

If men speak ill of you, live so that no one will believe them

"...Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty"—2 Corinthians 3:17

The Baptist Examiner

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"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" -- Isaiah 8:20.

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SIMPLICITY OF SALVATION

By Ray Waugh, Sr.
(Now with the Lord)



Thank you so very, very much for taking a moment out of your day to speak with me. It does the heart of this old man good to know that our Lord can enable someone whom I do not know to think or to suppose that I might have a good word to share. After my more than 50 years—saved in West Virginia in February of 1939—as a servant of my Lord, I am aware that the Holy Spirit of God deals with the hearts of those who belong to Jesus and to God the Father. Therefore, He moved upon your heart, that my heart might be encouraged as His servant.

Some of your questions and your conversation seemed to indicate to me that someone in the past may have seemed to make a good relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ a very difficult process. Though our salvation cost God the Father the death of His only begotten Son on Calvary's Cross, He really has made the way of salvation very simple for us if we can truly believe His holy infallible Word. Jesus Himself said **"He who believeth on the Son hath [right now] eternal life."**

This is simplicity of salvation in its most pristine and timely form!

We may note that our Lord Jesus Christ Himself dramatized this truth most wonderfully when He was dealing in a very personal way with some of His first disciples, His apostles. He asked them **"but whom say ye that I am?"** Brash and always bold Peter very quickly responded **"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."** Then, it was at that Jesus turned to Peter and said **"Flesh and blood have not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven."** In other words, God had enabled the Holy Spirit to provide Peter with the mind and the heart to believe,

and the ability to confess his belief.

Salvation then really is of God! It is not of men or man's ability!

By the word of Jesus Himself, we can know that at that moment, Peter had a relationship by the Holy Spirit of God with God the Father and with Jesus who was there in person in his presence. At that very moment, Peter was eternally saved.

By the grace of God, Peter was able to say that Jesus was the Son of God. That was all that was needful for him to have everlasting life. Already, Jesus had earlier said **"He who believeth on the Son hath everlasting life."** Very simply, Peter did not have to "join" anyone's church in order to be saved! Peter did not have to go to anyone's church in order to be

saved! Peter did not have to indulge in any religious activity or any religious ritual whatever in order to be saved!

In order for Peter to be eternally saved, all he had to do was confess that Jesus was **"the Christ, the Son of the Living God."** Later, of course, Peter served his Lord faithfully and for a very long time. Also, we presume that Peter died as a martyr for his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; a worthy objective for all of us who have been redeemed.

This truly is what Paul was saying to all of us in the book of Romans. There, we have his word of promise and assurance **"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe in thine heart that God has raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."** This also is what the Apostle Paul was explaining to the Philippian jailer who had asked **"What must I do to be saved?"** The Apostle Paul's word of response was **"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."** For him, too, though sal-

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STOP! TAKE A GOOD LOOK

By Pastor Edward G. Graff, Grace Central Baptist Church, Mansfield, Louisiana

Yes, "good looks" seem to be on every one's mind. Television, newspaper, magazine, and billboard advertisements—they all tell you how to possess "good looks." These advertisements are meant to sell you notions, potions, and lotions. But cosmetic appearance is not "the real person"! There is an old saying, "Beauty is only skin deep, but ugly goes to the bone." What you need today is not "good looks" but to do some "good looking." Hebrews 12:1-3 says **"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."** (Our text verse is the first part of verse two "Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.") Look away from all that will distract you, and could hinder you from being a winner. Look away from the sin that could keep you from doing God's will, and look to Jesus, who is the Leader and the Source of your faith—the first incentive of your belief.

Take a Good Look at Where You Came From

Isaiah 51:1 says **"Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord:**



look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." The Lord says **"Hear Me, you that follow after righteousness, and take a good look at the rock that you were cut out of, and at the hole of slime that you were taken out of, that rock good for nothing, and that pit of sin."** That is where you came from! But you have been taken out of the pit of sin, cleaned up, and put on the firm Rock of Christ. Jesus Christ has saved you! So, because of your salvation, do not forget to look back! Why? So that you will not forget your first love, Jesus Christ and the fire of your salvation, that you had at the hour you were saved.

Once You Have Looked at Where You Came From You Can Take a Good Look at Where You Are Going

Colossians 1:10 says **"That ye might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in the knowledge of God."** You will live your life in a manner that is worthy of and honors the Lord. You will always please God by bearing the fruit of good deeds. You will steadily grow in the wisdom, awareness, enlightenment, insight, and understanding of God. You will become closer to the Lord.

Look to the Hills

Psalms 121:1-2 says **"I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth."** You are to look to the hills, that is where your help comes from. The hills are the sacred mountains called Zion and Moriah which are used in this bit of Scripture as an outward sign of the holiness of God who holds you in His hands. Without God you can accomplish nothing, but with God you can achieve all things! So lift your eyes. Psalm 123:1-2 **"Unto thee lift I up mine**

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Interim Pastor Jack C. Whitt

IN ALL THY WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM

The title for this message is taken from Proverbs 3:6. The remainder of this verse says: **"...and he shall direct thy paths."** What a wonderful and compelling portion of God's Word this is to the Christian! To those who truly desire to know, to understand, and to live a life pleasing to God, surely this verse says it all. Is this perhaps the

main cause for our failures, or lack to understand things rightly, our inability to perform, our lack of joy and to reap the blessings God would have for us? Is it all because in all our ways we do not acknowledge Him? Surely this must be the main reason why so many paths go without direction from God.

If only Christians would ac-

knowledge God MORE in their lives there would be far less strife, discontentment, and uncertainty. Notice I said acknowledge God (more) in their lives, however, in many cases the emphasis seems to be the "minimum" rather than the "maximum." Some seem to think that going to church once or twice

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IN ALL THY

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a week is all there is to acknowledging God. To acknowledge God "in all thy ways" means to live for Him wherever we go and whatever we do—at home, on the job, in school. But some would say "That's too much to expect." But dear friend, it's not what I or anyone else expects that counts. It is what God expects. The problem in these modern days of computers, new gadgets, and technology is that people are focusing on the external and materialistic rather than the internal and spiritualistic needs. It would seem that with all our time saving devices, we could

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JULY 1, 1996

PAGE TWO

Editor's Update

By Interim Pastor Jack C. Whitt

Greetings to one and all from myself and Calvary Baptist Church. Well, let me say first of all, I have assumed the temporary position of pastor of the Calvary Baptist Church as well as editor of *The Baptist Examiner*. Most of you by now know that Brother Eugene Helton has accepted the call to pastor the Grace Baptist Church in Fairborn, Ohio. I think Brother Helton has explained in the last edition his reasons regarding this matter. While he will be missed here at our church, we can only say the Lord's will be done. Let it be known, Brother Helton left under good feelings with no ill will from our church. We believe he will serve his new church very well just as he has at Calvary. We feel he has been a positive influence to our church and to many who listened to him preach each Sunday morning on "The Call to Calvary" radio broadcast.

As the new editor of the TBE (for however long it will be), it is my intention to carry on the work of providing the best quality of reading with articles that are Scripturally sound and timely. No two editors are exact in every detail. I can only say that I will do my best as I feel led of the Lord in choosing material for the paper. Many of you know me and know also I had filled this same position prior to Brother Helton. I wish to say at this time, I have appreciated all those who have supported TBE. Those who have written articles and all who support financially the expense of this publication.

I especially desire your prayers for me as I undertake the responsibilities of preaching at Calvary and editing TBE. Please pray for our church as we seek God's will in choosing the man to fill the pastorate. As of this writing, we are seeking such a man with appropriate qualifications for this most important position. We at Calvary are encouraged as we rely on God to supply the need and as we believe "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy path" (Prov. 3:6). Until next time, may God bless you all as you serve Him.

find more time to acknowledge God. The explanation to the malady of our day and time may be that we are living out the latter days of II Timothy 3-4. We are witnessing people who are "LOVERS OF PLEASURES MORE THAN LOVERS OF GOD" (II Tim. 3:4). Surely there has been no time greater than our present when Christians need to acknowledge God in all their ways. O, how I need to acknowledge Him to be my Help and Sustainer as I assume the responsibilities to preach here at Calvary Baptist Church and to continue the editorship of this paper. How I need to acknowledge God more to help me become more compassionate and loving, to make me a better and more dedicated soul winner for Christ, to make me more tolerant and understanding of those around me.

To you, my reader, can you think of more ways you could acknowl-

edge God? Are you experiencing some particular problem or difficulty that defies an answer? Have you first acknowledged God by receiving Jesus Christ, God's Son, to be your Saviour and Redeemer, your Shield, the One who will take you to heaven?

Christian friend, it is not enough to simply acknowledge God in a very few things. The verse says:

"In all thy ways acknowledge him and He shall direct thy paths."

FATHER'S DAY

By Paul Jackson

"And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven" (Mt. 23:9).

Jesus has reference to the religious sects in His day who called their leaders names which had reference to God. There are many sects today who do the same.

A day in June has been set aside each year to honor our earthly fathers. The day is called "Father's Day" by the world. It is celebrated on Sunday. I would rather call it "Dad's Day" or something other than "Father's Day." Every Lord's day is Father's day. The Lord's day is a day given over wholly to the worship of our heavenly Father. Jesus teaches us in our text verse not to honor any man above our heavenly Father because we have only one Father and that is God. "Father's Day" should not overshadow the worship of our heavenly Father. Many times it does.

The context of this article is not completely about what the day is called, but what it means to be an earthly father. As the days grow darker and as each new generation passes, I see a steady falling away from the true meaning of being a "father." A prime example was displayed the other day by the mother of a young man who was just married. The young man had left his new wife at home alone and had gone out with his old friends. The new wife had called her mother-in-law and expressed her anger concerning her new husband's desire to still run around. The mother-in-law scolded the girl for not giving him his freedom. This is the problem with this new generation of "boys" (not men) that are coming on the scene in this modern day. They are still treated like babies by their parents and not taught the responsibility of being a man.

I can remember when my mother and dad instructed me that if I desired to get married, it was my responsibility to take care of my wife and children. That meant I was to work and make a living. Many young men today are not willing to work. The Apostle Paul said, "But if any provide not for his own and especially for those of his (head of the house—husband) own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (I Tim. 5:8).

Young men of this day sit at home and expect their wives to get out and work and make a living. This might be the way of the world, but it is not God's way. Parents are going to suffer in eternity for not teaching their children the responsibilities that come with becoming a man or woman. If we are not careful, we will lose a whole generation to sin and degradation.

God help us to get back on track with God's eternal Word.

Preaching God's Word

By Jack Whitt

As a preacher, I sometimes labor long over the question: "What is the message that is needful for the hour? I ponder, meditate, pray to God asking Him for wisdom in knowing what to preach. There are sermons from the Bible that warn, rebuke, and encourage. Messages that give cheer, hope, strength, and call for Christian separation from the world. Others call sinner to repentance. Ah, but what message do I preach today? What is right for this occasion? I think I may be like most preachers to this extent—we all want to meet God's approval and give glory and honor to Him. The best sermon perhaps is the one that includes all of the above.

The Baptist Examiner Bible Study Lesson

By Kirk R. Everman
Member of Calvary Baptist Church, Knoxville, Tennessee

Isaac: The Dwelling Sojourner Genesis 26:1-35

"And there was a famine in the land, beside the first famine that was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went down unto Abimelech king of the Philistines unto Gerar" (v. 1). The last famine described to us preceded the birth of Isaac (see chapter 12) and during that famine, Abraham (then called Abram) travelled to Egypt for survival. "And the Lord appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee...Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (v. 2-5).

"And Isaac dwelt in Gerar" (v. 6), which was still in the land of Canaan. Next, Isaac is confronted with a trial from the Philistines: "And the men of the place asked him of his wife." Isaac deceived the Philistines in a manner similar to that portrayed by his father Abraham (see Gen. 12, 20), saying that Rebekah is his sister: "for he feared to say, She is my wife; lest said he, the men of the place should kill me for Rebekah; because she was fair to look upon" (v. 7).

Isaac maintains this deception for a long time until Abimelech "saw, and, behold, Isaac was sporting with Rebekah his wife." Abimelech confronts Isaac; Isaac explains his motivation for the deception, "Lest I die for her." Very similar events transpired between the king of Gerar with Abraham and Sarah when the Lord intervened (Gen. 20); Abimelech demonstrates that he is quite aware of the consequences for taking Isaac's wife. Abimelech gives orders to his people for Isaac and Rebekah's protection (v. 8-11).

At this point God materially blesses Isaac in Gerar. "Then Isaac sowed in that land, and received in the same year an hundredfold...And the man

waxed great...and grew until he became very great: For he had possessions of flocks, and possessions of herds, and great store of servants: and the Philistines envied him" (v. 12-14).

Note that the Philistines did not rejoice with Isaac and his recent prosperity and acted maliciously toward Isaac. "For all the wells which his father's servants had digged in the days of Abraham his father, the Philistines had stopped them, and filled them with earth. And Abimelech said unto Isaac, Go from us; for thou art much mightier than we" (v. 15-16).

Isaac complies, migrating to the valley of Gerar. Here Isaac restores Abraham's wells that the Philistines had closed after the death of Abraham and names these wells according to the names they had received from Abraham. Additionally, Isaac's servants discovered two other wells in the valley, one of which was even identified as being of "springing water," which can also be described as running or living water. With these wells "the herdmen of Gerar did strive with Isaac's herdmen," so Isaac named these wells Esek and Sitnah, which mean "contention" and "opposition" respectively (v. 17-21).

Isaac moves his camp and digs another well. With this well there is no striving from the herdsmen of Gerar. Thus Isaac names this well Rehoboth meaning "room." "For now the Lord hath made room for us, and we shall be fruitful in the land" (v. 22).

"And he went up from thence to Beersheba. And the Lord appeared unto him the same night, and said, I am the God of Abraham thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, and multiply thy seed for my servant Abraham's sake" (v. 23-24). It is significant that the Lord appeared to Isaac on the very night that Isaac arrived at Beersheba. Does this not complete the instruction that the Lord had presented to Isaac in verse 2, "dwell in the land which I shall

tell thee of," when his journey first brought him to Gerar!

It is also important to note Isaac's response to his encounter with the Lord. "And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of the Lord, and pitched his tent there, and there Isaac's servants digged a well" (v. 25). Isaac worships the Lord, trusting that this is to be his dwelling place. Then he establishes his tent, even as his servants begin to dig a well. Does this not demonstrate that Isaac expects a well of life sustaining water to be discovered nearby.

"Then Abimelech went to him from Gerar, and Ahuzzath one of his friends, and Phichol the chief captain of his army. And Isaac said unto them, Wherefore come ye to me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you? And they said, We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee: and we said...let us make a covenant with thee; That thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace: thou art now the blessed of the Lord" (v. 26-29). Through the miraculous blessings that Isaac has received, the Philistines recognize that the God of Abraham is with Isaac as well. Abimelech is accompanied by advisors of worldly wisdom and strength and accordingly he views this situation from a worldly perspective, that is to say, "Isaac is mightier than us; it would be better to be allied with him, than to be conquered by him."

Isaac did not respond to Abimelech's proposal that evening, though he was a gracious host, "And he made them a feast, and they did eat and drink" (v. 30).

"And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another: and Isaac sent them away, and they departed from him in peace" (v. 31). Isaac makes a covenant with Abimelech the next morning; however, we are not told whether or not Isaac sought guidance from the

Lord in this matter. However, there is no doubt that Abimelech was pleased; he received that which he had sought.

"And it came to pass the same day, that Isaac's servants came, and told him concerning the well...We have found water" (v. 32). Thus, the Lord provided for the needs of Isaac and his people in establishing the dwelling place Beersheba.

This chapter does not conclude on this blessed note, for we are told of two other compromising covenants established with Isaac's family, "And Esau was forty years old when he took to wife Judith the daughter of Beeri the Hittite, and Bashemath the daughter of Elon the Hittite: Which were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (v. 34-35). (The Hittites were the children, or descendants, of Heth who was one of the sons of Canaan. Canaan, the son of Ham, was cursed by Noah in chapter 9. Abraham and Isaac had each married descendants from Shem, one of Noah's blessed son).

Trials, Failures, and Blessings, Oh Why!

In this study we see a portrait of Isaac as he encounters trials and blessings; however, the fine details are often painted with light brush strokes and we must be careful not to foolishly speculate on the unexpressed motivations of Isaac's heart for that is known by God alone (see I Sam. 16:7; Ps. 44:21, 139:23; Jer. 17:9-10; Rom. 8:27; Heb. 4:12-13).

God's desire is for His children to mature into completeness. A part of this process is purifying the heart. "The fining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold: but the Lord trieth the hearts" (Prov. 17:3). As in the refining of precious metals, where the refiner may scrape from the surface the impurities previously hidden within, the Lord works through the fiery trials in the lives of His children.

The famine presents itself as an upheaval in the lives of Isaac and his people. We would agree that
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STOP!

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eyes, O thou that dwellest in the heavens. Behold, as the eyes of servants look unto the hand of their masters, and as the eyes of a maiden unto the hand of her mistress; so our eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until that he have mercy upon us."

Take a Good Look Within Yourselves

II Corinthians 13:5 states "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" Inspect yourselves, look closely within, to find out if you are in fact true to your faith. Prove to yourself, not to others, your faith. Know yourself, whether Christ is in you or not; only you can know. If Christ is in you, then you are in the faith. But if Christ is not in you, then you are depraved, that is, corrupt, debased, degenerate, perverted, vile, warped, and wicked. You simply are not what you say you are. Galatians 6:4 says "But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another." Each person is to examine to see whether their own acts and deeds are genuine or not. And if your acts, and deeds are genuine only then can you take satisfaction in yourself, but without boastful comparison to someone else.

Look deep into yourself to see if you are living your faith or if your faith is dead without acts and deeds. Look deep into yourself to see if you have forgotten the fire of your salvation that you had at the hour of your salvation. Look deep into yourself to see if you are living your life in a manner that is worthy of and honors the Lord. Look deep into yourself to see if you are looking to the holiness of God Who holds you in His hands. Look deep into yourself to see if you are looking to Jesus, the Lamb of God, and Author and Finisher of our faith before we believed or have forgotten your first love. Look deep into yourself to see if your Christian beauty is only skin deep or goes clear to the bone. Today, take a good look.



The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT TO:
THE BAPTIST EXAMINER, P.O. BOX 60, ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060



Please discuss fasting as it relates to prayer in this present age.
(Submitted by John R. Gilpin, Jr.)

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Fasting is a very important part of our Christian and prayer life. I'm afraid however that it is becoming a lost art. Our Lord spoke of it in a very positive way. **"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly"** (Matt. 6:16-18).

Please note that He did not say "if ye fast," but "when ye fast," obviously expecting His people to fast. He also made it clear that it is to be done as a form of worship and not to be done in order to be praised by men. Fasting is a practice that is done when one is so absorbed by his need or devotion to God that food and drink are forgotten and replaced by prayer and the Word.

Fasting is something that should be observed during certain events or occasion that rise up during our lives. Such occasions as public calamities (II Sam. 1:12); afflictions, such as sickness (Ps. 35:13) or as the king in Daniel 6:18; private afflictions, such as the sickness of David's son (II Sam. 12:16); approaching dangers (Esth. 4:16); and ordinations of ministers (Acts 13:3, 14:23).

Fasting should be accompanied by prayer (Dan. 9:3); confession of sin (I Sam. 7:6; Neh. 9:1-2); humiliation (Neh. 9:1; Deut. 9:18); and reading of the Scrip-

tures (Jer. 36:6).

I personally believe that we, who are God's people, need to get back to more prayer on our knees and times of fasting with our prayers.

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"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face: That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father, which seeth in secret, shall reward thee openly" (Matt. 6:16-18). IT IS A MATTER OF THE HEART, NOT OUTWARD APPEARANCE.

"Fasting and prayer" is an activity that is little mentioned in our present day among the vast majority of Christians, let alone practiced. Therefore, the great benefit that comes from fasting and prayer is little known, and a great benefit is forfeited. We live in a day when everything connected with most teaching and "Christian living" among Christians per se, has to be catchy, quick, and require no long term commitment to memory or practice. We will not have time, if we do not take time.

Fasting in the Old Testament was of two kinds: public and private. Fasting was always accompanied by prayer and supplication (a humble, earnest asking). Public fasts ordinarily lasted a day, but could be lengthened. There was a four day fast proclaimed surrounding the fall of Jerusalem. The prophet's writ-

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Fasting is simply the abstaining from food, treats, earthly comforts, and recreations for a time that we may earnestly seek the Lord's will in some matter of importance. If you take your concordance and trace this practice, you will see that fasting was observed on occasions of public calamities, afflictions, private sickness, approaching danger, and worship. Fasting is always associated with prayer and especially humility before God (see II Sam. 1:12; Ps. 35:13; Esth. 4:16; Dan. 9:18). As far as I can tell, fasting is not a command for Christians. Yet, I do believe it is a Scriptural practice both taught and practiced by our Lord Jesus Christ. I do not believe the Lord wants us to fast to the extent of injuring our health. The Scripture also indicates that fasting can be effective in the context of marriage. **"Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency"** (I Cor. 7:5).

So fasting is a spiritual matter of drawing closer to the Lord. Jesus taught that we should be willing to deny our flesh for more effective worship and service in His kingdom. This is hard in a society of luxury and comforts. It would do all of us well to lay aside food, pleasures, TV watching, and other activities to seek our Lord in earnest. I believe the results would be a greater awareness of His presence in our hearts. Greater things could be done for the cause of Christ. Look at what Ezra did when he wanted the Lord's blessings: **"Then I proclaimed a fast there...to seek of Him a right way for us, and for our little ones, and for all our substance."** It's also inter-

esting that when the Lord's church sent out its missionaries, the whole church fasted. **"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away"** (Acts 13:2-3). God certainly blessed the works that were established. When a church really fasts and prays about the missionaries they sponsor or support, you can be sure that we would be more careful in how we invest the Lord's money!

There is also a practical side to fasting. Certainly it bears some physical as well as mental benefits. I like to practice a cleansing fast about every three months in which I abstain from sugar, starches, and fatty foods. This takes around seven days of eating raw vegetables and drinking pure water. This cleanses your stomach and colon and helps rebuild the cells in your blood. In our bodies there are two kinds of germs—good and bad. If the bad are not fed, they cannot live. If you eat right, you will eliminate most of your colds and viruses. I believe fasting is a practice for Christians in this dispensation and I highly recommend it.

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The word "fasting" means "abstinence from food." In the Old Testament, Israel practiced fasting for many different reasons among which were to commemorate certain consecrated holy days. Another was in mourning over sins with the object of abating God's wrath or winning His divine compassion. There are references to fasting enjoined with prayer in the New Testament as well. Jesus fasted 40

days in the wilderness (Lk. 4:1-2).

It was customary in the early church to fast and pray, especially among those who wanted to consecrate their lives in service to Christ and His church. We read, for example: **"As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away"** (Acts 13:2-3). Then again we read: **"And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed"** (Acts 14:23). We are told that Anna served God with fastings and prayers night and day (Lk. 2:37).

We see from these Scriptures (and there are more) that fasting often accompanied prayers of those who were especially committed to God. Fasting then, is a form of denying physical requirements of the body, in order to enhance a deeper spiritual gratification. It is a way of letting God know we are serious about a specific need or desire. Is fasting appropriate for today? In my opinion, yes. It could be very worthwhile and rewarding if its done in the right way and for the right person, remembering what Jesus told His disciples: **"Moreover when ye fast, be not, as the hypocrites, of a sad countenance: for they disfigure their faces, that they may appear unto men to fast. Verily I say unto you, they have their reward. But thou, when thou fastest, anoint thine head, and wash thy face; That thou appear not unto men to fast, but unto thy Father which is in secret: and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly"** (Matt. 6:16-18).

**Deepen your
walk with God.
Fast and Pray!**

A PLACE CALLED HEAVEN

By Pastor Jim Orrick, Storms Creek Baptist Church, Ironton, Ohio

Few passages of Scripture have brought as much comfort to God's people as have John 14:1-3. In these verses Jesus tells us that there is a place that He has gone to prepare for us and that someday He will take us to this place, our home for all eternity. Although there are several names given to this place, such as Paradise and Glory, we usually speak of it as Heaven.

The Reality of Heaven

Jesus said, "I go to prepare a place for you." Heaven is either a place or it isn't. Jesus either told us the truth or He spoke a falsehood. In His preaching Jesus often prefaced a statement by saying, "I tell you the truth." This could be said of all that He said because it was not possible for the One who was Truth to speak anything but the truth. So we have the very best authority for believing there is a literal place called heaven, the words of Jesus Himself. Heaven is not a figment of our imagination.

When we are going where we have never been before, we should want to know something about our destination. We can gain this information by talking to someone who has been there, or by reading literature about it. As to heaven, we cannot talk to anyone who has been there, but there is much that we can read about it in the Bible. For the answers to our questions about heaven we are shut up to what the Bible tells us.

A Place of Immense Size

Because believers seem to always be in the minority, we are apt to think that heaven will be small and there will only be a few people there, but the opposite is true. "After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands" (Rev. 7:9). Heaven will be home for all of the redeemed of all ages, from the first person who was saved to the last one that will be saved. Add to them all the babies who died, remembering that in many of the third world countries half or more of those born die in infancy or in the first few years of life, and millions that are murdered by abortion in the civilized countries, and we can easily see how heaven will have to be a big place in order to be home for the multi-

tude that will be there.

Revelation 21:16 gives the dimensions of the New Jerusalem. It is believed that 12,000 furlongs means that city will be 1,500 miles long and 1,500 miles wide. Someone has calculated that if you multiplied the states of Kentucky, Ohio, and West Virginia 20 times and then multiplied Tennessee, Delaware, and Washington, D.C. three times, that is how big the base of this city will be. Then, remembering that it is as high as it is long and wide, that is some city. And heaven itself is so vast that we are unable to grasp how big it really is.

Indescribable Beauty

We live in a country that has many beautiful sights. Such sights as the Grand Canyon, the Rocky Mountains, and Niagara Falls are beautiful, yet even these places are marked by the curse of sin. But there will be nothing to mar the beauty of heaven.

Imagine that you are approaching the New Jerusalem in heaven. The first things you see are the walls of jasper; coming closer you see that the foundations of the walls are of various precious stones, and each gate, of the city is made of pearl. When the gates open, you see that the streets are made of gold. There is a river, pure as crystal proceeding from the throne of God. Since this is a place that the Lord has prepared for His people, we can be sure that it will be of great beauty (Rev. 21:10, 22:1-5). Imagination fails us when we try to visualize such a place.

Indescribable Music

Heaven will be a place of indescribable music. "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and has redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests; and we shall reign on the earth...And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever" (Rev. 5:9-10, 13). What a sound! The redeemed of the ages all in perfect harmony singing the praises of God.

A Permanent Place

This world has seen many great cities. Babylon once ruled as the capital of the world, but she has long since ceased to be. Ephesus and Athens enjoyed their times of great fame, but today their former greatness is but a memory and columns of once great buildings stand like tombstones in the midst of a cemetery. Rome is called the eternal city, but it is not. The only permanent and eternal city is that one that Jesus spoke of when He said: "I go to prepare a place for you." Heaven will never have a slum problem or ever fall into decay. It will remain forever, the eternal city of the eternal God where His children will live with Him forever.

Blessed Companionship

Imagine that you had a time machine and you could go back in time and talk to some of the great people of the past. I am sure that we would all be thrilled to sit down and talk with George Washington or Abraham Lincoln. There is something more thrilling than that ahead for the child of God. "And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 8:11). Someday we will be able to talk with all of the heroes of faith that we read about in Hebrews 11. What a thrill it will be to talk to the apostles and hear them tell of those early days with Jesus when He called them to come after Him and He would make them fishers of men. But the most blessed of all—we will see Jesus. "And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it; and His servants shall serve Him: and they shall see His face; and His name shall be in their foreheads" (Rev. 22:3-4). How beautifully has the hymn writer put it: Face to face with Christ my Saviour,

Face to face—what will it be?
When with rapture I behold Him,

Jesus Christ who died for me!
Face to face I shall behold Him,
Far beyond the starry sky;
Face to face, in all His glory,
I shall see Him by and by!

Things Absent

We will not only be blessed in heaven because of the things that will be there but also because of things that will not be there. All

MUD

By Irene Orrick

I guess Ella was financially several cuts above most of us kids, but she never let it bother her, and we never considered it ourselves. Her two pair of overalls were the same OshKosh brand as ours—we didn't have designer overalls in the '40's in our hill country. Her overshoes, like ours, had only four buckles. Nevertheless, her house had the only refrigerator, kerosene operated since there was no electricity, that I remember seeing in the community. And she had a real, honest-to-goodness separate living room with a stuffed, upholstered couch and chair. Oh, we had an oak and leather divanette, but it lost any pretense of class by being crowded into the bed-family-sitting room.

I didn't go to Ella's often for it was several hills over. But I enjoyed going there to play because peanut butter, just about by favorite food, tasted better at her house than anywhere. Even still when I sniff or taste a new jar of peanut butter, I compare it unfavorably to that long remembered aroma and taste. However, I suppose the biggest reason I enjoyed going to Ella's was that she had close neighbors and usually two or three came to play.

Last summer, I went down to Ella's house again. It stood vacant, forsaken, and lonely. The surrounding fields and woods were so empty and still that I could hear birds, jar flies, and other whirring insects clearly even from afar; they seemed loud and echoing. But as I walked around to the back and looked at the old weathered grey barn with its lot

grown over with high grass and weeds, I remembered one afternoon forty years ago that was not so still. The shouts and boisterous laughter of four or five children rang loudly as we played in the mud puddles left by a summer rain.

In our play that afternoon, I learned a lesson. From our running and tramping all that day, the barn lot had become squishy muddy. I decided that it would be the finest kind of fun if I could shove Marion Lee, a boy about my size, into a mud hole. I gave it my best, but he managed somehow to out-manuever me, and I plopped humiliatingly, seat first, into the mud myself. Marion Lee's laughter was triumphant. And my new white dirndl would need a long soaking in strong lye soap water.

Through the years when I have succumbed to a certain base human trait that likes to muddy someone else's character, I've always felt that I came out of it muddier than they. For it is true that when we are tearing someone else down, we are trying to build ourselves up by contrast. No matter how much we may feel justified in our criticism, the bottom line is that we are saying, "See how good I look in comparison to that person?"

In Romans 1:29-30, God lists slander and gossip right along with murder and other evils. And Psalm 7:15-16 says, "He who digs a hole and scoops it out falls into the pit he has made. The trouble he causes recoils on himself; his violence comes down on his own head."

of the things that we know in this life that are the result of sin will be no more. "And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4). We live in a world that is full of pain, suffering, sorrow, and death but someday these things will be no more. In heaven there will be no grief or grave, sin or sorrow, death or burial. Heaven is the place where Jesus reigns as King and where He will never hide His face from His people.

Only those who receive Jesus as Saviour, believing in their heart that He died on the cross to pay

for their sins, and trusting Him to save them will ever experience heaven. "And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it" (Rev. 21:24a). Do you believe on Him as your Saviour?

We all have cares
and problems we
cannot solve
alone, but if we
go to God in
prayer, we are
never on our own!

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SIMPLICITY

(Continued from Page 1)

vation for us had cost God the Father the death of His only begotten Son, salvation for those of us who can believe is really a very simple process.

This is what the Apostle John was saying in his first letter that all of us should read very regularly. There he said **"Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God."** Very simply, anyone who can believe that Jesus is the Christ, that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh, or that Jesus has died and been raised from the dead has the Spirit of God, and is eternally saved or redeemed. All who are able to make such a confession have had the same experience as Peter did when Jesus asked **"but whom say ye that I am?"**

Only by the Spirit of God can anyone ever make such a confession!

Therefore, if your loved ones who have recently died had ever believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, you can be assured they were eternally, eternally, eternally redeemed or saved. As I have indicated in my messages concerning my wife who died some years ago, the very moment that your loved ones took their last breaths here upon the earth, they were taking their first breaths there in the glory land; that place we call heaven.

You and I were discussing the story of Stephen in the book of Acts. As you and I agreed, as Stephen was in the process of dying, he looked up into heaven. When he did so, he saw Jesus at the right hand of the Father in heaven.

Therefore, when the Apostle Paul explains **"For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"** he is telling us that his situation was far better in heaven where Jesus is than it can ever be or could ever be here upon the earth. This is why the Apostle Paul could go on further and boldly and wonderfully inform us **"We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."** This is wonderful truth in which our hearts should rejoice each hour of every day!

Many people, however, and sadly have trouble believing this.

Often, they have trouble believing this because some one has given them a lot of wrong information about "death" being a form of "sleep." The words of the Apostle Paul, thankfully, are very simple and very understandable. Consequently, if we are going to have peace of mind concerning these eternal things, we must forget what people have falsely and unscripturally told us. We just need to believe what the Apostle Paul says. When we do this—that is, take God at His Word—we shall never have any problem with the question, and our hearts can be at peace regarding where we shall be after we die, if we have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ.

So, if you personally, have ever believed on the Lord Jesus Christ or if you now believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, then you are eternally, eternally, eternally redeemed or saved. You may never do all of the good that you might like to do, and you may do some things that you wish you did not or would not do. The things that you do or do not do, however, will never preclude your entering into heaven at the moment of your death. Our salvation is not dependent upon what we do or do not do. Our salvation is dependent totally and forever upon what Jesus did on Calvary's cross.

In Psalm 51, we have a great confession of sin by the man David who had been involved in some very serious sinning. He knew, however, that he was eternally saved despite all that he had done, so he simply cried that God would return unto him **"the joy of his salvation."** You and I will have some sinning experiences as long as we dwell in these temples of clay that the Apostle Paul himself calls a **"body of death."** Our salvation, thankfully, is dependent not upon what we do or what we do not do. Rather, our salvation is dependent upon what we have done with the Lord Jesus Christ.

All of us—even as David and Peter were humbled several times—need to be humbled and made to be conscious that we are sinners and that always we need Jesus the Saviour. The Apostle Paul even speaks concerning this in Romans 7. Our Lord doubtless grieves when we do that with which He is not pleased, even as He was when David sinned, and even as He was when Peter sinned.

Thankfully, however, we have that further promise that **"if we**

confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." As sinning David, we may lose the joy of our salvation, and we may lose momentarily our fellowship with God, when we sin. Wonderfully and rejoicingly, we do not lose our salvation. When we confess our sins, He forgives us, and we then are back in fellowship with Him.

I do trust that these words will be an encouragement to your grieving heart. Perhaps something I have shared with you from the holy Word of God will help you to find that peace of mind that our hearts must ever seek. This is something that our God does for us, when we take Him at His Word, and believe exactly what He has said, and what He even now is saying in His holy Word.

A Different Type of Garden

If you are not blessed with a green thumb, there is still a type of spiritual planting that all can do.

Plant 4 rows of peas:

- Prayer
- Patience
- Politeness
- Purity

Plant 3 rows of squash:

- Squash gossip
- Squash criticism
- Squash halfheartedness

Plant 4 rows of lettuce:

- Let us follow Christ
- Let us love one another
- Let us be honest
- Let us be unselfish

Plant 4 rows of turnips:

- Turn up for Sunday school
- Turn up for worship service
- Turn up for Wednesday service
- Turn up with a smile

A HEARTWARMING EXPERIENCE

By Jack Whitt

"And they said one to another, Did not our hearts burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the scriptures?" (Luke 24:32). This account of the disciples' encounter with Jesus while on the road to Emmaus serves as a good reminder to our churches and to individual Christians, that only through our close encounter with Jesus, will we maintain the kind of spiritual, uplifted, soul satisfying lives so much needed in the realms of Christianity and so especially in our churches today. Yes, it must be true, God's people are very much in need of burning hearts. Our churches would be more zealous, more compassionate, more giving and loving if we had fewer "hotheads" and more "hot hearts." Some have said that many churches today are made up of figureheads, soreheads, deadheads, and hotheads. It seems it is easier to heat up the heads of some folks than to warm-up their hearts. Churches should be melted together not frozen together. Could it be true, God's Word has become too "familiar" that it does not spark a "holy heartburn" within us as it once did? The psalmist David wrote: **"Thy statutes have been my songs in the house of my pilgrimage"** (Ps. 119:54).

It is often true that the climate for worship and fellowship within a church is not right because its members have not given themselves in prayer and meditation upon God's Word. It is our Christian responsibility to help create the right spirit for fellowship and worship within the church. Could it be the reason for our lack of spiritual uplifting in our church service may be due to our own lack of participation in the service? And is our spirit right within us? **"Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"** (Ps. 51:10). May God help us and our churches that we may have a heart warming experience, and in so doing our love for Jesus and for each other will grow and show in our churches and homes.



THE HEAVEN BOUND HARLOT

By Waldo Whiddon



2. We see a great Saviour here also. The only hope for a great sinner is Jesus Christ, the great Saviour, the only Saviour. Our Lord Jesus Christ is greater in His saving power than any sinner in his greatest need. The great Saviour is able to save the great sinner to the uttermost. "...Thou shalt call his name JESUS; for he shall save his people from their sins" (Mt. 1:21). Jesus would be untrue to the meaning of His name if He were not a great Saviour. Salvation was His reason for coming into the world. "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Lk. 19:10). The eternal purpose of a sovereign God would be frustrated, even defeated, if Jesus were not a great Saviour.

3. We see here a great faith. Look at verse 50 of our text. "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." God has wrought within this harlot the gift of saving faith. She had exercised and manifested this God-given faith. Beloved, it was her faith in spite of her many sins. Remember, her faith was God-given faith. Her sins, like a mighty mountain, rose up against her to send her into eternal punishment. Her faith removed this mountain of sin into God's sea of forgetfulness. When God saves a person that person has "Blessed Assurance", the balance of his natural sojourn here on earth. Eternal security of the believer? Oh yes. It is my humble opinion that a God Who is unable to keep is also likewise unable to save in the first place. Beloved, our God is able to keep what He buys with His Son's blood make no mistake about it.

4. We see a great love manifested here. Take a long look at this saved harlot. She stands at the feet of her beloved Saviour. No doubt, tears of great gratitude and love flow from her eyes. She could not hold them back. Beloved, the water had broken and there was a new birth being made manifest. Oh, how she loved Him.

The tears fell upon His feet. She knelt there at His feet and began to wash His feet with her tears of joy.

Jesus tells us in verse 47, that she loved much. Realizing what a great sinner she was and had been, no doubt contributed to the greatness of her love. Her love did not save her or cause her salvation. Her crying was because of her salvation. She was crying passionately because of a great love for her Saviour. My beloved, though it is faith and not love that saves, it is a faith inseparably joined with true love.

5. We see a great work. "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith which worketh by love" (Gal. 5:6). My dear readers, true faith is always accompanied by true love and this always produces good works. James said that faith without works is dead (James 2:26). Here are those things that James is talking about. They always go together—faith, love, and works. They never exist separately. When James said faith is dead without works, he did not mean salvation comes by works. The fact is and what he is talking about is that if we do not put our faith to work it accomplishes absolutely nothing! The faith is still there, but idle doing nothing. So faith without works is equally the same as dead. Have all the faith in the world and sit upon the stool and do nothing, and it will accomplish absolutely nothing. How much better could he have said it than "...so faith without works is dead also" (James 2:26).

To exercise faith is to see live faith accomplishing something. Dead faith is the result of not exercising it. Faith without works is dead and dead faith cannot save. Works are essential to salvation. Yes, they are not as the cause or means, but as the evidence of the true saving experience. Beware, dear friend, of assuming you are saved if you have no good works, and by the same token, never never trust your works for salvation. But at the same time never trust that you are saved by a supposed faith which does not produce good works. Note the works of the woman. Note her weeping and washing His feet with her tears, and drying them with her hair, and anointing them with precious ointment.

A Woman's Touch

By Wendy Barkman



Bashemath
Genesis 26:34

General Information

Genesis 26:34 - She was the daughter of Elon the Hittite, and she became one of the wives of Esau. Most authorities agree that she was probably the same woman as Adah II, mentioned in Genesis 36.



Name Study

Bashemath - sweet smelling, perfumed, fragrant, fragrance, spicery, the balsam plant, to be fragrant. This word is translated smell, spice, sweet, in the following verses: Ex. 25:6, 30:23, 35:8, 28; I Kings 10:2, 10, 25; II Kings 20:13; I Chron. 9:29, 30; II Chron. 9:1, 9, 24, 16:14, 32:27; Esth. 2:12; Song of Sol. 4:10, 14, 16, 5:1, 13, 6:2, 8:14; Isa. 3:24, 39:2; Ezek. 27:22. This word is derived from a word meaning to smell sweet, an aroma, and translated sweet in the following verses: Ex. 25:6, 30:7, 34, 31:11, 35:8, 15, 28, 37:29, 39:38, 40:27; Lev. 4:7, 16:12; Num. 4:16; II Chron. 2:4, 13:11.

Personal Application

Note the slight similarity in the name meanings of Adah and Bashemath. Adah had to do with outward beauty and adorning; Bashemath has to do with pleasant odors. Might this be suggestive of rituals involved in the worship of her (Adah/Bashemath) heathen gods?

Practical Application

"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour" (Eph. 5:2). Just as Christ offered Himself as the sacrifice for us, and was pleasing to the Father, accepted by the Father, so we should serve God in love and in a pleasing manner, acceptable to the Father. Remember the Old Testament offerings and sacrifices, in which perfumes and incense were used, all picturing the work of Christ.

Here was a work that involved expense—that of the ointment. Here was a work that involved time. Here was a work that exposed her to the ridicule of others. Here was a work that was a testimony of her love for her Saviour. Beloved reader, we are not saved by good works, but we will be found doing good works after we are saved because of it. Never trust your works for salvation. Also, never trust that you are saved by a supposed faith which does not produce good works. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that

we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10).

6. We see a great peace. Jesus said to the woman in verse 50 of our text "...go in peace." Oh beloved, the sweet and blessed peace of salvation. How well do I remember the great peace that was given to me when I was saved. There was, for this woman, the peace of sins forgiven, to know that her many sins were as if they had never been. The Lord had forgiven her. He would remember her sins no more against her. Though the memory of them would linger with her. He would remember them no more forever.

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BIBLE STUDY

(Continued from Page 3)

some form of provision for food and water is required for their continued survival. While we are told in Genesis 25:21 that Isaac sought the Lord to make Rebekah fruitful after so many years of barrenness, we are not told that Isaac sought the Lord similarly when his land was fruitless. It would seem that Isaac decided to escape the famine conditions in his land by migrating to better conditions, possibly toward Egypt as Abraham had done before the days of Isaac.

Isaac's life is characterized by his sensible nature (literally, as in that which he can detect or understand from his senses). As a young man when Isaac climbed Mount Moriah with his father to offer a sacrifice to the Lord, Isaac observed that they lacked a lamb for the burnt offering. Abraham answered that God would provide the lamb. In this chapter Isaac migrates his camp, probably into regions where the inhabitants do not worship the God of his father, to locate essential food and water. Additionally, Isaac believed that his life was endangered living near the inhabitants of Gerar, possibly because of truths or exaggerations that he had heard, or by actions that he had observed. Later in life, Isaac's sensible nature allows him to be deceived (Gen. 27).

While such personality traits are often valued by those in the world surrounding the believer, we must never allow that which we can perceive overrule a life lived by faith (see Heb. 11:6, Jn. 20:29). While man's carnal, or sensible nature is to "understand and control" God's desire is that we learn to "trust and obey." For the truly wise in the Lord are those who obey God without knowing all of the "Why's" of the Lord.

This brings us to the last focus in this study, namely "Why did the Lord abundantly bless Isaac materially after his deception was uncovered?" There are several observations that can be made regarding this matter, which on first reading may seem puzzling, but with study reveals (or manifests) God's glory:

1. God is faithful (even to His Character) - "God is not a man,

that he should lie...hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Num. 23:19). In verse 3, the Lord has told Isaac, "Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee."

Should not those who have yet to believe (place trust in Jesus Christ for paying the penalty for sins and establishing reconciliation, or peace, between oneself and God) and all believers, especially in times of struggle when one's faith is weak, rejoice in the fact that "If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself" (II Tim. 2:13).

2. God is gracious (giving that which is not deserved) - While God delights greatly in His children that are faithful and obedient, the awesomeness of His love and grace are shown when He bestows unmerited blessings (see Lk. 15:29-32). A hundred-fold increase in personal wealth can never compare to the eternal blessings and the inexpressible joy that the rebellious sinner receives when through faith he becomes an adopted child of God.

3. God demonstrates that His blessing has not departed from Isaac - Isaac's people experienced both famine and incredible harvest. Through such contrasts, God's handiwork is revealed. Isaac's rapid growth in material wealth and power were impossible apart from God's blessing. This is readily apparent to Abimelech for he finds Isaac at Beersheba and says, "We saw certainly that the Lord was with thee...thou art now the blessed of the Lord."

4. God's blessing takes Isaac from a land of sojourning to a land of dwelling - Isaac's nature was such that he did not move without reason. Perhaps with a less bountiful harvest, the Philistines might desire that Isaac stay in Gerar. However, the Lord told him to sojourn in this land of Gerar. "Sojourn" means to live somewhere temporarily or to live as a visitor. By comparison, "dwell" means to establish, or to live at, one's home. Through the famine and the conflicts of envy and strife, the Lord brought Isaac to Beersheba, separate from the Canaanites in the land. How patient and kind God who will never abandon His children and will even nudge us to place of blessing when we do not seek Him to lead.

Remember that God meets each of us where we are. His plans

allow us to be used for His service where He finds us, and not where we could have, should have, or ought to have been. Even so, it is far better to dwell in the land of promised blessings with eternal substance not yet seen, than to sojourn in a land of gilded blessings having substance that will not last (see II Cor. 4:18).

FORUM

(Continued from Page 4)

LENEGAR

ings have some strong warnings against abuse of the fast (Jer. 14:11-12). Repentance and mourning were elements of many public and private fasts. To deprive and humble one's spirit was necessary to begin to center on the Lord.

A private fast was often an act of penance, when someone became sick, or when one was accused, scorned, or persecuted. David fasted for his child in II Samuel 12:15-23. Psalm 35:13-14 speaks of fasting for others when they are sick.

Certainly, fasting in Jesus' time has several examples, with the exception that it is to be done as the Scripture I quoted at the beginning of this question as far as the public observing the one fasting. Jesus fasted forty days and nights at the beginning of His ministry. Although Jesus did not command His disciples to fast as did the John the Baptist, there are several examples of fasting in different situations. Acts 27:33 shows a time of fasting during a great time of trial. Fasting and prayer were observed before the consecration of Paul and Barnabas in Acts 13:2-3.

If a person is in good health, a day of fasting and prayer can be a very blessed and beneficial time. Lack of food will sharpen the mind. It will cause one to think more clearly. Prayer and concentration on communion with the Lord will produce a greater sense of who a person is and what the Lord's will is for them. Seeking the Lord's will concerning some particular thing or for sickness is a good time to fast and pray. For me this time has always brought the awareness of my great and total dependence on God an awareness of and hatred for sin and a great desire to do God's will.

Love One
Another

HARLOT

(Continued from Page 7)

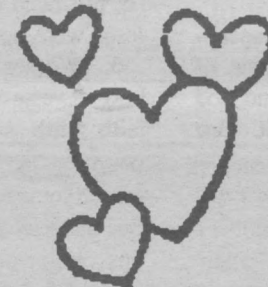
God is not pleased with work done in an effort to obtain salvation. He is pleased with works that are done from faith, in love, and because of salvation.

Oh, this wonderful blessing of salvation is eternal. She now had eternal life. She could never perish. The fear of a deserved hell was no more. Oh, the blessed assurance of eternal salvation...Amen.

Where is your heart?

Having gained a Doctor's degree in medicine, David Livingston (1813-1873) plunged into the very heart of black Africa to serve Christ against all odds. He lived and died in Africa, dedicated to the enslaved people, whom he loved.

Preparations were made to ship his body back to England, but the natives slipped through the night and cut out his heart. They said "you can have his body but his heart is ours." They buried it under a Mulva tree in Africa where it had beat for 30 years to the tune of "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel."



NOTES TO OUR READERS:

Calvary Baptist Church is presently reviewing resumes of those interested in the pastoral position. Please send us your resume along with your personal doctrinal statement to:

Calvary Baptist Church

P.O. Box 60

Ashland, KY 41105

The Bluegrass Boys will be "Preachin', Singin', (no Pickin') but a lot of Grinnin'" on July 11-12, 1996 at Calvary Baptist Church in Ashland, Kentucky. The services will begin at 7:00 p.m. nightly. "Ya'll come if ya can!"