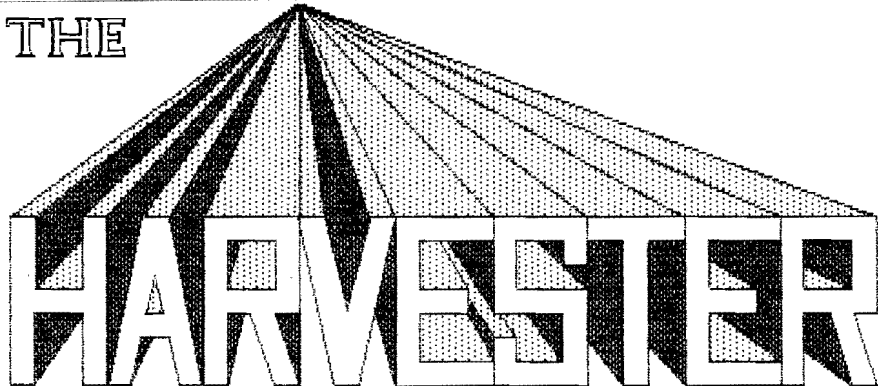


THE



HARVESTER

"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest!" [Luke 10:2]

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HOW SOON WE FORGET

In the book of Exodus we find the fascinating story of Israel's deliverance from bondage in Egypt. During this time God continually demonstrated His power, both to the Egyptians and to the children of Israel. He wrought many miracles by the hands of His servants Moses and Aaron. For example, the ten plagues which devastated Egypt, and finally gained Israel's release. But throughout all of this destruction which was brought down upon Egypt, Israel was spared. Certainly no one could question the fact that the hand of God was involved in this, since Israel and Egypt lived side by side, yet only Egypt suffered.

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Then came the crossing of the Red Sea. Israel stood in fear as they saw the Egyptians closing in on them from the rear, and their own progress blocked by the sea. But once again God miraculously delivered them. He parted the sea and allowed them to cross, and then destroyed the Egyptians as they attempted to follow. *"And Israel saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and His servant Moses."* (Exodus 14:31)

God continued to be with them as their journey progressed. He was always visible either in the form of a cloud or a pillar of fire. Now with all of the things these people had witnessed, and been a part of, certainly they would be more than willing to follow God anywhere, and do anything He asked. What faith these people must have had after seeing all of these demonstrations of the power of Almighty God. After all that He had done for them, God should now have a very loyal and trustworthy people.

However, it took but three days after crossing the Red Sea for the people to begin to murmur and complain against God. They had no water and thought they were going to die in the wilderness. Did they think that the God who had brought all the plagues upon Egypt, and had parted the Red Sea, did not have the power to give His own people water? Well, God did give them water, but they still murmured. This time He gave them quails and manna to eat. But still the people were not satisfied.

Finally they came to Mount Sinai. Moses went up the mountain and was given the two tablets of stone upon which were written the Ten Commandments. But before he could even return and give these laws to the people, they

had already forsaken God. They had built themselves a golden calf to worship instead. How could a people who had seen so much, and had been blessed to such an extent, forget so quickly? How could those who had first hand knowledge of the power and strength of God be so weak themselves?

I will have to admit that this series of events, both amazes and saddens me. I'm sure that we are all confident that had we been present during all of this, we would never have forsaken God. But, of the 600,000 men (Exo. 12:37), which does not include women and children, who left Egypt, only two, Joshua and Caleb, ever set foot on the promised land (Num. 14:30). That works out to 0.00033%! Not very good odds, is it? But it's the same trend we find at the time of the flood. Eight were saved from the world's entire population! To perhaps put it in a little better perspective consider this. The population of the United States is nearing 250,000,000. If the same percentage of Americans are saved, as Israeli men entered the promised land, it would only be 833 people! 833 out of 250,000,000! Can you imagine that? I'm not saying this is all that will be saved, but it does demonstrate exactly what our Lord meant when He said, *"Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and FEW there be that find it."* (Matt. 7:14)

God has long recognized the need to continually remind mankind of his duties and responsibilities. There are several prominent examples of this concerning the children of Israel. The passover feast and the feast of unleavened bread were given to remind them of their deliverance by God from the Egyptians (Exo. 13:3-10). And after the man was caught picking up sticks on the sabbath day, the people were commanded to put fringes on the borders of

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their garments to remind them of the Lord's commandments (Num. 15:38-41). This was very similar to today's practice of tying a string around your finger to remind you of something.

But the Sabbath day was the greatest example of a reminder. Every seven days, a special day was set aside where the people were to forget about their own concerns of life and focus on God. It is best explained in the book of Isaiah. "If thou turn away thy foot from the sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on my holy day; and call the sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words". (Isa. 58:13) The primary purpose of the Sabbath was to cause the people to think about the Lord, not to allow them to rest physically. This is why it was lawful for Christ to heal on the Sabbath. He was attending to His father's business, and not to His own.

Mankind has a tendency to forget God during times of prosperity. Our own nation today is a prime example. God warned the children of Israel about this very thing. Read all of Deuteronomy chapter 8, it illustrates this point very well. "Beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God, in not keeping his commandments, and his judgments, and his statutes, which I command thee this day: lest when

thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein ... then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the Lord thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt ... and thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of mine hand hath gotten me this wealth. But thou shalt remember the Lord thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth." (Deut. 8:11-18)

The problem of having a short memory was not just confined to the Jews. Even Christians have a need to be reminded. The Apostle Paul recognized this need as he told Timothy that *"If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ."* (I Tim. 4:6)

Peter also recognized this need when he said, *"For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you"* (II Pet. 1:12-15 NKJ). Peter said even though you already know these things I will keep reminding you of them. So perhaps we should pay a little more attention to someone when they are teaching something which might not necessarily be new to us. We all need reminding from time to time.

Finally we come to the greatest reminder God has ever given His people, the Lord's Supper. Remember how Paul spoke of it by quoting the Lord. *"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which he was betrayed took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had*

supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." (I Cor. 11:23-26)

God recognizes how easy it is for man to be distracted by the world. This is why He has ordained so many things throughout history to serve as reminders to man. James penned these words which make a fitting conclusion to our study. *"But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed." (James 1:25)* Friends, don't let the world get to you. Be a doer. Dare to be different and be one of the few that find the strait gate which leads to life. Always remember what is most important in life. *"Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13)*

TONY WHIDDON

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SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Who did Saul ask the medium to conjure up from the dead?
2. In the book of Revelation, how long could the locust sting men?
3. Who does the Lord discipline?
4. In what language did Paul hear the voice from heaven speaking to him on the road to Damascus?

5. What does Jeremiah tell the women of Israel to teach their daughters?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Where did Joshua fall face down after his first military defeat? BEFORE THE ARK (Josh. 7:6)

2. What did James and John want to do to the town that did not welcome Jesus? CALL FIRE DOWN FROM HEAVEN TO CONSUME IT (Luke 9:54)

3. What was John told to do with the little book he took from the seventh angel? TO EAT IT (Rev. 10:9)

4. Which bird is not mentioned in the Bible: crane, crow, eagle, owl, ostrich, or stork? CROW

5. With what did Samson kill a lion? HIS BARE HANDS (Judg. 14:6)

PLEASE USE YOUR BIBLE!

The evangelist D.L. Moody once said, "The best way to show that a stick is crooked is not to argue about it or to spend time denouncing it, but to lay a straight stick alongside it." Likewise, when we are discussing religious matters with our friends and comparing different teachings or ideas or doctrines, the affair can be quickly put to rest. Simply lay God's word "alongside it" and the Truth will be self-evident! *"If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed!"* (Gal. 1:9)

RAY

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
June 1 - 6	Liberty, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 7 - 12	Oak Grove Church Casey County, KY	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 7 - 12	Taylor's Crossroads Roanoke, AL	Bill Prince (Oxford, AL)
June 14-19 (Su-F)	Pleasant Grove Church near Alex City, AL 7:00 each evening	Lindeal Greer (Bogue Chitto, MS)
June 14-19	Jigger, LA	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 21-26	Ephesus, GA 7:30pm E.S.T.	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 21-26	Cold Springs Church Bogue Chitto, MS	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
June 21-27	Athens Church Casey County, KY	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 21-28	Lamar, CO	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
July 6 - 9	Hokes Bluff, AL 7:00 each evening	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
July 10-12	West Gadsden Church Gadsden, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)



WHEN A MAN BEGINS SOWING WILD
OATS, HE USUALLY BEGINS WITH
CORN OR RYE.