

CONTRAST OF THE RIGHTEOUS AND UNRIGHTEOUS FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Dave Leonard

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 The contrast between the righteous and unrighteous is a picture painted for us throughout the Scriptures.
- 2 The Psalms give us several pictures of the righteous, unrighteous, their dealings with one another and with God.
 - a Rather than attempting to outline many psalms and bring them together, we will look at the first psalm, which serves as an introduction to the rest of the book and a summary of God's reaction toward those who practice lives of righteousness or unrighteousness.
 - b A...this preface psalm presents a marked contrast between the choice, conduct and character of the righteous man and the choice, conduct and character of the wicked man.@ (Robert R.Taylor, Jr., Studies in Psalms, Chapter Two, p. 11).
- 3 What does it mean that the righteous man is Ablessed?@
 - a What did it mean as Jesus used it to begin the Sermon on the Mount (Mat. 5-7)?
 - b What did it mean as used by the Lord in the Abrahamic promise (Gen. 12:3)?
 - c The word Ablessed@ carries much more meaning than simply making one Ahappy,@ rather, it entails the happiness or blessedness that comes with the satisfaction or fulfillment of all spiritual needs (cf. Eph. 1:3, A...who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings...@).
- 4 To understand the way of righteousness and to avoid the way of the ungodly is the great challenge to man. So, what is the great difference between the righteous and unrighteous man?

Discussion:

- I THE CONDITION OF THE RIGHTEOUS - ABLESSED@ (1:1-3).

A His Path (v. 1).

1 His Course: A...walketh not in the counsel...nor standeth in the way...nor sitteth in the seat...@

a Note the progression of the way of wickedness: from walking, to standing, to sitting in the midst of evil doers and their practices; i.e., becoming one of them.

b Negatively depicted - he shuns or refrains from this way of life; there are things and associations that he must not have in his life.

2. His Companions.

a Ungodly, sinners and scornful

b He refuses to put himself under the influence of evil or unrighteous ones (cf. 1 Cor. 15:33).

B His Pleasure (v. 2).

1 ABut his delight is in the law of the Lord...@

2 Rather than following the influence of those who are unrighteous, he Adelights@ in the Word of God which provides him with joy and peace.

3 His Adelight@ causes us to recognize his desire; one finds pleasure in fulfilled desire. If one desires sinful or worldly things, he will find no pleasure in the Word of God.

C. His Pondering (v. 2).

1 A...in his law doth he meditate day and night.@

2 AMeditation is to the soul what digestion is to the body. It means understanding the Word and applying it to our lives, making it a part of the inner person (See Jer. 15:16; Eze. 3:3)@ (Warren W. Wiersbe, Wiersbe=s Expository Outlines on the Old Testament, Psalm One, p. 128).

3 The Word of God had captured his full affection and attention.

D His Prosperity (v. 3).

1 He is planted - Aby the rivers of water@

2 He is producing - Abringeth forth his fruit in his season@

3 He is profitable - Awhatsoever he doeth shall prosper@

II THE CONDITION OF THE UNRIGHTEOUS - AJUDGED@ (1:4-5).

A The Contrast (v. 4).

- 1 AThe ungodly are not so:...@
- 2 All that the godly person enjoys and experiences is not true in the life of the ungodly.
- 3 In opposition to the godly, the unrighteous have walked in the counsel of the ungodly, stood in the way of sinners and sat in the seat of the scornful.
 - 4 The unrighteous do not delight in the law of the Lord nor do they meditate in it.
 - 5 Because their character opposes that of the righteous, so oes their standing before God.

B The Comparison (v. 4).

- 1 A...but are like the chaff...@
- 2 Chaff has no roots for strength, no work for production and no life for profit.
- 3 The unrighteous are blown with the wind, no beauty or productivity; they are useless to the plan of God.

C The Consequence (vs. 4-5).

- 1 He is driven - A...which the wind driveth away.@
- 2 He is doomed - ATherefore the ungodly shall not stand...@

III THE CONTRASTING CONCLUSION - ATHEIR WAYS@ (v. 6).

A The Comfort of the Righteous.

- 1 AFor the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous...@
2. cf. 1 Pet. 3:12.

B The Condemnation of the Unrighteous.

- 1 A...the way of the ungodly shall perish.@
- 2 cf. Mat. 7:21-23; Rom. 1-3; Gal. 5:19-21...

CONCLUSION:

- 1 The righteous and unrighteous are clearly contrasted in Scripture as they differ in their character, choices and consequences.

- 2 To study other psalms that contrast the righteous and unrighteous, see Psalm 3-5, 7, 9-15, 17, 24-25, 32, 34, 36-37, 41, 49-50, 52-53, 58, 62, 73, 75, 82-84, 91-92, 94, 101, 112, 119, 121, 125, 127-129, 133 and 149.

THE DANGERS OF ALCOHOL IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Derrick Coble

TEXT: Prov. 20:1; Prov. 23:29-35

INTRODUCTION:

- A Budweiser, Busch, Keystone, Icehouse, Corona, Bacardi—what do all of these names have in common? Am I familiar with these names because I am some drunk?
- 1) We are familiar with all of these brands of alcohol simply because our televisions are filled with commercial after commercial trying to sell liquid sin.
 - 2) We wonder why so many homes are being broken by mothers and fathers who can't shake the habit, we wonder why so many people are killed each year by drunk drivers, and we wonder why it is so hard for our young people to resist.
- B If you can just make it to age 21.
- 1) For a lot of teenagers hitting the milestone ages of 18 and 21 means you have legal freedom to do as you please in the realm of worldliness—gamble, smoke, buy pornography, and finally alcohol.
 - 2) Christian teens should want to make it to age 21 for a different reason.
 - a) “The average age when youth first try alcohol is 11 years for boys and 13 years for girls. The average age at which Americans begin drinking regularly is 15.9 years old.” (www.focusas.com)
 - b) “A child who reaches age 21 without smoking, abusing alcohol or using drugs is virtually certain never to do so”—Joseph A. Califano, Jr., Chairman and President, The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University.
- C Then, here comes the “ifs and buts.”
- 1) “But, preacher where does it say in the Bible that just drinking a little with my friends is wrong?”
 - 2) “If drinking is so bad, then how come everybody has so much fun?”
 - 3) “But, it is just one little beer, how is that going to affect me?”
- D For every “if” and “but” there is a Bible answer.
- 1) The Bible says drinking with your friends is wrong when It says, “Be not drunk with wine” (Eph. 5:18).
 - 2) Those who drink seem like they are having great fun because Satan tempts as an “angel of light” (2 Cor. 11:14) with subtlety (2 Cor. 11:3).
 - 3) “One little beer” is going to affect you because you didn't abstain from the evil it entails (1 The. 5:22).
- E Alcohol is extremely dangerous and the book of Proverbs best describes the dangers therein.

DISCUSSION:

- F YOU LOSE YOUR WISDOM (Prov. 20:1)
- 1) When something or someone is mocking us and nagging us over and over it soon becomes easy to give in to the temptation and if we do Solomon says we have been deceived and it is not a wise thing.
 - 2) Think of those we know from the Bible that were deceived by alcohol and notice how they lost their wisdom.

- a) Noah (Gen. 9:21)
- b) Lot (Gen. 19:32ff)
- c) The children of Israel (Exod. 32:6)
- d) Possibly Nadab and Abihu (Lev. 10:1,2,9)
- e) Eli thought Hannah had been deceived with alcohol (1 Sam. 1:13)
- 3) If we think we can partake of alcoholic beverages to “have a good time” or to “get rid of our troubles” and still remain in control of our bodies we have been deceived.
 - a) Alcohol will ruin your life and run your life for you.
 - b) No matter what the commercials show us, no matter how happy and in control drunk people seem, it always ends the same way.
 - (a) You lose your ability to walk straight (Job 12:25)
 - (b) You err in every work and stagger in your vomit (Isa. 19:14)
- 4) Above all this, the effects on the brain are irreversible.
 - a) Alcohol destroys brain cells—the only cells that are never regenerated.
 - b) Brain cells are responsible for coordination, memory, motor function, sensory function, and all other functions necessary for life.
 - c) This is why drunks become violent, depressed, weak, and forgetful.
- 5) Alcohol truly makes us unwise in every way.

II YOU LOSE YOUR FRIENDS (Prov. 23:29)

- A) A man from Alcoholics Anonymous had this to say about his addiction (by the way since there is an organization for this it shows the shamefulness)
 - We drank for happiness and became unhappy.
 - We drank for joy and became miserable.
 - We drank for sociability and became argumentative.
 - We drank for sophistication and became obnoxious.
 - We drank for friendship and made enemies
- B) Pressures to drink are faced in every realm.
 - 1) Our friends may want us to hang out at their house on Friday and when we get there, everyone is drinking and we think to be popular and keep our friends we must too.
 - 2) Society tells us that those who are successful in business and live it up with friends and a nightlife are those who drink.
- C) What does God tell us?
 - 1) Prov. 23:29,30—all alcohol can give is grief.
 - (a) To have friends we must show ourselves to be friendly (Prov. 18:24) and that is not done by drinking alcohol.
 - (b) True friends love at all times (Prov. 17:17) and those who lead others to drink alcohol are leading their friends into something that is killing them.
 - (c) That is why God told us the importance of choosing our friends carefully (1 Cor. 15:33).
 - 2) Success does not come from drinking alcohol with friends but from following the Lord (Josh. 1:8).
 - (a) That is why Joshua was successful in the battles of the land (Josh. 24:15).
 - (b) That is why David was successful in defeating Goliath (1 Sam. 17).
 - (c) That is why we can be successful in defeating Satan (Eph. 6:11ff).
- D) The very people who we know to have been successful in the past are those who did not

drink.

- 1) Ty Cobb said while he was setting records that still stand, “No drink for me! It slows me up and dims my batting eye.”
 - 2) The United States Steel Corporation displays this poster: “The Last Man Hired, The First Man Fired, The Man Who Drinks”
- E) When the mind is under the influence of alcohol, it is out of control.
- 1) It could cause one to lose friends by the things that are said—the Christian is not to let corrupt communication proceed from the mouth (Eph. 4:29).
 - 2) It could cause one to lose friends by the things that are done.
 - (a) Alcohol is involved in fifteen thousand homicides and suicides annually, twenty thousand accidental deaths, plus one-half of all auto accidents and the additional twenty-five thousand deaths they cause. Even 40 percent of the pedestrians who are killed have been drinking.
 - (b) 1 Cor. 10:31 “Whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God”

III YOU LOSE YOUR HEALTH (Prov. 23:29,32,34-35)

- A) Not only is the brain affected by alcohol but it leads to the deterioration of the entire body.
- 1) It causes the clumping of red blood cells (“sludge”) that lead to high blood pressure, blocked arteries, strokes, and heart attacks.
 - 2) It causes cirrhosis of the liver which means your body cannot produce what it needs to help your blood clot and soon the liver can fail which results in one of two options: transplant or death.
- B) The very nature of the word, “intoxicate” should tell us that alcohol is a toxic substance that poisons the body.
- C) How can we say we are a Christian living our lives for the Lord if we are constantly hurting our bodies with alcohol?
- 1) 1 Cor. 3:16,17
 - 2) 1 Cor. 6:19,20
- D) The problem of alcohol plagues over 70 million Americans who are social drinkers leaving only about 33% of the American public sober.
- E) This is why God tells us to be sober (1 Thess. 5:8; 1 Pet. 1:13)
- 1) Sober = free from every form of mental and spiritual drunkenness, excess passion, and confusion (Arndt and Gingrich)
 - 2) Alcohol is a known impurity and no matter how little or how much is consumed recreationally it goes against Paul’s charge to “keep thyself pure” (1 Tim. 5:22).
- F) Our aim is to “follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another” (Rom. 14:19).

IV YOU LOSE YOUR SALVATION (Prov. 23:31)

- A) Notice all of these warnings against alcohol.
- 1) Isa. 5:11,12
 - 2) Hab. 2:15
 - 3) Gal. 5:21
 - 4) 1 Cor. 6:9,10
- B) Even though these warnings are present many want to say that the occasional drink is O.K because it is only drunkenness that is condemned.

- 1) It is true that Paul says, “be not drunk with wine wherein is excess” (Eph. 5:18).
- 2) If only drunkenness is condemned then why did Solomon tell us not to even look at it? The whole reason why he tells us about the evils of it is so we will stay away from it.
- 3) Think about it in consideration of what Christians are like in the kingdom.
 - (a) We are to be like little children (Mat. 18:3)—Would we give children the occasional drink of alcohol?
 - (b) We are soldiers (2 Tim. 2:3)—Are soldiers allowed to have alcohol in the midst of a battle?
 - (c) We are the salt of the earth (Mat. 5:16)—Salt is pure and if alcohol is added to salt it becomes impure.
 - (d) We are priests (1 Pet. 2:9)—(Ezek. 44:21) Neither shall any priest drink wine, when they enter into the inner court.
 - (e) We are sheep (John 10:3)—Have you ever seen a sheep sipping alcohol?
- C) The fact is anybody who partakes of alcoholic beverages in any amount at any time is in danger of condemnation if they don’t repent.

CONCLUSION:

- V It has been estimated that over 3 million teenagers are out and out alcoholics and several more have a serious drinking problem.
- VI Parents who have a favorable attitude toward drinking also contribute to the attitudes of their children toward this dangerous problem.
- VII Solomon warns us all about the dangers associated with alcohol and we should take it seriously.
- VIII The sad thing is that even though we may not support alcoholic drinking we can still suffer from the effects of it.
- IX Let us all decide to heed the dangers of alcohol and follow the Lord.

DAVID: SWEET IMPRECATOR OF ISRAEL

Dan Cates

The description of David which precedes his last words reads, "David the son of Jesse said, and the man *who was* raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel" (II Sam. 23:1). What a beautiful characterization of the second king of Israel and the producer of most of the Psalms; what a beautiful description of the one whose heart was like Lord's (I Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22; c.f., I Kings 15:3-5). He was not perfect, but he was very admirable, this "sweet psalmist of Israel."

Seeing this David described as sweet, and how do we reconcile his being capable of praying concerning his enemies things such as "Destroy thou them . . . let them fall" or "[let them] be ashamed and sore vexed" or "let them be silent in the grave" or "Destroy . . . and divide their tongues"? Would this not be a grievous attitude on the part of David? Considering these statements in their fuller versions, one understands a little about what attitude backed these imprecations (imprecation being "The act of calling down a curse that invokes evil" [WordWeb, ver. 4.5a]) of David as well as other psalmists, including the writer of the harsh Psalm 137:7-9 which reads, "Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase *it*, rase *it*, *even* to the foundation thereof. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy *shall he be*, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy *shall he be*, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." Here they are:

- "Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee" (Psalm 5:10).
- "Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return *and* be ashamed suddenly" (Psalm 6:10).
- "Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause" (Psalm 25:3).
- "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert" (Psalm 28:4).
- "Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, *and* let them be silent in the grave" (Psalm 31:17).
- "Destroy, O Lord, *and* divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city" (Psalm 55:9).
- See also the Messianic Psalm 69:21-28 and large sections of Psalm 18:40-42 and Psalm 35:3-8 and the whole of Psalm 109:1-31.

Could you see the attitude behind these imprecatory Psalms? Even though they may not seem such on the surface (and even though many have misunderstood them), the psalmists' imprecations are righteous ones for the following reasons:

- They call upon God to be the One who exercises vengeance (Psalms 94:1; 58:10; 149:6-7; Deut. 32:35, 32:43; c.f. Rom_12:19).
- They recognize God as being a God of judgment (Psalm 149:9) and justice (Psalms 7:9; 82:3) as the psalmist wrote, "Justice and judgment *are* the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face" (Psalm 89:14).
- They represent vindication for the righteous (Psalm 58:11).
- They exemplify the old principle of retaliation (Psalm 137:8-9; c.f., Exod. 21:23-25; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21).

When we read these Psalms, let us consider not the harsh language, but the righteous indignation behind the psalmists' words.

Pride and Its Deadlines From the Book of Proverbs

Paul Meacham

TEXT: Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall (Pro. 16:18).

THESIS: The purpose of this sermon is to cause the hearer to think about the danger of being prideful, feel apprehensive about falling into the trap of arrogance, and behave in a more humble manner.

INTRODUCTION:

1. The Bible defines physical death for us.
 - a. It is the separation of the soul from the body (Gen. 35:18).
 - b. It causes us pain because it separates our loved ones from us (2 Sam. 12:23).
 2. The Bible defines spiritual death as one's separation from God.
 - a. Our sins separate us from God (Isa. 59:1-2).
 - b. If we die in our sins God sends us away from Him making the separation permanent (Mat. 25:41)
 - c. Being cast away from God is the "second death" (Rev. 20:14-15).
 3. Let us consider the deadly nature of pride by looking at some of the things from which it separates us.
 4. Pride separates us from sound reasoning.
 - a. Sound reasoning leads us to rely on God.
 1. God wants us to rely on Him (Pro. 14:12; Jer. 17:7; Luke 11:3).
 2. But, pride causes us to trust only in ourselves (Pro. 3:5-7; 14:12).
 - b. Sound reasoning teaches us the value of instruction
 1. God wants us to be wise in His ways, and only godly instruction can bring about that kind of understanding (Pro. 1:2-4; 15:5)
 2. But, pride causes us to be puffed up against the Lord and rebellious against instruction (Pro. 1:7; 26:12).
 - c. Sound reasoning teaches us that there are times we should not speak.
 1. God wants us to develop into people of discretion and understanding (Pro. 17:28).
 2. But, pride causes us to speak arrogantly (Pro. 8:13; 30:32; 14:3; 27:1).
- II. Pride separates us from good relationships with our fellow man.
- A. Good relationships are generally characterized by peace.
 1. God requires that we do all we can to live peaceably (Rom. 12:18; Mark 9:50; Rom. 14:19; 2 Cor. 13:11; Heb. 12:14; 1 Pet. 3:10-11).
 2. But, pride causes strife and contention (Pro. 13:10).
 - B. Good relationships are tied, in part, to the reputation we make for ourselves among men.
 1. God expects His people to be people of good reputation (Acts 6:3; 1 Tim. 3:7; 3 John 12).
 2. But, pride causes others to adjudge us fools and braggarts (Pro. 25:6-7; 27:2).

- III. Pride separates us from reverence toward God.
 - A. Reverence breeds humility which brings honor, but pride leads us to shame (Pro. 15:33; 11:2; Psa. 10:4).
 - B. Reverence that leads to humility allows God to be gracious to us, but pride causes Him to destroy us (Pro. 3:34; 15:25).
 - C. Reverence before God is seemly, but pride before God is a wickedness that God hates (Pro. 6:16-19; 21:4; 16:5; 28:25).

- IV. Pride separates us from repentance without which we cannot be forgiven.
 - A. Repentance is necessary for forgiveness (Luke 13:3, 5; 17:3; 2 Pet. 3:9).
 - B. But, pride causes one to think he is special and his sins can be dealt with in some less embarrassing way (Pro. 28:13).

- V. Pride separates us from our reward.
 - A. The rewards of this life are predicated on humility and reverence (Pro. 22:4; 25:27),
 - B. But, pride brings us down to destruction (Pro. 29:23; 18:12).

Godly Advice to Women from the Book of Proverbs

Mindy Coble

INTRODUCTION:

- A. The purpose of the book of Proverbs is to give moral instruction or advice on subjects ranging from wisdom, sin, and temptation to poverty, benevolence, and pleasure, just to name a few.
- B. When considering what advice is given that might be of special importance to women, it is helpful to note how the word “woman” is used in the book.
 - 1. The word “woman” or “women” appears 27 times in the book.
 - a. 15 times it is used to warn men against the dangers of a strange, whorish, or adulterous woman.
 - b. The remaining 12 verses will serve as the basis of our lesson as we notice six things we should be seeking as advised in the book of Proverbs.

I. SEEK HONOR

- A. Proverbs 11:16 tells us that “a gracious woman retaineth honor.”
 - 1. In seeking honor, we must be gracious.
 - a. A gracious person shows kindness, courtesy, and compassion to those around her.
 - 2. The word “honor”, as it is used here, carries with it the idea of being esteemed or respected.
 - a. Thus, the verse tells us that the woman who is gracious will be held in high esteem or will be well respected.
 - 3. Psalm 145:8 teaches us that the Lord is gracious.
 - a. We see His graciousness through the act of sending His Son to die for us.
 - 4. Note the following biblical examples of women who were gracious:
 - a. The Shunamite Woman (2 Kings 4)
 - b. Rahab (Joshua 2:12)
 - c. Widow of Zarephath (1 Kings 17)
 - d. Mary the Sister of Martha (John 12)
 - e. Dorcas (Acts 9)
 - 5. The New Testament also teaches the concept of being gracious.
 - a. Ephesians 4:32 teaches us to be kind to one another.
 - b. 1 Peter 3:8 teaches us to have compassion one of another.
- B. Am I seeking honor in my life as a Christian woman?

II. SEEK PEACEFULNESS

- A. Several verses in the book of Proverbs address a woman who is anything but peaceful to be around.
 - 1. Proverbs 21:9; 25:24; and 21:19
 - a. How many times are we angry and ready to snap at our husband for any little thing he may say or do?
 - b. We’ve all heard the saying, “If Momma ain’t happy ain’t nobody happy.”

- i. We usually laugh when we hear this, but essentially Solomon through inspiration is saying the same thing.
- ii. I doubt any of our husbands would be happy living in the wilderness or only a tiny corner of our homes, yet Solomon says even that would be better than living with us when we are “on the warpath.”

2. Proverbs 27:15

- a. How many of us are guilty of nagging? (husbands, children, friends, co-workers, etc.)
 - i. The word nag means “to annoy by continual scolding, urging, etc., or to keep troubling.”
 - ii. When we raise contentions or strife and constantly nag our friends, relatives, or acquaintances about them, we are not being the women that God would have us to be.

3. Proverbs 30:21, 23

- a. How do we treat our husbands?
 - i. Are we hateful in the way we speak to them and treat them, or do we love our husbands (Titus 2:4) and submit ourselves to them as to the Lord (Ephesians 5:22)?
 - ii. Many times we offer more respect, compassion, and love to strangers that we meet than to our own husbands (especially in the way we talk to them.)

B. Am I seeking peacefulness in my life as a Christian woman?

III. SEEK VIRTUE

- A. Proverbs 31:10 tells us that the virtuous woman’s price is far above rubies.
- B. Proverbs 12:4 says, “A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband, but she that maketh ashamed is as rottenness in his bones.”
- C. Being virtuous carries with it the idea of being worthy, having strength, and moral excellence.
- D. As we think about a virtuous woman in today’s society, let us note that she would be one who exhibits the following qualities:
 - 1. She puts God first in her life (Matthew 6:33).
 - 2. She has a knowledge of the Word of God and continues daily to learn more about Him and His Word (2 Timothy 2:15).
 - 3. She goes about doing good works so that Christ may be glorified (Matthew 5:16).
 - 4. She loves and respects her family (Titus 2:4, Ephesians 5:22-24; 6:2).
 - 5. She is modest in her dress (1 Timothy 2:9).
 - 6. She is kind to others (Ephesians 4:32).
 - 7. She is hospitable and looks after the needs of others (Romans 12:13; Matthew 25:33-46).
- E. We each need to examine our lives to see if we exhibit these qualities or if our lives would make others ashamed.
- F. Am I seeking virtue in my life as a Christian woman?

IV. SEEK DISCRETION

- A. Having discretion means that one is careful about what she says or does. She exercises sound judgment and is cautious in how she conducts herself.
- B. Solomon paints a very vivid picture of the woman who lacks discretion.
 - 1. Picture a beautiful pair of gold earrings.
 - a. They are pure Gold.
 - b. You would love to have them, but hesitate because they are too expensive.
 - c. They are the kind that might be reserved as a gift from your husband on a milestone anniversary.
 - 2. Now picture one of those earrings pierced through the nose of a pig.
 - a. The earrings lose their luster.
 - b. Their beauty is lost and overshadowed by the foulness of the pig.
 - 3. Proverbs 11:22 tells us that a fair woman who lacks discretion is no different than this beautiful golden jewel in the nose of a pig.
 - a. Her beautiful countenance is lost in her lack of discretion and the foul way in which she conducts herself.
- C. As Christian women, being cautious as to how we conduct ourselves, and making important decisions only after prayerful consideration is essential in our being pleasing to God.
- D. One area of particular importance for us to use discretion is in the use of our tongue.
 - 1. It is no secret that most women enjoy talking.
 - 2. However, when we talk too much, it becomes a problem.
 - 3. The Bible is very clear on the use of the tongue and strictly forbids such things as gossip, tale bearing, backbiting, and lying.
 - 4. Many Bible authors warn against the dangers that lie with the misuse of the tongue, and Solomon is no exception.
 - a. In the book of Proverbs alone, there are at least 20 references to how we should control our speech.
 - i. Notice the following verses from the book of Proverbs:
4:24 ; 6:17, 19 ; 10:11, 14 ; 12:6, 17-22 ; 13:3 ; 15:1-7, 23 ;
16:13, 23-24, 27-28 ; 18:4-8, 21 ; 20:19 ; 21:23 ; 25:11;
26:20,
28.
 - 5. That is why it is so important that we use caution and think before we speak.
 - 6. It has been said that before we say or repeat anything, that we should ask ourselves 3 questions.
 - a. Is it true?
 - b. Is it needful?
 - c. Is it kind?
 - i. If we can answer “no” to any of these questions, then we need to keep our mouths shut tight and our words to ourselves.
- E. Am I seeking discretion in my life as a Christian woman?

V. SEEK WISDOM

A. One cannot study the book of Proverbs without quickly noticing the emphasis on seeking and gaining wisdom and the contrast of the wise and the foolish.

B. Of course, there are numerous ways in which we should all seek wisdom. However, there is one verse that is of particular interest to women seeking wisdom.

1. Proverbs 14:1 states, “Every wise woman buildeth her house: but the foolish plucketh it down with her hands.

a. We know that the home is vital to the happiness of the family.

b. God has given us, as women, the rewarding job of being keepers at home.

c. It is clear that the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31 showed wisdom in the way she cared for her home and family. Surely she was “building her house.”

d. As women, our attitude and actions within our homes can either make us or break us.

i. Are we being wise and building our house, or are we foolishly plucking it down by negativity and neglect?

C. Am I seeking wisdom in my life as a Christian woman?

VI. SEEK GODLINESS

A. All of the advice we have considered thus far can be summed up in one final direction – Seek Godliness.

1. Proverbs 31:30 tells us that a woman who fears (respects/reverences) the Lord will be praised. Surely this type of woman is seeking Godliness.

2. Peter wrote of the importance of Godliness in 2 Peter 1:6.

3. Paul, writing to Timothy in 1 Timothy 6:6, points out that Godliness with contentment is great gain.

B. If we seek Godliness in our lives, honor, peacefulness, virtue, discretion, and wisdom will all follow.

C. Am I seeking Godliness in my life as a Christian woman?

CONCLUSION:

A. The book of Proverbs is full of advice that is essential for us to follow in order to live a life that will be pleasing to God.

B. Let us strive each day to follow the good advice that is given therein.

THE VIRTUOUS WOMAN

Proverbs 31:10-31

Irene Taylor

INTRODUCTION

- A. What the world needs now are virtuous women to be wives and mothers. These are the ones who are supportive (help meets) of their husband and who carefully train their children to be God fearing, moral, honest and productive citizens of the community. What power for good is given to the virtuous or worthy woman if she will but utilize it properly. Real beauty is not that which is outward but that inner beauty which is reflected in our outer conduct (1 Peter 3:3-4). Godly or virtuous women have this special beauty untouched by cosmetic products of the world. Their beauty is within. Outward beauty is secondary.
- B. One who is virtuous has moral standards based upon the Word of God. Hers is an example of one who trusts in God and seeks to emulate His will in her life.

SHE IS A WOMAN OF INDUSTRY

- A. In our text chapter there are many verses which attest to this fact. See especially verses 13,15a,16b,17,18b,19,27b.
- B. Jesus was a worker giving today's woman the perfect example. Read John 5:7; 10:25; 17:4; Acts 10:38.
- C. God does not approve idleness (2 Thessalonians 3:10). 1. We, too, must be workers for good.

SHE WAS AN HONEST BUSINESS WOMAN

- A. She excelled in many areas. She knew real estate and examined it before purchasing it (vs.16a). She checked to be sure her merchandise was of good quality (vs.18a). She made fine linen to sell (vs. 24).
- B. Hers was a reputation for quality and honest dealing. She was unlike the gentleman who declared he could not be a Christian while he was a car salesman. The virtuous woman knew honesty and business could and should be partners.

IV. SHE CARED ABOUT OTHERS

- A. She was kind in her speech (vs. 26).
- B. She provided for her household (Vss. 15b,21).
- C. She shared with the poor and needy (vs. 20).
- D. James 1:27 commands Christians to do likewise.

V. SHE CARES ABOUT HOW SHE PRESENTS HERSELF TO OTHERS

- A. She clothes herself in decent attire (Vs. 22). She is not sloppy in her appearance.
Christian women today need to realize we represent God's family at all times wherever we go.

B. She Loved And Cared For Her Family.

- 1. She had the full trust of her husband (Vs. 11).
Trust must be earned (Verse 12 tells us why he could trust her).
- 2. She was proud he was well known (vs. 23).
 - a. Nothing indicates she was jealous of such.
Inspiration says man is blessed by sharing life with a virtuous woman (Prov. 18:22).
 - b. Her reward was beloved in return. Verse 28 is a beautiful statement of family love as God would have it. Her husband called her blessed and he praised her. Her children arise up and call her blessed.

VI. SHE WAS LOYAL TO GOD

- A. Note the beautiful tribute given by Inspiration in verses 29 and 31.
 - 1. Such tributes are not given undeserved.

B. Read carefully verse 30. "Favour is deceitful and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised."

1. Here is emphasized the worth of the true value of inner beauty vs. outward beauty.
2. Here is evidence of her loyalty and love for God.

CONCLUSION :

The life of the virtuous woman was full of good works yet none were done for the purpose of praise and recognition from her peers. Nevertheless, her humble character brought its own reward from both heaven above (vs. 31) and family and associates below. Only deeds done for the Lord and the benefit of others with a loving attitude will count in the sweet by and by.

AYET TROUBLE CAME@:

THE PROBLEM OF EVIL IN THE BOOK OF JOB

Curtis A. Cates

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Job was one of the people Aof whom the world was not worthy@ (Heb. 11:38).
 - 1. Few if any, likely, have undergone such trial as Job experienced.
 - 2. Satan was allowed by God to unleash terrible, diabolical fury upon Job (Job 1:12; 2:6).
- B. The actual battle was between Satan and God -- Job was caught in the middle.
 - 1. Yet, notice James= praise of Job (Jas. 5:10,11).
 - 2. Note also that the book of Job shows how that Athe Lord is full of pity and full of mercy.@

II. GOD=S SERVANT JOB IDENTIFIED

- A. Job was a patriarch, a real, live person.
 - 1. He lived in Uz, east of Palestine.
 - 2. Evidence he was in the Patriarchal Age include his name, the Aramaisms of the early Hebrew, the absence of Jewish history and instructions, how Job=s wealth is described, the early forms of idolatry mentioned, court met at the gate of the city yet there were indictments, no formal priesthood, Job offering sacrifices for his family and his friends, Sabceans and Chaldeans were roaming marauders, units of money used, Job shaved his head but was not chastised (Deut. 14:1), daughters inheriting with their brothers though not permitted in Judaism (Num. 27:8), references to the Noahic flood, et al.
- B. Job had a wife and ten precious children.
 - 1. The family was close and loving.
 - 2. Their birthdays were observed together.
 - 3. The ten children were Job=s greatest possessions.
 - 4. Job offered sacrifices for them.
- C. Job was rich financially.
 - 1. He was Athe greatest of all the children of the east@ (1:3).
 - 2. He had 7,000 sheep, 3,000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 she-asses, countless servants to take care of them, and even numerous sheepdogs.

- D. Job was a man of great honor.
 1. He was a judge at the gate, very highly respected.
 2. Others looked to him for guidance and counsel (29:7-9,21,22).
- E. Job was a man of sterling character.
 1. He was unlike any other in all the earth, Aa perfect and upright man, one who feareth God, and turneth away from evil@ (1:8).
 2. He was unswervingly moral, reverent of God, and constantly vigilant of temptation and wickedness.
 3. He was tremendously blessed by God (1:10).
 4. He was motivated by love of God, not by desire for finances B and yet, God blessed him financially as He often blessed the patriarchs (Noah, Abraham, Isaac).
 5. Blessed so richly by God for more than fifty years and living a life which honored his God, Job thought, AI shall die in my nest, And I shall multiply my days as the sand@ (29:18). However, it was not to be. How would Job be destroyed Awithout cause@! (2:3).

III. THE DESTRUCTION OF RIGHTEOUS JOB

- A. Job was falsely accused by Satan.
 1. On one occasion when the righteous angels appeared before God=s throne, Satan appeared with them [AEvery dog has his day in court@; Satan has access to the ear of God (Zech. 3:1,2; I Kings 22:19-22; Rev. 12:10). We need a Alawyer for the defense@ (I John 2:1,2)].
 2. When Satan claimed to control all persons on earth, God asked if he had considered God=s servant Job. Going about as a roaring lion (I Per. 5:8), surely Satan had considered him and knew him well; he works only through means today, not directly, and still seeks God=s offspring whom he can destroy.
 3. Satan accused Him of bribing Job (building a hedge about Job) to get Job to serve Him; other wise, he implied, God was not worthy of man=s worship and Job would not have served God.
 4. Satan accused Job also, accusing him of serving God to receive the bribe from God; otherwise, Job would curse God to His face if he was not well paid and if things did not go well health-wise and otherwise.
- B. Being thus attacked and challenged by Satan, God Alet out Satan=s leash@ and permitted Satan to Atouch all that he hath@ but not to put his hand upon Job=s person (Job 1:6-12).
 1. With this permission [Satan could do only what God permitted (cf. I Cor. 10:13), ASo Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah.@
 2. As Satan goes into the darkness to do his dirty, evil work, notice again that the battle is between God and Satan; Job is caught in the middle.
 3. How similar that is with today=s battle between all that is good [the cause of truth and of God] and all that is evil [the cause of error and of Satan]. Who is between? We must choose whether to obey God or Satan!

- C. In one fell blow, Satan=s cruel, ruthless, vicious hatred against God and against God=s offspring [man] is seen as he takes away everything Job has (1:13-19).
1. Only one servant escapes each of the four disasters, to tell Job.
 2. Each servant is not even able to get the news out of his mouth before another servant arrives with another terrifying, heart-rending message of destruction.
 3. It culminates in the death of all ten of his precious children.
 4. Who would want to serve a diabolical, vicious, ruthless enemy and master like Satan?!
- D. God won round one.
1. Job did not curse God but rather humbled himself before God, worshipped God, and said, ANaked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: Jehovah gave, and Jehovah hath taken away; blessed be the name of Jehovah. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly@ (1:21-22).
 2. God actually had not taken away, as Job thought; actually it was Satan who destroyed Job, though God stated He had been moved by Satan Aagainst Job, to destroy him without cause@ (2:3; cf. 42:11). [Sometimes in the Holy Scriptures, God is described as having done something whereas He only permitted it, as in I Kings 22:17-23]. God only permitted Satan to destroy Job.
 3. Satan refused to acknowledge that God had won the earlier trial of Job, arguing that Job had not really been tested in round one; but, touch Job=s skin and he would curse God [In other words, Job would trade even the skin of his own children to save his own skin].
 4. God again gave Satan liberty to afflict Job, but not to take his life.
 5. ASo Satan went forth from the presence of Jehovah, and smote Job with sore boils from the sole of his foot unto his crown@ (2:1-8).
 6. Even then, the trials of Job had hardly begun! AFor the thing which I fear cometh upon me, And that which I am afraid of cometh unto me. I am not at ease, neither am I quiet, neither have I rest; But trouble cometh@ 3:25,26).

IV. THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND JOB

- A. Atheist attempt to rule out the possibility that God is, using the problem of evil.
1. Their argument is: God is omnipotent. God is omnibenevolent. Evil exists. Therefore, God does not exist.
 2. Either God is all-powerful, but not all-loving; or God is all-loving, but not all-powerful. Whichever, since evil exists, therefore the all-powerful, all-loving God of the Bible does not exist.
- B. This argument is easily answered.
1. God is sovereign, all-loving, and all-powerful.
 2. God is also omnijust, which means any violation of His will, which is

based upon His very nature of infinite goodness, must be appropriately punished.

3. God wished to have offspring, which had to be created in His image, with free-moral agency -- the ability to choose (Gen. 1:26,27). [Christ Himself chose to become man, undergo temptation, et al.].
4. Angels and man, offspring of God, had to possess free will, were they to have existed [Note: no cattle or monkey is ever termed a Ason of God@ or Achild of God.@]
5. God could have chosen not to have offspring.
6. If He chose to have offspring [which He did (Acts 17:26-29; Heb. 12:9)], those offspring had to have the power of volition, free will.
7. Free will requires the ability to choose -- alternatives right and wrong, rules. Angels had to obey God, but could [some did] rebel; Adam and Eve [and we] had rules -- not to eat of the forbidden fruit.
8. Not even God can do some things, those things which are self-contradictory. To have created man with free will made it impossible for even God to violate that free will.
9. Adam and Eve did choose to violate God=s will.
10. The consequences of sin [demanded by God nature -- His absolute justice] had to be exercised; God cannot pass over even one unrequited sin.
11. Only God, the One whose will is violated, knows and can determine the penalty for sin B it is not determined by the violator.
12. The only intrinsic evil is sin itself.
13. It is not evil that evil exists.
14. Many so-called Aevils@ are not evil [such as natural disasters, accidents, things not enjoyable, suffering, punishment for sin, et al.]
15. The sending of Christ to die for man enable God=s mercy to rejoice against His justice (Rom. 3:24-26).

C. Why do righteous persons, such as Job, suffer?

1. Sometimes, people suffer because of the man=s inhumanity to man [remember, man has free-will], as recorded in Luke 13:1-3.
2. Sometimes, people suffer because of their inhumanity to themselves, as in destructive mistreatment of their own bodies (drinking, smoking, use of illegal drugs, et al.).
3. Sometimes persons violate purposefully or accidentally the laws of nature, as in Luke 13:4,5. Perhaps they are in the wrong place at the wrong time, as those in Siloam. Mankind lives in a world and universe of law and order, but because of Adam=s and Eve=s having sinned and having been put out of the Garden there are consequences. We, born outside the Garden, cannot get back to the Tree of Life, the veritable fountain of youth; thus, we suffer because of Satan and sin and sin=s consequences.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. The consequences of sin and the suffering that surrounds us should make us better people. (Heb. 12:5-13).

- B. We become more like Christ if we have the proper attitude toward suffering, for suffering teaches us the temporary nature of life, that this life is not all there is, that there is a place that is a better home of extreme happiness and no tears.
- C. We become more like Christ in compassion, love, and sacrifice for others.
- D. Suffering and the message of the Sacred Scriptures are a warning. For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 6:23).

THE PATRIARCH JOB:

EXAMPLE OF GODLY LIVING AND FACING THE FUTURE

Curtis A. Cates

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Job is a tremendous example in Godly living (Jas. 5:10,11).
 - 1. Ezekiel spoke of Job's great righteousness (Ezek. 14:14-20).
 - 2. When he lost all, he fell prostrate upon the ground and worshipped (1:20);
AIn all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly@ (1:22)
 - 3. When racked with personal, indescribably severe physical pain, AIn all this did not Job sin with his lips@ (2:10).
- B. Like the prophet Jeremiah, he wished he had never been born (Jer. 20:14-18).
 - 1. Since he had been born, he wished to die (chapter 3).
 - 2. He thought that God had destroyed him and had hedged him in, not allowing him to die (3:23). Of course, God could not win for losing: Satan accused God of hedging Job in with riches, and Job with not letting him die.
 - 3. God twice told Satan, in God's vindicating His honor through Job, that Job was Aa perfect and upright man, one that feareth God and turneth away from evil@ (1:8; 2:3). Was Job worthy of such accolades?

II. THE GRIEVOUS PAIN JOB ENDURED AS HE WAS TRIED IN THE FIRE

- A. Job was deprived of his physical possessions.
 - 1. He had worked hard; God made him a steward over great riches.
 - 2. He went from billionaire status to a pauper in the garbage dump.
- B. Job was deprived of his high social standing.
 - 1. All held him in highest esteem. (29:7-25).
 - 2. He was looked to as a Achief@ and a Aguide.@
 - 3. Now, his companions were jackals and ostriches (30:29); no one heeded his cry for help (30:28).
- C. Job was scorned by his family.
 - 1. He was ridiculed, spat upon, and punched (30:1-14).
 - 2. He was abandoned by his brothers and sisters, and former servants (30:13-19).
 - 3. Little children now abhorred him.
 - 4. Like Christ, he was betrayed by his closest friends (Psm. 44:9).

- D. Job suffered the death of his children.
1. He loved them very deeply and continually watched for their souls. (1:4,5).
 2. They were his most prized possessions (cf. Eph. 6:1-4).
 3. How unbearable must be the death of one child; Job lost ten!
 4. Oh, how Job needed God=s help!
- E. Job had to endure terrible, horrible torture.
1. This took place many months, perhaps a year or more (7:3).
 2. His flesh was covered with boils, dirt, and maggots (7:5), with constant itching (2:8) and unbearable pain (30:17).
 3. He had great depression (3:24,25) continual crying (16:16), constant fever (30:30), persistent nightmares (7:14,15).
 4. Satan got Job within a hair=s breath of death, to the limit of that permitted by God.
- F. Job suffered the urging of his wife that he Acurse God and die@ (2:9).
1. She had also lost ten children and the Aapple of her eye@ was undergoing grievous pain, BUT, that should not have provoked her suggestion for Job to abandon his integrity, curse God, and die [perhaps meaning commit suicide].
 2. Satan must have preserved her life in order through her to tempt Job even further.
 3. Imagine this additional trial!
- G. Job was bitterly, vindictively, hatefully, and falsely accused by his three Afriends.@
1. AWith certain friends, you do not need enemies.@
 2. At first they came Ato bemoan and to comfort him@ (2:11).
 3. But soon, they changed in attitude and demeanor.
 4. Their vicious, evil, false philosophy was: All suffering is punishment for sin. Job is suffering. Therefore, Job is a sinner.
 5. The Afriends@ had no evidence of their accusation, so they just made up their Aevidence.@
 6. How many have been the times that a person is treated Awell@ and Agloated over@ by a Afriend,@ but if he crosses him or disagrees with his pet hobby or philosophy, he becomes counted immediately as an enemy and comes under the supposed friend=s vicious attacks!
 7. Satan uses such people, as he used and spoke through [not directly] Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar; they were Aforgers of lies@ (13:4).
 8. The three speeches of Job=s Afriends,@ with Job=s answers, go from chapter four through chapter twenty-six.
 9. Their false charges included that no innocent person ever perished (4:7) [what does that do with Christ, the innocent crucified for the guilty?], God trusts neither righteous angels nor man (4:18-21), God was chastising Job because of his sins (5:17-21), Job=s children were killed by God and

because of their wickedness (8:4), Job=s sacrifices for his children had no efficacy (8:8-13), Job was Godless (8:13), Job mocked God (11:3), Job claimed sinless perfection (11:4), Job turned against God (15:25), Job was lifted up with pride and was hypocritical (15:31), Job had robbed the poor and the widow (20:18,19) Job=s wickedness was great (22:5-10), no person can be righteous before God (25:4-6), et al.

10. Incidentally, the Afriends@ never prayed to God; yet, Job repeatedly prayed and confessed his sins. But, he constantly maintained and correctly so, that he had not committed the grievous sin(s) to bring this destruction upon him.

H. Job thought that God had abandoned him and was even trying to kill him.

1. Satan destroyed Job in a way as to leave the impression that God destroyed him -- Athe fire of God@ destroyed the sheep; the whirlwind killed his children [nature], etc.
2. Satan hid his ugly claw so Job would blame God, not Satan.
3. Wishing to die, Job thought that God had hedged him in (3:23).
4. Elihu, the last Afriend@ to speak, also accused Job of grievous iniquity (34:6-8) and averred that God had rendered to Job what he deserved (34:10,11).
5. Yes, poor, persecuted, abandoned, suffering Job thought God was afflicting, but he knew not why (6:4; 7:11,12; 9:17; 13:15; 13:24; 16:12; 19:9; 19:22; 24:1; 21:7-13).

III. AI SHALL COME FORTH AS GOD@

A. The patriarch Job persistently maintained his innocence.

1. But, why was he undergoing such indescribable, be meaning, vicious persecution [which question one can understand his asking]?
2. The answer to this question, he did not receive throughout the whole ordeal.
3. He finalized that it was a test, for some unknown reason.
4. His determination was, ABut he knoweth the way that I take; When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold. My foot hath held fast to his steps; His way have I kept, and turned not aside. I have not gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have treasured up the words of his mouth more than my necessary food@ (23:10-12).

5. Job never claimed Asinless perfection,@ but he knew that he had not brought this evil upon himself.

B. Vital to this study of Job=s endurance and righteousness is an exegesis of Job 31.

1. It has been stated that AEvery cloud has a silver lining,@ but it did not seem so for Job.
2. Since he had not been able to plead his case before God, Job challenged Him to a debate, as a last resort.
3. He endeavors to Aget God=s attention@ and to Aclear his name@ in

chapter thirty-one.

- C. In God's speeches (chapters 38-41), God does not answer even one of Job's questions.
1. In fact, He answers his questions with counter questions.
 2. Though Job has spoken rashly in his suffering, God did not call for repentance.
 3. God is going to educate Job through the question method and lift Job's vision from his small environment to the overall picture.
 4. What God is doing is saying, "Trust me, Job."
 5. Though Job does not learn the reason for his suffering, he keenly realizes that God has been with him all along; that God is speaking to him is enough for Job; Job is not required by God to go against his claim of innocence; Job can thus face the future, for his true, abiding Friend is with him!

IV. CONCLUSION

- A. Job acknowledged more fully the magnificence of God.
- B. He had uttered that which [he] understood not (42:1-6) and threw himself upon God's mercy.
- C. God rebuked Eliphaz and his two friends thus: "You have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job has."
- D. They were required to get Job to offer sacrifices for them and to pray for them (42:7-9).
- E. When Job prayed for his friends, God doubled what he had before. Note the forgiving attitude of Job and how God blessed him richly (42:10-17).

THE MESSIAH AS PICTURED IN THE BOOK OF JOB

Curtis A. Cates

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. The Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, is the hope of the world.
 - 1. There is a crimson thread that begins with Genesis and runs through the Revelation.
 - 2. Christ is pictured in every book of the Bible.
 - 3. The author feels strongly that Christ is especially depicted in the Book of Job.
- B. Every person who ever lived, if that person is saved, depends upon the precious blood shed by the only begotten Son of God (Gen. 3:15; Heb. 9:22, 10: 1-14).
 - 1. See Romans 5:12-21.
 - 2. Moses and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration were talking to Jesus about His impending death; their salvation depended upon it.

II. A HE IS NOT A MAN AS I AM@

- A. Job in the midst of his suffering felt his weakness and his need for ultimate spiritual cleansing, which he could not achieve (9:30).
 - 1. How could he thus approach God?
 - 2. AIf I wash myself with snow water [which from its whiteness and brilliance was the most nearly pure substance which came to his mind], And make my hands never so clean; Yet wilt thou [God] plunge me in the ditch, And mine own clothes shall abhor me@(9:31).
 - 3. How could he approach God in court in any possible way; even his own clothes would betray his inadequacy. To the friends, he was totally wretched. He had no helper and representation. How could he stand before God pure and clean (cf. 14:4)?
- B. God is so exalted and Job is so lowly.
 - 1. AFor he is not a man, as I am, that I should answer him, That we should come together in judgement@ (9:32).
 - 2. How could this great distance, spiritually, be bridged?
 - 3. AThere is no umpire betwixt us, That might lay his hand upon us both@ (9:33).
 - 4. Job did not have a mediator, daysman, arbitrator [Goel, Hebrew] who could represent both God and Job and thus reconcile Job back to God; an arbitrator listens to and represents both sides in a dispute or problem.
 - 5. Job thought he had no hope to approach God, but he was a developing character.

III. AWHO IS HE THAT WILL CONTEND WITH ME?@

- A. Job thought God would kill him, yet he was determined not to depart from God (13:15).
 - 1. That would be his salvation (13:16).
 - 2. He had set his cause in order; he knew he was righteous (13:18).
- B. Job had grown in understanding by the events of chapter thirteen.
 - 1. He was sure he would be vindicated; he would have a defender.
 - 2. But, he did not know who would stand by his side (13:19).
 - 3. His purpose was not to save his life but to vindicate his innocence. Who would help him in that, Job knew not. Yet, he reached out toward a mediator.

IV. JOB CRIED OUT FOR A WITNESS

- A. He was being killed, though he was innocent, was a man of prayer, and was genuine (16:17), like Christ.
 - 1. He cried out for the earth not to cover his innocent blood [like Abel=s blood, Gen. 4], so his next of kin could see it upon his death and vindicate him (16:18).
 - 2. His witness was an exalted person, in heaven (16:19)
 - 3. His witness was fair and honorable, unlike his Afriends@ (16:20).
- B. His witness could plead and represent Job before God (16:21).
 - 1. He was God, and he would also be the son of man -- thus kin to Job, his neighbor.
 - 2. Job was crying out for the incarnation of Christ, the God-man.
 - 3. Job was now seeing the Son of God, who could represent him and plead his case to God. He could plead Job=s case and vindicate him even after Job was dead (16:22).

V. AI KNOW THAT MY REDEEMER LIVETH@

- A. One can notice a powerful analogy between Job and Christ (19:13-22).
 - 1. He wished so much that his words of defense could be made permanent, certainly not realizing that they would indeed endure beyond the dissolution of heaven and earth, Holy Writ (Matt. 24:35; Job 19:23,24).
 - 2. Job now knows more about his Redeemer.
- B. ABut as for me, I know that my Redeemer liveth, And at last he will stand up upon the earth@ (19:25).
 - 1. This is the goel, the umpire, the daysman he thought he did not have (chapter 9).
 - 2. He knew about his Redeemer, who would become his near kinsman in the incarnation and bring about a final vindication.
 - 3. His Redeemer is eternal.
 - 4. Though crucified by man and bearing man=s sins on the cross and paying

the ultimate price for man=s redemption, He would arise from the dead triumphant over death, hell, and the grave.

- C. Job realized that the God-man, his Kinsman and Redeemer, would enable him to see God face-to-face at last.
 - 1. AAnd after my skin, even this body, is destroyed, Then without my flesh shall I see God; Whom I, even I, shall see, on my side [for myself], And mine eyes shall behold, and not as a stranger@ (19:26,27).
 - 2. After his death and resurrection (14:7-15), at the final judgment, Job shall Asee God@ for himself -- and no longer as an enemy, as a stranger.
 - 3. The God-Man shall have laid His hand upon God=s shoulder [because He is God] and upon man=s, Job=s shoulder [because He became man] and reconciled Job to God.

VI. CONCLUSION

- A. Christ is our A great high priest@ (Heb. 4:14-16) and our A Advocate with the Father@ (1 John 2:1,2), if we are God=s children.
- B. Thanks be to God for our Messiah!

LESSONS FROM LITTLE CREATURES IN THE BOOK OF PROVERBS

Tim Burroughs

INTRODUCTION:

1. Although some do not see the need to study the Old Testament, there are many great lessons that can be gained and applied from those inspired writers of God.
 - a. **For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope@ (Rom. 15:4).**
 - b. The things written afore time@ are the scriptures@ of the Old Testament.
2. The book of Proverbs is no exception.
 - a. Lessons that are to be learned is the key point of the entire book
 - b. The writer makes this point in first few verses of Proverbs
 1. Know wisdom and understanding@ (v.2).@
 2. Receive the instruction of wisdom, justice, and judgment, and equity@ (v.3).
 3. The reason? To give subtlety to the simple, to the young man **knowledge** [emp. TB] and discretion@ (v. 4).
3. The topic under consideration deals with lessons that can be learned from the little creatures of the animal world as recorded in Proverbs 30.
 - a. They are described as four things which are little upon the earth, but are exceeding wise@ (v.24).
 - b. Man does not often look at the little things on the earth and see them as being wise.
 - c. What lessons can man learn from these little but wise creatures?
4. Lessons from little creatures in the book of Proverbs.
 - a. The ants.
 - b. The conies.

c. The locusts.

d. The spider.

I. LESSONS FROM THE ANT (VERSE 25).

A. The ants are described as a **people not strong, yet they prepare their meat in the summer.**

1. The idea of an ant not being strong is calling attention to his size not his physical strength.

2. An ant can lift a weight 50 times as heavy as its own body (if a 175 pound man could do that, he would be able to lift more than 4 tons!).

B. The ant is called wise; Why?

1. They make preparation for the time that is ahead of them.

a. Solomon wrote, **Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and garnereth her food in the harvest** (Pro. 6:6-7).

b. The ant shows his wisdom by preparing his meat in the summer; he gathers it and stores it when it is available.

c. The ant will sleep all winter long; so he must work and take advantage of the opportunities he is given.

d. He does these things while having no ruler or guide. He takes the initiative to complete the task at hand.

2. Ants live in colonies, and share the work and responsibilities of the colony; this includes looking out for the other's well being.

a. They work together in raising their young.

b. When the young are about the size of a grain of rice the adults will move them to the edge of the entrance of the nest to expose them to the sun.

c. When the rain would come the adults will return the young back to the nest and cover the entrance with a stone to protect the young from danger.

C. What lessons can be learned from the ant?

1. Man needs to make preparation for the future while he has opportunity.
 - a. Jesus said: **AI must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the cometh when no man can work@ (John 9:4).**
 - b. James wrote: **AGo to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is you life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away@ (James 4:13-14).**
 - c. Man does not know if tomorrow will come; therefore preparation for the future (eternity) is of the utmost importance.
 - d. **A(For he saith, I HAVE HEARD THEE IN A TIME ACCEPTED, AND IN THE DAY OF SALVATION HAVE I SUCCOURED THEE: behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation@ (2 Cor. 6:2).**

2. Christians need to work together and share the responsibilities in the work of the church.

- a. The Great Commission is for all members, not just the elders and preacher (Matt. 28:18-20).
- b. How many times have we heard that only 10% of Christians in the local congregation do all the work?

3. Christians need to expose their children to the ASON@ and protect them from the dangers of the world.

- a. The ant will expose it=s young to the sun for the benefit of them of knowing what to do and when to do it.
- b. Only exposure to inspired Word of God can prepare our children for the life ahead of them (Deut. 6:6-8; Eph. 6:1-4).

D. The ant is a tireless worker from which so much can be learned.

II. LESSONS FROM THE CONEY (VERSE 26).

A. Agur describes the conies as: **A... a feeble folk, yet they make their houses in the rocks.@**

1. These wise creatures know that they need protection (this is why they separate

themselves from the dangers of their surroundings.

2. It is said that conies will post guards to watch for the welfare of the group.

3. One sound from the guard and the conies will run for cover. They heed to the warnings of danger.

B. Man needs to recognize that he needs protection.

1. God has set in order the organization of the church to include elders to watch over the flock.

a. **ATake heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood@ (Acts 20:28).**

b. **AObey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you@ (Heb. 13:17).**

2. Man must seek protection by separating himself from the world.

a. That protection is only found in the Rock, Jesus Christ.

b. **AAnd all did drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ@ (1 Cor. 10:4).**

c. All that are in Christ are a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17)

d. All that are in Christ walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3-4)

e. All that are in Christ are in the church, that solid rock vessel of safety (Eph. 5:23-27).

C. The coney is a wise little creature that will seek refuge in the place of safety.

III. LESSONS FROM THE LOCUSTS (VERSE 27).

A. The description of the locusts is they: **Ahave no king, yet go forth in bands.@**

a. They have no leader, but go forth in companies.

b. Together, they have one purpose and one goal.

c. They march forth as one body.

B. Although Christians have a leader, they must be determined to march to the beat of drum, the Word of God.

a. **ANow I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment@ (1 Cor. 1:10).**

b. **AThere is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling@ (Eph. 4:3).**

C. The locust is a wise little creature that are unified for one purpose.

IV. LESSONS FROM THE SPIDER (VERSE 28).

A. The spider is described as one that: **Ataketh hold with her hands, and is in kings palaces.@**

1. Though humans can grasp these creatures with their hands, these animals can still make their way into palaces of kings.

2. The point is strength is not everything.

3. Wisdom is of great value. The idea that the spider (lizard ASV) uses her hands to take a hold of that which is needful.

4. With her hands she builds her houses, scales high walls, and provides for her well being.

B. Christians can follow this great example in principle.

1. What we hold in our hands today (God=s Word) gives the very instructions in how to seize those needful things.

2. Man can know how to build houses (Matt. 28:18-20).

3. Man can know how to scale walls (obtain goals) (2 Tim. 4:5-8).

4. Man can know about everything that he needs (2 Pet. 1:3).

C. The spider is a wise little creature that will use her abilities to accomplish much.

CONCLUSION:

1. The Old Testament was written for our learning. Every child of God should value the teaching and lessons that can be found through a diligent study of it.

2. The little creatures from the book of Proverbs are great examples by their characteristics and

know how for survival.

3. May God bless every Christian that values in his life the things that will make him a better servant.

THE MAJESTY OF GOD IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Those who wrote the Psalms were God-centered and truth-oriented. He was near and dear to them. He was not an idol they had made but He was the Maker/Creator of them all. The psalmist showed the utter folly of idol making, idol~serving and idol-worshiping (Psalm 115:4-8).
- B. The Majesty Of His Reality (Psalm 2:1-2). He was not a figment of their fertile imaginations. He was as real as were the Psalmists, as real as the earth on which they walked, the air they breathed, the food they ate and the water they drank.

II. THE MAJESTY OF HIS GREATNESS.

- A. Psalm 48:1--"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised ... "
- B. Psalm:92:5--"O LORD, how great are thy works!
- C. Psalm 104:1--"O LORD, my God, thou art very great; ... " God is great in character, in thoughts, in Words and deeds. "How Great Thou Art" and "O Mighty God" are familiar songs that capture Jehovah's majesty in greatness.

III. THE MAJESTY OF HIS GOODNESS.

- A. There is only one letter's difference between God and good.
- B. God is good in the ultimate and absolute sense.
- C. Psalm 25:8--"Good and upright is the Lord:"
- D. Psalm 31:19--"O how great is thy goodness,@
- E. Psalm 100:5--"For the Lord is good; ... "
- F. Psalm 119:68--"Thou art good, and doest good; ... "
- G. Positive goodness of Jehovah God means He can never take pleasure in evil or wickedness.
- H. Evil is diametrically opposed to Him and He is diametrically opposed to evil.

IV. THE MAJESTY OF HIS MERCY.

- A. Mercy is a key, kingly term in Psalms.
- B. In fact, compassion and mercy permeate the entirety of precious Psalms.
- C. Psalm 57:10--"For thy mercy is great ... "

- D. Psalm 86:15--He is "plenteous in mercy ... "
- E. Psalm 136:1-26--"for his mercy endureth for ever" occurs twenty-six times in this chapter. It is found in every verse. The ASV translates the Hebrew terms for mercy as lovingkindness.

V. THE MAJESTIC GREATNESS OF HIS WRATH.

- A. Majesty contains the idea of sovereign power and this surely fits the comprehensive character of Jehovah God.
- B. Today's mindset speaks often of grace, mercy, love, compassion and God=s goodness.
- C. Yet, God's wrath is taboo is today's religious climate and vocabulary.
- D. It would be my judgment that there is more in the Bible relative to His wrath than about His mercy.
- E. Psalm 1:4-6--the ungodly shall perish and shall not stand.
- F. Psalm 2:5,9,12--"Then shall he speak to them in his wrath ... Thou shalt break them with a rod of" iron ... The Son (Christ) can be angry and His wrath can be kindled.
- G. Psalm 90:9-- "For our days are passed away in thy wrath: ... "
- H. Psalm 129:4--" ... he hath cut asunder the cords of the wicked."
- I. There is a sure payday for sin now, after death in Hades and in eternal Gehenna subsequent to judgment. How Paul expressed it in Acts 24:25 and 2 Corinthians 5:11. He is not the doting, grandfatherly image many have imagined Him to be. God is serious about sin and its punishment by the impenitent.

VI. THE MAJESTY OF HIS WEALTH.

- A. Psalm 24:1--"The earth is the LORD's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."
- B. Psalm 50:10--"For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."
 - 1. All the universe, marvelous and majestic as it is, belongs to Him. We are but stewards of what we claim as possessions.
 - 2. Solomon and Croesus were two of the richest men of antiquity. Yet the combining of their wealth pales into insignificance when compared with what the Godhead owns.
 - 1. Billionaires today are but paupers compared with the riches of God, Christ and the Holy Spirit.

2.. A gospel preacher, early one morning, walked the streets of the town where he lived. His countenance was beaming; he was one happy man. An onlooker said to him, "Preacher, you look like you own the world today." To which he replied, "Sir, my Father does own it!"

VII. HE IS MAJESTIC AS:

- A. Shepherd (Psalm 23:1-3).
- B. Gracious Host (Psalm 23:4-6).
- C. As refuge, strength and a very present help in trouble (Psalm 46:1).
- D. As guide till death (Psalm 48:14).
- E. As King of all the earth (Psalm 47:7-8).
- F. As sun and shield (Psalm 84:11).
- G. As helper (Psalm 121:1-2).
- H. As our preserver (Psalm 121:4-8).

VIII. IN STATELY SUMMATION.

- A. He is great in the GOODNESS He confers.
- B. He is great in the MERCY He bestows.
- C. He is great in the PARDON He bequeaths.
- D. He is great in the PROTECTION He provides.
- F. He is great in the GUIDANCE He supplies.

IX. CONCLUSION

How precious indeed is His portrait in Psalms. He truly is the MAJESTIC ONE.

THE MESSAGE OF GOD FROM THE BOOK OF PSALMS (119)

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

INTRODUCTION:

- 1 Psalm 119 is bold, beautiful and brilliant in all its fascinating and fundamental facets.
- 2 It is the longest chapter in the Bible--176 verses.
- 3 It is divided into twenty-two verses with eight verses in each section.
- 4 Each section is begun with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet which has twenty-two letters. Greek has twenty-four. English has twenty-six.
- 5 Each verse exalts, extols and enhances the Word of God.
- 6 The Bible's longest chapter is a chapter about the Bible.
- 7 There is no beginning ascription here as touching probable human penman. In all likelihood it was penned by David. He seems to be the most logical one to have written it. It just 'has the writing style of David permeating it throughout.
- 8 It is a good chapter to memorize--eight verses a day (entire section) over twenty-two days of time will do it. Each February I take the first twenty-two days and memorize it again. This I have done for thirty-five or more years. I commend this memorization plan for Psalm 119.
- 9 I have recently had published an entire book (318 pages) just on this chapter.

I GOD'S MESSAGE IS COUCHED IN DELIGHTFUL DESIGNATIONS IN PSALM 119.

- A Commandments (Psalm 119:172)--" ... all thy commandments are righteous."
- B Judgments (Psalm 119:75)--" ... thy judgments are right, ... "
- C Law (Psalm 119:142)--" ... thy law is the truth."
- D Precepts (Psalm 119:104)--"Through thy precepts I get understanding."
- E Righteousness (Psalm 119:172)--" ... all thy commandments are righteousness."
- F Statutes (Psalm 119:135) --" ... teach me thy statutes."
- G Testimonies (Psalm 119:2) B "Blessed are they that keep his testimonies."
- H Truth (Psalm 119:142)--" ...thy law is the truth."
- I Way (119:30) --" ... I have chosen the way of truth: ... "
- J Word (Psalm 119:89)--" ... thy word is settled in heaven."

- K These comprehensive terms speak of the same message--God's message.
- II A MESSAGE OF BLESSED ASSURANCE
- A Note the first words in the initial two verses (Psalm 119:1-2).
 - B For youth (Psalm 119:9-11).
 - C For afflictions and profit therefrom (Psalm 119:67,71).
 - D That He is our Creator (Psalm 119:73).
 - E For fellowship (Psalm 119:63,74).
- III A MESSAGE FOR THE WHOLE HEART
- A Psalm 119:2 -- " ... that seek him with the whole heart."
 - B Psalm 119:10 --"With my whole heart have I sought thee: ... "
 - C Man's heart is composed of the intellect with which we reason, the emotions with which we love and trust, the will power with which we decide on a certain course of action and the conscience which approves when we do what we deem to be right and disapproves when we do what we deem to be wrong.
- IV A MESSAGE DEMANDING MEDITATION
- A Psalm 119:97 B "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day."
 - B Psalm 119: 148--" Mine eyes prevent the night watches, that I might meditate in thy word."
 - C Such meditation will make us like the Bereans of old (Acts 17:11).
- V MESSAGE OF COMMANDMENT KEEPING
- A Psalm 119:60 --"I made haste and delayed not to keep thy commandments."
 - B We need to LEARN, LOVE and LIVE God's Word. Psalm 119 is preciousy permeated with these three L's.
- VI A MESSAGE OF LIVING POWER
- A At least ten verses in this chapter speak of the quickening (living) power of God's Word. Two of them are now given.
 - B. Psalm 119:154 --" ... quicken ,me ,according ,to ,thy word."
 - C Psalm 119:156 --" ... quicken me according to thy judgments.@
 - D God's Word is living and powerful: it is no dead letter.
- VII A MESSAGE DEMANDING LOVE FOR IT
- A Psalm 119:97 -- "O how love I thy law!"

B Psalm 119:127 -- "Therefore I love thy commandments above gold;
... "

VIII A MESSAGE THAT IS RIGHT

A Psalm 119:75.--"I know, O LORD, that thy judgments are right,
... "

B Psalm 119:151 --" ... all thy commandments are truth." They could
not be truth unless they were right.

C The Word of God is right--never wrong (Cf. Psalm 19:8; 33:4).

IX A MESSAGE DEMANDING TOTAL LOYALTY

A Psalm 119:31 --"I have stuck unto thy testimonies."

B Relate the B. C. Goodpasture story about this verse. In speaking
at Hillsboro in Nashville when he observed sixty years as a
gospel preacher he chose this as his text for the sermon and told
how he had made this his motto in preaching, writing and
lecturing. As a longtime admirer of him, I think he lived up to
it till his death in February of 1977.

C This should be the regal resolve of each of us.

X MESSAGE IN WHICH TO REJOICE

A Psalm 119:162 B "I rejoice at thy word as one that findeth great
spoil.

B Psalm 119:174 B A...thy law is my delight.

C A young lady once read a book and assessed it as the dullest book
she had ever read. She put it away never expecting to skim its
pages again. Years later she fell in love with a man only to
learn that he had written that book. She read it a second time
and assessed it as the greatest book she had ever read. Wherein
lay the difference in the two assessments? She did not love the
author during the initial reading but did the second reading.
The application is an easy one to make.

XII IN STATELY SUMMATION

A To the writer of this Psalm nothing was comparable in value to
God's Word.

B To the Psalmist God's Word was his Jacob's Ladder linking heaven
and earth.

C True knowledge is KNOWING God's Word.

D True wisdom is LIVING God's Word.

E True joy is TEACHING His will to others and observing their

permanent practice of the same.

F True satisfaction comes from defending God's Word when it is assaulted or attacked.

CONCLUSION:

Psalm 119 is a good, grand and great chapter among its 1,188 chapter colleagues.

THE MESSIAH PICTURED IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Robert R. Taylor, Jr.

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. Jesus knew His portrait had been painted in Psalms (Luke 24:44). As one of the Godhead Three He helped put it there!
- B. The same is true with other Old Testament books as well.
- C. In fact some three hundred or more prophecies about Him abound in the Old Testament.
- D. An excellent biographical volume could be written of Him just from the Old Testament with another volume penned of precise fulfillments of the same in the New Testament.
- E. His Deity is Portrayed in Psalms.
- F. In Psalm 2:2.7.12 **B** He is the anointed One of ^{Jehovah} will be Son of the Father in the unfolding of the scheme of redemption and is worthy of worship.
- G. He is called God by the First Person in Psalm 45:6 (Cf. *Hebrews 1:8-9*) *The RSV in 1952 tampered with this passage leaving Him with only a divine throne. But David and Solomon occupied the Lord's throne--a divine one (1 Chronicles 29:23)*

II. HE IS PORTRAYED AS CREATOR.

- A. *Psalm 102:25-27 so attests.*
- B. *Hebrews 1:10-12 quotes this very passage and applies it to Christ (Cf. John 1:1-3,10; Colossians 1:15-17; Revelation 3:14).*

III. HIS INCARNATION IS PORTRAYED.

- A. *He would be given a fleshly body (Psalm 16:9-10; 40:6-8; Cf. Hebrews 10:5ff).*
- B. *He would be pierced in hands and feet which demanded a human body (Psalm 22:16).*

IV. HE IS PORTRAYED AS A PREACHER.

- A. He would delight in God's will (Psalm 40:8).
- B. He would preach righteousness (Psalm 40:9).
- C. He would declare God's faithfulness, salvation, lovingkindness and truth (Psalm 40:10).
- D. He would employ parables in His teaching
- E. Psalm 49:4; 78:2. Matthew, Mark and Luke present many of His parables. Matthew 13 and Luke 15 are whole chapters devoted to parables.

V. HE WOULD BE FILLED WITH ZEAL.

- A. Psalm 69:9.
- B. John 2:17 and Romans 15:3 look back to Psalm 69:9 and the Messiah portrayed therein.
- C. He cleansed the temple twice in John 2 and Matthew 21. His zeal overflowed in both of these transactions.

VI. HE WOULD ENJOY ANGELIC ASSOCIATION.

- A. Psalm 91:11-12 so attests. Compare Matthew 4:6.
- B. Angels are connected with His birth, temptations, In Gethsemane, His resurrection, His ascension and in the advancement of His Cause in the book of Acts (Cf. 1 Timothy 3:16).

VII. HIS PRIESTHOOD IS PORTRAYED.

- A. Psalm 110:4--a priest after the order of Melchizedek

- B. Much of Hebrews is a standing and inspired commentary on this priestly concept.

VIII. HIS DEATH, BURIAL, RESURRECTION AND ASCENSION ARE ALL PORTRAYED.

- A. He would be betrayed by a friend (Psalm 41:9)--a reference to the traitor--Judas Iscariot.
- B. Psalm 16:8-10.
- C. Psalm 22 contains numerous references to Calvary.
- D. His amazing ascension (Psalm 24:7-10).

IX. FINAL PORTRAIT OF HIM.

- A. He would be the seed of David or David's Son (Psalm 89:3,4; 132:11; Cf. Acts 2:30).
- B. He would be Jehovah's chosen stone (Psalm 118:22-24).

XI. POINTS TO PONDER ABOUT MESSIANIC PSALMS.

- A. The Psalmists who wrote of Jesus were not modernists. They knew He was/is Deity or God.
- B. The Psalmists who wrote of Jesus were not Jehovah's witnesses. They knew He was/is God, Creator and Eternal.
- C. The Psalmists who wrote of the Messiah were not "Jesus only" people or Oneness Holiness/ They knew there were two Lords--Jehovah and His Anointed--also called Lord.
- D. The Psalmists who wrote of the Messiah were not materialists. They knew He would have both body and Spirit in His Incarnation.
- E. The Psalmists who wrote of Jesus were not theological liberals. They accepted His supernatural powers He possessed and bequeathed to others.
- F. The Psalmists who wrote of Jesus were not Roman Catholics. They gave glory, honor and adoration to the Messiah--not Mary, not Peter, not Popes.

X. CONCLUSION

After meditating on all these many marvelous references to the Mighty Messiah, we can appreciate far more deeply our Lord's affirmation in Luke 24:44 that the Psalms spoke of Him. They did so frequently and fervently. They did so basically and beautifully. They did so elegantly and excellently.

Misuse of the Tongue

Chris Butler

INTRODUCTION:

1. The topic of our study is the tongue. In particular the many ways one may misuse the tongue.
2. The tongue is a part of our bodies. As James describes it is a little member. (James 3:5) It is member controlled by our brain or heart as it is called in the Bible.
3. The point that I want to make is this, the tongue is just an instrument through which we express what is in our hearts.
4. Matthew teaches us just how important our words are, that one day they will meet us in the judgement.
5. AO generation of vipers, how can ye, being evil, speak good things? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. A good man out of the good treasure of the heart bringeth forth good things: and an evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth evil things. But I say unto you, That every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment. For by thy words thou shalt be justified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.@ (Matthew 12:34-37).
6. AFor out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies:@ (Matthew 15:19).
7. These things that come forth from the heart defile a man. Note that the last two of those sins listed there are those things which are spoken.
8. So it is the case that a fornicator is one in the same as a gossip. A liar is one in the same as a drunkard. A talebearer is one in the same as the one who is addicted to pornography.
9. How? They all have problems with the heart.
10. AFor as he thinketh in his heart, so is he: Eat and drink, saith he to thee; but his heart is not with thee.@ (Proverbs 23:7).

Discussion:

I. THE POWER OF THE TONGUE.

- A. Solomon wrote, ADeath and life are in the power of the tongue: and they that love it shall eat the fruit thereof.@ (Proverbs 18:21).
 1. There is great power in the use of the tongue.
 2. It can speak those words which are good and right, and it can speak those words which are evil. (Jam. 3:8-12).
 3. The tongue can pierce like a sword. AThere is that speaketh like the piercings of a sword: but the tongue of the wise is health.@ (Proverbs 12:18).
 4. Matthew Henry said, ASlanders, like a sword, wound the reputation of those of whom they are uttered, and perhaps incurably. Whisperings and evil surmises, like a sword, divide and cut asunder the bounds of love and friendship, and separate those that have been dearest to each other.@
 5. I want us to consider one point here.
 - a. In Hebrews we read AFor the word of God is quick, and powerful,

and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.@ (Hebrews 4:12).

- b. God=s power is His word, spoken through inspired men, which word we preach this very day. (Rom. 1:16; 2 Pet. 1:21; 2 Tim. 3:16-17).
- c. This word when it is preached can cut the heart of the sinner and bring to the obedient life, or salvation. (Acts 2:36-38).
- d. Speaking of the evil tongue, Solomon wrote it cuts like a sword. (Prov. 12:18).
- e. What is the point? Words are powerful, whether those which are right, or those which are evil.

6. Our tongues can get us into trouble. *A Christmas Story, One scene depicts a school recess in the middle of winter. Two boys surrounded by their classmates argue whether a person=s tongue will stick to a metal pole in below-freezing weather. Eventually one of the boys succumbs to the infamous Atriple-dog dare.@ Hesitantly he sticks his tongue out and touches it to the school flagpole. Sure enough, it gets stuck. The recess bell rings. Everyone runs into the school building, everyone except the hapless victim. When the teacher finally looks out the window, she sees the boy writhing in pain, his tongue frozen to the flagpole. While few of us have been in that predicament, we all know what it=s like to have our tongues get us in trouble. When we suffer the pain that eventually recoils upon everyone who speaks boastful words, lying words, bitter and cruel words, hypocritical or doubting words, we learn the truth of the proverb, AWhoso keepeth his mouth and his tongue keepeth his soul from troubles. (Prov 21:23).*

- B. The Choice we must make. Remember that phrase :life and death@.
- 1. The tongue can be used for the greatest cause on earth, or it can be used to destroy, to hinder, to divide, to slander, to backbite, and to lie among other things.
 - 2. Either way the tongue is powerful and can do a tremendous amount of

- good or it can do much harm.
3. Think of the words spoken throughout the trial of Christ.
 4. Our tongues can either be used for God, or they can be used for Satan.
 - a. Like Moses, Baalim (Numb. 23:38-ff), Micaiah (1 Kings 22:14), or Amos (Amos 7:12-16).
 - b. All of these men and others used their tongues to proclaim the word of God.
 5. That is the choice we must make. A Christian cannot be silent.
 6. Now I realize that I am speaking to those who are Christians, who are faithful to the Lord.
 7. But sometimes Satan's snare will catch us. (2 Tim. 2:26) Sometimes we get caught.
 8. Let us consider some of the problems a Christian can face with the tongue.

II. THE PROBLEMS OF THE TONGUE.

A. The problem of lying.

1. Let's start by defining our word. Lie is an intentionally false statement.
 - 1 a situation involving deception or founded on a mistaken impression. verb (lies, lied, lying) 1 tell a lie or lies. 2 (of a thing) present a false impression. (Oxford University Press)
 - a. A lie is any error spoken. God is truth, His word is truth. A lie is in opposition to God and His word.
 - b. Gen. 2:16-17 God spoke truth. But Gen. 3:1-6 Satan spoke a lie.
 - c. John call Satan the father of lies. AYe are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.@ (John 8:44).
2. God's attitude toward lying. In Proverbs 6:16-19. AThese six things doth the LORD hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood, An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running to mischief, A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren.@
 - a. Thus those who follow the Lord are to have the same attitude toward lying. AA righteous man hateth lying: but a wicked man is loathsome, and cometh to shame.@ (Proverbs 13:5).
 - b. We are to avoid such. AThe remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth: for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid.@ (Zeph. 3:13).
 - c. We are not to respect those who lie and reject their companyABlessed is that man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies.@ (Psalm 40:4). AHe that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight.@ (Psalm 101:7).

3. The character of the wicked. The wicked love lying. (Psa. 52:3)
 - a. They delight in lying. (Psa. 62:4)
 - b. They seek after lying. (Psa. 4:2)
 - c. They give heed to it. (Prov. 17:4)
 - d. Lying is mentioned as one of the characteristics of Israel in the lowest point in their history. (Hos. 4:1-2).
 - e. Only a few years removed from captivity, their condition is described by a lack of truth, mercy and knowledge of God.
 - f. They were liars, murders, adulterers and such like.
 - g. Those words describe the company of the liar.
 4. The Bible mentions the fate of the liar as well. A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape.@ (Proverbs 19:5).
 - a. No possibility of heaven. AHe that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.@ (Rev. 21:7).
 - b. AFor without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.@ (Rev. 22:15).
 - c. Their punishment is a lake of fire with all other workers of iniquity. ABut the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.@ (Rev. 21:8).
 5. Remember there are a number of examples that illustrate the severity of lying.
 - a. Ananias and Sapphira. (Acts 5:1-11) Note, they lied unto God.
 - (1) They spoke the lie to men.
 - (2) Peter said, however they lied unto god. V. 4
 - (3) Sin is against God. (Gen. 39:9).
 - b. Cain. (Gen. 4:9)
 - c. Sarah (Gen. 18:15) Laughed at the possibility of her having children.
 - d. Jacob=s deception of his father. (Gen. 27:19)
 - e. Saul. (1 Sam. 15:13-14) AI have performed the commandment.@
 - f. Sometimes even good men fall into the snare of the Devil. David. (1 Sam. 21:2)
 - g. Peter. (Mat. 26:7)
 6. Brethren if we have trouble with lying, may our prayer and our aim be as David who prayed, ARemove from me the way of lying: and grant me thy law graciously.@ (Psalm 119:29)
- B. The problem of Gossip.
1. Gossip AThree ministers gathered to form a support group. After several weeks of building trust in one another, they began to share some of their darkest secrets. One minister confessed to his problem with gambling and how he would sometimes lose his concentration in a sermon when he

looked down at the offering plates. The second admitted to his vice of alcohol and noted his fears of being found out by his congregation. The third minister quickly piped up, "I'm a gossip, and I can't wait to get out of here."

2. What is Gossip? Defined it is: Casual conversation or unsubstantiated reports about other people. 2 chiefly derogatory a person who likes talking about other people's private lives.
3. The backbiter, talebearer, and slanderer fall into this category of people
 - a. Whispering (Rom. 1:29; 2Co 12:20).
 - b. Backbiting (Rom. 1:30; 2Co 12:20).
 - c. Evil surmising (1Tim. 6:4).
 - d. Tale-bearing (Le 19:16).
 - e. Babbling (Ecc. 10:11).
 - f. Tattling (1Tim. 5:13).
 - g. Evil speaking (Ps 41:5; 109:20).
4. Illustration of the preacher.
5. The Bible has much to say about this subject.
 - a. Israel was to refrain from such evil speaking. AThou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer among thy people: neither shalt thou stand against the blood of thy neighbour: I am the Lord.@ (Leviticus 19:16).
 - b. This word is defined as one who carries tales. A scandal monger.
 - c. A talebearer revealeth secrets: but he that is of a faithful spirit concealeth the matter. (Proverbs 11:13).
 - d. From this we see the definition of the word. A person who reveals information whether true or not.
 - e. It is also found in Proverbs 18:8; 20:19; 26:20; 26:22.
6. The talebearer is one who wounds. His words cut. AThe words of a talebearer are as wounds, and they go down into the innermost parts of the belly.@ (Proverbs 18:8).
7. He is a hypocrite who destroys with his mouth. (Prov. 11:9).
8. A talebearer reveals secrets. He that goeth about as a talebearer revealeth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips. He will build you up to your face and cut you down behind your back. (Proverbs 20:19).
9. He is not concerned about others. He is described as hating them. Prov. 26:20-24
 - a. Like coals to a fire, wood to a fire the talebearer inflames strife.
 - b. His words are as wounds that cut deep.
 - c. He is like a potsherd, a piece of broken pottery. He is good for nothing.
10. How does one stop gossip, talebearing? Where no wood is, there the fire goeth out: so where there is no talebearer, the strife ceaseth. (Proverbs 26:20)
 - a. First, don=t be a gossip. Keep your mouth shut.
 - b. Second, do not listen to one who is a gossip.
11. In dealing with the problem of Gossip one man came up with the

following: when speaking of any person or subject.

12. T--Is it true?H--Is it helpful?I--Is it inspiring?N--Is it necessary?K--Is it kind?
13. *If what I am about to say does not pass those tests, I will keep my mouth shut! And it worked!*

C. THE PROBLEM OF BOASTING.

1. The word Boast is defined as: 1 talk about oneself with excessive pride. 2 possess (a feature that is a source of pride). >noun an act of boasting.
2. That should be enough to know that we should not boast. It originates from a proud heart.
 - a. Thou sayest, Lo, thou hast smitten the Edomites; and thine heart lifteth thee up to boast: abide now at home; why shouldst thou meddle to thine hurt, that thou shouldst fall, even thou, and Judah with thee? (2 Chr 25:19)
 - b. The proud will not seek after God. AThe wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God: God is not in all his thoughts.@ (Psa 10:4)
 - c. Thus destruction awaits. Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall. (Prov 16:18)
3. Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth. (Proverbs 27:1)
 - a. First, the boaster assumes there will be a tomorrow.
 - b. Second, he assumes that he has complete control over the situation.
 - c. Third, He assumes that his plans are the Lord=s plans.
 - d. AA man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps.@ (Proverbs 16:9; Jer. 10:23).
 - e. James reminds us of this terrible sin of the tongue. A Go to now, ye that say, To day or to morrow we will go into such a city, and continue there a year, and buy and sell, and get gain: Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away. For that ye ought to say, If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this, or that. But now ye rejoice in your boastings: all such rejoicing is evil.@ (James 4:13-16).
4. The Boaster is like a cloudy and windy day without rain.
 - a. Proverbs 25:14 Whoso boasteth himself of a false gift is like clouds and wind without rain.
 - b. All the signs are there. Looks like rains, but produces nothing.
 - c. The boaster sounds good, but that is about all there is to him.

D. The Problem of Hasty speech.

1. We read in Proverbs 29:20 ASeest thou a man that is hasty in his words? there is more hope of a fool than of him.@
 - a. Ever heard someone say, AI said that before I thought@.

- b. Impossible. It is more likely we spoke hastily and did not think through the situation.
- c. James said, AWherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.@ (James 1:19-20).
- 2. The hasty man is a man of folly. He that is slow to wrath is of great understanding: but he that is hasty of spirit exalteth folly. (Prov 14:29)
- 3. The thoughts of the diligent tend only to plenteousness; but of every one that is hasty only to want. (Prov 21:5)
- 4. The hasty often because of his anger speaks without much consideration.
 - a. AThe heart of the righteous studieth to answer: but the mouth of the wicked poureth out evil things.@ (Proverbs 15:28).
 - b. AHe that answereth a matter before he heareth it, it is folly and shame unto him.@ (Prov 18:13).
 - c. Thus James said, we are to be Aslow to wrath: for the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.@ (Jam. 1:19-20).
 - d. Finally we need to realize that there are times when we should not speak at all. A A fool uttereth all his mind: but a wise man keepeth it in till afterwards.@ AProverbs 29:11"
 - e. We need to slow down our tongues to the pace of our brains.

CONCLUSION:

- 1. The Christian should guard and keep the heart with all diligence. (Prov. 4:23).
- 2. The Christians should keep their tongue from evil. (Ps 34:13; 1Pe 3:10).
- 3. The Christian should lay aside evil speaking. (Eph 4:31; 1Pe 2:1).
- 4. Yes we should be warned against such evil speaking. (Tit 3:1,2).
- 5. We should so live as to give no occasion for one to speak evil against us. (1Pe 2:12; 3:16).

NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN

(Lessons from Ecclesiastes)

by

Jesse M. Dickison

- INTRO:**
1. I want to express my thanks to the elders of the Nesbit Church of Christ and to the congregation itself for the invitation to speak on this Lectureship.
 2. It is my conviction that Lectureships such as this one will provide needed help to members of the Lord's Church for years to come.
 3. I have been assigned the topic of "Nothing New Under The Sun"--Lessons from Ecclesiastes.
 4. To be honest with you, the hardest part of this task was to narrow down my focus to just four or five points. Ecclesiastes is rich with good material.
 5. These are the ones that I have chosen to discuss:

I. NOTHING NEW UNDER THE SUN (ECCL. 1:9).

- A. This phrase is rendered a little differently in both the King James Version and the American Standard Version: "... *and there is no new thing under the sun.*"
- B. This does not mean that there would not be new inventions and new discoveries; Daniel prophesied that "*knowledge would be increased*" in the time of the end (12:4).
- C. An equivalent phrase today would be something like "history repeats itself."
- D. "*There is no new thing under the sun,*" is absolutely a true statement.
 1. Emotionally, man is exactly the same as he has always been.
 2. The sins of modern America are exactly the sins of ancient Babylon or Rome.
 3. Man attempts to excuse his sinful behavior and yields to temptation in exactly the same pattern as he always has.
 4. In this sense, there is indeed "*no new thing under the sun.*"
- E. Man's basic spiritual needs are the same as those of Adam and Eve after they were cast out of the Garden of Eden.
 1. Adam and Eve needed to be reconciled to their Creator due to broken fellowship; they were sent forth from the Garden (Gen. 3:23-24). Today man is out of fellowship with God because of sin (Isa. 59:1-2) and needs to be reconciled to Him (2 Cor. 5:18-21).
 2. Adam and Eve also needed forgiveness for their sins. They had transgressed God's law or revealed will and "...*sin is transgression of the law*" (1 John 3:4). Man today also stands in need of forgiveness (Romans 3:23; 6:23).

II. MAKING SENSE OF LIFE (ECCL. 3:1-15).**

- A. Perhaps the best known passage in Ecclesiastes is 3:1-9, which begins, "*To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.*"
 1. The inspired writer then lists examples in verse 2-9.
 2. While some scholars understand the passage to teach that all of life is predetermined, we reject such an idea because it removes the free moral agency of man.
 3. Others say that these verses stress there is an appropriate time for all things. Solomon

- does make that point several times in the *book* (3:11; 8:5-6; 11:9; 12:1).
4. Since the context (2:26; 3:9-10a) seems to be negative, however, the passage under consideration seems to teach that life is frustrating; i.e., nothing stays done; good and bad seem to cancel each other out.
- B. Is there any way to make sense out of life?
1. Verses 1-9 are followed by one of the most meaningful passages in the book.
 2. This is one of those rare occasions in Ecclesiastes when heavenly sunshine breaks through the earthly gloom.
- C. In verses 10-15, we see four suggestions for making sense of life:
1. **# 1: Know that the hand of God is in all that happens (3:10).**
 - a. God's name was not mentioned in verses 1-9. Now it is.
 - b. God's plan in all that happens is to exercise men.
 2. **# 2: Understand that there is value in all that happens (3:11).**
 - a. All of the things in 3:1-8 are "beautiful" in their time ("beautiful" is the literal Hebrew). We may not always see the beauty, but let us consider *Romans 8:28*.
 - b. One value exists in all that happens: We are impressed with the fact that this world is not our home. God has set eternity (ASV) in our hearts, so this world can never satisfy.
 3. **# 3: Realize that there is much good in this life that we should enjoy (3:12-13).**
 - a. Look again at 3:1-8. Sad times follow happy times; but happy times also follow sad times. There is always something to look forward to.
 - b. Notice the simple pleasures of verse 13--these are things the humblest of men can have. We must learn to enjoy the simple things of life (*Phil. 4:11*); these are God's gift to us.
 4. **# 4: Learn to trust in God--and leave all things in His hands (3:14-15).**
 - a. Verse 15 again notes the endless repetition of life, but adds the important thought that God is in control.
 - b. Verse 14 lets us know that when God does something:
 - 1) It is permanent.
 - 2) It is perfect.
 - 3) It has a purpose.
 - c. Since God is in control, we may draw some conclusions.
 - 1) We need God--without Him, life is a vicious cycle.
 - 2) We need to learn to *fear* Him, respect Him, and do His will (Eccl. 12:13).
 - 3) We need to trust Him and leave things in His hands.
- D. Ecclesiastes 3:1-15 puts in our place.
1. It humbles us, but it also fills us with confidence.
 2. We are nothing; God is everything. *In Him* all is right!

**** This material is from brother David Roper's book, Through the Bible.**

III. SENTENCE NOT EXECUTED SPEEDILY AGAINST AN EVIL WORK (ECCL. 8:11).

- A. The term translated "sentence" is PITHGAM, which Adam Clarke defines as "*a Divine*

decree” or “*declaration.*” He further states that this is not originally a Hebrew word, but that it originated in the Chaldean language.

1. Because God does not immediately punish every sin, men think He disregards evil acts; and therefore they are emboldened to sin on.
 2. Thus, the longsuffering of God which “*leadeth to repentance*” is abused by some and they are led to further sins against God!
 3. When men sin against the remedy of their salvation, there is no way they can escape perdition.
- B. Brother James Burton Coffman in his commentary says: “*This is an eternal principle of righteous government that wrongdoers should be punished quickly; and this verse indicates that failure to obey this principle has the effect of encouraging evil.*”
1. In our nation and our society today we can see how true this statement is.
 2. The average time required to execute sentence against a cold-blooded, vicious murderer runs into many years, sometimes exceeding decades.
 3. This is exactly why the death penalty, as we practice it today, is not a deterrent to crime. The time between the crime and the punishment is so lengthy that people do not connect the two events!

IV. REMEMBER THY CREATOR IN THE DAYS OF THY YOUTH (ECCL. 12:1).

- A. W/o belief in God, our Creator, so much of life would mean little or nothing. If God is not, then nothing really matters.
1. All the rules for life & living might as well be cast aside.
 2. But it is “*the fool*” who says “*there is no God*” (*Psa. 14:1*), and this aptly describes “*the wicked*” who “*will not seek after God*” (*Psa. 10:4*).
- B. Those who honestly consider the valid evidence for God’s existence in the things which are--the heavens, the earth, man and all other living things w/ all their complexities--and still disbelieves in God, certainly cannot be known for their “*smarts.*”
1. Back in the 1960’s some said “*God is dead!*” Since that time efforts to dissuade belief in God have increased and intensified.
 2. The consequences/results can be seen in today’s society which is becoming increasingly amoral or immoral day by day.
- C. One of the most tragic things to happen in our society in recent times is the loss of belief in God by capable and in some ways highly intelligent young people.
1. The very thing that contributed in such a great way to the well-being of our country is now waning--faith in G.
 2. Once young people reject the abundant evidence for G’s existence, the likelihood that they will later come to believe in God is practically nonexistent.
 3. In the U.S. we pride ourselves in our scientific achievements and consider ourselves as among the smartest--if not the smartest--people in the world--but if our worldly wisdom produces unbelief in God, then it becomes a great curse rather than a blessing.
- D. Young people will never face a greater challenge than that of belief in the one true God (Heb. 11:6; John 8:24; 14:1-3).

1. No greater reward will be available as when you meet that same challenge.
2. There are strong obstacles to overcome--such as concerted efforts to completely secularize our society and to undermine our moral standard.
3. Still this most important challenge to "*Remember thy Creator*" can be successfully met by those who put their minds to work and face reality.

V. FEAR GOD AND KEEP HIS COMMANDMENTS (ECCL. 12:13-14).

- A. Solomon's grand conclusion of the book will serve as our conclusion of this lesson.
- B. *Fear God and keep his commandments (v. 13).*
 1. God does exist and according to *Hebrews 11:6*, He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him.
 2. This verse shows also that God has given commandments which all men are obligated to honor and observe and obey.
- C. *This is the whole duty of man (v. 13).*
 1. The word "*duty*" is not in the original language, but has been supplied by the translators.
 2. The passage can be literally understood as "*the whole of man.*"
 3. The whole business, the whole purpose, the whole intent of God's placing man on the earth (the whole of man)--all that concerns man is summed up in this phrase: **Fear God and obey Him!**
- D. *For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil (v. 14).*
 1. This is perhaps the most positive statement of the biblical doctrine of the eternal judgment to be found anywhere in the Old Testament.
 2. The judgment of God upon the world is a cardinal doctrine of Christianity, one of the fundamentals (*Hebrew 6:2*).
 3. The language is similar to that of *2 Corinthians 5:10*.
 4. The fact that Solomon announces it at the end of his book serves to make it a climax.
- E. Let me ask in closing, do **you** fear God? Are **you** keeping His commandments?

- CONCL:**
1. We have only touched the hem of the garment as far as the book of Ecclesiastes is concerned.
 2. Surely, there are other passages that are worthy of our consideration and study; these are the five that I chose to discuss in this lesson.
 3. May this simple lesson serve to lead us to a further study of this wonderfully rich book--the book of Ecclesiastes.

Parenting Pointers from Proverbs

God=s AAD to Prevent ADD/ADHD

Todd Clippard

Introduction: Proverbs 1:1-7 B So you wanna be wise?

1. Hear and Increase Learning - v 5a (cf Proverbs 9:9-11)
2. Listen to the Counsel of the Wise - v 5b (cf Proverbs 19:26-27)
3. Fear the Lord and do not despise instruction - v 7 (cf Hebrews 12:5-11)

Body: Parenting Pointers B Three Key Concepts

1. **AUTHORITY: Be the Parent!** B Proverbs 1:8
 - a. Note the ring of authority as seen in the two imperatives: Ahear@ and Aforsake not.@
 - b. Also note the authority resides in **both** parents.
 - i. from the father, Ainstruction@ (Strong=s #4148).
 - (1) This Hebrew word elsewhere appears as Achastisement@ (Deut 11:2), discipline (Job 36:10); Acorrection@ (Prov 7:22; 15:10); rebuke (Hos 5:2).
 - (2) Its root (Strong=s #3256) means to correct, instruct, reform, teach.
 - ii. from the mother, Alaw@ (Strong=s #8451)
 - (1) Alaw@ - used primarily in regard to the Decalogue or Pentateuch.
 - (2) Its root (Strong=s #3384) is also translated Acast@ (to set in place - Gen 31:51); Adirect@ or Ashoot@ (as an arrow); Ainform,@ (Deut 17:10); Alaid,@ (as a corner stone - Job 38:6); Ateach@ (Ex 24:12).
 - iii. AHonor thy father **and** mother@ B Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:2
 - (1) Proverbs 10:1 - AA wise son makes a glad father, but a foolish son is a sorrow to his mother.@ ESV
 - (2) Proverbs 17:2 - AA wise servant shall have rule over a son that causes shame, and shall have an inheritance among the brethren.@
 - (3) This principle is not often seen today . . . BUT IT SHOULD BE! How many God-fearing parents leave their estate to rebellious, unbelieving children instead of faithful servants of God (the church, a school of preaching or faithful Christian university, an orphanage, a mission effort)
2. **ADVICE** B a Pre-emptive Parental Strike B Proverbs 1:10-18
 - a. Early intervention: AIf sinners entice thee, consent thou not@ B v 10
 - i. Don=t wait until trouble comes to intervene!
 - ii. Modern ad campaigns . . .
 - (1) Talk to your kids about sex . . . smoking . . . marijuana . . . drinking . . . etc.
 - (2) AParenting B the Anti-Drug.@
 - (3) Even the secularists realize the importance of early **parental** intervention.
 - b. What to watch for . . . evil companions B vv 11-14
 - i. The enticement of the wicked: ACome with **us**@ - v 11a
 - ii. The explanation of their wickedness: ALet us lie in wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent@ B v 11b-c
 - iii. The end of their wickedness: AWe shall find all precious substance; we shall fill our

- houses with spoil@ B v 13
- iv. How to respond - v 15 B A Walk thou not in the way with them@ (cf Psalm 1)
 - v. Explain the end B 1:16-18
 - (1) >Do you realize what is going on here?= B v 16
 - (2) Look to the end of the action B vv 17-18 (cf Prov 19:20)
 - vi. Never forget to say, AI told you so.@
 - (1) Numbers 14 B Israel=s unbelief (cf Deut 1:41)
 - (2) Numbers 16 B Korah=s rebellion (cf Num 26:9-10; Deut 11:6)
 - (3) 1 Corinthians 10:1-12 B Paul=s reminder of past failures
3. **DISCIPLINE:** A training that corrects, molds or perfects the mental faculties or moral character@- Webster. Discipline = Disciple = Teach = Matthew 28:18
 Three types of discipline that helps with child-rearing:
- a. **Personal B** How parents conduct themselves (see AIntrospection for Fathers@ at end)
 - i. Genesis 3-4 B Adam, Eve, and Cain
 - (1) When confronted with sin, Cain played the blame game: ABut unto Cain and to his offering he (God) had not respect. And Cain was very wroth, and his countenance fell. . . . Cain rose up against Abel his brother, and slew him@ (Genesis 4:5, 8).
 - (2) Where do you reckon Cain learned his behavior of refusing to accept responsibility for one=s actions . . . perhaps from his *parents*?
 - (3) When confronted with his sin, Adam played the blame game: AThis woman whom you gave to be with me . . .@ (Genesis 3:12)
 - (4) When confronted with her sin, Eve played the blame game: AThe serpent beguiled me and I did eat@ (Genesis 3:13).
 - ii. When parents fail to practice personal discipline and restraint in their personal habits, their work habits, and their financial affairs, what else should we expect from the children?
 - iii. What have they seen in thy house? 2 Kings 20:15
 - b. **Parental B** already discussed in some detail in the section on authority, but the Proverbs are full of admonitions to parents to practice discipline on their children.
 - i. Whoever says, >I just love my children too much to spank them= never read Proverbs 13:24 B AHe who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly@ NKJV.
 - ii. Proverbs 23:13 B ADo not withhold discipline from a child; if you strike him with a rod, he will not die.@ ESV
 - iii. Proverbs 23:14 B AIf you strike him with the rod, you will save his soul from Sheol.@
 - (1) Sheol is a transliteration similar to Hades.
 - (2) It can mean the grave or the waiting place of the dead.
 - (3) In this case, discipline **may** be said to save both the physical life and the soul.
 - c. **Parochial B** that which takes place in the church.
 - i. That church discipline is commanded cannot be denied. It is a divine imperative and always commanded and administered with the authority of Christ:
 - (1) Matthew 18:15-20 B church discipline is done **in the name of Christ** (v 20)
 - (2) 1 Corinthians 5 B AIn the name of@ and Awith the power of the Lord Jesus Christ@
 - (3) 2 Thessalonians 3:6 B A**now we command you brethren in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly**, and not after the traditions received from us.@

- ii. Too many adults and children have spent their entire lives in the church without having witnessed a single act of church discipline.
- iii. What lesson is taught or learned when our children and others see brethren thumb their noses at God through indifference or outright ungodliness with no fear of retribution or punishment?

Introspection For Fathers

To get his goodnight kiss he stood beside my chair one night
And raised an eager face to me, a face with love alight.

And as I gathered in my arms this son God gave to me,
I thanked the lad for being good and hoped he's always be.

His little arms crept around my neck, and then I heard him say
Five simple words I'll never forget
Five words that made me pray.

They turned a mirror on my soul, on secrets none knew.
They startled me; I hear them yet; He said, A Dad, I'll be like you.

12 Rules for Raising a Juvenile Delinquent

1. Begin with infancy to give the child everything he wants. In this way he will grow up to believe the world owes him a living.
2. Quarrel frequently in the presence of your children. This way they won't be so shocked when the home is broken up later.
3. When he uses bad words or shows disrespect, laugh at him. This will make him think he's cute.
4. Give the child all the spending money he wants. Never let him earn his own.
5. Never give him any spiritual training. Wait until he is older and let him decide for himself.
6. Satisfy his every craving for food, drink, and comfort. See that every sensual desire is gratified.
7. Avoid the use of A wrong. He may develop a guilt complex. This will

condition him to believe later, when he is arrested, that society is against him and he is being persecuted.

- 8. Let him read any printed material, and listen to any music he can get his hands on. Be careful that the silverware and drinking glasses are sterilized, but let his mind feast on garbage.*
- 9. Pick up everything he leaves lying around. Do everything for him so that he will be experienced in throwing all responsibility on others.*
- 10. When he gets into real trouble, apologize to yourself by saying, I could never do anything with him.@*
- 11. Take his part against neighbors, teachers, and policemen. They are all prejudiced against your child.*
- 12. Prepare for a life of grief. You=ll likely have it.*

(Most online sources cite the Houston, Texas police department as the source of this list. TC)

12 RULES FOR A HAPPY MARRIAGE*

1. Never both be angry at once.
2. Never talk at one another, whether alone or in company.
3. Never speak loud to one another unless the house is on fire.
4. Let each one strive to yield most to the wishes of the other.
5. Let self denial be the aim and practice of each.
6. Never taunt with a past mistake.
7. Neglect the whole world before neglecting the other.
8. Never make a remark at the expense of the other.
9. Never meet without a loving welcome.
10. Never let the sun go down on any anger or grievance.
11. Never forget the happy hours of early love.
12. Never forget that marriage is ordained by God, and that His blessings alone can make it what He intended it to be.

*While this is not directly associated with parenting, the attitude and demeanor of the parents toward one another is one of the greatest childhood influences.

VARIOUS TYPES OF PRAYERS IN THE BOOK OF PSALMS

Daniel F. Cates

TEXT: Psalm 5:1-3, "Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my meditation.

Hearken unto the voice of my cry, my King, and my God: for unto thee will

I pray. My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the morning

will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up."

INTRODUCTION:

1. While five of the Psalms are specifically titled prayers (Heb. *Tephillah*), there

are thirty-two instances of this word in the Psalms, and numerous others

regarding prayer in various other forms (e.g., supplication (thirteen times),

or descriptions such as cried unto God [fourteen times] et.al.).

a. The Psalms specifically titled (in the uninspired headings) as prayers are

these:

(1). Psalm 17:1, "A Prayer of David."

(2). Psalm 86:1, "A Prayer of David."

(3). Psalm 90:1, "A Prayer of Moses the man of God."

(4). Psalm 102:1, "A Prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed, and poureth out his complaint before

the

LORD."

(5). Psalm 142:1, "Maschil [A maschil is a psalm designed to teach-

DFC] of David; A Prayer when he was in the cave."

2. The preponderance of expressions regarding prayer illustrates the great amount

of emphasis on prayer in the Psalms (further exemplified in passages such

as Psalm 5:1-3); consequently, there are for the diligent Bible student great

lessons to be gleaned from the Psalms regarding prayer.

a. For this lesson the writer has been asked to deal with the types of

prayer which are found in the Psalms.

b. The writer has taken some liberty with the word "types" in preparing this

study, to wit: The lesson shall show what types, or forms, of

the prayers in the Psalms take; and it shall show what types, or

characteristics, made the psalmists' prayers effectual.

(1). It will be shown that the prayers in the Psalms may fall into

various categories including exaltation (praise and thanksgiving), introspection (concerning the psalmists'

needs), and circumspection (in which the psalmist focuses

upon others).

(2). It will also be shown that the psalmists' prayers were modeled,

expressed, continual, humble, sincere, godly,
realistic,
elevated, heard, and answered.

I. THE PSALMISTS' PRAYERS BY TYPES.

A. Exaltation.

1. Praise, i.e. for Who God is.

a. "O LORD our Lord, how excellent is thy name in
all the
earth! who hast set thy glory above the
heavens"

(Psalm 8:1).

b. "Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let
thy
glory be above all the earth" (Psalm 57:11).

c. "Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in
all generations. Before the mountains were
brought
forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth
and the
world, even from everlasting to everlasting,
thou
art God" (Psalm 90:1-2).

d. Is not this very characteristic exemplified in
Jesus' model
prayer? ("Hallowed be thy name. . . . For
thine is
the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
for
ever" [Matthew 6:9,13]).

2. Thanksgiving, i.e. for what God has done, is doing, and will do.

a. "He delivereth me from mine enemies: yea, thou liftest

me up above those that rise up against me:

thou

hast delivered me from the violent man.

Therefore

will I give thanks unto thee, O LORD, among

the

heathen, and sing praises unto thy name"

(Psalm 18:48-49).

b. "Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee

do

we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare" (Psalm 75:1).

c. "At midnight I will rise to give thanks unto thee

because

of thy righteous judgments" (Psalm 119:62).

d. Incidentally, there is an interesting repetition

associated

with the giving of thanks to the Lord whose

mercy

endures forever (for that study, consider

Psalms 106:1;

107:1; 118:29; 136:1-26; c.f., I Chronicles

16:34; Ezra

3:11; et.al.).

B. Introspection.

1. Forgiveness, i.e. spiritual needs.

- iniquity;
affliction and
25:11,18).
- a. "For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine
for it is great. . . . Look upon mine
my pain; and forgive all my sins" (Psalm
25:11,18).
- iniquity
forgavest
- b. "I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine
have I not hid. I said, I will confess my
transgressions unto the LORD; and thou
the iniquity of my sin" (Psalm 32:5).
- c. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy
lovingkindness: according unto the multitude
of thy
tender mercies blot out my transgressions.
Wash
me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse
me
from my sin. For I acknowledge my
transgressions: and my sin is ever before me.
Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and
done
this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be
justified
when thou speakest, and be clear when thou
judgest" (Psalm 51:1-4).
- d. Again, consider the Lord's model: "And forgive
us our
sins; for we also forgive every one that is

indebted

to us. And lead us not into temptation; but

deliver

us from evil" (Luke 11:4).

2. Request, i.e. physical needs.

a. "Return, we beseech thee, O God of hosts: look

down

from heaven, and behold, and visit this vine;

And

the vineyard which thy right hand hath

planted, and

the branch that thou madest strong for

thyself"

(Psalm 80:14-15).

b. "The eyes of all wait upon thee; and thou givest

them

their meat in due season. Thou openest thine

hand,

and satisfiest the desire of every living thing"

(Psalm 145:15-16, c.f., 18-19).

c. Paul's admonition echoes the Psalmist's

recognition

("Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by
prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let

your

requests be made known unto God"

[Philippians 4:6]).

d. Again, note the model: "Give us this day our

daily

bread" (Matthew 6:11).

3. Protection, i.e. security needs.

- a. "O my God, I trust in thee: let me not be
ashamed, let
not mine enemies triumph over me" (Psalm
25:2).
- b. "In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust; let me
never be
ashamed: deliver me in thy righteousness"
(Psalm 31:1).
- c. "Thy righteousness is like the great mountains;
thy
judgments are a great deep: O LORD, thou
preservest man and beast. How excellent is
thy
lovingkindness, O God! therefore the children
of
men put their trust under the shadow of thy
wings"
(Psalm 36:6-7).
- d. "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in
unto my
soul" (Psalm 69:1).
- e. "In thee, O LORD, do I put my trust: let me
never be
put to confusion. Deliver me in thy
righteousness,
and cause me to escape: incline thine ear unto
me,
and save me. Be thou my strong habitation,
whereunto I may continually resort: thou hast

given

commandment to save me; for thou art my

rock

and my fortress. Deliver me, O my God, out

of the

*hand of the wicked, out of the hand of the
unrighteous and cruel man" (Psalm 71:1-4).*

f. *"Let my supplication come before thee: deliver*

me

according to thy word" (Psalm 119:170).

4. *Guidance, i.e. direction needs.*

a. *"For thou art my rock and my fortress;*

therefore for thy

name's sake lead me, and guide me" (Psalm

31:3).

b. *"For thou hast delivered my soul from death:*

wilt not

thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may

walk

before God in the light of the living?" (Psalm

56:13).

c. *"Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and*

afterward

receive me to glory" (Psalm 73:24).

C. *Circumspection.*

1. *Intercession, i.e. remembering the needs of others.*

a. *"Redeem Israel, O God, out of all his troubles"
(Psalm 25:22).*

b. *"Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance:*

feed them

also, and lift them up for ever" (Psalm 28:9).

c. "O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart"

(Psalm 36:10).

d. "Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion: build thou the walls of Jerusalem" (Psalm 51:18).

e. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem: they shall prosper that love thee" (Psalm 122:6).

f. "Do good, O LORD, unto those that be good, and to them that are upright in their hearts" (Psalm 125:4).

2. Imprecation, i.e. remembering the scars from others.

a. An imprecation is effectively a curse--something which one might not expect in a prayer.

b. While one can have the wrong attitude regarding his

oppressors, the psalmists' imprecations are righteous ones for the following reasons:

(1). They call upon God to be the One who exercises vengeance (Psalms 94:1; 58:10; 149:6-7;

Deuteronomy 32:35,43; c.f. Romans 12:19).

(2). They recognize God as being a God of

judgment (Psalm 149:9) and justice
(Psalm 7:9; 82:3) as the psalmist wrote,
"Justice and judgment are the habitation
of
thy throne: mercy and truth shall go
before
thy face" (Psalm 89:14).

(3). They represent vindication for the
righteous
(Psalm 58:11).

(4). They exemplify the old principle of
retaliation
("O daughter of Babylon, who art to be
destroyed; happy shall he be, that
rewardeth thee as thou hast served us.
Happy shall he be, that taketh and
dasheth
thy little ones against the stones"
[Psalm 137:8-9; c.f., Exodus 21:23-25;
Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21])

c. Consider a few examples of David's imprecations:

(1). "Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall
by
their own counsels; cast them out in the
multitude of their transgressions; for
they
have rebelled against thee" (Psalm 5:10).

(2). "Let all mine enemies be ashamed and
sore
vexed: let them return and be ashamed

suddenly" (Psalm 6:10).

ashamed:
(3). "Yea, let none that wait on thee be

let them be ashamed which transgress
without cause" (Psalm 25:3).

desert"
(4). "Give them according to their deeds, and
according to the wickedness of their
endeavours: give them after the work of
their hands; render to them their

(Psalm 28:4).

have
(5). "Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I

called upon thee: let the wicked be
ashamed, and let them be silent in the
grave" (Psalm 31:17).

tongues:
(6). "Destroy, O Lord, and divide their

for I have seen violence and strife in the
city" (Psalm 55:9).

and
(7). See also the Messianic Psalm 69:21-28

The large sections Psalm 18:40-42 and
Psalm 35:3-8 and the whole of
Psalm 109.

II. THE PSALMISTS' PRAYERS BY CHARACTERISTICS . . .

A. . . . Are modeled ones.

1. The psalmists had the examples of Moses, Aaron,
Samuel, and

Aaron
call upon
answered
others from whom they learned to pray ("Moses and
among his priests, and Samuel among them that
his name; they called upon the LORD, and he
them" [Psalm 99:6]).

2. So the disciples had Jesus as a model ("After this
manner
disciples had
therefore pray ye: . . ." [Matthew 6:9]) as John's
him as a model (Luke 11:1).
3. So do prayerful Christians today have all those
examples who
are in the Bible.

B. . . . Are expressed ones.

1. Though the Lord know our needs before we even pray
concerning them (Matthew 6:8), a prayer is of no
use if it is
never offered unto the Lord!
a. "Give ear to my words, O LORD, consider my
meditation. Hearken unto the voice of my
cry, my
King, and my God: for unto thee will I pray.
My
voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD;
in
the morning will I direct my prayer unto thee,
and
will look up" (Psalm 5:1-3).

O God:

speech"

hast

and

30:2,8).

my cry;

stranger

were"

of my

my life

to the

ear unto

b. "I have called upon thee, for thou wilt hear me,

incline thine ear unto me, and hear my

(Psalm 17:6).

c. "O LORD my God, I cried unto thee, and thou

healed me. . . . I cried to thee, O LORD;

unto the LORD I made supplication" (Psalm

d. "Hear my prayer, O LORD, and give ear unto

hold not thy peace at my tears: for I am a

with thee, and a sojourner, as all my fathers

(Psalm 39:12).

e. "Hear my prayer, O God; give ear to the words

mouth" (Psalm 54:2).

f. "Hear my voice, O God, in my prayer: preserve

from fear of the enemy" (Psalm 64:1).

g. "Give ear, O LORD, unto my prayer; and attend

voice of my supplications" (Psalm 86:6).

h. "Let my prayer come before thee: incline thine

my cry;" (Psalm 88:2).

LORD.
i. "Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O

Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be
attentive to
the voice of my supplications" (Psalm 130:1-
2).

j. "I cried unto the LORD with my voice; with my
voice
unto the LORD did I make my supplication"
(Psalm 142:1).

2. The same idea would be expressed by Jesus in His
sermon on
the mount: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek,
and ye
shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:
For
every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh
findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be
opened"
(Matthew 7:7-8).

C. . . . Are continual ones.

1. "As for me, I will call upon God; and the LORD shall
save me.
Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and
cry
aloud: and he shall hear my voice" (Psalm 55:16-
17).

2. "And he shall live, and to him shall be given of the
gold of

Sheba: prayer also shall be made for him
continually; and

daily shall he be praised" (Psalm 72:15).

3. "Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee
daily"

(Psalm 86:3).

4. "O LORD God of my salvation, I have cried day and
night

before thee:" (Psalm 88:1).

5. "Because he hath inclined his ear unto me, therefore
will I call

upon him as long as I live" (Psalm 116:2).

D. . . . Are humble ones.

1. "Have mercy upon me, O LORD; for I am weak: O
LORD,

heal me; for my bones are vexed" (Psalm 6:2).

2. "The meek will he guide in judgment: and the meek
will he teach

his way" (Psalm 25:9).

3. "Bow down thine ear to me; deliver me speedily: be
thou my

strong rock, for an house of defence to save me"
(Psalm 31:2).

4. "LORD, make me to know mine end, and the measure
of my

days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am.

Behold,

thou hast made my days as an handbreadth; and
mine age

is as nothing before thee: verily every man at his best state

is altogether vanity" (Psalm 39:4-5).

5. *"Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I am poor and*

needy" (Psalm 86:1).

E. . . . Are sincere ones.

1. *"Hear the right, O LORD, attend unto my cry, give ear unto my*

prayer, that goeth not out of feigned lips" (Psalm 17:1).

2. *It is fitting to contrast the sincerity of the righteous (Psalm 32:2)*

with the insincerity of the wicked (Psalm 5:9; 55:21).

F. . . . Are godly ones.

1. *"But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for*

himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him" (Psalm 4:3).

2. *"Let integrity and uprightness preserve me; for I wait on thee"*

(Psalm 25:21).

3. *"For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time*

when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great

waters they shall not come nigh unto him" (Psalm 32:6).

4. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me: *But* verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer" (Psalm 66:18-19).
5. "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; *and the* lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice" (Psalm 141:2).
6. This truth is oft repeated in the New Testament by various writers!
- a. "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16).
- b. "For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, *and* his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Peter 3:12).
- c. "Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and do those things that are

pleasing in his sight" (1 John 3:21-22).

G. . . . Are realistic ones.

1. "They shall be abundantly satisfied with the fatness of thy house;

and thou shalt make them drink of the river of thy pleasures" (Psalm 36:8).

2. "Evening, and morning, and at noon, will I pray, and cry aloud:

and he shall hear my voice" (Psalm 55:17).

3. "In the day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt

answer me" (Psalm 86:7).

4. This is in perfect harmony with what was known throughout

from Abraham to Jesus!

a. "And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised,

he was able also to perform" (Romans 4:21).

b. "And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer,

believing, ye shall receive" (Matthew 21:22).

H. . . . Are elevated ones.

1. "My voice shalt thou hear in the morning, O LORD; in the

morning will I direct my prayer unto thee, and will look up"

(Psalm 5:3).

2. "Unto thee, O LORD, do I lift up my soul" (Psalm 25:1).

3. "Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O

Lord, do I lift

up my soul" (Psalm 86:4).

4. "Cause me to hear thy lovingkindness in the morning;
for in thee

do I trust: cause me to know the way wherein I

should

walk; for I lift up my soul unto thee" (Psalm 143:8).

5. To approach the throne of God's grace, one must
elevate

himself above this world!

a. "Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto
God in the

heavens" (Lamentations 3:41).

1. . . . Are heard ones.

1. "I cried unto the LORD with my voice, and he heard
me out of

his holy hill" (Psalm 3:4).

2. "Depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity; for the
LORD hath

heard the voice of my weeping. The LORD hath

heard my

supplication; the LORD will receive my prayer"
(Psalm 6:8-9).

3. "Blessed be the LORD, because he hath heard the
voice of my

supplications" (Psalm 28:6).

4. "O thou that hearest prayer, unto thee shall all flesh
come"

(Psalm 65:2).

5. *"But verily God hath heard me; he hath attended to the voice of my prayer. Blessed be God, which hath not turned away my prayer, nor his mercy from me" (Psalm 66:19-20).*

6. *"I cried unto God with my voice, even unto God with my voice; and he gave ear unto me" (Psalm 77:1).*

7. *"In my distress I cried unto the LORD, and he heard me" (Psalm 120:1).*

J. . . . Are answered ones.

1. *"Hear me when I call, O God of my righteousness: thou hast enlarged me when I was in distress; have mercy upon me, and hear my prayer" (Psalm 4:1).*

2. *"They prevented me in the day of my calamity: but the LORD was my stay. He brought me forth also into a large place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me" (Psalm 18:18-19).*

3. *"I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me" (Psalm 57:2).*

4. *"The LORD preserveth the simple: I was brought low, and he helped me" (Psalm 116:6).*

CONCLUSION:

1. While this study could but skim the surface of the subject at hand, it has

endeavored to demonstrated types of prayer in the Psalms in two senses:

categorically and characteristicly.

2. May the Christian keep these lessons in mind in his own prayer life and so be

drawn closer to God.

DAVID: SWEET IMPRECATOR OF ISRAEL

Dan Cates

The description of David which precedes his last words reads, "David the son of Jesse said, and the man who was raised up on high, the anointed of the God of Jacob, and the sweet psalmist of Israel" (II Sam. 23:1). What a beautiful characterization of the second king of Israel and the producer of most of the Psalms; what a beautiful description of the one whose heart was like Lord's (I Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22; c.f., I Kings 15:3-5). He was not perfect, but he was very admirable, this "sweet psalmist of Israel."

Seeing this David described as sweet, and how do we reconcile his being capable of praying concerning his enemies things such as "Destroy thou them . . . let them fall" or "[let them] be ashamed and sore vexed" or "let them be silent in the grave" or "Destroy . . . and divide their tongues"? Would this not be a grievous attitude on the part of David? Considering these statements in their fuller versions, one understands a little about what attitude backed these imprecations (imprecation being "The act of calling down a curse that invokes evil" [WordWeb, ver. 4.5a]) of David as well as other psalmists, including the writer of the harsh Psalm 137:7-9 which reads, "Remember, O LORD, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem; who said, Rase it, rase it, even to the foundation thereof. O daughter of Babylon, who art to be destroyed; happy shall he be, that rewardeth thee as thou hast served us. Happy shall he be, that taketh and dasheth thy little ones against the stones." Here they are:

· "Destroy thou them, O God; let them fall by their own counsels; cast them out in the multitude of their transgressions; for they have rebelled against thee" (Psalm 5:10).

· "Let all mine enemies be ashamed and sore vexed: let them return and be ashamed suddenly" (Psalm 6:10).

· "Yea, let none that wait on thee be ashamed: let them be ashamed which transgress without cause" (Psalm 25:3).

· "Give them according to their deeds, and according to the wickedness of their endeavours: give them after the work of their hands; render to them their desert" (Psalm 28:4).

· "Let me not be ashamed, O LORD; for I have called upon thee: let the wicked be ashamed, and let them be silent in the grave" (Psalm 31:17).

· "Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues: for I have seen violence and strife in the city" (Psalm 55:9).

· See also the Messianic Psalm 69:21-28 and large sections of Psalm 18:40-42 and Psalm 35:3-8 and the whole of Psalm 109:1-31.

Could you see the attitude behind these imprecatory Psalms? Even though they may not seem such on the surface (and even though many have misunderstood them), the psalmists' imprecations are righteous ones for the following reasons:

· They call upon God to be the One who exercises vengeance (Psalms 94:1; 58:10; 149:6-7; Deut. 32:35, 32:43; c.f. Rom_12:19).

· They recognize God as being a God of judgment (Psalm 149:9) and justice (Psalms 7:9; 82:3) as the psalmist wrote, "Justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne: mercy and truth shall go before thy face" (Psalm 89:14).

· They represent vindication for the righteous (Psalm 58:11).

· They exemplify the old principle of retaliation (Psalm 137:8-9; c.f., Exod. 21:23-25; Lev. 24:20; Deut. 19:21).

When we read these Psalms, let us consider not the harsh language, but the righteous indignation behind the psalmists' words.

An Overview of the Book of Song of Solomon

Gary McDade

INTRODUCTION:

In his well circulated work of 1977, *A Popular Survey of the Old Testament*, Norman L. Geisler summarized the literature of the Old Testament into four sections.

A Legal literature C moral life of the people.

A Historical literature C national life of the people.

A Poetical literature C spiritual life of the people.

A Prophetical literature C future messianic life of the people.

In the first five books of the Old Testament Moses laid down the *ethical* code which governed the conduct of the theocratic nation. The historical books from Joshua to Nehemiah depict the *political* life in view of these moral norms. Meanwhile, the poetical books reflect the *spiritual* experiences of the people. These religious experiences comprise some of the greatest treasures of the Old Testament and even of world literature@ (p. 179).

Geisler offers three primary periods of poetic literature within the Old Testament. They are the Patriarchal period C Job (c. 2000 B.C.); the Davidic period C Psalms (c. 1000 B.C.); and the Solomonic period C Song of Solomon C a young man=s love, Proverbs C a middle-aged man=s wisdom, and Ecclesiastes C an old man=s sorrow (c. 950 B.C.) (p. 180).

THE TITLE

Song of Solomon is not uniformly titled in every copy of the Bible. The title in the English Bible is taken from the first verse, *A The song of songs*, which is *Solomon=s* @ Again drawing from Geisler=s work the reason for the book being variously titled becomes clear. In Hebrew the title of this book

is >the song of songs.= Both the Greek *asma* and the Latin *canticum* (from which we derive the word >Canticles=) translate the Hebrew title literally@ (p. 219). 1 Kings 4:32 says that Solomon wrote 1,005 songs, and this one is his chief work, thus, ASong of Songs.@

THE AUTHOR

The book supports King Solomon as its author from the first verse throughout (Song of Solomon 1:1, 5; 3:9, 11; 8:11-12). The vocabulary and style are linked to the book of Ecclesiastes which is also attributed to Solomon (Eccles. 1:1). The wisdom of Solomon included a vast knowledge of natural science which is reflected in the book. 1 Kings 4:33 says, AAnd he spake of trees, from the cedar tree that is in Lebanon even unto the hyssop that springeth out of the wall: he spake also of beasts, and of fowl, and of creeping things, and of fishes.@ In Song of Solomon A some twenty-one plants and fifteen animals are identified@ (Geisler, 219). Luxurious living is typical of Solomon=s reign and supports him as author (Song of Solomon 1:12-13; 3:6, 9; et al.). Geographical references within the book lend the view that the 120 year period of the United Kingdom under the reigns of Saul, David, and Solomon is in mind. Cities are mentioned without discrimination between Northern and Southern Kingdoms, so, again, the period of the United Kingdom would best answer as a reason for this observation. No reference to the capital city of Samaria, although other cities of the region are mentioned, points to a time before Samaria was the capital (established after 885 B.C.) and, thus, to a time when the kingdom was united as under Solomon. For example, Tirzah is only about ten miles from Samaria (Song of Solomon 6:4). The wealth of the author in general and his interest in horses in particular support Solomon as the author of the book (1 Kings 10:4-7; 4:26; 10:25-29; Song of Solomon 1:9; 3:9).

THE DATE

Solomon died in 931 B.C. Song of Solomon was likely written before the mid-way point of his forty year reign (about 960-950 B.C.). A reason for his multiplication of wives and concubines was to form political alliances. Unfortunately, this tactic ultimately leads to his downfall (1 Kings 11:4-13). In summary, 1 Kings 11:1-3 tells of Solomon's 700 wives and 300 concubines but Song of Solomon must have been written a number of years before the close of his reign because it records his harem at 60 Queens or wives and 80 concubines (Song of Solomon 6:8). The date at which Song of Solomon is written shows there are virgins without number already standing in the wings.

THE SETTING

The volatile events in the reign of David are sometimes called the Court History of David, and the rise to power by David's son Solomon has been called by Roger N. Whybray, the Throne Succession Story (The Succession Narrative, London: SCM Press, Ltd., 1968). John H. Hayes writes of this story providing the setting out of which will emerge the Song of Solomon. He wrote,

The Throne Succession Story is one of the major literary masterpieces in the Hebrew Scriptures. In its psychological analysis of human character and activity and in its objective description of significant events, it stands alone among the historical writings of ancient Near Eastern cultures. A comparison of its portrayal of David with that found in Later Hebrew tradition (for example, in 1 Chron., chs. 11 to 29) illustrates how willing and able the author was to picture the king in all his strength and weakness and to expose even the seamy side of his life. The multiple characterizations in the story present the reader with realistic persons and not impersonal stereotypes. His understanding of historical events as the results of human actions is evident in each episode. Only occasionally does the writer pause in his description to express a theological judgment concerning Yahweh

[Jehovah] and his relationship to the events at hand (see II Sam. 11:27; 12:24-25; 17:14).

When and why was such a work as this written? The intimate detail and the familiarity with the events narrated as well as the lack of any mention of the final disruption of the kingdom suggest that the Throne Succession Story was written during the lifetime of Solomon. Undoubtedly the author was a contemporary who lived through the experiences depicted and perhaps witnessed them from a position within the royal court itself. Interest in the question of dynastic succession and the right of Solomon to rule must be seen as the motive behind the composition of the narrative. In this regard, it is a novel of political propaganda. The advocacy of Solomon's divine right to rule is anticipated already in the story of Solomon's birth (II Sam. 12:24-25), where it is said that >Yahweh loved him, and sent a message by Nathan the prophet; so he called his name Jedidiah [i.e., Beloved of Yahweh]. Solomon as Yahweh's elected successor to David is emphasized in the speeches of David (I Kings 1:29-30, 33-35) and Benaiah (I Kings 1:36-37) in conjunction with the account of Solomon's enthronement. The most probable time for the writing of such a political document intent on justifying the regime of Solomon as the rightful successor in the Davidic dynasty was during the early years of his rule soon after the events described in I Kings, chs. 1 and 2, when the disaffected sentiments concerning the succession were still alive (Introduction to the Bible, 115-116).

THE PURPOSE

A threefold expression of purpose is put forward by Geisler.

A The historical purpose.

First and foremost, the Song aims to teach the sanctity and beauty of marriage as God intended it. Secondly, in Jewish usage the Song served a national role in that it was read at the feast of the Passover.

A The doctrinal purpose.

The central teaching of the book concerns the nature of the union of lover and beloved. Hence, both compassion and union, love and oneness, are at the core of the doctrinal statement of the Song. Following from this, of course, are both a rebuke to polygamy and a reaffirmation of monogamous love as God's ideal for mankind.

The Christological purpose.

Solomon's love for his bride is a most beautiful illustration of Christ's love for his church (Eph. 5:25f.). Further, the bride's growth in love depicts the believer's maturation in the love of Christ, a growing realization of His acceptance of us in love. Truly, no book of the Bible is more holy and more sacred, yet few are more often scorned and rejected. Nevertheless, the aspiration for union with Christ in love is nowhere more fully and descriptively illustrated in all of Scripture (Geisler, 221).

Wayne Jackson discussed the purpose of the book from a single standpoint, The purpose of this inspired poem appears to be a commendation of married love. It extols the bliss of genuine love after the divine order. Sexuality is a dominant theme but there is nothing base in this, for sex is not an invention of Satan; rather, it was ordained of God for the pleasure and happiness of humanity within the confines of the marriage relationship. How tragic that this heavenly gift has been so perverted across the centuries in such great variety of ways (Christian Courier, September 24, 2004).

After Geisler wrote about three interpretations of the book, that is, literal—a commendation of married love, allegorical—a allegory of God's love for his people, and typical—a prefiguring or type of Christ and his love for the church, he said, The song of Solomon is a beautiful example of how God's riches are literally fulfilled within the true love of a biblical marriage. And it is within this ideal relationship that we may see an element of truth in the other interpretations. Truly a marriage of this kind is a dramatic illustration of Jehovah's love for Israel and a beautiful picture of Christ's love

for His bride the church. But it seems unjustified to think of the story of Solomon and the Shulamite as purely allegorical on the one hand or as a type on the other. Technically, a type is a picture that predicted and was fulfilled in Christ (see ch. 7). Actually the Song lacks the last two of these three characteristics. It is not predictive and could not therefore be fulfilled in Christ, although its truth is certainly exemplified in Christ@ (Geisler, 223).

The late George W. DeHoff in his highly prized work called *DeHoff=s Bible Handbook* spoke of the purpose of the Song of Solomon, AThis poem is thought to be a eulogy of the joys of wedded life. Its essence is sound in its tender and devoted expressions of the intimate delights of wedded love. Marriage is ordained of God (Genesis 2:24) and upon the happiness of married life depends the future of civilization@ (DeHoff, 130).

THE FORM

Again brother DeHoff is consulted for comment on the form the book takes. He wrote, AThe book is written in the form of Hebrew poetry, suddenly jumping from one speaker to another and from one place to another with no explanation of shifting scenes and actors. This makes it very difficult to understand the book. The speakers seem to be a bride, called the Shulamite (6:13), the king and a chorus of palace ladies called the daughters of Jerusalem. Solomon=s harem at this time was small including only 60 wives and 80 concubines, with many on the waiting list (6:8). It afterward grew to include 700 wives and 300 concubines (1 Kings 11:3). The Shulamite is commonly thought to have been Abishag of Shunem, the fairest maiden in all the land who attended David in his last days (1 Kings 1:1-4), and who became Solomon=s wife. Her marriage to another might have endangered his throne (1 Kings 2:17-22)@ (DeHoff, 130).

THE OUTLINE

Geisler=s is preferred.

- AI. The virgin and the vineyard (1:1C2:7).
- All. The damsel and the dream (2:8C3:5).
- Alll. The queen and the quest (3:6C5:1).
- AlV. Recollection and romance (5:2C6:9).
- AV. Romance and reality (6:1OC8:4).
- AVI. The homestead and the honeymoon (8:5-14)@ (Geisler, 221-222).

THE CONTENT

A sampling of the content of the book from its major sections will give a flavor of the narrative. The AMajor Sections of the Book@ from *The Bible Knowledge Commentary*, Vol. 1, page 1009 are: 1. Courtship, 1:2-3:5. 2. A wedding, 3:6-5:1. 3. Maturation in marriage, 5:2-8:4. 4. The Nature of love, 8:5-7. And, at last harkens back to 5. How their love began, 8:8-14. An abstract of the book follows. An Aabstract@ is Aa summary of points (as of a writing) usu. presented in skeletal form@ (*Webster=s*, 5).

THE ABSTRACT

Courtship

She speaks--

Chapter 1:

A² Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine.

³ Because of the savour of thy good ointments thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee.

⁴ Draw me, we will run after thee: the king hath brought me into his chambers: we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine: the upright love thee.@

Courtship

He speaks--

Chapter 1:

A¹⁰ Thy cheeks are comely with rows of jewels, thy neck with chains of gold.

¹¹ We will make thee borders of gold with studs of silver.@

Courtship

She speaks--

Chapter 1:

A¹² While the king sitteth at his table, my spikenard sendeth forth the smell thereof.

¹⁴ My beloved is unto me as a cluster of camphire in the vineyards of Engedi.@

Courtship

He speaks--

Chapter 1:

A¹⁵ Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves= eyes.@

Courtship

She speaks--

Chapter 1:

A¹⁶ Behold, thou art fair, my beloved, yea, pleasant: also our bed is green.

¹⁷ The beams of our house are cedar, and our rafters of fir.@

Chapter 2:

A¹ I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys.

³ As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste.

⁴ He brought me to the banqueting house, and his banner over me was love.

⁵ Stay me with flagons, comfort me with apples: for I am sick of love.

⁶ His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me.@

Courtship

He speaks--

Chapter 2:

A¹¹ For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;

¹² The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;

¹³ The fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grape give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.@

A Wedding

Daughters of Jerusalem speak--

Chapter 3:

A⁶ Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant?

A Wedding

She speaks--

Chapter 3:

A¹¹ Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart.@

A Wedding

He speaks--

Chapter 4:

A¹ Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves= eyes within thy locks: thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from mount Gileady.

A¹¹ Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb; honey and milk are under thy tongue; and the smell of thy garments is like the smell of Lebanon.@

Maturation In Marriage

He speaks--

Chapter 5:

A² . . . Open to me, my sister, my love, my dove, my undefiled: for my head is filled with dew, and my locks with the drops of the night.@

Maturation In Marriage

She speaks--

Chapter 5:

A¹⁰ My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.

¹¹ His head is as the most fine gold, his locks are bushy, and black as a ravenY.

¹⁵ His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars.

¹⁶ His mouth is most sweet: yea, he is altogether lovely. This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem.@

Maturation In Marriage

He speaks--

Chapter 6:

A⁴ Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem, terrible as an army with banners.

⁵ Turn away thine eyes from me, for they have overcome me.@

Chapter 7:

A⁹ And the roof of thy mouth like the best wine for my beloved, that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak.@

The Nature Of Love

She speaks--

Chapter 8:

A⁶ Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm: for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave: the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame.@

The Nature Of Love

He speaks--

Chapter 8:

A⁷ Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned.@

How Their Love Began

She speaks--

Chapter 8:

A¹⁰ I am a wall, and my breasts like towers: then was I in his eyes as one that found favour.@

How Their Love Began

He speaks--

Chapter 8:

A¹³ Thou that dwellest in the gardens, the companions hearken to thy voice: cause me to hear it.@

AN APPLICATION LESSON

The time the lovers enjoy is so precious to them that they do not want to waste it attending to those annoying little things that distract them from each other, so the reference to *The little foxes, that spoil the vines*@ (Song of Solomon 2:15) is the plea that they be taken away so as not to disturb the lovers. We must identify *The Foxes, The Little Foxes, That Spoil the Vines*@ in our marriages.

\$ First, the little fox of a *flawed foundation* upon which the relationship rests. There are three categories of people who have a God-given right to marry. (1) Those who have never married (Heb. 13:4), (2) Those who have a deceased spouse (Rom. 7:1-3), and (3) Those who have put away a spouse who was guilty of fornication while they remained pure (Mt. 19:9). The union is not to be entered into lightly but demands both parties to be mature and responsible bringing their very best into the relationship (Mt. 19:10-12). A marriage contracted on

unscriptural grounds comes with built in problems before God and man; it has a flawed foundation.

\$ Second, the little fox of *fanciful flirtation* with others. Malachi is an authority on this subject, AYet ye say, Wherefore? Because the Lord hath been witness between thee and the wife of thy youth, against whom thou hast dealt treacherously: yet is she thy companion, and the wife of thy covenant. *And did not he make one?* Yet had he the residue of the spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth@ (Mal. 2:14-15).

\$ Third, the little fox of *full faculties* leaves no room for thoughts of love. Many are unhappy in their marriages because they do not sacrifice the luxury of time spent with others and in activities, recreational and occupational, to be with their mates quietly meditating on chaste romantic sentiments that may be gleaned from the inspired word of God in the book of Song of Solomon. Far too often the story of divorce begins with forsaking the time and energy initially spent during the courtship to win the lover=s favor and redirecting it to personal pursuits.

\$ Fourth, the little fox of *family functions* that have a maximum of time allotted to the children or even the couples= own parents. The old joke, AWhy are you two getting a divorce at ninety years old when you=ve been married for seventy years?@ and the reply comes, AWell, we were just waiting on the children to die!@ has application here.

\$ Fifth, the little fox of *fragile finances* that demands more time on the job or at home wringing the hands. Our high standard of living urges especially younger married couples to live above, way above, their means. Jesus taught, ATake heed, and beware of

covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth@ (Lk. 12:15).

\$ Sixth, the little fox of *foul friends*. A pivotal factor in the eternal destiny of men is the friends they choose. King David's son AAnmon had a friend@ who provided him with just enough motivation to push him over the edge into sin (II Sam. 13:3). The careful study of II Samuel 13-18 by couples longing for a godly union together will indelibly affix the impression foul friends may have on their lives and the lives of those they love. Just as Aevil companionships corrupt good morals,@ Athere is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother@ (I Cor. 15:33, ASV; Prov. 18:24b). Wisdom is required to distinguish the difference between these choices and to prefer the latter over the former.

\$ Seventh, the little fox of *failing faith*. Since Afaith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God@a good question is Ahow much time do we devote each day to reading, studying, and meditating on the word of God?@ The Bible says, AFollow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord: Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his birthright@ (Heb. 12:14-16).

\$ Eighth, the little fox of a *frustrated future*. The Lord taught, ABut seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you. Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof@ (Mt. 6:33-34). The establishment of proper priorities in life with the kingdom of God in first place insures a fantastic future.

Those unwilling to set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth are sure to set unrealistic goals for the future (Col. 3:2). Many want to live in a big house and seldom if ever darken the door of the church house! Clearly, we must identify the Foxes, The Little Foxes, That Spoil the Vines in our marriages.

THE SUMMARY

Song of Solomon is a 117 verse poem expressing the beauty of married love so needed in our world today. As DeHoff observed, A Marriage is ordained of God (Genesis 2:24) and upon the happiness of married life depends the future of civilization (DeHoff, 130). Solomon wrote 1,005 songs; this one represents the crown jewel of his work. Likely it was penned in the mid tenth century B.C. from Jerusalem during the single most influential period of the Hebrew kings when the United Kingdom had expanded to its fullest extent. King Solomon was enjoying a position of world renown (1 Kings 10). This inspired book shows married couples how to experience the joy and fulfillment of marital love as designed by our loving heavenly Father. As divorce rates have soared to fifty percent or more and become the status quo of American culture and society, the church of Christ stands as the pillar and ground of the truth like the Rock of Gibraltar for true biblical marriage as God would have it.

LET US HEAR THE CONCLUSION OF THE WHOLE MATTER

Wayne Jones

INTRODUCTION:

1. Most people get excited when they hear the preacher use the words *Ain conclusion.*
 - a. Most of the time, that is when song books begin to be pulled from the rack, children's crayons are positioned back into their holder, pagers are shuffled, etc.
 - b. Why? Because in the minds of some, *Ait=s almost over!*
2. Consequently, some never hear what might just be the most important part of the sermon: *AThe overall purpose of sermon conclusions should be to so impress the Truth of the sermon upon the mind of the hearer that he cannot merely walk out of the assembly and forget it! Rather, it should challenge the hearer on Monday at home, Tuesday on the job in the office or on the farm, and the remainder of the week. The Truth should be in the mind and influencing the conscience and decisions of the hearer.* *B Tom Holland*
3. It is our assignment to discuss, in detail, the conclusion of a sermon (Eccl. 12:13-14).
 - a. This exactly what the text states: *ALet us hear the conclusion of the whole matter... (Eccl. 12:13)*
 - b. The word, *AEcclesiastes* can also be rendered as *Athe preacher,* *Athe assembly speaker* or *Athe one who gathers the assembly together.*
 - c. Plainly, Solomon states: *AI, the Preacher, was king over Israel in Jerusalem.* (Eccl. 1:12)
4. This sermon was written (1) by divine inspiration and (2) from a storehouse of personal experience in the matter.
5. Let's consider the conclusion of the matter and may it challenge us for days and years to come that we might live out its Truth!

In Solomon's Conclusion, There Is...

- I. Recognition.
 - A. J.B. Coffman contends that there are at least 12 fundamental principles of Christianity that are recognized in the 12th chapter of Ecclesiastes; many of which are found in this two verse conclusion.
 1. The existence and power of God.
 2. God is the Creator.
 3. God is the Creator of man.
 4. Immortality of the soul.
 5. The resurrection from the dead.
 6. God's is man's Shepherd.
 7. The existence of the law of Moses.
 8. God's commands were found within that law.
 9. God's law is divine revelation.
 10. Man's accountability to God.
 11. The eternal judgement.
 12. Rewards and punishment.
 - B. Spiritual recognition is key to personal obedience: *ABut when he came to himself,*

he said, "How many of my father's hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger!@ (Luke 15:17)

In Solomon=s Conclusion, There Is...

II. Insight.

- A. There are questions that have gone unanswered over the years because men have failed to properly find the insight in this conclusion.
 - 1. From where did we come? Why are we here? Where are we going?
 - 2. David once asked, *AWhat is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him?@ (Psalm 8:4)*
 - 3. Job once asked, *AHow then can man be righteous before God? Or how can he be pure who is born of a woman?@ (Job 25:4)*
 - 4. David asked, *AWho may ascend into the hill of the LORD? Or who may stand in His holy place?@ (Psalm 24:3)*
 - 5. Moses also asked, *AAnd now, Israel, what does the LORD your God require of you...@ (Deut. 10:12)*
 - 6. Those on Pentecost, Saul of Tarsus and the jailer in Philippi all asked a form the question, *AWhat must I do?@ (Acts 2:37; 9:6; 16:22).*
- B. First, there is insight in the fact that God expects to be feared or respected.
 - 1. *AYou shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve Him, and to Him you shall hold fast, and take oaths in His name.@ (Deut. 10:20)*
 - 2. *AHe will bless those who fear the Lord, both small and great@ (Psalm 115:13)*
 - 3. *AIn the fear of the Lord there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge.@ (Prov. 14:26)*
 - 4. Those who do not will be punished (Lev. 10:1-3; Num. 20:12).
- C. Second, there is insight in the fact that expects obedience to His commands.
 - 1. *AObserve and obey all these words which I command you, that it may go well with you and your children after you forever, when you do what is good and right in the sight of the LORD your God.@ (Deut. 12:28)*
 - 2. *AAnd whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.@ (1 John 3:22)*
 - 3. *ABlessed are those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.@ (Rev. 22:14)*
- D. Over and over again, Biblical writers connect these two ideas of fearing God and commandment keeping (Duet. 5:29; 6:2; 13:4; Psalm 111:10; 119:63).

In Solomon=s Conclusion, There Is...

III. Finality.

- A. There no other part of man that must be found and no other instruction to man that needs to be given B a man who heeds this insight will be whole.
- B. *ALet us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is man's all.@ (Eccl. 12:13)*

- C. It should be remembered that while Solomon was writing by inspiration of the Spirit, he was also writing with his own life experiences.
 - 1. He had pursued wisdom (1:12-18).
 - 2. He had pursued wealth (2:1-26).
 - 3. He had pursued power and prestige (3:1-5:20).
 - 4. He had pursued pleasure (6:1-8:17).
 - 5. Yet, he found nothing to make him whole: *A>Vanity of vanities,= says the Preacher; >Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.=@ (Eccl. 1:2)*
- D. Yet, when he returned to God and revisited those things he had previously known, Solomon's search was over and he found what made him whole!
- E. This ought to remind us of Paul's inspired words to Timothy: *AAll Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.@ (2 Tim. 3:16-17)*

In Solomon's Conclusion, There Is...

IV. Motivation.

- A. In every Gospel sermon we should visit the Judgement.
 - 1. *ATruly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent, because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.@ (Acts 17:30-31)*
 - 2. Every sermon should cause us to stand before God (in our minds) and consider how we would want to answer regarding our response to the sermon being preached.
 - 3. We should realize that when that day arrives that we will be there and that we will be all alone as we stand before God; we will be judged simply by the facts and truth!
- B. Solomon does just that: *AFor God will bring every work into judgment, including every secret thing, whether good or evil.@ (Eccl. 12:14)*
- C. There really is no reason to add a section dedicated to concluding this sermon, Solomon has already concluded it for us!
 - 1. Are you ready for the judgement?
 - 2. Are you ready for every work, both secret and public, to be brought to light?
 - 3. Have you feared God and committed yourself to keeping His commandments?

A Wise Man=s Foolishness

Solomon=s Failures to Exercise Wisdom

Todd Clippard

Introduction: Solomon=s Faith as Seen in his Request B 1 Kings 3

1. Solomon **remembers** the mercy of God shown to his father David - v 6a
2. Solomon **recognizes** God=s hand in his position on the throne - vv 6b-7a
3. Solomon **realizes** his own inadequacy to rule such a great people - v 7b
4. Solomon=s **request** B AGive thy servant an understanding heart to judge thy people, that I may discern between good and bad@ - v 9
5. Solomon=s **reward**:
 - a. the pleasure of the Lord - v 10
 - b. a wise and understanding heart - v 12
 - c. riches and honor - v 13
 - d. long life - v 14
6. Solomon=s **response** - offerings, sacrifice, festivities - v 15

Body: Solomon=s Folly as Seen Regarding:

1. Marriage B ASolomon loved many strange women@ - 1 Kings 11:1-4
 - a. These women were among those forbidden of the Israelites in Deuteronomy 7:1-4.
 - i. The forbidden mates were those of the land of Canaan.
 - ii. Incidentally, it appears Solomon=s Egyptian wife (the daughter of Pharaoh - 1 Kings 2:1) was excepted from this list of forbidden wives.
 - b. God had given the express purpose for his refusal to allow intermarriage between the Israelites and Canaanites B their idolatry would contribute to Israel=s apostasy (Dt 7:3-4)
 - c. Many misuse this verse to teach against intermarriage among the Araces.@ However, this prohibition was based upon **religion** and not upon **race** (Song of Solomon 1:5-7).
 - d. I wish more Christians were concerned with the religion of their children=s friends and less concerned with their race.
 - e. God has always been concerned about intermarriage, but race has nothing to do with it.
 - i. Genesis 6:2-5 B the sons of God (godly men) married the daughters of men (ungodly women) resulting in the apostasy of humanity.
 - ii. Genesis 22:20-24 B God=s concern regarding intermarriage and religion explains the

insertion of this narrative of Abraham=s life:

- (1) Abraham would not take a Canaanite woman as a wife for Isaac (Gen 24:3).
- (2) Abraham=s servant was instructed to find a wife for Isaac from his own country and kindred (Gen 24:4).
- (3) Abraham=s faith in God=s covenant assured him a proper wife would be found for Isaac (Gen 24:7) . . . and he was right! (Gen 24:10ff)

iii. Marrying outside the faith is neither wise nor recommended today.

- (1) In three separate studies within the church, 70-80% of all Christians who married outside the faith eventually became unfaithful.ⁱ
- (2) These same studies revealed that more than 90% of Christians who married Christians remained true to the faith.ⁱⁱ
- (3) We recognize it is not inherently wrong to be married to a non-Christian (1 Corinthians 7:12-17; 1 Peter 3:1-6), but how can one Aseek ye first the kingdom of God@ (Matt 6:33) and marry someone who will not help one do that very thing?
- (4) Furthermore, the apostle Paul limited the widows to marry only in the Lord (1 Cor 7:39) a clear reference to one who is a Christian, and
- (5) he limited himself (not to mention Barnabas) to marrying only a Christian (1 Cor 9:5).

2. Leadership

- a. Early in his reign, Solomon is said to have Aloved the Lord, walking in the statutes of David his father@ (1 Kings 3:3).
 - i. He offered 1000 burnt offerings upon the altar at Gibeon (1 Kings 3:4).
 - ii. God continued to give Solomon wisdom (1 Kings 4:29; 5:12).
 - iii. He was chosen by God to build the temple (1 Kings 5-7)
 - iv. The sacrifices at the temple dedication could not be numbered (1 Kings 8:5).
 - v. Solomon=s prayer of dedication - AThere is no God like thee . . .@ (1 Kings 8:27)
- b. Despite Solomon=s record, God warned Solomon a second time against apostasy (1 Kings 9:4-9).
- c. Solomon=s apostasy caused God=s people to be troubled by her enemies B 1 Kings 11:
 - i. Hadad the Edomite - vv 14-22
 - ii. Rezon the son of Elidah B vv 23-25
 - iii. Jeroboam the son of Nabat B vv 26-40
- d. Solomon=s apostasy ultimately caused God=s people to be divided:
 - i. 1 Kings 11:9-13, 29-37
 - ii. Consider the end result of God=s people after the rise of Jeroboam!

- e. Solomon=s apostasy created the very situation that he had hoped to avoid when he asked God for wisdom!

Conclusion: Solomon=s Failure as Seen in his Ecclesiastical Recitation B AVanity of vanities, all is vanity.@

1. Solomon=s level of wealth is beyond our wildest imaginationB 1 Kings 10
2. Yet, despite wisdom, influence and wealth, Solomon never found genuine happiness:
 - a. Ecclesiastes 1 B the vanity of the world
 - i. There is nothing new under the sun B vv 9-11
 - ii. >I have seen it all; done it all, and all is vanity and grasping at the wind= B vv 12-17
 - b. Ecclesiastes 2 B the vanity of the things of this world
 - i. AI will test my heart with pleasures@ = Hedonism (v 1)
 - ii. AI tried to satisfy myself with wine@ (v 3)
 - iii. AI built great buildings@ (v 4)
 - iv. AI planted vineyards . . . gardens and orchards@ (vv 4-5)
 - v. AI had servants@ (v 7)
 - vi. AI gathered wealth and unique treasures@ (v 8)
 - vii. A I did not withhold any thing that I desired@ (v 10)
 - viii. I looked at everything, and it was nothing . . . and I hated life (v 11, 17)
3. **There is no statement of repentance in the life of Solomon** (1 Kings 11:1-13, 41-43).
4. It appears the wisest man ever to live died as a **fool** (Proverbs 1:7).

i. Todd Clippard, AChoosing a Mate,@ 1998 Faulkner Lectureship, AThings Most Surely Believed@

ii. Ibid

THE VANITY OF TRUSTING IN RICHES

Wayne Jones

INTRODUCTION:

1. *AYes, we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves but in God who raises the dead, who delivered us from so great a death, and does deliver us; in whom we trust that He will still deliver us@ (2 Cor. 1:9-10).*
2. That complete trust in God, gives us motivation to serve Him even in the most difficult of circumstances: *AFor to this end we both labor and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Savior of all men, especially of those who believe@ (1Tim. 4:10).*
3. Thus, where I put my trust will directly effect my service to God.
4. That is why so many Biblical writers warned against trusting in things or persons other than the God of heaven.
 - a. Some warned against trusting in earthly kingdoms: *AWoe to you who are at ease in Zion, and trust in Mount Samaria, notable persons in the chief nation, to whom the house of Israel comes!@ (Amos 6:1)*
 - b. Some warned against trusting in human alliances: *AWho walk to go down to Egypt, and have not asked My advice, to strengthen themselves in the strength of Pharaoh, and to trust in the shadow of Egypt!@ (Isa. 30:2)*
 - c. Some warned against trusting in human reasoning: *ATrust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding;@ (Prov. 3:5)*
 - d. Some warned against trusting in other men: *ADo not trust in a friend; do not put your confidence in a companion; guard the doors of your mouth from her who lies in your bosom.@ (Micah 7:5)*
5. There are also many warnings that detail the various dangers of a man putting his trust in riches, wealth and material goods.
 - a. *ADo not trust in oppression, nor vainly hope in robbery; if riches increase, do not set your heart on them.@ (Psalm 62:10)*
 - b. *AHe who trusts in his riches will fall, but the righteous will flourish like foliage.@ (Prov. 11:28)*
 - c. *AAnd the disciples were astonished at His words. But Jesus answered again and said to them, >Children, how hard it is for those who trust in riches to enter the kingdom of God!=@ (Mark 10:24)*
 - d. *ACommand those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.@ (1Timothy 6:17)*
6. Perhaps there is no greater text in all of the Bible than that of Ecclesiastes 5:10-20 regarding this subject.
 - a. Within the framework of this text, we can see the folly and vanity of trusting in material possessions.
 - b. These words come from a man inspired by God to write them and qualified by his own life experiences to encourage that they be kept.

Trusting in Riches, means trusting in something that...

VII. Will Never Bring Real Satisfaction (Eccl. 5:10-11).

- A. Solomon begins this section of the text revealing the never ending cycle that runs when a man **desires** to build wealth and increase his goods (verse 10).
 - 1. Much like a drug user that must move to Aharder@ drugs in order to satisfy his craving, a man whose happiness depends upon material possessions, will always be seeking a way to gain more and more.
 - 2. The rich fool of Luke 12 is the Master Teacher=s example of this very idea; Instead of being satisfied after filling his barns, the Lords notes that he said, *AI will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods.@ (Luke 12:18)*
- B. Solomon also points out that a man who **desires** to be rich will never be satisfied with his wealth, because wealth often breeds friends (verse 11).
- C. For what are these things gathered? So that he can look at them?
- D. When viewed in that fashion, it is amazing what some people will give up so that they might be Asee them with their eyes@ (5:11).
 - 1. Some young people give up their time as young people that they might start early to amass wealth and riches.
 - 2. Some young people give up opportunities to attend youth activities, Aget-togethers,@ trips and summer camp for the more hours to work and more money to be earned.
 - 3. Some young people give up the weekly obligation to assemble with saints and to study with the Bible with their peers, to earn money.
 - 4. In short, some give their own soul in exchange for the opportunity to see that paycheck with their own eyes!
- E. True satisfaction, has never been attributed to money or things...
 - 1. *ABlessed are you who hunger now, for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep now, for you shall laugh.@ (Luke 6:21)*
 - 2. God is able to provide us with same spiritual satisfaction as he did for Ruth in a physical sense: *A...So she sat beside the reapers, and he passed parched grain to her; and she ate and was satisfied, and kept some back.@ (Ruth 2:14)*

Trusting in Riches, means trusting in something that...

VIII. Could Bring Serious Difficulty (Eccl. 5:12-17).

- A. The key verse in this portion of the text is verse 13: *AThere is a severe evil which I have seen under the sun: Riches kept for their owner to his hurt.@ (Eccl. 5:13).*
- B. An abundance of riches can often be accompanied by worry, anxiety and a loss of sleep (verse 12).
- C. An abundance of riches is often times the precursor to accident, tragedy and loss B if nothing else where there is an abundance there is more to loose (verse 14).
- D. Perhaps the greatest misfortune for the rich is that if he has nothing momentarily to leave his children, there will be nothing more to give (verses 15-17) B Chances are he will have sacrificed his virtue, influence and good name is search

of the riches.

Trusting in Riches, means trusting in something that...

- IX. Will Keep Us From God=s Intended Happiness (Eccl. 5:18-20).
- A. We are reminded of the teaching of James: *AEvery good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.@ (James 1:17)*
 - B. God, the giver of all good gifts, has given man possession of and control over earthly things (i.e., wealth, riches, money, land, livestock, etc.).
 - 1. How man pursues it and what he does with it, will determine if those gifts remain blessings or become a curse.
 - 2. Here Solomon clarifies what some might have misunderstood, God wants man to enjoy the things of life and to be proud of his accomplishments (verses 18-19).
 - 3. Afer all, they are gifts from God.
 - C. However, he will not obsess over those things because are righteous man (and a righteous young person) will be busy being happy or satisfied with other things.
 - D. In fact, Solomon contents that God will keep a man busy with being happy if that man trusts in Him rather than riches (verse 20).

CONCLUSION:

- 1. Young people, it is God=s full intent that you live happy and satisfied lives; however, that satisfaction does not come by trusting in riches.
- 2. Satan=s lies have continued since the dawn of time.
 - a. To some he stresses the satisfaction that comes from trusting in human wisdom.
 - b. To some he stresses the satisfaction that comes from trusting in false religions.
 - c. To some he stresses the satisfaction that comes from trusting in military might.
 - d. To some he stresses the satisfaction that comes from trusting in riches.
- 3. Just as in Jeremiah=s day, some were trusting in lies (Jer. 28:15; 29:31); so are many today.
- 4. Don=t let Satan full you into trusting in uncertain riches, but rather *Aoffer the sacrifices of righteousness, and put your trust in the Lord.@ (Psalm 4:5)*

WHAT DOES IT MEAN WHEN GOD LAUGHS?

Derrick Coble

TEXT: Prov. 1:26; Psa. 2:4; Psa. 37:13; Psa. 59:8

INTRODUCTION:

- A We laugh in lightheartedness—it makes us feel good to be happy.
 - 1) (Pro 15:13) A merry heart maketh a cheerful countenance: but by sorrow of the heart the spirit is broken.
 - 2) (Pro 17:22) A merry heart doeth good *like* a medicine: but a broken spirit drieth the bones.
- B It is hard not to be happy around someone who is always cheerful and telling jokes to make us laugh and those are the people that we want to be around.
 - 1) Ecc. 3:4 tells us there is a “time to weep, and a time to laugh”
 - 2) (Pro 15:15) All the days of the afflicted *are* evil: but he that is of a merry heart *hath* a continual feast.
- C Like medicine that a doctor prescribes to heal our earthly illnesses, our laughing and being happy is a medicine that heals the soul.
 - 1) It affects our outlook on life (Phi. 4:11)
 - 2) It affects what we do in day to day life (Gal. 6:4)
 - 3) It affects those with whom we meet (Rom. 12:15)
- D But, What does it mean when God laughs?
 - 1) Is it an expression of joy?
 - 2) Is it a good medicine for Him as it is for us?

DISCUSSION:

- E WHAT IT DOES NOT MEAN WHEN GOD LAUGHS
 - 1) God has many different traits that make Him God.
 - 1) He is a spirit (John 4:24) which means he does not have flesh and bones (Luke 24:39) but He is an eternal mind—the master of all the universe.
 - 2) Being an eternal mind means that He is capable of having feelings.
 - (a) He loves and is love (John 3:16; 1 John 4:8).
 - (b) He can be provoked to jealousy and anger (Deut. 32:16).
 - (c) He can be grieved (Gen. 6:6). “it repented the Lord that he had made man”
 - (d) He can be content (Gen. 1:31). “and God saw everything that he had made”
 - 3) Above all of these emotions, God is a picture of complete perfection.
 - (a) His holiness is unsurpassed (1 Sam. 2:2) “there is none holy like the Lord.”
 - (b) His righteousness is beyond compare (Psa. 9:8) “he shall judge the world in righteousness”
 - (c) He alone can be described as truly good (Mark 10:18) “there is none good but one that is God”
 - 2) In the midst of all these perfect character traits, God rules and uses His emotions in His dealings with man.
 - 1) He is longsuffering with man not willing that we should perish (2 Pet. 3:9; Gen. 6; Jon.3:4).
 - 2) He cares about our well being and faithfully provides (Mat. 6:26ff).
 - 3) He is full of pity and of tender mercy (James 5:11).
 - 4) He sometimes laughs.

- (a) (Pro 1:26) I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh;
 - (b) Psa. 2:4 “He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh”
 - (c) (Psa 37:13) The Lord shall laugh at him: for he seeth that his day is coming.
 - (d) (Psa 59:8) But thou, O LORD, shalt laugh at them; thou shalt have all the heathen in derision.
- 3) Before considering what it does mean it is helpful to find out what it does not mean.
- 1) It does not mean God is pleased.
 - (a) When we laugh at some joke or something that a person has done it means that it was humorous to us and we are amused and pleased by those actions.
 - (b) God is not concerned with petty jokes or clumsiness as to take pleasure in them but He is concerned with the upright.
 - (i) (1Ch 29:17) I know also, my God, that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightness. As for me, in the uprightness of mine heart I have willingly offered all these things: and now have I seen with joy thy people, which are present here, to offer willingly unto thee.
 - (ii) Preaching pleases God (1 Cor. 1:21)
 - (iii) Faithfulness pleases God (Heb. 11:5)
 - (iv) Doing good pleases God (Heb. 13:16)
 - (c) When God is pleased he does not laugh but states His pleasure.
 - (i) When David wanted to build a house for God, God told him “thou didst well that it was in thine heart” (1 Kings 8:18).
 - (ii) Solomon’s speech “pleased the Lord” (1 Kings 3:10) and God let it be known.
 - (iii) To Jesus God said, “I am well pleased” (Mat. 3:17)
 - (d) When God is pleased with us at the end of time he will not laugh but make his pleasure known by saying, “Well done thou good and faithful servant” (Mat. 25:21).
 - 2) It does not mean God is happy
 - (a) On television commercials where they want us to see that people are happy they are always smiling and laughing.
 - (b) In keeping with this theme, there are Bible examples of laughing as a means of expressing happiness.
 - (i) When those in Babylonian captivity were able to be released there was great laughter (Psa 126:2) Then was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing: then said they among the heathen, The LORD hath done great things for them.
 - (ii) Jesus said, “Blessed are ye that weep now for ye shall laugh” (Luke 6:21) indicating that after we receive salvation from our sins we have indescribable joy.
 - (c) When God is happy, He blesses.
 - (i) After creating everything to be very good (including Adam and Eve) God blessed them (Gen. 1:28)
 - (ii) He blesses us for seeking Him first (Mat. 6:33)
 - (iii) As His children, He gives us spiritual blessings (Eph. 1:3).
 - 3) It does not mean God is Surprised
 - (a) It is by this same pleasurable surprise that we find Abraham and Sarah laughing when they find out that they will have a son in their old age (Gen. 17:17; 18:12,13).
 - (b) Other people have been amazed or will be by the power of God.

- (i) Disciples (Mat. 19:25)
- (ii) Mary and Joseph (Luke 2:48)
- (iii) Multitude on Pentecost (Acts 2:12)
- (iv) Those who have not obeyed the Gospel on Judgment (Mat. 7:21)
- (c) God cannot be surprised because He knows everything (Mat. 6:8; Psa. 139)

II WHAT IT DOES MEAN WHEN GOD LAUGHS

- A) When God laughs there are no tears of joy, it is not a happy moment, and there is nothing funny about it.
- B) When God laughs we know something isn't exactly right and it means something.
 - 1) It means derision or scorn (Psa. 2:4)
 - (a) Scorn = mockery or ridicule
 - (b) Just as Jesus was mocked by the unbelievers who crucified him (Luke 22:63) God will mock the unbelievers.
 - 2) It means disgust (Psa. 59:5-8)
 - (a) Belch out = boil forth; gush out; to flow
 - (b) Because some men mock saying, "There is no God" (Psa. 14:1) they will ultimately see that "God is not mocked" (Gal. 6:7) as He takes vengeance upon them (2 Thess. 1:7-9).
 - (c) (Psa 2:5) Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.
 - 3) It means condemnation (Prov. 1:26-29)
 - (a) A day is coming in which God will judge all those who lack the fear of the Lord.
 - (b) That is why it is important for us to realize Godly fear is necessary now.
 - (i) 2 Cor. 5:10,11
 - (ii) Heb. 12:28; Eccl. 12:13
 - (c) Do we really want the type of punishment describe here to come upon us? (calamity, fear, desolation, destruction, distress, and anguish)
 - (d) God says, "I will not hear you in the day of judgment when you cry out to me because you did not choose fear but laughter"

CONCLUSION:

- III What a day that will be standing before the Lord and all His holy angels in all the glory of Heaven waiting for our entrance into everlasting life.
- IV What will we hear?
 - A) Hopefully we will hear a welcoming voice.
 - B) What if we hear a cold, cruel, laugh?
- V There are people today who take God lightly and laugh off their salvation as if it doesn't matter when that day arrives nor the state of their soul—these will receive a deserved punishment from the Lord.
- VI When God laughs, it isn't a good thing!