9:26-43 ΔJosh 5:2-6:27 ΔJob 23
- 24. ΔActs 10:1-33 ΔJosh 7-8 ΔJob 24
- 25. ΔActs 10:34-48 ΔJosh 9-10 ΔJob 25
- 26. ΔActs 11:1-18 ΔJosh 11-12 ΔJob 26
- 27. ΔActs 11: 19-30 ΔJosh 13-14 ΔJob 27
- 28. ΔActs 12 ΔJosh 15-17 ΔJob 28
- 29. ΔActs 13:1-35 ΔJosh 18-19 ΔJob 29
- 30. ΔActs 13:26-52 ΔJosh 20-21 ΔJob 30

May

- 1. ΔActs 14 ΔJosh 22 ΔJob 31
- 2. ΔActs 15:1-21 ΔJosh 23-24 ΔJob 32
- 3. ΔActs 15:22-41 ΔJudg 1 ΔJob 33
- 4. ΔActs 16:1-15 ΔJudg 2-3 ΔJob 34
- 5. ΔActs 16:16-40 ΔJudg 4-5 ΔJob 35
- 6. ΔActs 17:1-15 ΔJudg 6 ΔJob 36
- 7. ΔActs 17:16-34 ΔJudg7-8 ΔJob 37
- 8. ΔActs 18 ΔJudg 9 ΔJob 38
- 9. ΔActs 19:1-20 ΔJudg 10:1-11:33 ΔJob 39
- 10. ΔActs 19: 21-41 ΔJudg 11:34-12:15
ΔJob 40
- 11. ΔActs 20:1-16 ΔJudg 13 ΔJob 41
- 12. ΔActs 20:17-38 ΔJudg 14-15 ΔJob 42
- 13. ΔActs 21:1-36 ΔJudg 16 ΔPs 42
- 14. ΔActs 21:37-22:29 ΔJudge 17-18 ΔPs 43
- 15. ΔActs 22:30-23:22 ΔJudg 19 ΔPs 44

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*Senior Pastors / Founders / Apostles
Apostle Joseph T. Robinson Sr.
Prophetess Laura L. Robinson*

*Sunday School 11:00 am
Sunday Worship 12:noon
Wed: Bible Study 8:00 pm*

Therefore, we too must always be on the lookout for them . We must know what we believe and why.

Key Verse:

BUT THERE WERE FALSE PROPHETS ALSO AMONG THE PEOPLE, EVEN AS THERE SHALL BE FALSE TEACHERS AMONG YOU, 2 PETER 2:1A KJV

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Mon. 2 Peter 3:1-7; We are Living in the Last Days; Judgment Is Coming.
Tues. 2 Peter 3:8-13; Live Holy, Godly Lives as We Wait for the Lord.
Wed. 2 Peter 3:14-18; Look Forward to the New Heaven and Earth.
Thurs. Revelation 21:1-5; John Sees a New Heaven and Earth.
Fri. Revelation 21:6-14; John Is Shown the Holy City.
Sat. Revelation 21:15-21; The Angel Explains How the City Is Laid Out.
Sun. Revelation 21:22-27; The Glory of God Lights the City.

April 26, 2009

A New World Coming

Lesson Focus:

We Look forward to a new heaven and earth.

'Judgment upon the Old Heaven and Earth'
2 Peter 3: 3-5, 7-10
'Anticipating the New Heaven and Earth'
2 Peter 3:11-15a, 17-18

Tearing Down to Build Again

The coming destruction of this present world is really all about redemption. It is not destruction for its own sake, but rather, like the tearing down of an old house to make way for a beautiful new one, it is the beginning of a new and eternal state of peace, joy , and blessing. When viewed from this vantage point, the life that is to come can be anticipated with delight, not fear, and we need to thank God for His abundant grace that allows us to join Him in eternity.

Key Verse:

WHEREFORE, BELOVED, SEEING THAT YE LOOK FOR SUCH THINGS, BE DILIGENT THAT YE MAY BE FOUND OF HIM IN PEACE, WITHOUT SPOT, AND BLAMELESS. 2 PETER 3:14

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Mon. Daniel 1:1-21; Daniel and Friends Do Not Eat Royal Food and Wine.
Tues. Daniel 2:1-11; King Nebuchadnezzar Had Dreams That Troubled Him.
Wed. Daniel 2:12-23; Daniel Praises God.
Thurs. Daniel 2:24-30; Only God Can Reveal Mysteries.

Fri. Daniel 2:31-38; Daniel Tells the Dream to the King.

Sat. Daniel 2:39-49; Daniel Interprets the Dream.
Sun. Daniel 3:1-15; King Nebuchadnezzar Makes an Image of God.

(Satan: Continued from Pg 12)

"Keep skinny, beautiful models on the magazines and TV so their husbands will believe that outward beauty is what's important, and they'll become dissatisfied with their wives. "

"Keep the wives too tired to love their husbands at night." "Give them headaches too!"

"If they don't give their husbands the love they need, they will begin to look elsewhere."

"That will fragment their families quickly!"

"Give them Santa Claus to distract them from teaching their children the real meaning of Christmas."

"Give them an Easter bunny so they won't talk about his resurrection and power over sin and death."

"Even in their recreation, let them be excessive."

"Have them return from their recreation exhausted."

"Keep them too busy to go out in nature and reflect on God's creation. Send them to amusement parks, sporting events, plays, concerts, and movies instead." (Continued Pg)

"Keep them busy, busy, busy!"

"And when they meet for spiritual fellowship, involve them in gossip and small talk so that they leave with troubled consciences. "

"Crowd their lives with so many good causes they have no time to seek power from Jesus."

"Soon they will be working in their own strength, sacrificing their health and family for the good of the cause."

"It will work!" "It will work!" It was quite a plan! The demons went eagerly to their assignments causing Christians everywhere to get busier and more rushed, going here and there. Having little time for their God or their families. Having no time to tell others about the power of Jesus to change lives.

I guess the question is, has the devil been successful in his schemes?

You be the judge!!!!

Does "BUSY" mean: B-eing U-nder S-atan's Y-oke?

Please pass this on, if you aren't too BUSY!

IF YOU LOVE JESUS, PASS THIS ON!!!!!!!

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