

"THE LAW"

EXODUS 19-20

THIS CHAPTER BRINGS US TO ANOTHER MAJOR DIVISION IN THE BOOK OF EXODUS. AT SINAI GOD MADE A COVENANT WITH ISRAEL. ACCORDING TO THE TEXT, IT WAS A CONDITIONAL COVENANT. (CONTRAST THIS WITH AN UNCONDITIONAL COVENANT, NAMELY, THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT.) THE LAW OF MOSES, ITS NATURE AND FUNCTION IN ISRAEL, AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO N.T. BELIEVERS IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND. THE FIRST IMPORTANT FACT TO KEEP IN MIND ABOUT THE LAW IS THAT IT WAS NOT GIVEN IN ORDER FOR MEN TO BE SAVED. SALVATION BY LEGAL OBEDIENCE TO A LAW IS JUST NOT PART OF THE BIBLE. GOD HAS ONE WAY FOR SAVING MEN AND THAT IS BY FAITH, IRRESPECTIVE OF DISPENSATIONS. THE O. T. SAINT WAS NEVER SAVED BY KEEPING THE LAW, AND NEITHER IS THE N.T. SAINT. (ROM. 3:20.... THEREFORE BY THE DEEDS OF THE LAW SHALL NO FLESH BE JUSTIFIED IN HIS SIGHT....) IN THE O.T. FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD FOR THE SAINT WAS REGULATED BY LAWS WITH VARIOUS PENALTIES. THE LAW WAS GIVEN TO PROTECT ISRAEL FROM IDOLATRY AND AS A CODE FOR THE STRUCTURE OF THE NATION IN A LEGAL SENSE. "FOR THE BELIEVER THE LAW IS NONETHELESS REVEALING AND INSTRUCTING. IT GIVES INSIGHT INTO THE MIND OF GOD AND HELPS ONE TO DETERMINE WHAT STANDARDS OF HOLINESS HE EXPECTS OF THOSE WHO FOLLOW HIM." (JOHN DAVIS) THE LAW HAD SEVERAL FUNCTIONS BUT ROMANS 3:20 REMINDS THE N.T. BELIEVER THAT "BY THE LAW IS THE KNOWLEDGE OF SIN." ONE FUNCTION OF THE O.T. LAW WAS THAT IT WAS LIKE A LOOKING GLASS, IT REVEALED MAN'S SIN AS TRANSGRESSION BUT DID NOT HAVE THE POWER TO WASH OR CLEANSE AWAY THE TRANSGRESSION. IT WAS LIKE A THERMOMETER WHICH REGISTERS AND DETECTS FEVER BUT DOES NOT HAVE THE ABILITY OR CAPACITY TO TREAT OR CURE IT. DR. CHARLES STEVENS TELLS A STORY ABOUT HIS EARLY MINISTRY WHEN HIS 3 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER INSISTED ON HELPING HIM CARRY A 25 POUND BLOCK OF ICE WHICH HE HAD PURCHASED AT A NEARBY ICE STORE AND HAD BROUGHT HOME ON THE RUNNING BOARD OF THE FAMILY CAR. WHEN HE LIFTED IT FROM THE RUNNING BOARD OF THE AUTOMOBILE HIS 3 YEAR OLD DAUGHTER INSISTED ON TRYING TO HELP HIM CARRY IT. HE SAID

NO, BUT HER INSISTENCE, HE LET HER TRY. AFTER STRUGGLING AND PULLING AND BEING UNABLE TO MOVE IT SHE SAID IN A SHEEPISH WAY, "DADDY, YOU TAKE IT." THE FATHER DID NOT LET THE DAUGHTER TRY TO CARRY THE ICE WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT SHE COULD DO IT, BUT RATHER TO STOP HER MOUTH! MAN BOASTED IN THE MOSAIC COVENANT THAT HE WOULD DO ALL THAT GOD REQUIRED OF HIM. GOD GAVE ISRAEL THE LAW AND ONE OF ITS FUNCTIONS WAS TO SHOW THE INABILITY OF THE FLESH TO PLEASE GOD. STEVENS HAS ALSO MENTIONED THE FACT THAT THE LAW IS TAILOR-MADE FOR THE FLESH, IT FITS THE NATURAL MAN WITH ITS NEGATIVE ASPECTS. THE LAW DOES NOT FIT THE SPIRITUAL MAN ANY MORE THAN A HORSE HARNESS FITS AN AUTOMOBILE. THE LAW WAS CONCERNED WITH EXTERNAL ACTS OF OBEDIENCE WHEREAS GRACE PUTS THE EMPHASIS ON INTERNAL MOTIVES. ANOTHER SERIOUS ERROR REGARDING THE LAW OF MOSES IS TO BREAK DOWN THE VARIOUS ELEMENTS OF THE LAW RETAINING THE MORAL ASPECTS BUT DISMISSING THE CEREMONIAL AND CIVIL PARTS OF THE LAW. THE BIBLE ? MAKES NO SUCH DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE MORAL, THE CEREMONIAL AND CIVIL ASPECTS OF THE LAW. AS McCLAIN HAS WELL POINTED OUT, THE LAW IS AN INDIVISIBLE UNIT. GALATIANS 3:24 REMINDS N.T. READERS THAT THE LAW WAS OUR SCHOOLMASTER TO PREPARE ISRAEL FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST. THE SCHOOLMASTER WAS THE ONE WHO TRAINED SLAVES AND PREPARED THEIR CHILDREN FOR ADULT LIVING. WHEN THE CHILD HAD REACHED ADULTHOOD HIS INHERITANCE TOOK OVER AND HE NO LONGER NEEDED A SCHOOLMASTER. "ISRAEL WAS IN HER SPIRITUAL CHILDHOOD UNDER THE LAW BUT THIS PREPARED HER FOR THE COMING OF CHRIST." (WIERSBE) WHEN ISRAEL, A GROUP OF SLAVES, LEFT EGYPT THEY WERE UNIQUE AMONG THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD. ISRAEL WAS NOT A DEMOCRACY, THAT IS A RULE OF THE PEOPLE, NOR AN ARISTOCRACY, THE RULE OF A FEW, BUT A THEOCRACY-A NATION RULED BY GOD. IN THIS SECTION OF THE BOOK OF EXODUS GOD ANNOUNCES THE PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH HE WILL RULE HIS PEOPLE. THE LAW APPEARED UPON TABLES FOR THE FIRST TIME, BUT THE PRINCIPLES HAD ALREADY BEEN ENGRAVED UPON MAN'S MORAL NATURE, HIS CONSCIENCE. (ROM. 2:15) ALREADY THE CODE OF MORALITY OF THE GOD WHO MADE MAN WAS ENGRAVEN UPON THEIR HEARTS WHEREVER MAN LIVED. ONE THING MEN LEARNED AT SINAI WAS THAT THERE IS A MIGHTY GULF BETWEEN THE HOLY, MAJESTIC GOD AND SINFUL MANKIND. MAN IN HIS FLESH IS UNFIT AND UNABLE TO APPROACH GOD. SINIA SPEAKS OF BARRIER.

AND A DISTANCE BETWEEN GOD AND MAN BY WHICH ONLY A DIVINELY APPOINTED REPRESENTATIVE MIGHT PASS TO SPEAK TO GOD IN BEHALF OF MEN. AS A MATTER OF FACT, NO ANIMAL WAS EVEN PERMITTED TO COME NEAR THE MOUNT THAT MEN MIGHT LEARN THE LESSON THAT GOD HAS A PRESCRIBED WAY OF APPROACH TO HIMSELF. THAT WAY HAS ALWAYS BEEN A WAY OF GRACE. THE EXPERIENCE AT SINAI WAS UNIQUE AMONG THE NATIONS OF THE WORLD. OTHER NATIONS HAD THEIR SHRINES, HOLY PLACES, HOLY PEOPLE, HOLY OBJECTS AND MYTHS, BUT HERE GOD MADE KNOWN HIS WILL BY SPEAKING TO THE NATION AND ENGRAVING HIS WORDS ON TABLES OF STONE. OF THE SOME 600 LAWS INVOLVED IN THE MOSAIC SYSTEM, THE 10 MOST FAMILIAR ARE THOSE DEALING WITH THE MORAL PRINCIPLES OF GOD'S KINGDOM COMMONLY KNOWN AS THE 10 COMMANDMENTS. THE CIVIL AND CEREMONIAL ELEMENTS OF THE LAW ARE NOT SO WELL KNOWN. THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH ALL OF THE O.T. LAWS GIVEN TO ISRAEL ARE BUT AN AMPLIFICATION AND APPLICATION OF THE 10 COMMANDMENTS. AS A MATTER OF FACT 9 OF THE 10 COMMANDMENTS ARE REPEATED IN THE N.T. FOR BELIEVERS TODAY. THE SOLE EXCEPTION IS #4 DEALING WITH THE SABBATH. ANOTHER IMPORTANT TRUTH MUST BE NOTED IN THE N.T. THAT THE BELIEVER IS NOT UNDER THE LAW IN ANY FORM. (ROM. 6:14) IN CHRIST WE NOT ONLY DIED TO THE LAW BUT HAVE BEEN DELIVERED FROM IT. (ROM. 7:5-6) HOWEVER, THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE CHRISTIAN IS LAWLESS AND IGNORES GOD'S LAW; AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE N.T. BELIEVER IS UNDER A MORE DEMANDING WAY OF LIFE THAN THE OUTWARD ACTS OF O.T. LAW. OURS DEALS WITH THE LAW OF LOVE AND INWARD ATTITUDES NOT JUST OBEDIENCE TO AN EXTERNAL SYSTEM. THE N.T. CHRISTIAN IS NOT UNDER THE LAW AS LAW, BUT CERTAINLY HE IS RESPONSIBLE TO THIS PART OF THE O.T. SCRIPTURE IN THE SENSE THAT IT IS SCRIPTURE. (II TIM. 3:16) AS TIME WOULD ALLOW, WE ARE GOING TO CONSIDER THE MORAL PRECEPTS AND IMPORTANCE OF THE PRINCIPLES LAID DOWN IN THE 10 COMMANDMENTS. ONE MINOR OBSERVATION CONCERNING THE TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE "10 WORDS OR DECALOGUE." THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH AND THE LUTHERAN CHURCH COMBINE THE FIRST AND SECOND INTO ONE AND BREAK THE 10 INTO 2. BUT THIS DIVISION DOES NOT ACKNOWLEDGE OR EMPHASIZE THE OBVIOUS DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HAVING ONE GOD AND ANOTHER FORM OF SIN OF NAMELY THAT OF IDOLATRY. THE COMMANDMENTS ARE DIVIDED INTO THE FIRST FOUR EMPHASIZING OUR DUTY TOWARDS GOD AND THE LAST SIX OUR DUTY TOWARD MAN. IN SUMMARY, THEN, THE FUNCTION OF THE

10 COMMANDMENTS IN THE WORLD HAS BEEN OF GREAT VALUE SERVING AS THE GREATEST CODE OF MORALS KNOWN TO MANKIND. THESE LAWS REVEAL TO MAN THE REGAL CHARACTER OF GOD IN HOLINESS AND MAJESTY AND POINTING TO THE FACT THAT GOD WAS AND IS INTERESTED IN THE HIGHEST GOOD FOR MANKIND. THESE COMMANDMENTS REVEAL THIS GREAT FACT AND ACTED AS A RESTRAINT TO SIN AND THE SINNER, MAKING MEN CONSCIOUS OF THEIR TRANSGRESSION AGAINST GOD.

1. THE FIRST COMMANDMENT: NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME

EXODUS 20:3

THE WORD "BEFORE" MEANS BEFORE MY FACE OR IN ADDITION TO ME. THIS COMMANDMENT MEANT FOR ISRAEL THAT THE GOD OF ISRAEL WAS THEIR ONLY GOD. ISRAEL HAD LIVED FOR OVER 400 YEARS IN A COUNTRY WHERE THERE WERE MULTIPLIED THOUSANDS OF GODS AND THE SAME WAS TRUE IN CANAAN WHERE THEY WERE PLANNING TO DWELL. MAN IS PRONE TO WORSHIP SOMETHING BEYOND HIMSELF, SOMETHING TO SATISFY HIS INNATE RELIGIOUS INSTINCT. THROUGHOUT THE PAGES OF HUMAN HISTORY MEN HAVE WORSHIPPED THE SUN, MOON, STARS, RIVERS, MEN AND OBJECTS. THIS V. MAKES IT VERY CLEAR THAT THE GOD OF THE BIBLE IS NOT JUST SOME TRIBAL DEITY FOR A TINY NATION BUT HE WAS AND IS INDEED THE ONE GOD FOR ALL THE EARTH. ONE COMMENTATOR HAS POINTED OUT THAT MEN BECOME LIKE THE GODS THEY SERVE. THEREFORE THE KIND OR NATURE OF THE GODS MEN BELIEVE IN WILL MAKE A DIFFERENCE IN THE KIND OF LIFE THEY LIVE! FOR EXAMPLE, ONE OF THE SERIOUS FORMS OF IDOLATRY IN THE O.T. WAS BAAL WORSHIP. THE IDEA BEHIND BAAL WORSHIP WAS THAT THE MOST MYSTERIOUS AND IMPORTANT FORCE IN LIFE IS GROWTH. THERE WAS SOME KIND OF FORCE THAT MADE PLANTS GROW AND CROPS RIPEN. THESE HEATHEN NATIONS SAID BAAL WAS THE POWER OF GROWTH BEHIND ALL LIVING THINGS. ULTIMATELY THE MOST IMPORTANT TYPE OF GROWTH HAD TO DO WITH HUMAN LIFE AND THE POWER TO HAVE CHILDREN. THEY SAW THE POWER OF SEX TO BE THE POWER OF BAAL. THEREFORE, SEX ACTS WERE LOOKED UPON AS SACRED ACTS AND THE TEMPLES OF BAAL WERE FILLED WITH PRIESTESSES WHO WERE NOTHING MORE THAN SACRED PROSTITUTES. TO UNITE WITH ONE OF THESE PRIESTESSES WAS LOOKED UPON AS AN ACT OF REAL WORSHIP. THIS KIND OF "WORSHIP" WAS APPEALING TO THE LOWER

SIDE OF HUMAN NATURE AND HAD AN ENORMOUS ATTRACTION TO SINFUL MANKIND. (WE MIGHT OBSERVE THAT "BAAL WORSHIP" THAT IS THE WORSHIP OF THE GODS OF SEX IS RAMPANT IN AMERICA TODAY. IT SIMPLY LACKS THE TITLE OF BAALISM!) IF MEN WORSHIP LICENTIOUS GODS LIKE BAAL THEY WILL BECOME LICENTIOUS MEN. IF THEY WORSHIP A HOLY AND RIGHTEOUS GOD THEIR CHARACTER WILL BE REVEALED IN THAT KIND OF WORSHIP. I AM CONCERNED THAT THE WEAK, ANEMIC KIND OF CHRISTIANITY THAT IS BEING PEDDLED IN SOME CHURCHES TODAY HAS NO POWER OR CAPACITY TO TURN MEN FROM THE GODS OF THIS WORLD. MEN HAVE A SMALL CONCEPT OF GOD AND A LARGE CONCEPT OF MEN. THIS WAS NOT TRUE OF OUR FOREFATHERS FOR THEY UNDERSTOOD THE BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF AN INFINITELY HOLY GOD BEFORE WHOM ALL MEN MUST ONE DAY STAND. THEIR CHIEF GOAL OR END IN LIFE WAS TO ENJOY GOD AND WORSHIP HIM FOREVER. THIS KIND OF SITUATION IN OUR COUNTRY HAS FALLEN INTO THE SPOTLIGHT IN THE PAST DOZEN YEARS THROUGH THE EMERGENCE OF A PHILOSOPHY KNOWN AS "SITUATION ETHICS". IN 1966 DR. JOSEPH FLETCHER, PROF. OF ETHICS AT EPISCOPAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN CAMBRIDGE, MASS, WROTE A BOOK IN WHICH HE MADE FUN OF WHAT HE CALLS SUNDAY SCHOOL MORALS AND ETHICS AND THE 10 COMMANDMENTS. HE LOOKED UPON THE 10 COMMANDMENTS AS TOO RIGID AND ARCHAIC SYSTEM OF RULES BY WHICH MEN SHOULD LIVE. THIS MOVEMENT AWAY FROM THE WORD OF GOD AS A BASIS FOR ETHICS HAS HAD A DEVASTATING IMPACT UPON OUR NATION. THIS KIND OF ETHICAL ATMOSPHERE HAS PROMOTED A GENERATION OF PEOPLE WHO "DO THEIR OWN THING" WITHOUT REGARD FOR GOD OR GOD'S WORD. MEN TEND TO FORGET THAT WE CAME FROM GOD, THAT WE NEED GOD AND THAT OUR HAPPINESS IN LIFE IS BOUND UP IN OUR SERVICE TO HIM. INSTEAD OF TRYING TO RUN AWAY FROM HIM AND RULE HIM OUT OF OUR LIVES WE SHOULD MOVE TOWARD HIM IN REPENTANCE AND FAITH. I AM AMAZED WITH THE FOLLY OF THE THINKING OF THE NATURAL MAN. IS IT NOT STRANGE THAT PEOPLE WHO DESIRE TO GO TO HEAVEN WHEN THEY DIE BUT HAVE NO INTEREST IN SERVING GOD HERE IN A SERIOUS WAY. I WONDER WHAT MAKES THEM THINK THEY WILL BE HAPPY IN THE PRESENCE OF A THRICE-HOLY GOD SIMPLY BY CHANGING THEIR SPHERE FROM EARTH TO HEAVEN? HEAVEN WOULD BE HELL INDEED FOR THE MAN WHO DID NOT LOVE GOD AND DESIRE TO SERVE HIM! THIS WORLD IS THE VESTIBULE OR PLACE OF REPENTANCE AND CHANGE FOR MEN TO PREPARE FOR ETERNITY. WE DETERMINE BY OUR RELATIONSHIP TO GOD IN CHRIST THIS SIDE OF THE GRAVE

Print

WHERE WE WILL SPEND ETERNITY.

II. THE SECOND COMMANDMENT: NO GRAVEN IMAGE - 20:4

THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT THE WORSHIP OF GOD SHOULD BE BY FAITH AND IN SIMPLICITY. THE N.T. CHRISTIAN NEEDS NO AIDS TO WORSHIP, SUCH AS IMAGES OR STATUES. WE WEAR NO CROSSES AROUND OUR NECKS OR HAVE ELABORATE ALTARS IN OUR CHURCHES IN ORDER TO INDUCE TRUE WORSHIP. THE PATTERN IN THE BOOK OF ACTS IS ON SIMPLICITY AND AN EMPHASIS UPON THE WORD OF GOD. WE DO NOT BOW DOWN BEFORE IMAGES OR KISS SACRED OBJECTS IN ORDER TO WORSHIP GOD. THE NATURAL MAN OR FLESH DOES NOT LIKE TO WORSHIP GOD BY FAITH AND WITHOUT "RELIGIOUS CRUTCHES." I KNOW THE ARGUMENT USED BY SOME FOLK TO DEFEND OBJECTS IN WORSHIP. I HAVE BEEN TOLD, BY WELL MEANING PEOPLE, THAT THEY DO NOT WORSHIP THE OBJECT BUT THAT IT IS A REMINDER OF GOD AND HELPS THEM TO WORSHIP THE UNSEEN GOD. THEY SAY IT MAKES IT EASIER FOR PEOPLE TO IMAGINE HIS PRESENCE WHEN THEY LOOK AT THE OBJECT. IT IS A REPRESENTATION OF GOD AND IS NOT INTENDED TO BE WORSHIPPED. THAT IS EXACTLY PART OF THE PROBLEM. LITTLE BY LITTLE THE IMAGE CEASES TO REPRESENT GOD AND BEGINS TO TAKE THE VERY PLACE OF GOD IN THE LIFE OF THE WORSHIPPER! THIS VERY THING HAPPENED IN ISRAEL'S HISTORY. IN THE WILDERNESS WHEN THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE ATTACKED BY FIERY SERPENTS MOSES INSTRUCTED THEM TO MAKE A BRONZE SERPENT AND SET IT UPON A POLE IN ORDER THAT THOSE WHO WERE BITTEN MIGHT LOOK TO THE BRONZE SERPENT AND BE HEALED. (NUM. 21:6-9) HUNDREDS OF YEARS LATER BRONZE SERPENTS APPEARED IN ISRAEL AS OBJECTS OF WORSHIP. WE SEE THIS VERY IDEA CARRIED OUT IN OUR MODERN DAY. A CROSS WORN ON A CHAIN OR SOME OTHER SUPPOSEDLY SACRED OBJECT IS WORN AROUND THE NECK OR ON THE PERSON TO REMIND THE WORSHIPPER OF THE LOVE OF GOD AND THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CROSS AND IT IS MEANT TO BE AN AID TO WORSHIP TO FIX OR CONCENTRATE THE MIND UPON THE ONE WHO DIED ON THE CROSS. THE PROBLEM ARISES IN THAT INEVITABLY THAT ITEM BECOMES A HOLY THING AND IS REGARDED WITH SUPERSTITIOUS REVERENCE AND THE SYMBOL IS CONFUSED WITH THE REALITY. IN FACT THAT WHICH WAS MEANT TO BE AN AID TO WORSHIP BECOMES A BARRIER AND A HINDRANCE AND IN FACT IT BECAME THE OBJECT OF WORSHIP. I AM VERY SURE THAT OBJECTS BECOME THINGS WORSHIPPED IN MANY

L. tiray

CHURCHES. IT IS POSSIBLE TO WORSHIP A MAN, A CHURCH BUILDING, A LITERATURE, OR ANYTHING ELSE WHICH GETS MAN'S MIND OFF OF THE UNSEEN HOLY GOD AND UPON SOMETHING HE MAY TOUCH, FEEL OR SMELL. THERE IS ANOTHER ASPECT OR APPLICATION TO THIS VERSE. A MAN'S GOD IS THAT WHICH IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IN HIS LIFE. WHENEVER SOMETHING ELSE TAKES THE PRIMARY PLACE IN A MAN'S LIFE IT BECOMES IDOLATRY. IDOLATRY IS PREOCCUPATION WITH THINGS WHILE THE PREOCCUPATION SHOULD BE WITH GOD. THIS IS VERY EASY FOR US IN AMERICA BECAUSE WE WORSHIP AT THE ALTAR OF MATERIALISM. WE ARE TOO MUCH CONCERNED WITH A BETTER HOUSE IN A BETTER NEIGHBORHOOD AND A BETTER JOB AND A BIGGER CAR AND A BIGGER TELEVISION AND MORE VACATION TIME, ALL OF WHICH MAY BE CORRECT IF IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE, BUT NONE OF WHICH CAN MAKE US HAPPY IF THEY TAKE THE PLACE OF GOD IN THE LIFE. DO NOT BE MISLEAD INTO THINKING THAT IDOLATRY IS ONLY FOR PRIMITIVE HEATHEN PEOPLE. OUR COUNTRY HAS LONG AGO BOWED TO THE WORSHIP OF THINGS INSTEAD OF GOD. IN V. 5 THE WORD "JEALOUS" APPEARS WITH REFERENCE TO GOD. THE QUESTION ARISES HOW CAN JEALOUSY BE A VIRTUE IN GOD AND A VICE AMONG MEN? WHEN MEN SPEAK OF JEALOUSY IT IS THAT "GREEN-EYED MONSTER" THAT DESTROYS PEOPLE INWARDLY AND ALSO DESTROYS THAT RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER HUMAN BEINGS. HOW CAN THIS BE A QUALITY OF GOD AND YET QUESTIONABLE IN MEN? HOW CAN IT BE COMMENDED IN GOD AND CONDEMNED AMONG MEN? GOD USES THIS TERM TO PLAY UPON LANGUAGE WHICH MEN UNDERSTAND AND WHICH HAS TO DO WITH OUR PERSONAL LIFE AND PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS. HOWEVER, THE WORD JEALOUSY WAS USED IN AT LEAST A TWO-FOLD WAY AMONG MEN AND BOTH USAGES OF THE TERM ARE NOT NECESSARILY WITH A WRONG CONNOTATION. TO BE SURE THERE IS ONE KIND OF JEALOUSY WHICH IS THE EXPRESSION OF PERSONAL RESENTMENT AND COVETOUSNESS WHICH IS MEAN AND VICIOUS IN ITS EXPRESSION TOWARD ANOTHER HUMAN BEING. HOWEVER, THERE IS (2) ANOTHER KIND OF JEALOUSY WHICH MANIFESTS ITSELF IN A LOVE RELATIONSHIP FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROTECTING THAT RELATIONSHIP. MARRIED PERSONS WHO FEEL NO JEALOUSY AT THE INTRUSION OF A THIRD PARTY OR AN ADULTERER INTO THEIR HOME ARE SURELY WITHOUT TRUE LOVE AND DO NOT RECOGNIZE MORAL VALUES. FOR, AS SOMEONE HAS SAID, "THE EXCLUSIVENESS OF MARRIAGE IS THE ESSENCE OF MARRIAGE." THIS KIND OF JEALOUSY IS A VIRTUE FOR IT SHOWS AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE REAL MEANING OF MARRIAGE IN THE HUSBAND AND WIFE

RELATIONSHIP,

AND THE WILLINGNESS TO GUARD AGAINST ATTACK IN KEEPING THE MARRIAGE INTACT. TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST THOSE WHO SEEK TO DESTROY THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP IS A NORMAL AND CORRECT APPROACH THAT DEMONSTRATES AN APPRECIATION OF THE VALUE INVOLVED IN A MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP. IN THE O. T., IN VARIOUS PLACES, GOD SPEAKS OF HIS COVENANT RELATIONSHIP WITH ISRAEL AS A MARRIAGE. HE REQUIRES OF THAT NATION AN UNCOMPROMISING RELATIONSHIP WITH OUTSIDE INFLUENCES, ESPECIALLY IN THE FORM OF IDOLS. GOD LOOKED UPON UNFAITHFULNESS IN WORSHIP ON ISRAEL'S PART AS SPIRITUAL ADULTERY, PROVOKING HIM TO JEALOUSY AND IN THIS SENSE, GOD WAS SURELY CORRECT AND ISRAEL SURELY WRONG, AND THE USAGE OF THE WORD JEALOUS WAS ABSOLUTELY CORRECT AND PROPER. ALSO, THERE IS ANOTHER PART OF THIS VERSE WHICH HAS DRAWN SOME MISUNDERSTANDING. THE LATTER PART OF THIS VERSE SEEMS TO SUGGEST THAT GOD ARBITRARILY PUNISHES GENERATIONS TO COME FOR THE SINS OF A PARTICULAR GENERATION. THIS IS NOT WHAT THE VERSE IS TEACHING. IT IS NOT TEACHING THAT GOD ARBITRARILY PUNISHES CHILDREN FOR THE SIN OF THEIR FATHERS. GOD IS SETTING FORTH THE PROCLAMATION OR DECLARATION OF THE WORKINGS OF DIVINE LAW. A NATION OR PEOPLE WHO HAVE THE WRONG CONCEPT WILL TRANSFER THAT WRONG IDEA FROM ONE GENERATION TO ANOTHER THEREBY BRINGING UPON THEM GREAT HARM FOR GENERATIONS TO COME. (APPLICATION TODAY.) WHEN ONE STANDS AT SINAI AND HEARS THE RUMBLINGS OF GOD'S LAW AND THEN UNDERSTANDS THAT THE 10 COMMANDMENTS ARE LIKE THE LINKS IN A CHAIN TO BREAK ONE IS TO BREAK ALL, AND FAILURE TO KEEP ON IS FAILURE TO KEEP ALL. THESE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD MAKE MEN AWARE OF THE PRESENCE OF SIN AND MAN'S INABILITY TO OBEY GOD'S LAW. THERE IS A VERSE IN ROMANS 10:4, WHICH GIVES PROPER UNDERSTANDING CONCERNING OUR DEALING WITH THE 10 COMMANDMENTS. "FOR CHRIST IS THE END OF THE LAW FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS TO EVERYONE THAT BELIEVETH," WHEN IT COMES TO RIGHTEOUSNESS, CHRIST IS THE END. HE IS OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS AND WHEN ONE IS IN CHRIST HE IS RIGHTEOUS AND THE DEMANDS OF GOD'S LAW WERE FULLY MET BY HIM FOR US. I AM NOT AFRAID OF THE THUNDERINGS OF SINAI BECAUSE AS A BELIEVER YOU AND I STAND CLOTHED IN THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST WHO FULLY KEPT AND FULFILLED THE O. T. LAW AND WE ARE SAFE, FREE AND FORGIVEN BECAUSE WE ARE IN CHRIST.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS: 3 & 4

EXODUS 20:7-11

Parrot:
 string - ea. leg.
 10 Comm. - Both
 string? - Fall down!

THE
 LAST LORD'S DAY WE LEARNED THAT / 10 COMMANDMENTS ARE PART OF THE LAW GOD GAVE TO MOSES ANNOUNCING THE PRINCIPLES BY WHICH HE WOULD RULE HIS PEOPLE, ISRAEL. WE LEARNED ALSO THAT THE LAW WAS NOT GIVEN AS A BASIS OR STANDARD BY WHICH MAN COULD BE SAVED IF THEY KEPT THE LAW. GOD HAS ONE WAY OF SAVING MEN, IN ALL DISPENSATIONS, AND THAT IS BY FAITH, NOT LEGAL OBEDIENCE. (HEB. 11, ROM. 3:20) WE LEARNED THAT THE PRINCIPLES OF 9 OF THE 10 COMMANDMENTS HAVE BEEN REPEATED IN THE N.T. AND THAT AS LAW WE ARE NOT UNDER THE LAW IN ANY OF ITS FORM, BUT DO RECOGNIZE THE 10 COMMANDMENTS AS PART OF SCRIPTURE, WHICH IS PROFITABLE TO US. THE 10 COMMANDMENTS ARE FAMILIAR, THAT IS, MOST PEOPLE COULD RECITE APPROXIMATELY 5 OF THE 10, BUT THE MEANING IS NOT WIDELY KNOWN AND THE PRACTICE EVEN LESS. I AM AFRAID THAT MANY PEOPLE SIMPLY READ THE 10 COMMANDMENTS AS GOD'S GOOD ADVICE TO MEN, WITH NO IDEA OF ABIDING BY THE MORALITY AND PRINCIPLES CONTAINED IN THESE LAWS. TODAY, WE WILL LOOK AT TWO OF THE FIRST DIVISION OF THE COMMANDMENTS, THAT IS, THE FIRST FOUR COMMANDMENTS ARE GODWARD IN THEIR IMPLICATION, THE LAST SIX ARE MANWARD.

III. THE THIRD COMMANDMENT: THE NAME OF GOD IN VAIN Exo. 20:7

THIS COMMANDMENT CONTAINS THREE MAJOR IDEAS:

1. THE NAME OF GOD
2. IN VAIN
3. NOT GUILTYLESS

→ (See art. Friday paper)

NAMES DO NOT CARRY THE SIGNIFICANCE IN OUR GENERATION THAT THEY DID IN BIBLE TIMES. WE NAME PEOPLE AFTER RELATIVES, MOVIE STARS, SPORTS HEROES, OR SOMETIMES SIMPLY BECAUSE WE LIKE THE SOUND OF THE NAME. (RELATE STRAUSS' STORY ABOUT A PASTOR IN VIRGINIA NAMED Y.Z. GORDY. ALSO, PSALM 104:4) IN THE BIBLE, A NAME WAS THAT BY WHICH A PERSON, PLACE OR THING WAS MARKED AND KNOWN. NAMES STAND FOR PEOPLE. CONCERNING GOD, HIS NAME STANDS FOR ALL HE IS, IN ATTRIBUTES, CHARACTER AND AUTHORITY. FOR EXAMPLE, CERTAIN USAGES

OF GOD'S NAME SPEAK OF CERTAIN RELATIONSHIPS TO MEN.

(1) TO CALL UPON GOD'S NAME MEANT TO WORSHIP GOD.

(2) TO CONFESS HIS NAME MEANS TO ACKNOWLEDGE HIM.

(3) TO FORGET HIS NAME MEANS DEPARTURE FROM GODLY PRINCIPLES.

(4) TO SPEAK IN HIS NAMES MEANS AUTHORITY FROM GOD.

AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE NAME JEHOVAH WAS SO SACRED TO JEWS IN THE O.T. THAT WHEN THEY WERE READING THE SCRIPTURE THEY DID NOT PRONOUNCE THAT NAME BUT SUBSTITUTED ANOTHER WORD ADONAI IN ITS PLACE. WE ARE TOLD THIS WAS ALSO TRUE IN THE WRITING OF THE NAME JEHOVAH IN THE TRANSLATION OF SCRIPTURE. (CONSIDER EXO. 3:5-6, ISA. 9:6, REV. 19:11) THE SECOND

IDEA IN THIS COMMANDMENT IS THE PHRASE "IN VAIN."

ONE TRANSLATION OF THE O.T. USES THE WORD VANITY AND THE HEBREW PHRASE LITERALLY MEANS "FOR UNREALITY."

THE WORD IS USED TO DESCRIBE SOMETHING THAT IS EMPTY OR FRIVOLUS OR A FALSE REPORT. THIS WORD SUGGESTS THAT GOD'S NAME SHOULD NEVER BE USED IN A FRIVOLUS OR INSINCERE WAY. THERE ARE SEVERAL IDEAS SUGGESTED HERE. IT HAS TO DO WITH PLEDGES. A PERSON SHOULD NEVER USE GOD'S NAME TO UNDERScore OR BACK UP A LIE. IT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT A PERSON SHOULD NOT EVADe OR FAIL TO KEEP ANY VOW OR PLEDGE HE MAKES TO GOD, OR ANYONE ELSE FOR THAT MATTER. IT IS EASY FOR PEOPLE TO SAY "I SWEAR TO GOD" AND THEN PROCEED TO TELL A FALSEHOOD. THE MOST OBVIOUS FAILURE IN THE MATTER OF VOWS OR PLEDGES IS IN MARRIAGES. TWO PEOPLE INVOKE GOD'S BLESSING AND PRESENCE INTO THEIR MARRIAGE BUT ARE QUICK TO DEPART FROM THEIR VOWS. THEY ACCEPT A PARTNER FOR BETTER BUT NOT FOR WORSE. THEY SEEM TO HAVE LITTLE REGARD FOR THE PLEDGE THEY MADE EACH TO THE OTHER IN THE PRESENCE OF GOD. THIS SPEAKS OF A WIDESPREAD MORAL BREAKDOWN AND A FAILURE TO APPRECIATE THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING ONE'S WORD. (BEFORE CHRISTIAN SWELL UP

IN HOLY INDIGNATION TOWARD THE LOST, I DARE NOT HAVE TIME TO SPEAK OF THE NUMBERS OF PEOPLE IN CHURCHES WHO PROMISE TO DO AND NEVER DO!) THIS COMMANDMENT

HAS TO DO WITH PERJURY. PERJURY IS FALSE SWEARING.

IN A COURT OF LAW ONE IS REQUIRED TO TELL THE TRUTH AND TO DO SO IN GOD'S NAME. A PERSON MIGHT SWEAR

FALSely IN A COURT OF LAW AND GET BY OR EVEN WIN A

CIVIL CASE. HOWEVER, THAT CASE WILL COME UP AGAIN

IN A HIGHER COURT. IT IS BETTER TO TELL THE TRUTH

REGARDLESS OF THE CONSEQUENCES, THAN TO MEET THE

SUBJECT AGAIN IN GOD'S PRESENCE. AS AN ITEM OF INTER-

ESTING TO KNOW THAT THE CRIME OF PERJURY IN EGYPT WAS SUBJECT TO DEATH AND MUTILATION, IN GREECE A HIGH FINE AND LOSS OF CIVIL RIGHTS, AND IN ROME, DEATH. A MAN'S WORD IS VITALLY IMPORTANT IN THE INTERCHANGE OF HUMAN BEINGS IN ANY SOCIETY. WHEN ONE CAN NO LONGER ACCEPT THE TRUTHFULNESS OF A MAN'S WORD, EITHER IN OR OUT OF COURT, THAT MAN AND SOCIETY IS IN DANGER OF CRUMBLING. THIS COMMANDMENT REFERS TO PROFANITY. OURS IS A CURSING OR SWEARING AGE. THERE WAS A TIME WHEN PROFANITY WAS LOOKED UPON AS THE ACTIVITY OF POORLY BRED RUFFIAN. NOW, ON ANY GIVEN DAY ANYWHERE, ONE MAY HEAR MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN SWEARING FREELY. A MAN DRIVES ALONG AN EXPRESSWAY ON HIS WAY TO WORK. THE CAR STOPS. HE GETS OUT RAISES THE HOOD AND UNABLE TO GET THE CAR STARTED, HE CURSES THE CAR AND THE OTHER CARS GO BY HONKING THEIR HORNS. WHEN HE GETS TO WORK HE CURSES HIS FELLOW WORKERS. WHEN HE GETS HOME HE CURSES HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN, WHEN HE PLAYS GOLF POORLY HE CURSES THE CLUBS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, PEOPLE CURSE ANYTHING AND ANYONE WHO FRUSTRATES THEIR NORMAL ACTIVITIES. I DO NOT AGREE WITH THOSE WHO SAY THAT PROFANITY IS THE EXPRESSION OF LITTLE OR WEAK MINDS, OR THOSE WHO DO NOT KNOW HOW TO EXPRESS THEMSELVES IN ANY OTHER WAY. AS A MATTER OF FACT, SOME OF THE MOST KNOWLEDGEABLE AND ARTICULATE MEN I'VE EVER KNOWN HAVE BEEN PROLIFIC WITH PROFANITY. THIS DOES NOT EXCUSE SUCH BEHAVIOR, IT SIMPLY ADDS TO THE FACT THAT NO MATTER WHO DOES IT OR WHERE, IT IS STILL CHEAP AND VULGAR. SOME PARENTS FORGET THAT CHILDREN PICK UP EVERY WORD THEY HEAR IN THE HOME OR ANYWHERE ELSE. THERE IS AN OLD STORY ABOUT LITTLE JOHNNY WHO WAS SITTING IN THE PRESENCE OF THE VISITING PASTOR WHEN FOR NO APPARENT REASON, HE CAME FORTH WITH A VERY SHOCKING PROFANE WORD. HIS MOTHER WAS HORRIFIED AND ASKED WHERE IN THE WORLD HE'D HEARD THAT WORD. JOHNNY'S REPLY WAS HE HAD HEARD MOMMY AND DADDY USING IT IN AN ARGUMENT ON THE PREVIOUS NIGHT! SEVERAL YEARS AGO SOMEONE GAVE ME A CARD ENTITLED "TEN REASONS WHY I SWEAR". SOME OF THE REASONS WERE: 1 IT PLEASES MOTHER SO MUCH; 2 IT IS A MARK OF MANLINESS; 3 IT PROVES I HAVE GOOD SELF-CONTROL; 4 IT MAKES MY CONVERSATION SO PLEASING AND PUTS EVERYONE AT EASE AROUND ME; 5 IT IMPRESSES PEOPLE THAT I HAVE MORE THAN AN ORDINARY EDUCATION. 6 IT IS AN UNMISTAKABLE SIGN OF CULTURE AND REFINEMENT, ETC. - RECENTLY, WHILE TALKING WITH SOME FRIENDS

ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, WE GOT ON THIS MATTER OF SWEARING. I THINK THERE IS A THEOLOGICAL REASON WHY MEN SWEAR. SWEARING IS PROOF OF THE BIBLICAL DOCTRINE OF TOTAL DEPRAVITY. PROFANITY IS A MORAL PROBLEM AND IS THE NATURAL EXPRESSION OF THE HUMAN HEART THAT IS NOT BEEN TOUCHED BY GRACE. ROM. 3:14 SAYS "WHOSE MOUTH IS FULL OF CURSING...." WHEN MEN KNOW THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS SAVIOR AND LORD ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS CORRECTED IN THE LIFE IS THE PROBLEM OF SWEARING (RELATE TO DAD) IF YOU ARE A PROFESSING CHRISTIAN AND YOUR VOCABULARY HASN'T CLEANED UP, THERE IS SOMETHING WRONG WITH THAT PROFESSION. I'M NOT SAYING THAT A NEW CHRISTIAN MIGHT NOT ACCIDENTLY SWEAR, BUT WHEN HE DOES IT IS A SUBJECT AND A MATTER OF GRACE REPENTANCE AND NOT SOMETHING TO BE PASSED OFF QUICKLY OR EXCUSED. IF YOU PROFESS TO BE SAVED AND YOUR VOCABULARY HASN'T CHANGED, SOMETHING IS DRASTICALLY WRONG WITH THAT PROFESSION. IT IS NOT POSSIBLE FOR THE SAME MOUTH TO BOTH PRAISE GOD AND PROFANE HIM AT ONE AND THE SAME TIME! WITH PROFANITY SO WIDESPREAD IN BUSINESS AND NOW ON TELEVISION, THE SUBJECT OF SLANG MAY SEEM TO BE TRITE. I THINK A WORD NEEDS TO BE SAID ABOUT SLANG WORDS USED INSTEAD OF THE WORD OF GOD. WORDS LIKE "BY GOLLY," "GEE WHIZ," "JEEZ," "GEE," "LAWDY" ARE ALL SLANG EXPRESSIONS FOR PROFANITY, BUT DO NOT HONOR THE NAME OF GOD IN CONVERSATION. AS WAS STATED A MOMENT AGO, PROFANITY IS A PROBLEM OF THE HEART AND NOT THE MOUTH ALONE. (MARK 7:6, 21-23) JESUS TAUGHT THAT THE TONGUE IS AN INDEX OF THE MIND. IF THE HEART IS CORRECT THE SPEECH WILL BE CORRECT. JESUS WARNED MAN ABOUT FRIVOLOUS AND THOUGHTLESS SPEECH, "BUT I SAY UNTO YOU THAT EVERY IDLE WORD 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." (MATT. 12:36-37)

IV. THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT: THE SABBATH DAY- 20:8-11

HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU HEARD SOMEONE PRAY IN CHURCH AND THANK THE LORD FOR THE BEAUTIFUL SABBATH DAY? SUNDAY IS NOT THE SABBATH! THE SABBATH LOOKS BACKWARD TO GOD'S WORK IN CREATION AND REMINDS MAN THAT HIS WORK SHOULD BE DONE ON A SIX DAY CYCLE WITH ONE DAY OF REST IN THAT 7 DAY CYCLE. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THE IDEA OF THE SABBATH WENT BEYOND THE WEEK TO

YEARS AND THE VARIOUS CYCLES OF 7 INVOLVING A SABBATH YEAR AND THE YEAR OF JUBILEE EVERY 50 YEARS. (EXPLAIN THE SABBATH IN THE MOSAIC COVENANT WAS A SIGN OF THAT COVENANT AND CEASED AT A PERIOD IN TIME BUT WILL BE REESTABLISHED IN THE MESSIANIC KINGDOM. THE IDEA OF THE SABBATH WAS HUMANITARIAN IN ITS DESIGN NOT PRIMARILY FOR RELIGIOUS PURPOSES, BECAUSE THERE IS NOTHING SAID ABOUT WORSHIPPING GOD OR RELIGIOUS SERVICES IN THIS COMMANDMENT. IT WAS GIVEN FOR MAN TO HAVE A DAY OF REST, COMING ASIDE FROM THE ORDINARY TOILS OF LIFE, AND RESTING ONE DAY IN SEVEN. THERE WERE SOME INTERESTING IDEAS WHICH DEVELOPED AROUND THE SABBATH. I SHALL NOT SOON FORGET THE FIST-SHAKING EPISODE ON A BUS IN ISRAEL ON THE SABBATH DAY. THE BIBLE SAID IT WAS NOT LAWFUL TO GATHER MANNA ON THE SABBATH, BUILD A FIRE, OR EVEN TO GATHER STICKS. (CF. EXO. 16:26, 35:3, NUMB. 25:35) THERE WAS SUCH A THING AS A SABBATH DAY'S JOURNEY, IN OTHER WORDS THE DISTANCE A MAN COULD TRAVEL ON THE SABBATH WAS LESS THAN A MILE. IN JESUS TIME, THE PHARISEES HAD SO BURDENED THE PEOPLE WITH EXCESSIVE RULES AND REGULATIONS REGARDING THE SABBATH THAT IT WAS VIRTUALLY IMPOSSIBLE FOR PEOPLE TO LIVE UNDER THOSE HEAVY BURDENS. THE PHARISEES HAD A LAW THAT MEN WERE FORBIDDEN TO HEAL ON THE SABBATH, AND IN CASES OF SEVERE INJURY STEPS COULD BE TAKEN TO KEEP A MAN FROM GETTING WORSE, BUT NO POSITIVE CURE COULD BE INSTITUTED ON THE SABBATH. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THIS INSTITUTION WHICH GOD GAVE TO PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS AND HEALTH AND THE WELFARE OF ORDINARY PEOPLE BECAME A REAL BURDEN IN THE TIME OF THE PHARISEES. THESE PEOPLE MADE THE SABBATH LAWS DEARER THAN LIFE ITSELF. WHEN JESUS CAME HE PROCLAIMED HIMSELF LORD OF THE SABBATH AND RENEWED THE TRUE FACT THAT THE SABBATH WAS GIVEN FOR MAN AND NOT VICE-VERSA. AS A MATTER OF FACT, DURING THE INTER-TESTAMENT PERIOD, CERTAIN JEWS WOULD STAND BY AND BE KILLED IN COLD BLOOD WITHOUT DEFENDING THEMSELVES FOR FEAR OF TAKING UP ARMS ON THE SABBATH DAY. THE SABBATH WAS A SYMBOL OR A MEMORIAL DAY THAT WAS UNIQUELY LINKED TO THE DISPENSATION OF LAW. THE SABBATH WAS GIVEN TO ISRAEL AS A PART OF THE LAW GIVEN BY MOSES. SOME OF THE PEOPLE WOULD TAKE THE IDEA OF THE SABBATH YET ISOLATE LAWS WHICH GOVERNED IT AND TRY TO FIT IT INTO THE CHRISTIAN DISPENSATION MAKING IT A DAY OF RELIGIOUS ACTIVITY AND MEETINGS BUT THIS IS ENTIRELY OUT OF HARMONY WITH THE SCRIPTURES ON THE SUBJECT. IT BECAME OBVIOUS IN THE TEACHINGS OF

CHRIST THAT A GREATER THAN MOSES WAS IN THE MIDST OF ISRAEL. HE CAME TO RESCUE THE SABBATH FROM THE INSLAVING NATURE OF THE VARIOUS LAWS IMPOSED UPON THEM AND TO TURN IT TO THE BENEFIT AND BLESSING OF MANKIND. MAN WAS NOT MADE FOR THAT SPECIAL DAY, THE DAY WAS MADE FOR MAN'S BLESSING. WITH THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST, THE EARLY CHURCH WORSHIPPED GOD ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK. (CR. ACTS 20:7, I. COR. 16:2) THE LORD'S DAY IS LINKED TO THE DISPENSATION OF GRACE AND REMINDS US NOT OF GOD'S REST IN CREATION BUT OF CHRIST'S WORK IN RESURRECTION. THE SABBATH WAS UNIQUELY JEWISH IN NATURE AND THE LORD'S DAY HAS SPECIAL PURPOSE FOR THE CHURCH. FOR EXAMPLE, IN THE BOOK OF ACTS, THE WORD SABBATH IS MENTIONED 9 TIMES, BUT NOT ONE TIME DOES THE WORD IMPLY THAT THE EARLY CHURCH KEPT IT IN THE O.T. SENSE OF THE WORD. AS A MATTER OF FACT, VERSES SUCH AS COL. 2:16-17, II COR. 3:5-15, SUGGEST THAT THE LAW IN ITS ENTIRETY WAS NAILED TO THE CROSS OF CHRIST. AS A MATTER OF INFORMATION, THE LORD JESUS DID KEEP THE SABBATH. AS A JEW HE WAS BORN UNDER THE LAW AND KEPT IT PERFECTLY, BUT THERE IS NO MENTION OF HIS REQUIRING ANY OTHER MAN TO KEEP THE LAW IN THIS DISPENSATION. ONE THING IS OBVIOUS IN THE WORD OF GOD, THAT THE SABBATH DAY AND THE LORD'S DAY ARE DIFFERENT DAYS AND SPEAK OF DIFFERENT EVENTS. THE SABBATH IS THE LAST DAY IN A SERIES OF SEVEN AND SPEAKS OF GOD'S REST FROM ~~1000~~ IN THE CREATION WEEK AND WAS GIVEN AS A SIGN OF THE COVENANT GOD MADE WITH MOSES. THE LORD'S DAY IS THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK AND COMMEMORATES THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. THERE ARE SOME THINGS WHICH SHOULD BE SAID ABOUT THE LORD'S DAY. ACCORDING TO THE N.T., THE LORD'S DAY WAS A DAY IN WHICH CHRISTIANS ASSEMBLED FOR PUBLIC WORSHIP. IT WAS A DAY OF STUDY OF THE WORD OF GOD, OF PRAYER, OF FELLOWSHIP AND PRAISE TO THE LORD. IT SHOULD BE A DAY FOR THE FAMILY, FOR THE SOUL AND SPIRIT TO BE REFRESHED IN GOD'S PRESENCE. THERE IS A PRINCIPLE WHICH NEEDS TO BE CALLED TO THE ATTENTION OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE. THE LORD'S DAY IS BEING DISHONORED ACROSS THE LAND. SUNDAY HAS BECOME FUNDAY AND THE BIGGEST DAY FOR SALES IN THE MARKET PLACE. GOD IS FORGOTTEN AND STORES AND BUSINESS IS OPERATING FOR THE CONVENIENCE OF SHOPPERS AND THE LORDS DAY HAS BECOME A DAY FOR AMUSEMENTS AND SPORTS TO THE EXCLUSION OF THE WORSHIP OF GOD. I DO NOT THINK GOD INTENDED THE LORD'S DAY TO BE A SABBATH WHEREBY PEOPLE

Do nothing.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS: 5 & 6

Exodus 20:12-13

THERE IS A FICTICIOUS STORY ABOUT A LITTLE OLD MAN WHO LIVED WITH HIS CHILDREN IN HIS OLD AGE BECAUSE HE DID NOT HAVE RESOURCES TO LIVE ELSEWHERE. HOWEVER, BECAUSE HIS HAND WAS SHAKY AT THE TABLE HE SOMETIMES MADE A MESS, DRIBBLING FOOD ON HIS CLOTHING AND THE TABLECLOTH, WHICH PROVED TO BE SOMEWHAT OF AN EMBARRASSMENT TO THE HUSBAND AND WIFE IN THE HOME. THEY AGREED THAT THE LITTLE OLD MAN WOULD HAVE TO EAT IN ANOTHER PART OF THE HOUSE, OUT OF VIEW FROM THE REST OF THE FAMILY. ONE DAY WHEN HIS TREMBLING HAND WAS UNABLE TO HOLD THE UTENSIL FROM WHICH HE WAS EATING, IT FELL SHATTERED, AND BROUGHT THE WRATH OF HIS DAUGHTER-IN-LAW UPON HIM. SPEAKING TO HIM IN STRONG WORDS AND ACCUSING HIM OF BARNYARD BEHAVIOR SHE SAID FROM THIS POINT ON THE LITTLE OLD MAN WOULD EAT FROM A WOODEN TROUGH. THE 4 YEAR OLD SON IN THE FAMILY WAS OBSERVED ONE EVENING PLAYING WITH SOME PIECES OF WOOD AND WHEN ASKED WHAT HE WAS DOING HE SAID: I'M MAKING A TROUGH SO I CAN FEED YOU AND MOMMY OUT OF IT WHEN I GET BIG!" THE FICTICIOUS STORY TELLS HOW THE SHAMED CHILDREN RETRIEVED THE LITTLE OLD MAN FROM A DISTANT PART OF THE HOUSE, SET HIM IN A COMFORTABLE CHAIR, WELCOMED HIM AT THE TABLE WITH NO MORE SCOLDING AND NO MORE CONCERN FOR SPILLED OR BROKEN THINGS. THOUGH THE STORY IS FICTICIOUS, THE TRUTH IS REAL. THERE ARE MANY CHILDREN IN AMERICA WHO TREAT THEIR PARENTS WITH UTTER SHAME AND SCORN. THIS BRINGS US TO THE TWO COMMANDMENTS FOR CONSIDERATION TODAY.

V. THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT: HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER - Exo. 20:12

THE ATTITUDE WHICH HAS BEEN DESCRIBED IN THE FAIRY TALE IS NOT NEW TO OUR GENERATION. IN THE DAYS OF OUR LORD'S PUBLIC MINISTRY, JESUS CONDEMNED THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES FOR THEIR CALLOUSED ATTITUDE TOWARD THEIR PARENTS. THEY WERE SIDE-STEPPING THE CLEAR COMMAND OF GOD IN THE O.T. IN AVOIDING HELP TO THEIR PARENTS IN A SUBTLE "RELIGIOUS" WAY. THEY PROFESSED THAT ALL THEIR GOODS WERE KORBAN, THAT IS,

THEIR MONEY HAD BEEN DEDICATED TO GOD SO PARENTS, THEY CLAIMED, HAD NO CLAIM UPON THEM BECAUSE THEY WERE GIVING THEIR GIFTS TO GOD. A SON COULD TELL HIS PARENTS THAT THE MONEY HE HAD FOR THEM HAD BEEN GIVEN TO GOD AND COULD BE USED FOR NO OTHER PURPOSE. HOWEVER, OFTENTIMES THIS MONEY WAS NOT EVEN GIVEN IT WAS SIMPLY A CLAIM MADE TO AVOID RESPONSIBILITY TO AGED PARENTS. IT WAS A TRICK OR A RATIONALIZATION TO AVOID FAMILY RESPONSIBILITY. (MATT. 15:4-6) JESUS CALLED THESE PEOPLE HYPOCRITES. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT A ROMAN FATHER HAD ABSOLUTE POWER OVER HIS CHILDREN, INCLUDING HIS SONS. AS LONG AS A FATHER LIVED A ROMAN SON WAS NEVER OF AGE AND COULD NOT LEGALLY OWN PROPERTY. HIS FATHER HAD ABSOLUTE POWER OVER HIM AND THIS POWER INVOLVED IMPRISONMENT, BEATING WORK, AND EVEN DEATH. THERE WAS NO LEGAL POWER THAT COULD RELEASE THE SON FROM HIS FATHER'S POWER OVER HIM. WHEN CHRISTIANITY CAME INTO THE WORLD CHILDREN WERE OFTEN TREATED IN A HEARTLESS MANNER. MANY WERE LEFT IN THE STREETS TO DIE OR EXPOSED TO THE VICES OF SOCIETY. OFTEN BOYS WERE TRAINED AS GLADIATORS, GIRLS WERE SCHOOLED IN PROSTITUTION. ONE COMMENTATOR SUGGESTS THAT CHILDREN WERE DELIBERATELY MAIMED SUCH AS BROKEN LIMBS, WHICH DID NOT HEAL PROPERLY, IN ORDER THAT THEY MIGHT BECOME PROFESSIONALLY BEGGARS IN THE STREETS OF ROME. THERE ARE MANY PROBLEMS IN THIS MATTER OF HONORING ONE'S PARENTS. FOR ONE THING, PARENTS DO NOT ALWAYS UNDERSTAND THAT HONOR MUST BE EARNED! IF A PARENT EXPECTS HONOR FROM THE CHILDREN HE MUST CONDUCT HIMSELF IN A WAY THAT IS WORTHY OF HIS HONOR. THIS IS A SIDE OF THIS SUBJECT THAT IS SELDOM EXPLORED! THE PARENT WHO DOES NOT HAVE THE RESPECT OF HIS CHILDREN WILL NOT BE ABLE TO DISCIPLINE OR CONTROL THEM IN A PROPER FASHION. THE BIBLE SPEAKS OF THE DANGERS OF UNDUE SEVERITY ON THE PART OF PARENTS. THERE IS NEED FOR BALANCE IN THE CHRISTIAN HOME. TOO MUCH CRITICISM AND TOO LITTLE PRAISE IS AS DAMAGING AS TOO MUCH PRAISE AND SPOILING OF CHILDREN. IN OUR TIME WE HAVE HEARD A GREAT DEAL ABOUT THE GENERATION GAP. THE FOLLOWING IS A QUOTATION FROM PETER THE HERMIT MADE IN THE 11TH CENTURY: "THE WORLD IS PASSING THROUGH TROUBLOUS TIMES. THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF TODAY THINK OF NOTHING BUT THEMSELVES. THEY HAVE NO REVERENCE FOR PARENT OR OLD AGE. THEY ARE IMPATIENT OF ALL RESTRAINT. THEY TALK AS IF THEY KNEW EVERYTHING AND WHAT PASSES FOR WISDOM WITH US IS FOOLISHNESS WITH THEM. AS FOR THE GIRLS, THEY ARE

NOT

FROM WORD, IMMODEST AND UNWOMANLY IN SPEECH, BEHAVIOUR AND DRESS." (RELATE THE STATEMENT OF CONFUCIUS)

I WISH IT WERE POSSIBLE TO TALK ABOUT THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS TOWARD THEIR CHILDREN IN MATTERS OF PARENTAL LOVE AND UNDERSTANDING. THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PARENTS TO CREATE A HOME IN WHICH THERE IS SOME COMMUNICATION AMONG THE MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY, WHERE ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY, INCLUDING THE CHILDREN, ARE TREATED WITH KINDNESS, RESPECT, YET WITH PROPER STANDARDS OF CONTROL AND DISCIPLINE. I AM NOT UNAWARE OF THE TIMES IN WHICH WE LIVE BUT I AM FULLY CONVINCED THAT SOME OF THE DIFFICULTY IN OUR HOMES, EVEN CHRISTIAN HOMES, RESTS UPON THE UNWILLINGNESS OF PARENTS TO CHANGE WHEN CHANGE IS NECESSARY, AND TO LISTEN WHEN LISTENING IS NECESSARY. IT WOULD SEEM TO ME THAT PARENTS MUST EARN THE RESPECT OF THEIR CHILDREN AND NOWHERE IN THE BIBLE IS A FATHER GIVEN DICTATORIAL OR TYRANNICAL CONTROL OVER HIS CHILDREN TO LEGISLATE LAWS AND DEMAND RESPECT AND OBEDIENCE SIMPLY BECAUSE HE SAYS SO. OUR HOMES SHOULD BE A HAVEN FOR PARENTS AND CHILDREN ALIKE, WHERE THEY MAY COME IN FROM THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD AND FIND SUPPORT FROM THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THEIR FAMILY.

SEVERAL YEARS AGO SOMEONE LISTED SEVERAL RULES ON HOW TO PRODUCE A DELINQUENT CHILD. (1) BEGIN AT INFANCY TO GIVE THE CHILD EVERYTHING HE WANTS. IN THIS WAY HE WILL GROW UP TO BELIEVE THE WORLD OWES HIM A LIVING. (2) WHEN HE PICKS UP BAD LANGUAGE LAUGH AT HIM. THIS WILL MAKE HIM THINK HE'S CUTE. (3) NEVER GIVE HIM ANY SPIRITUAL TRAINING. WAIT UNTIL HE'S 21 AND THEN LET HIM DECIDE FOR HIMSELF. (4) AVOID THE USE OF THE WORD WRONG. IT MAY DEVELOP A GUILT COMPLEX. THIS WILL CONDITION HIM TO BELIEVE LATER WHEN HE IS ARRESTED FOR STEALING THAT SOCIETY IS AGAINST HIM AND HE'S BEING PERSECUTED. (5) PICK UP EVERYTHING HE LEAVES LYING AROUND, BOOKS, SHOES, CLOTHES. DO EVERYTHING FOR HIM SO HE WILL BE EXPERIENCED IN THROWING ALL RESPONSIBILITY ON OTHERS. (6) LET HIM READ ANY PRINTED MATTER HE CAN GET HIS HANDS ON. BE CAREFUL THAT THE SILVERWARE AND DRINKING GLASSES ARE CLEAN AND LET HIS MIND FEAST ON GARBAGE. (7) QUARREL FREQUENTLY IN THE PRESENCE OF YOUR CHILDREN. IN THIS WAY THEY WILL NOT BE TOO SHOCKED WHEN THE HOME IS BROKEN UP LATER ON. (8) GIVE A CHILD ALL THE SPENDING MONEY HE WANTS. NEVER LET HIM EARN HIS OWN. WHY SHOULD HE HAVE IT AS TOUGH AS YOU DID? (9) SATISFY HIS EVERY CRAVING FOR FOOD DRINK AND

10 Rules For Delinquents

COMFORT. DENIAL MAY LEAD TO FRUSTRATION. (10) TAKE HIS PART AGAINST NEIGHBORS, TEACHERS, POLICEMEN. THEY ARE PREDJUDICED AGAINST YOUR CHILD. HAVING DONE ALL OF THESE THINGS THEN PREPARE FOR A LIFE OF GRIEF, FOR THERE IS NO QUESTION YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE IT! HAVING SAID ALL OF THIS LET US COME BACK TO THE RESPONSIBILITY OF CHILDREN TO THEIR PARENTS. IN THE COLOSSIAN LETTER, 3:20, WE READ THESE WORDS: "CHILDREN OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN ALL THINGS FOR THIS IS WELL PLEASING UNTO THE LORD." ADD TO THAT THOUGHT EPH. 6:1ff "CHILDREN OBEY YOUR PARENTS IN THE LORD FOR THIS IS RIGHT. HONOR THY FATHER AND MOTHER; WHICH IS THE FIRST COMMANDMENT WITH PROMISE; THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH THEE AND THOU MAYEST LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH." TWO IDEAS SPEAK FROM THESE VERSES: (1) CHILDREN SHOULD OBEY THEIR PARENTS BECAUSE IT IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO! (2) CHILDREN SHOULD OBEY THEIR PARENTS BECAUSE IT PLEASES THE LORD! IF I UNDERSTAND THESE VERSES CORRECTLY, CHILDREN WHO DO NOT OBEY THEIR PARENTS, THAT IS, GIVE THEM THE PROPER OBEDIENCE, RECOGNITION, GRATITUDE AND ALL THAT IS REQUIRED IN THE SCRIPTURE, ARE NOT PLEASING GOD. IN SO DOING THEIR LIVES WILL NOT GO WELL! (6:3) MANY KIDS HAVE MISREAD THE VERSES IN THE N.T. TO READ "PARENTS OBEY YOUR CHILDREN" OR "CHILDREN HUMOR YOUR PARENTS." IF YOU DO NOT KNOW ANY OTHER WAY TO PLEASE GOD THAN TO OBEY YOUR PARENTS THEN THIS IS A GOOD PLACE TO START. GOD IS NOT PLEASED WITH A SMART-ALECK, SASSY, BACK-TALKING, OVERBEARING, OPINIONATED DISOBEDIENT CHILD! I MIGHT ALSO ADD THAT RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY AND TRUTH BEGIN AT HOME. CHILDREN WHO DO NOT LEARN TO HONOR THEIR PARENTS IN THE HOME WILL NOT KNOW THE MEANING OF THE WORD IN SOCIETY. THEY WILL HAVE NO HONOR FOR GOVERNMENTAL AUTHORITY IN THE PERSON OF A POLICEMAN OR PUBLIC OFFICIALS. A CHILD WHO HAS NO RESPECT FOR HIS PARENTS USUALLY HAS NO RESPECT FOR AUTHORITY PERIOD!

VI. THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT: THOU SHALT NOT KILL-20:13

ONE OF THE QUESTIONS PEOPLE ASK MOST OFTEN IS "WILL THERE BE MURDERERS IN HEAVEN?" THE ANSWER IS, YES. I CAN THINK OF THREE WHO ARE ALREADY THERE! MOSES, DAVID, AND PAUL. HOWEVER, LET ME HASTEN TO SAY THAT THEY WERE FORGIVEN MURDERERS WHO CAME TO GRIPS WITH GOD AFTER THEIR FAILURE IN THIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR FELLOW MAN. THE LATE DR. ALBERT SWEITZER DID NOT UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF THE 6TH COMMANDMENT. HE BELIEVED IN THE SACREDNESS OF ALL LIFE, NOT JUST HUMAN LIFE. HE WOULD LET INSECTS AND OTHER TYPES OF

LIFE FLOURISH SIMPLY BECAUSE HE FAILED TO UNDERSTAND THE CORRECT MEANING OF THIS COMMANDMENT. THE WORD FOR KILL IS THE WORD FOR MURDER. THIS COMMANDMENT FORBIDS MURDER SPECIFICALLY AND NOT KILLING IN GENERAL. ALL KILLING IS NOT MURDER AS THE BIBLE MAKES IT CLEAR. FOR EXAMPLE, ANIMALS WERE KILLED FOR FOOD. THE O.T. RECOGNIZED THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN ACCIDENTAL KILLING, WHAT WE CALL MANSLAUGHTER, AND WILFULL PREMEDITATED KILLING. THE CITIES OF REFUGE WERE CONVENIENTLY LOCATED ON EACH SIDE OF THE JORDAN RIVER. IN THE CASE OF AN ACCIDENTAL KILLING, THE SLAYER WAS GRANTED SANCTUARY OR IMMUNITY IN THE CITY OF REFUGE. THE PURPOSE OF SUCH SANCTUARY WAS IN ORDER THAT THE KILLING MIGHT BE INVESTIGATED AND THE SLAYER COULD BE PROTECTED DURING THIS CRITICAL PERIOD. IF HE WAS EXONERATED OF ANY WRONGDOING, THEN HE WAS FREE TO STAY IN THE CITY OF REFUGE UNTIL THE DEATH OF THE HIGH PRIEST. (IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTICE THAT THE ROADS TO THE CITIES OF REFUGE WERE KEPT OPEN, THE SIGNPOSTS WERE ADEQUATE AND COULD NOT BE TAMPERED WITH AND NO PERSON WAS EVER MORE THAN 30 MILES AWAY FROM ONE OF THESE CITIES. NUM. 35:6-34) IT IS ALSO INTERESTING TO NOTICE THAT IN A JEWISH COURT CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE WAS NOT VALID. NO MAN COULD BE CONDEMNED ON ANY EVIDENCE LESS THAN 2 EYE WITNESSES. THIS COMMANDMENT TOUCHES SEVERAL OTHER BIBLE SUBJECTS SUCH AS SELF-DEFENSE, CAPITAL PUNISHMENT, SUICIDE, WAR, ABORTION AND EUTHANASIA. THIS COMMANDMENT WAS GIVEN BY GOD BECAUSE LIFE IS SACRED. WHEN MEN DISOBEY THIS COMMANDMENT IT IS AN EVIDENCE OF MORAL DECAY IN A SOCIETY. AS A MATTER OF FACT, GOD INSTITUTED THE PRINCIPLE OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT ! IN GEN. 9:6 FOR THE VERY REASON THAT MAN WAS MADE IN THE IMAGE OF GOD AND LIFE IS VERY SACRED. THE PRINCIPLE LAID DOWN IN THIS V. ILLUSTRATES THE FACT THAT THE WORTH OF THE INDIVIDUAL IS GREAT, THAT THE MAXIMUM PENALTY IS PRONOUNCED UPON MEN WHO TAKE HUMAN LIFE THOUGHTLESSLY AND CARELESSLY. WHEN WE SPEAK OF THE PRINCIPLE INVOLVED IN CAPITAL PUNISHMENT WE ARE NOT THROWING TO THE WIND ALL OF THE SAFEGUARDS AND PROTECTION NECESSARY IN THE LAW TO PROTECT BOTH THE GUILTY AND THE INNOCENT, NO THINKING RESPONSIBLE PERSON WANTS TO BE RASH IN SUCH JUDGMENTS BUT THE PRINCIPLE IS LAID DOWN IN THE BIBLE FOR THE VERY PROTECTION OF HUMAN LIFE, WHICH IS A POINT SOME FOLK HAVE ABSOLUTELY FAILED TO SEE AND APPRECIATE THERE IS NO QUESTION THAT THE PRINCIPLE OF CAPITAL

PUNISHMENT IS AUTHORIZED IN THE WORD OF GOD. IT IS ALSO CLEAR THAT GOVERNMENT HAS THE RESPONSIBILITY UNDER GOD TO CARRY OUT THIS PRINCIPLE. ACCORDING TO ROMANS 13 IT IS ONE OF THE FUNCTIONS AS GOVERNMENT. IT TEACHES THAT GOVERNMENT HAS THE RIGHT TO TAKE THE LIFE OF A CRIMINAL AND THAT SUCH ACTION IS NOT CLASSIFIED AS MURDER. ONE OF THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF GOVERNMENT IS TO PUNISH PEOPLE, (II PETER 2:13) AND CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS EVIDENTLY ONE OF THE WAYS THIS PURPOSE IS CARRIED OUT. SOMEONE HAS CONCLUDED THIS IDEA WITH A VERY PERCEPTIVE STATEMENT: "CAPITAL PUNISHMENT SHOULD NEVER BE PRONOUNCED ON ANYONE WITHOUT DUE AND FULL PROCESS OF LAW, INCLUDING CAPABLE DEFENCE ASSISTANCE. NO ONE SHOULD BE EXECUTED UNLESS HIS GUILT HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED BEYOND THE SLIGHTEST DOUBT, AND ONLY THEN IN THE ABSENCE OF MITIGATING FACTORS." AND AS WAS SAID A MOMENT AGO, THE PERSON WHO ACTS IN BEHALF OF CIVIL AUTHORITY IN THE EXECUTION OF CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS NOT DOING SO AS PERSONAL VENGEANCE AND THEREFORE IS NOT COMMITTING MURDER. IN THE LIGHT OF OUR CURRENT SITUATION, MANY YOUNG PEOPLE QUESTIONED THE JUSTIFICATION OF WAR. 2. ONCE AGAIN, IN ROMANS 13:3 PAUL ESTABLISHES THE DIVINE AUTHORITY OF THE STATE TO BEAR THE SWORD. IN OUR TROUBLED TIME NOT ONLY IS A POLICE FORCE NECESSARY TO MAINTAIN LAW IN SOCIETY BUT MILITARY FORCE IS NECESSARY TO RESIST AGGRESSIVE NATIONS THAT MIGHT ATTACK A COUNTRY THAT COULD NOT DEFEND ITSELF AGAINST LAWLESSNESS AND FOR THE SAKE OF JUSTICE, LACK OF MILITARY PREPAREDNESS COULD MEAN NATIONAL SUICIDE IN OUR TROUBLED WORLD. THE MATTER OF NON-RESISTANCE AS MENTIONED IN THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT HAD TO DEAL WITH PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND NOT THE QUESTION OF WAR ON A LARGER BASIS. AS A MATTER OF FACT, I'M NOT SURE I CAN ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS THAT HAVE TO DO WITH THIS SENSITIVE SUBJECT. OURS IS A TROUBLED GENERATION IN THE MATTER OF WAR, JUST OR OTHERWISE. THE PRESENT NUCLEAR STOCKPILES ARE EQUIVALENT TO APPROXIMATELY 320 TO 350 BILLION TONS OF TNT, WHICH SPELLED OUT IN SMALLER TERMS MEANS, THAT THERE IS IN THE NUCLEAR ARSENALS OF THE COUNTRIES OF THIS WORLD 10 TONS OF TNT DESTRUCTIVE POWER FOR EVERY MAN WOMAN AND CHILD ON THE FACE OF THE EARTH. ANOTHER WRITER HAS SUGGESTED THAT IN THE AREA OF NERVE GAS ALONE THERE IS ENOUGH LETHAL GAS AVAILABLE IN THE WORLD TO DESTROY ALL LIFE IN AN AREA AS BROAD AS 455 MILLION SQUARE MILES, WHICH IS 8 TIMES THE TOTAL SURFACE AREA OF THE WHOLE WORLD. I DON'T

END

1101
BELIEVE THE STATE WILL OPERATE ON THE BASIS OF CHRISTIAN PRINCIPLES AND POLICIES. ITS PRIMARY CONCERN IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF PROTECTING ITS CITIZEN'S AND SAFEGUARDING ITS TERRITORY AND PROTECTING ITS OWN NATIONAL INTERESTS. A CHRISTIAN HAS A RESPONSIBILITY TO HUMAN GOVERNMENT AND IF THE CONFLICT EVER DEVELOPS BETWEEN ONE'S PERSONAL RELIGIOUS CONVICTIONS AND THE DEMANDS OF HUMAN GOVERNMENT THE CHRISTIAN MUST BE PREPARED TO PAY THE FULL PENALTY OF HIS REFUSAL TO OBEY HIS GOVERNMENT. THE QUESTION OF ~~SUICIDE~~ IS RELATED TO THIS COMMANDMENT. THERE ARE SOME 5 SUICIDES MENTIONED IN THE BIBLE. AHITHOPHEL, WHO COMMITTED SUICIDE WHEN HIS COUNSEL WAS NOT FOLLOWED (II SAM. 17:23); ZIMORI, (I KINGS 16:18); ABIMELECH (JUDGES 9:54); SAMSON (JUDGES 16:23-31); SAUL (I SAM. 31:4-5) AND JUDAS ISCARIOT (MATT. 27:3-5). THERE ARE SOME 20 THOUSAND OR MORE SUICIDES EVERY YEAR IN THE U.S. I LOOK UPON SUICIDE AS BREAKING THIS COMMANDMENT OF GOD. A PERSON USUALLY COMES TO THE POINT OF SUICIDE WHEN HE IS DEPRESSED AND FEELS A SENSE OF LONLINESS, WHICH LEADS TO SELF-PITY AND ALL OF ITS SELF-CENTEREDNESS SOMETIMES RESULTS IN SUICIDE. I THINK IT IS POSSIBLE EVEN FOR A CHRISTIAN TO BECOME OVERWHELMED WITH THE PRESSURES OF LIFE TO THE POINT WHERE HE LOOSES ALL RATIONAL APPROACH TO THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE. IT IS POSSIBLE FOR HIM TO TAKE HIS OWN LIFE BUT NOT IN A PROPER FRAME OF MIND. IN MY JUDGMENT ANYONE WHO DETERMINES TO DO THIS IS HAVING MENTAL ABNORMALITIES IN HIS PERSON. I DO NOT MEAN TO BE ABRUPT AND UNSYMPATHETIC BUT I THINK CHRISTIANS SHOULD KNOW THAT SUCH ACTION DOES NOT END EXISTENCE. RUNNING AWAY FROM LIFE AND LIFE'S PROBLEMS IS NOT THE ANSWER. FOR THE CHRISTIAN TAKING ONE'S LIFE IS FORBIDDEN. THIS DOES NOT MEAN HE WOULD FORFEIT HIS ETERNAL STATUS BUT HE WOULD FORFEIT HIS OPPORTUNITY TO ENHANCE HIS ETERNAL SERVICE FOR CHRIST BY TAKING HIS LIFE PREMATURELY. THE QUESTION OF ~~ABORTION~~ 4. IS RELATED TO THIS COMMANDMENT. YOU MAY BE SURPRISED AND MY BE DISAPPOINTED THAT THERE ARE VERY FEW STATEMENTS IN THE WORD OF GOD BEARING ON THE SUBJECT OF ABORTION. ONE OF THE SURPRISING ASPECTS OF THE SUBJECT IS THE NUMBER OF RELIGIOUS GROUPS OR DENOMINATIONS THAT HAVE ADOPTED FORMAL RESOLUTIONS FAVORING THE REPEAL OF LAWS AGAINST ABORTION AND PLACING THE RESPONSIBILITY IN THE HANDS OF THE WOMAN OR COUPLE

INVOLVED IN SUCH A SITUATION. ALSO, MANY OF THESE RESOLUTIONS MAKE LITTLE OR NO REFERENCE TO THE BIBLE AT ALL! THE BIBLE DOES SHOW IN EXO. 21:22-25 THAT AN ACCIDENTAL MISCARRIAGE OF UNBORN CHILD IS NOT TREATED IN THE SAME FASHION AS MURDER. I'M NOT SURE THAT I CAN RESOLVE THE THEOLOGICAL DEBATE AS TO WHEN LIFE ACTUALLY BEGINS AND WHEN A FETUS IS CONSIDERED A PERSON. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THERE ARE ALL KINDS OF ABORTIONS MENTIONED TO LIST A FEW:

- 1- THERAPEUTIC ABORTION, WHERE TERMINATION OF PREGNANCY IS DONE FOR THE MOTHER'S PHYSICAL HEALTH.
- 2- PSYCHIATRIC ABORTION, WHERE PREGNANCY IS TERMINATED FOR THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THE MOTHER.
- 3- EUGENIC ABORTION, WHICH HAS TO DO WITH POTENTIALLY RETARDED OR DEFORMED CHILDREN
- 4- SOCIAL ABORTION, HAVING TO DO WITH ECONOMIC PRESSURE IN A HOME
- 5- ETHICAL ABORTION, IN THE CASES OF RAPE OR INCEST
- 6- ABORTION ON DEMAND, WHICH PERMITS ABORTION FOR ANY REASON WHATSOEVER.

LET ME SAY THAT THIS IS AN AREA WHERE GREAT CARE SHOULD BE EXERCISED AND ANY KIND OF ABORTION FOR SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT OR ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE IS MORALLY AND SCRIPTURALLY WRONG. IT IS A MATTER OF FACT THAT SOMETIMES IN SUCH CASES THE CURE IS WORSE THAN THE PROBLEM! THERE MAY BE SITUATIONS WHERE THERAPEUTIC ABORTIONS FOR THE SAFEGUARD OF A MOTHER ARE NECESSARY OR IN OTHER CASES, SUCH AS RAPE AND INCEST, BUT THIS SHOULD BE DONE NOT BY THE PASSING WHIM OF AN IRRESPONSIBLE PARENT TO BE, BUT RATHER AFTER CAREFUL CONSULTATION WITH MEDICAL, PSYCHIATRIC AND RELIGIOUS COUNSELING OF THE MOST SENSITIVE NATURE. I'M ALWAYS CONCERNED WHERE PEOPLE RUSH IN SOMETHING AS GREAT AS THE SANCTITY OF HUMAN LIFE AND ARE QUICK TO MAKE DECISIONS. DR. CHARLES RYRIE HAS MADE A VERY PERCEPTIVE OBSERVATION CONCERNING THE MAN MENTIONED IN JOHN 9 WHO, AS YOU KNOW, WAS BORN BLIND. THIS CHAPTER MAKES IT OBVIOUS THAT HIS BLINDNESS WAS FOR THE GLORY OF GOD. RYRIE WAYS SUPPOSE A PRENATAL TEST COULD HAVE BEEN SHOWN THAT THIS BABY BOY WAS TO BE BORN WITHOUT SIGHT. THE PARENTS MIGHT HAVE BEEN ADVISED TO CONSIDER SPARING THEMSELVES THE PROBLEMS OF REARING SUCH A CHILD AND TERMINATING THE PREGNANCY. SUPPOSE ABORTION WAS EASY AND LEGALLY AVAILABLE IN PALESTINE; SHOULD THEY ABORT THE FETUS OR NOT? IMAGINE, FURTHER, THAT THEY DID DECIDE TO HAVE THE ABORTION. OBVIOUSLY THE BABY WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN BORN. THE CHILD WOULD NOT HAVE GROWN UP AND HE WOULD

NOT HAVE BEEN A MEANS OF DEMONSTRATING THE WORKS OF GOD. I DO NOT NEED TO LABOR THE POINT THAT SOMETIMES A DEFECTIVE CHILD IN SOME FASHION INTO A FAMILY HAS BEEN TO THAT FAMILY AN INSTRUMENT OF BLESSING BEYOND HUMAN DESCRIPTION. 5.

THE QUESTION OF EUTHANASIA OR MERCY KILLING IS ASKED BY SOME. EUTHANASIA IS THE IDEA THAT WHEN A PERSON'S LIFE BECOMES INTOLERABLE OR HAS DEVELOPED TO AN IMPOSSIBLE STAGE WHERE IT IS ARGUED LIFE IS WORSE THAN DEATH, THEN LIFE MAY BE LEGITIMATELY TAKEN AWAY. ACCORDING TO THIS IDEA, WHEN A PERSON IS SUFFERING FROM AN INCURABLE DISEASE, IT IS SAID THAT THE KINDLY OR HUMANE THING ALONG WITH HIS CONSENT MIGHT BE TO TAKE HIS LIFE, TO STOP THE SUFFERING. THIS ALL SOUNDS VERY HUMANITARIAN IN NATURE BUT IT VIOLATES THE CLEAR COMMAND THAT THE POWER OF LIFE AND DEATH BELONGS TO GOD AND NOT MAN. THE QUESTION ARISES IN THE SITUATION WHO MAKES SUCH A MOMENTOUS DECISION, WHO CARRIES IT OUT, AND HOW IS IT DONE. SUCH THINKING IS FRAUGHT WITH DANGERS. ONE COMMENTATOR HAS MADE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN MERCY-KILLING AND MERCY-DYING. IF A DOCTOR SHOULD GIVE MEDICATION TO SPEED DEATH, THAT WOULD BE WRONG; BUT IF HE INTURN PERMITTED A PATIENT TO DIE NATURALLY WITHOUT PROLONGING THE AGONY WITH TECHNICAL MACHINES AND ADDED MEDICATION TO PROLONG LIFE THIS IS NOT NECESSARILY WRONG. ALL OF THIS THINKING REMINDS US OF THE FACT THAT GOD PUTS HIGH PRIORITY ON THE INSTITUTION OF THE FAMILY AND UPON THE SACREDNESS OF HUMAN LIFE-AND SO SHOULD WE. WE SHOULD NOT TAKE LIGHTLY THE THINGS WHICH GOD HOLDS SACRED AND IMPORTANT.

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS: 7 & 8

(BRIEFLY REVIEW THE BOOK OF EXODUS TO THIS POINT.)
SOMETIME IN THE PAST YEAR, YOU HAVE WATCHED A T.V. PROGRAM IN WHICH ADULTERY WAS NOT ONLY SANCTIONED BUT SUGGESTED AS THE NOBLE THING TO DO. THE STORY MIGHT BE AS FOLLOWS: A MAN AND A WOMAN MEET BY CHANCE. THEY ARE BOTH MARRIED TO SOMEONE ELSE BUT IT IS AN UNHAPPY MARRIAGE. AS THEY BECOME ACQUAINTED AND "FALL IN LOVE" THE AGONY AND TORMENT OF THEIR MARRIAGE BECOMES OBVIOUS. WHAT SHOULD THEY DO? ACCORDING TO THE STORY THEY HAVE A LOVE AFFAIR AND MAY ULTIMATELY DIVORCE THEIR COMPANION. THROUGHOUT THE STORY THEY ARE PICTURED AS NOBLE AND ULTIMATELY FINDING HAPPINESS BECAUSE THEY HAD THE COURAGE TO BREAK THE BONDS OF A BAD SITUATION. ON THE SCREEN IT ALL LOOKS VERY ACCEPTABLE AND VERY MUCH IN KEEPING WITH THE PHILOSOPHY OF OUR TIME. THE PROBLEM IS THAT SUCH STORIES NOT ONLY CONDONE BUT ENCOURAGE ADULTERY! IT IS ALL PART OF THE CHANGING STANDARDS CONCERNING MORALITY IN AMERICA THAT HAS BEEN TAKING PLACE OVER THE PAST QUARTER CENTURY. WE MAY CHANGE OUR MINDS AND EVEN OUR LAWS IN THIS COUNTRY CONCERNING MORAL BEHAVIOR BUT GOD DOES NOT CHANGE THE RULES SIMPLY BECAUSE WE WANT THEM CHANGED.

VII. THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT - "THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTRY" - 20:14

I.
 A. THERE ARE TWO WORDS IN THE BIBLE WHICH SPEAK CONCERNING LACK OF PURITY AND CHASTITY. THE ALL ENCOMPASSING WORD TO DESCRIBE SEXUAL IMPURITY IS THE WORD FORNICATION. SUCH ACTIVITY IS CONDEMNED NO LESS THAN 18 TIMES IN THE NEW TESTAMENT AND IS SPOKEN OF WITH REFERENCE TO THE CONDUCT OF THE HEATHEN WHO HAVE NO MORAL SCRUPLES REGARDING SEXUAL BEHAVIOR. PAUL USED THE TERM TO SPEAK OF THE FACT THAT WHAT THE HEATHEN DO SHOULD NOT EVEN BE SPOKEN OF BY CHRISTIANS. (1 COR. 6:18, EPH. 5:3) THIS WORD IS ALSO USED TO DESCRIBE ELICIT SEXUAL BEHAVIOR INVOLVING UNMARRIED PERSONS. THE TERM ADULTERY II APPLIES SPECIFICALLY TO THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP OR MARRIAGE BOND AND REFERS TO A MARRIED PERSON ENGAGING IN SEXUAL ACTIVITY REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE PARTNER IS MARRIED OR NOT. THIS TERM IS CONDEMNED NO LESS

↓
 [Signature]

THAN 15 TIMES IN THE N.T. IN THE O.T., SOLOMON SPOKE OF THIS SIN IN TERMS OF SELF-DESTRUCTION. ACCORDING TO PROV. 6:32~~FF~~ SOLOMON DESCRIBES THE FOOLISHNESS OF SUCH ACTIVITY AND LIKENS IT TO A MAN PUTTING BURNING COALS UPON HIS BOSOM OR WALKING UPON BURNING COALS BAREFOOTED. HE DESCRIBES THE ADULTERER AS A PERSON LACKING UNDERSTANDING WHO IS IN THE PROCESS OF DESTROYING HIS OWN SOUL, LET ALONE THE DANGERS INVOLVED WITH JEALOUSY, REVENGE AND OTHER RELATED SINS. SOLOMON SAYS THE PERSON INVOLVED IN ADULTERY DOESN'T HAVE GOOD SENSE! FROM TIME TO TIME, WE NEED TO BE REMINDED THAT THE PROBLEMS WE FACE IN OUR SOCIETY ARE NOT NEW. WHEN CHRISTIANITY CAME INTO THE WORLD IT CAME TO A WORLD THAT WAS SATURATED WITH IMMORALITY, SEX WAS DISPLAYED EVERYWHERE, INCLUDING THE TEMPLES, WHERE IT WAS DONE IN THE NAME OF WORSHIP. INTO THIS WORLD CHRISTIANITY CAME WITH AN UNCOMPROMISING DEMAND FOR PURITY AND CHASTITY. IMMORALITY AND IMPURITY WERE NOT NAMED AMONG CHRISTIANS. THERE COULD BE NO FILTHY IMMORAL LIFE AND STILL CLAIM TO BE A CHRISTIAN! (EPH. 5:3-20, COL. 3:5,6) THERE IS A GREAT NEED IN AMERICA FOR CHRISTIANS TO TAKE A BIBLICAL STAND IN PRECEPT AND PRACTICE IN THIS AREA. BECAUSE OF THE WIDESPREAD APPROVAL OF ADULTERY AND THE ABANDONMENT OF BIBLICAL STANDARDS WE ARE HAVING WHAT SOMEONE CALLED A MORAL DESENSITIZATION IN AMERICA. SOMEONE DESCRIBED IT WITH THE FOLLOWING PSYCHOLOGICAL EXPERIMENT. "A FROG IS PLACED IN COLD WATER. THEN THE TEMPERATURE SLOWLY AND IMPERCEPTIBLY INCREASED. EVENTUALLY THE TEMPERATURE REACHED BOILING POINT, YET THE FROG MADE NO EFFORT TO ESCAPE. BECAUSE THE CHANGE OCCURED SO SLOWLY, THERE WAS NO RECOGNITION OF THE DANGER. THE FROG DIED MAKING NO ATTEMPT AT SELF-PRESERVATION." THIS IS TRUE IN A MORAL CLIMATE OF A COUNTRY. IT MAY CHANGE SO GRADUALLY THAT ONE DAY UNEXPECTEDLY WE WAKE UP TO FIND THAT THE STANDARDS HAVE BEEN COMPLETELY DESTROYED AND WHAT WAS THOUGHT OF AS ACCEPTABLE ONLY A FEW YEARS AGO HAS BEEN COMPLETELY DONE AWAY. IN MY JUDGMENT THAT IS HAPPENING IN AMERICA THROUGH THE INFLUENCE OF SITUATION ETHICS. WE SEE IT IN THE FLAUNTING OF HOMOSEXUALITY AND PROSTITUTION IN THE MEDIA. ANYONE WHO CONDEMNS EITHER OF THESE MORAL VICES IS LOOKED UPON AS PRUDISH AND PURITANICAL, HEARTLESS AND NOT CONCERNED ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS! SINCE WHEN DID SEXUAL SIN HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH HUMAN RIGHTS!

IT IS NOT ONLY A FEW "BIBLE THUMPING PREACHERS" WHO CONDEMN ADULTERY, BUT A GREAT MANY PEOPLE SUCH AS DR. CARL MENNINGER IN HIS BOOK ENTITLED WHATEVER BECAME OF SIN MENTIONS THE ABSOLUTELY DEVASTATING INFLUENCE ADULTERY HAS UPON A MARRIAGE. HE SPEAKS OF THE VIOLATION OF TRUST AND INTEGRITY AND POINTS TO THE FACT THAT ADULTERY IS A SIN OF INFIDELITY AND PERSONAL DISLOYALTY TO A MARRIAGE PARTNER, FAMILY AND SOMEONE WHO HAS TRUSTED A PERSON IN THE MOST INTIMATE WAY. THESE BROKEN TRUSTS MAY NOT BREAK THE LAW IN SOME INSTANCES, BUT THEY DO BREAK THE HEARTS AND DO DO DAMAGE IN THE AREA OF PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS TO SUCH A DEGREE THAT THE SITUATION CAN NEVER BE PERFECTLY CORRECTED ONCE THE TRUST HAS BEEN BROKEN. IN MATT. 5:32 AND 19:9 JESUS SPOKE OF THE DAMAGING EFFECTS ADULTERY HAS ON THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP. IN JOHN 8:3, JESUS DEALT WITH AN ADULTERESS SITUATION IN AN AMAZING AND SKILFUL WAY. THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES TRIED TO STAGE OR SET A TRAP FOR JESUS. THEY BROUGHT BEFORE HIM A WOMAN CAUGHT IN THE VERY ACT OF ADULTERY AND THEY REMINDED HIM THAT THE LAW OF MOSES PRESCRIBED DEATH FOR THE PENALTY OF ADULTERY. IT WAS A SERIOUS CRIME AND THEY WERE ASKING FOR THE DEATH PENALTY. JESUS DETECTED THE HYPOCRISY OF THE SITUATION KNOWING FULL WELL THAT THERE WAS STANDING IN THAT GROUP OF MEN SOME WHO WERE GUILTY OF THE SAME SIN OR WORSE! IN V. 6 IT SAYS THAT JESUS "WROTE ON THE GROUND." THE WORD FOR WRITE IS THE WORD GRAPHEIN WITH A PARTICULAR PREFIX KATA WHICH MIGHT INDICATE TO WRITE DOWN OR TO WRITE DOWN ON THE RECORD AGAINST SOMEONE. THE SUGGESTION OF JESUS THAT THE SINLESS PERSON IN THE CROWD SHOULD BEGIN THE EXECUTION PROCEEDINGS. UPON THESE TERMS NO WITNESSES WERE AVAILABLE AND NO ONE WAS READY TO HURL THE FIRST STONE ACCORDING TO JEWISH LAW. FROM THIS PASSAGE, WE LEARN A GREAT DEAL ABOUT OUR LORD AND HIS MINISTRY. JESUS WAS GENTLE WITH SINNERS BUT HARD ON SIN. HE WAS NOT NEARLY AS INTERESTED IN PUNISHING THIS WOMAN AS HE WAS IN RECLAIMING HER FOR A LIFE OF USEFULNESS AND CORRECT PURPOSE. JESUS WAS NOT SAYING TO THIS WOMAN THAT WHAT SHE DID WAS RIGHT AND SHE SHOULDN'T BE TOO CONCERNED ABOUT IT SIMPLY BECAUSE SHE HAD BEEN FORGIVEN. JESUS PUT RESTRICTIONS ON HER CONDUCT FROM THAT TIME ON "GO AND SIN NO MORE." THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO IDEA THAT JESUS IS SAYING TO THE WOMAN THAT HER CONDUCT AND WHAT SHE HAD DONE WAS OF NO CONSEQUENCE AND THAT FORGIVENESS WAS EASY AND SHE COULD ENTER INTO THE SAME CONDITION

AGAIN. NEVER. HE LEFT HER WITH NO DOUBT THAT SHE HAD BEEN FORGIVEN BUT TOLD HER IN CLEAR TERMS THAT IT SHOULD NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN! THE APOSTLE PAUL TOOK A SIMILAR POSITION WITH THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH "KNOW YE NOT THAT THE UNRIGHTEOUS SHALL NOT INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD? BE NOT DECEIVED: NEITHER FORNICATORS, NOR IDOLATERS, NOR ADULTERERS, NOR EFFEMINATE, NOR ABUSERS OF THEMSELVES WITH MANKIND, NOR THIEVES, NOR COVETOUS, NOR DRUNKARDS, NOR REVILERS, NOR EXTORTIONERS SHALL INHERIT THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND SUCH WERE SOME OF YOU: BUT YE ARE WASHED, YE ARE SANCTIFIED, BUT YE ARE JUSTIFIED IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS AND BY THE SPIRIT OF OUR GOD." (1 COR. 6:9-11)

NOTICE THE EMPHASIS ON THE WORD "WERE". THIS IS WHAT THEY USED TO BE BUT NOW THAT THEY ARE SAVED THESE SINS WILL HAVE NO PART IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. IN HEBREWS 13:4 PAUL MAKES A GENERAL STATEMENT ABOUT MARRIAGE "MARRIAGE IS HONORABLE IN ALL, THE BED UNDEFILED: BUT WHOREMONGERS (FORNICATORS) AND ADULTERERS GOD WILL JUDGE." IN THIS V. PAUL REMINDS HIS

READERS THAT MARRIAGE IS AN HONORABLE STATE BEFORE GOD. SEX IS SOMETHING THAT IS HOLY AND BLESSED OF GOD BUT IT MUST BE WITHIN THE RESTRICTIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MARRIAGE. PEOPLE WHO VIOLATE THESE CLEAR TEACHINGS OF THE WORD OF GOD WILL STAND BEFORE GOD IN JUDGMENT AND THERE IS NO ESCAPING HIM AS JUDGE. WE HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF LOSE THINKING ABOUT PROMISCUOUS SEX IN T.V., MAGAZINES, MARITAL INFIDELITY IS NO LONGER APPALLED BUT IS SUBTLY ENCOURAGED.

I WISH IT WERE POSSIBLE TO HERALD FROM THE HOUSETOPS THAT THESE ILLICIT RELATIONSHIPS ARE UNSATISFACTORY, THEY PRODUCE MORAL AND EMOTIONAL INSTABILITY, THEY ARE FUTILE IN NATURE AND DO NOT PROVIDE FULFILLMENT IN ANY SENSE OF THE WORD. AS A MATTER OF FACT, THEY PRODUCE GUILT TOWARD FELLOW MAN AND GOD. IT IS TOO BAD THAT YOUNG PEOPLE CANNOT KNOW THE FRUSTRATION AND SUFFERING AND AGGRAVATION THAT SUCH AFFAIRS PRODUCE BEFORE THEY BECOME HOPELESSLY ENTANGLED IN A SITUATION QUAGMIRE THAT LEADS THEM DOWN INTO A MORAL QUAGMIRE TO ULTIMATELY STAND BEFORE GOD IN FINAL JUDGMENT.

WISE IS THE PERSON WHO SELECTS A LIFE COMPANION NOT UPON THE BASIS OF SEXUAL ATTRACTION BUT UPON OTHER BASES SUCH AS LOVE, COMPATIBILITY, MUTUAL INTEREST, MUTUAL GOALS IN LIFE AND A DESIRE TO ESTABLISH A HOME WHERE GODLINESS AND BIBLICAL STANDARDS ARE VERY MUCH IN EVIDENCE. IN MY JUDGMENT GOD HAS BUILT A FENCE AROUND THE MARRIAGE RELATIONSHIP AND A PERSON

IS A FOOL WHO TRIES TO BREAK THROUGH THAT FENCE
EITHER FROM THE INSIDE OR THE OUTSIDE!

VIII. THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT - "THOU SHALT NOT STEAL"
20:15

ONE OF THE TRAGEDIES OF OUR TIME IS THAT DIS-
HONESTY HAS BECOME SO COMMONPLACE THAT WE ACCEPT
THIEVES IN HIGH PLACES AS BEING INEVITABLE. THE
SELLING OF ONE'S SKILL TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER,
BRIBES AND MATTERS OF THIS NATURE ARE SELDOM THOUGHT
OF AS FORMS OF STEALING. RELATE SAFEGUARDS IN
LOCAL DEPARTMENT STORES TO PREVENT SHOPLIFTING -THE
ESTIMATES ARE SOMEWHERE BETWEEN \$3 AND \$5 BILLION
LOST ANNUALLY. SIMPLY STATED, STEALING IS TAKING
THAT WHICH IS NOT RIGHTFULLY YOURS. IT VIOLATES
THE IDEA OF THE RIGHT OF PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF
PROPERTY. ONE OF THE PROBLEMS IN AMERICA IS THAT
CHILDREN ARE NOT TAUGHT IN THE HOME CONCERNING THE
WRONGFULNESS OF STEALING. MOST PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT
BANK ROBBERY, HOUSE BURGLARIES, AND THINGS OF THIS
NATURE ARE WRONG BUT DON'T BELIEVE THAT STEALING A
TOWEL FROM A MOTEL OR TAKING SOMETHING FROM A LARGE
CORPORATION SIMPLY BECAUSE IT IS LARGE, CHEATING ON
AN EXAMINATION, PUSHING A GROCERY STORE CART TWO
MILES DOWN THE ROAD AND SHOIVING IT OVER THE HILL,
ITEMS OF THIS NATURE ARE STEALING. THERE IS AN
INTERESTING V. IN EPH. 4:28. IT SUGGESTS THAT A
PERSON WHO IS BORN AGAIN SHOULD STEAL NO MORE - THIS
IS A CLEAR SPECIFIC COMMAND. IT ALSO SUGGESTS THAT
HE SHOULD BE WILLING TO WORK FOR HIS KEEP AND
ATTACHES DIGNITY TO HONEST LABOR. DID YOU HEAR
ABOUT THE MAN IN A BOAT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE LAKE;
DURING THE MIDDLE OF A TERRIFIC STORM. THE BOAT
BEGAN TO SINK SO THE MAN STARTED SWIMMING TO SHORE.
HE WAS 50 FEET FROM SAFETY WHEN ON SHORE AT A
NEARBY FACTORY THE 5 O'CLOCK WHISTLE BLEW AND HE
STOPPED SWIMMING AND DROWNED! THE SUBJECT OF
STEALING IN THE O.T. IS VERY INTERESTING INDEED.
THE LAW OF THE O.T. CARRIED THE MATTER OF RESTITUTION
AS A FORM OF PUNISHMENT. ONE OF THE INTERESTING
FEATURES OF O.T. LAW WAS THAT IT WAS ANXIOUS TO SEE
THAT THE VICTIM WAS COMPENSATED AS WELL AS THE
CRIMINAL PUNISHED. FOR EXAMPLE, IF SHEEP OR OXEN
WERE STOLEN AND KILLED OR SOLD, THE THIEF HAD TO
PAY BACK 5 OXEN OR 4 SHEEP AND ULTIMATELY COULD BE

INTO SLAVERY HIMSELF TO REPAY THE DEBT. IF THE ANIMAL WAS RECOVERED ALIVE THE THIEF HAD TO PAY BACK DOUBLE. (CF. EXO. 22:1-4) IN OTHER PARTS OF THE O.T. NAMELY PROV. 6:30-31, THAT WHICH WAS STOLEN HAD TO BE RETURNED SEVEN-FOLD AND OTHER PARTS OF THE O.T. THAT WHICH WAS TAKEN FRAUDULENTLY HAD TO BE REPAID IN FULL PLUS 1/5 OF ITS VALUE AS COMPENSATION. (NUMB. 5:7) IF A MAN DAMAGED ANOTHER MAN'S VINEYARD OR FIELD BY ALLOWING HIS ANIMALS TO BREAK OUT OF PASTURE AND DESTROY A CROP, RESTITUTION WAS REQUIRED. IF A PERSON ENTRUSTED ANOTHER PERSON WITH A VALUABLE GOOD AND IF THE VALUABLE ITEM WAS STOLEN THE PERSON WITH WHOM IT WAS DEPOSITED MUST RESTORE TWICE ITS VALUE. (EXO. 22:7) TIME WILL NOT PERMIT ME TO TALK ABOUT KLEPTOMANIA WHERE A THIEF IS REGARDED AS A PSYCHOLOGICALLY ABNORMAL PERSON INSTEAD OF A CRIMINAL. THESE PEOPLE STEAL FOR MANY REASONS, TO GAIN STATUS, TO VENT HOSTILITY, TO SEEK PUNISHMENT, A REACTION AGAINST AUTHORITY, A FORM OF EXCITEMENT AND ALL KINDS OF PSYCHOLOGICAL REASONS. SOME KINDS OF THIEVERY ARE REGARDED AS CLEVER AND HAVE LITTLE SOCIAL STIGMA WITH THEM. THE EVASION OF PAYMENT OF TAXES, THE PAYMENT OF CUSTOMS OR DUTY ON ARTICLES, TAKING FROM AN EMPLOYER ESPECIALLY IF THAT EMPLOYER IS A LARGE IMPERSONAL COMPANY, AND OTHER KINDS OF CREEPING DISHONESTY WHICH SEEM TO OVERWHELM OUR COUNTRY. (I SHALL NEVER FORGET THE IMPACT THAT A THIEF HAD ON THE COMMUNITY OF MY FIRST PASTORATE. I CAN STILL REMEMBER THE CONVERSATION OF A FARMER 80 YEARS OLD AND UP WHO HAD INVESTED HIS ENTIRE LIFE SAVINGS IN A LOCAL CREDIT UNION ONLY TO HAVE THE ENTIRE AMOUNT STOLEN.) THE BIBLE IS FILLED WITH EXAMPLES OF MEN WHO HAD LITTLE REGARD FOR THE PERSONAL RIGHTS AND PROPERTY OF OTHERS. FOR EXAMPLE, AHAB STOLE NABOTH'S VINEYARD. AND HAD HIM KILLED TO AVOID DETECTION. (I KINGS 21:FF) THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH ABSALOM STOLE HIS FATHER'S KINGDOM BY HIS DEVIANT METHODS BEHIND HIS FATHER'S BACK. (II SAM. 15) JUDAS WAS THE TREASURER OF THE 12 DISCIPLES, AND IS CALLED A THIEF AND ONE WHO PILFERED FROM THE COMMON TREASURY. "THEN SAITH ONE OF THE DISCIPLES, JUDAS ISCARIOT... WHY WAS NOT THIS OINTMENT SOLD FOR 300 PENCE AND GIVEN TO THE POOR? THIS HE SAID, NOT THAT HE CARED FOR THE POOR; BECAUSE HE WAS A THIEF AND HAD THE BAG, AND BARE WHAT WAS PUT

THEREIN." (JOHN 12:4-6) ONE OF THE EVIDENCES OF
~~ZACCHEUS'S CONVERSION~~ WAS HIS WILLINGNESS ~~TO RESTORE~~
~~ANYTHING HE MAY HAVE STOLEN FOURFOLD IN NATURE.~~
~~"ZACCHEUS STOOD AND SAID UNTO THE LORD, BEHOLD, LORD,~~
~~THE HALF OF MY GOODS I GIVE TO THE POOR; AND IF~~
~~I HAVE TAKEN ANYTHING FROM ANY MAN BY FALSE ACCUSA-~~
~~TION I RESTORE HIM FOURFOLD. AND JESUS SAID UNTO~~
~~HIM, THIS DAY IS SALVATION COME UNTO THIS HOUSE."~~
(LUKE 19:8-9) WHEN A PERSON IS GENUINELY BORN
AGAIN NOT ONLY WILL HE ~~STOP STEALING~~ BUT THERE IS
A ~~WILLINGNESS TO RESTORE OR MAKE RESTITUTION FOR~~
~~PAST WRONGDOING.~~

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS: 9 & 10

Exodus 20:16,17

(AS WE CONCLUDE OUR STUDY ON THE 10 COMMANDMENTS, WE HAVE LEARNED THAT THESE COMMANDMENTS WERE NOT GIVEN BY GOD AS A STANDARD FOR MAN TO KEEP IN ORDER TO BE SAVED. GOD HAS ONE WAY OF SAVING MEN IN EVERY DISPENSATION. THE LAW IN ITS ENTIRETY WAS GIVEN FOR SEVERAL REASONS NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH WAS TO SHUT MAN'S MOUTH IN ORDER THAT HE WOULD FLEE TO GRACE FOR SALVATION. THE N.T. TEACHES THE BELIEVER THAT HE IS NOT UNDER A LAW, HOWEVER THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE CHRISTIAN IS LAWLESS AND IGNORES GOD'S LAW BUT THAT THE BELIEVER IS NOT UNDER THE LAW AS LAW. WE HAVE LEARNED THAT IN THIS SECTION OF EXODUS GOD ANNOUNCED THE PRINCIPLES UPON WHICH HE WOULD BUILD HIS KINGDOM AND RULE HIS PEOPLE. THE LAW APPEARED ON TABLES FOR THE FIRST TIME BUT THE PRINCIPLES HAD ALREADY BEEN ENGRAVED UPON MAN'S MORAL NATURE, IN HIS CONSCIENCE. THE LAW IN ITS ENTIRETY WAS OUR SCHOOL MASTER TO PREPARE ISRAEL FOR THE COMING CHRIST. AS WE LEARNED IN EARLIER LESSONS THE SUBJECT OF THE LAW AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO BELIEVERS IS A DIFFICULT ONE TO UNDERSTAND AND EXPLAIN.

IX. THE NINTH COMMANDMENT: "THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR"- 20:16

THE WORD "FALSE WITNESS" UNDOUBTEDLY HAS A JUDICIAL ASPECT WITH REFERENCE TO ONE'S OBLIGATION AS A WITNESS IN A COURT OF LAW. THE IMPORTANCE OF SPEAKING THE TRUTH IN A COURT OF LAW IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE. HOWEVER, THESE TERMS GO BEYOND THE COURT ROOM TO THE MATTER OF TELLING THE TRUTH EVERYWHERE AND AT ALL TIMES. THIS IS A REFERENCE TO LYING OR UNTRUTH IN ANY FORM. A LIE IS SOMETHING SAID WITH INTENT TO DECEIVE. THE "LYING GAME" HAS BECOME THE EXPECTED TECHNIQUE IN MANY PLACES IN SOCIETY. ONE EXPECTS DEFECTIVE OR COUNTERFEIT INFORMATION IN THE BUSINESS WORLD, IN POLITICS, IN INTERENATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS AND IN PERSON TO PERSON RELATIONSHIPS. THERE WAS A TIME IN OUR COUNTRY WHEN WE EXPECTED OUR LEADERS TO TELL THE TRUTH. WHEN A NEWS RELEASE IS GIVEN ABOUT SOMETHING THE GOVERNMENT HAS DONE WE COULD EXPECT THE

TRUTH. FOR EXAMPLE, DR. MENNINGER MENTIONS IN HIS BOOK WHATEVER BECAME OF SIN THE STORY OF THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA. YOU REMEMBER THAT IN 1915 THE GERMANS TORPEDOED THE LUSITANIA. THE QUESTION WAS WHO WAS AT FAULT, THE GERMANS FOR SINKING THE BOAT OR THE BRITAINS FOR HAVING ~~SAVING~~ ~~BE~~ ARMED. SENTIMENT WAS AGAINST THE GERMANS BECAUSE THE LUSITANIA WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN AN UNARMED VESSEL CARRYING NO MUNITIONS. HOWEVER, 50 YEARS AFTER ITS SINKING IT BECAME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE THAT THE LUSITANIA WAS INDEED HEAVILY ARMED, THAT THE SHIP HAD BEEN CAMOFLAGED TO HIDE A LARGE CARGO OF MUNITIONS AND OTHER CONTRABAND THAT THE ENGLISH ADMIRALTY WAS STRANGELY NEGLENT IN PROTECTING THE SHIP AGAINST ATTACK, AND THAT FOR SOME 30 YEARS THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PURPOSELY WITHHELD THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SINKING OF THE LUSITANIA FROM THE AMERICAN PUBLIC, AND INDEED ACCUSED GERMANY FALSELY (OF ATROCITIES) FOR THE MANIFEST PURPOSE OF AROUSING AMERICAN SENTIMENT AGAINST GERMANY. MENNINGER SAYS "IN OTHER WORDS, WHILE ONE CANNOT SAY THAT THE EVENT WAS STAGED, IT WAS VERY LARGELY MANEUVERED AND GREATLY MISREPRESENTED AND EXPLOITED BY THE BRITISH AND AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS WHO INDUCED HATRED IN THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TOWARD THE GERMAN PEOPLE, IN SHORT, WE WERE LIED TO BY OUR LEADERS TO MANEUVER OUR COUNTRY INTO A WAR." ONE MIGHT WISH TO QUARREL ABOUT AN EVENT THAT HAPPENED OVER 50 YEARS AGO BUT NEED I MENTION OTHER OCCASIONS NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH THE WATERGATE EPISODE, WHICH SPEAKS OF LYING AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS WITH THE SPECIFIC INTENT TO DECEIVE. HAVE YOU EVER ASKED YOURSELF WHERE THE LIE ORIGINATED? JESUS GAVE THIS INFORMATION: "YE ARE OF YOUR FATHER THE DEVIL, AND THE LUST 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) SIN ORIGINATED WITH SATAN AND THE LIE IS PART OF HIS PROGRAM. BY CONTRAST, JESUS SAID CONCERNING HIS OWN "YE SHALL KNOW THE TRUTH AND THE TRUTH SHALL MAKE YOU FREE." (JOHN 8:32) TRUTH IS LIKE LIGHT TO SORE EYES, IT DISPELLES THE DARKNESS AND IT IS THE ONE THING SATAN DOES NOT WANT PEOPLE TO HEAR ABOUT GOD - THE TRUTH! WE DEMONSTRATE OUR ALLEGIANCE TO OR OUR ALIENATION FROM GOD BY OUR USAGE OF TRUTH. SATAN EMPLOYED THE LIE AS A TACTIC IN CAUSING EVE TO DOUBT AND QUESTION GOD. (GEN. 3) THE LIE HAS

*Tactical
Weapon*

Cowardly

Πορνοίς
(Fornicators)

-3-

ἀπίστοις

(Ῥακάτοις)

Foul

ALWAYS BEEN IDENTIFIED WITH SATAN, SIN AND SPIRITUAL DARKNESS. THE ULTIMATE DESTINATION OF THOSE WHO PRACTICE LYING IS TO BE WITH SATAN AND HIS ILK. "BUT 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) THE FACT OF HUMAN DEPRAVITY IS ILLUSTRATED IN THIS VERY AREA: "THE WICKED ARE ESTRANGED FROM THE WOMB; THEY GO ASTRAY AS SOON AS THEY ARE BORN, SPEAKING LIES." (PS. 58:3) "I SAID IN MY HATE, ALL MEN ARE LIARS." (PS. 116:11) "I'M SORRY TO DISAGREE WITH THOSE WHO SAY THAT GEORGE WASHINGTON NEVER TOLD A LIE. DAVID SAID ALL MEN AND THAT INCLUDED GEORGE!) I HAVE NEVER MET A MAN WOMAN OR YOUNG PERSON WHO HAS NEVER TOLD A LIE. THE PERSON WHO MAKES SUCH A CLAIM WILL IMMEDIATELY JOIN THE "LIARS CLUB!" PROVERBS IS FILLED WITH ADVICE CONCERNING THE FOLLY OF FALSEHOOD. IN CH. 6 WHERE SOLOMON MENTIONS SOME THINGS THAT GOD HATES HE MENTIONS A LYING TONGUE AND A FALSE WITNESS AS BEING TWO THINGS GOD HATES. "LYING LIPS ARE AN ABOMINATION UNTO THE LORD..." (PROV. 12:22) PROVERBS IS FILLED WITH WARNINGS ABOUT THE DANGER OF PRACTICING THE LIE. THE N.T. BELIEVER IS ADMONISHED "WHEREFORE PUTTING AWAY LYING, SPEAK EVERY MAN TRUTH WITH HIS NEIGHBOR..." (EPH. 4:25) WHEN THE ENEMIES OF JESUS DID NOT TOTALLY DESTROY HIM THROUGH THE USAGE OF THE BRIBE AND JUDAS' TREACHERY, THEY RESORTED TO THE FALSE WITNESS AND LIE IN ORDER TO PUT JESUS TO DEATH. "NOW THE CHIEF PRIESTS AND ELDERS, AND ALL THE COUNSEL SOUGHT FALSE WITNESS AGAINST JESUS, TO PUT HIM TO DEATH; BUT FOUND NONE..." (MATT. 26:59-60) PLEASE NOTICE THAT THESE SELF-RIGHTEOUS JEWISH LEADERS FREELY BROKE ONE OF THE 10 COMMANDMENTS SO INTENSE WAS THEIR HATRED AGAINST JESUS AND THEIR DESIRE TO KILL HIM AND GET IT OUT OF THE PUBLIC EYE. THEY ALSO RESORTED TO THE SAME TACTICS EMPLOYING FALSE WITNESSES TO SAY SOMEONE HAD GONE AND STOLEN THE BODY OF JESUS! LYING IS INGRAINED IN THE HUMAN NATURE. PEOPLE MUST BE TAUGHT NOT TO LIE, OTHERWISE MEN BECOME CARELESS ABOUT TRUTH, INACCURATE IN MAKING STATEMENTS OF FACT, BOASTFUL AND EXAGGERATING IN ORDER TO PROFIT AND TO MAKE ONESELF LOOK GOOD IN THE EYES OF OTHERS. LYING IS THE NATURAL THING TO DO WHEN FOLLOWING ONE'S ADAMIC NATURE. FOR THE SIMPLE REASON,

No
links
down.
5

TO TELL THE TRUTH SOMETIMES PUTS ONE IN A BAD LIGHT AND ALSO REQUIRES HIM OR HER TO FACE DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH WE MAY NOT WISH TO FACE. THE CLASSIC EXAMPLE OF LYING FOR PERSONAL GAIN IS THE STORY OF GEHAZI RECORDED IN 11 KINGS 5:15-27. GEHAZI WAS THE SERVANT OF ELISHA THE PROPHET AND MAY HAVE STOOD IN LINE TO INHERIT ELISHA'S MINISTRY, AS ELISHA INHERITED ELIJAH'S. WHEN ELISHA WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE HEALING OF NAAMAN, A WEALTHY SYRIAN MILITARY MAN, NAAMAN WISHED TO EXPRESS HIS APPRECIATION BY GIVING A GENEROUS GIFT TO THE PROPHET OF GOD. WISELY, ELISHA DECLINED. HOWEVER, GEHAZI DID NOT SHARE HIS MASTER'S GOOD JUDGMENT. HE FOLLOWED AFTER NAAMAN SAYING THAT ELISHA CHANGED HIS MIND AND WOULD ACCEPT THE GIFT FOR 2 BIBLE SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO WERE IN NEED. GEHAZI NOT ONLY DECEIVED NAAMAN AND MISREPRESENTED ELISHA, HE HAD NO INTEREST IN HELPING ANYONE ELSE, IT WAS FOR HIS OWN PERSONAL GREED THAT CAUSED HIM TO LIE AND DISHONOR THE NAME OF GOD. IT WOULD NOT BE DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW GEHAZI COULD RATIONALIZE HIS SITUATION. AFTER ALL, NAAMAN WAS WEALTHY AND HAD PLENTY. HE WAS REJOICING OVER HIS CLEANSING FROM LEPROSY, WHY NOT LET HIM SHARE HIS GENEROUS IMPULSES WITH HIM? THE PROBLEM WAS NOT THE SIZE OF THE GIFT, BY THE WAY WHICH WAS SUBSTANTIAL, BUT THE FACT THAT THE DESIRE FOR MONEY AND CLOTHES CORRUPTED GEHAZI. TO HIM, THESE THINGS WERE MORE IMPORTANT THAN THE LORD'S WORK, HIS FRIENDSHIP AND RELATIONSHIP WITH ELISHA, AND THE TRUTH OF GOD. ALSO, IT IS OBVIOUS IN THE STORY THAT GEHAZI WAS DECEIVING FOR HE HAD NO INTEREST IN HELPING TWO THEOLOGICAL STUDENTS AND HE MASQUERADED HIS OWN GREED BEHIND A RELIGIOUS FACADE. HE USED THE LORD'S WORK AS A BASIS FOR HIS OWN GREED. HE USED RELIGION AS A COVER FOR HIS COVETOUSNESS. THE SAD PART OF THIS STORY IS THAT GEHAZI HAD WITNESSED THE MIRACLE WORKING OF GOD IN THE HEALING OF NAAMAN, BUT HE SAW NONE OF THE SPIRITUAL BLESSING AND THE DANGER OF COMMERCIALIZING GOD'S GRACE. ALL HE SAW WAS THE MONEY AND THE SUITS OF CLOTHING AND THAT CAPTURED THE INTEREST. THERE IS ALWAYS THE EVER PRESENT DANGER OF GOD'S PEOPLE BEING TOO FOND OF MONEY, CLOTHES, PERSONAL GAIN AND MATERIAL THINGS! IT IS EASY FOR THOSE OF US WHO CLAIM TO KNOW GOD TO TALK ABOUT VIRTUE AND PRACTICE VICE! THE INTERESTING ASPECT OF THIS STORY IS THAT GEHAZI DID NOT LIVE TO ENJOY HIS ILL GOTTEN GAIN. THE LEPROSY THAT HAD PLAGUED NAAMAN WAS NOW

GEHAZI'S. HE WAS UNABLE TO DECEIVE ELISHA AND HIS FAILURE WAS KNOWN FAR AND WIDE. "WHAT A TANGLED WEB WE WEAVE WHEN WE PRACTICE TO DECEIVE." ALL TOO OFTEN WE ARE CAUGHT IN THE WEB OF OUR OWN DEVICES AND THE LIE WILL UNDO US IF WE USE IT AS AN INSTRUMENT AND PRACTICE IT AS A TOOL OF LIFE. SOMEWHERE I HEARD THE STORY WHO TALKED A GREAT DEAL, SPREADING GOSSIP AND SCANDAL EVERYWHERE SHE WENT. AFTER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME SHE FELT ESPECIALLY GUILTY ABOUT RECENT CONDUCT. SHE MADE HER WAY TO CHURCH AND TO A PASTOR IN ORDER TO GET SOME RELIEF FOR HER CONSCIENCE. AFTER DESCRIBING HER DEEDS THE PASTOR DID A STRANGE THING, HE HANDED HER ONE OF THOSE FAMILIAR DANDELIONS FLOWERS WITH THE FLUFFY TOP, ENCOURAGED HER TO DO OUTSIDE AND HOLD IT IN THE WIND AND WATCH THE SEEDS SCATTER. SHE OBEYED HIS REQUEST AND WHEN HE SAID TO HER "NOW YOU GO AND GATHER ALL THE SCATTERED SEEDS AND PUT THEM BACK IN PLACE." SHE WAS SHOCKED AND EXCLAIMED "THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!" THE PASTOR HAD MADE HIS POINT. THIS IS THE WAY OF GOSSIP AND SCANDALOUS CONVERSATION AND LIES ONCE UTTERED IT CANNOT BE RETREIVED. SOMEONE HAS SUGGESTED THAT LYING ABOUT ANOTHER PERSON IS LIKE THROWING MUD AGAINST A CLEAN WALL, IT MAY NOT STICK BUT IT ALWAYS LEAVES A MARK. THERE WAS TIME B.C. WHEN THE LIE THAT WAS PART AND PARCEL OF YOUR LIFE AND MINE, BUT IF YOU ARE A CHRISTIAN YOU AND I DEMONSTRATE THE GENUINENESS OF OUR FAITH BY ABANDONING THE USE OF THE LIE FOR THE PURPOSE OF DECEPTION. WE HAVE A NEW FOUND ALLEGIANCE TO TRUTH BECAUSE WE ARE LINKED BY BIRTH TO HIM WHO IS CALLED THE WAY THE TRUTH AND THE LIFE. IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE TO SAY WE BELONG TO CHRIST AND THEN CONTINUE TO USE THE LIE WHICH IS PART OF SATAN'S ARSENAL.

X. THE TENTH COMMANDMENT: "THOU SHALT NOT COVET"-20:17

THE WORD "COVET" IS USED IN TWO DIFFERENT WAYS IN THE BIBLE AND HAS A VARIETY OF SHADES OF MEANING. FOR EXAMPLE, THE WORD COVET IS USED IN A PROPER SENSE IN I COR. 12:31 WHERE THE BELIEVER IS TOLD TO "COVET EARNESTLY THE BEST GIFTS." IN THIS REFERENCE THE WORD COVET SIMPLY MEANS TO DESIRE. IT IS SO USED AND TRANSLATED IN I TIM. 3:1, LUKE 15:16, WHERE

THE WORD IS "WOULD FAIN," AND LUKE 16:21 WHERE IT IS TRANSLATED DESIRING. THERE ARE THREE BASIC IDEAS IN THE N.T. FOR THE WORD COVET: (1) IT REFERS TO DISHONEST GAIN (2) INORDINATE DESIRE TO HAVE MORE OR GREEDINESS, (3) AN INORDINATE LOVE OR DESIRE FOR MONEY. ^{So?} ACCORDING TO THE BIBLE, COVETOUSNESS LEADS TO OTHER SINS SUCH AS LYING, THEFT, MURDER, AND DOMESTIC DIFFICULTIES. "HE THAT IS GREEDY OF GAIN TROUBLETH HIS OWN HOUSE..." (PROV. 15:27) (OTHER VERSES: EZEK. 22:12, II KINGS 5:22, JOSH. 7:21, I TIM. 6:9-10)

SOMEONE SAID THAT COVETOUSNESS IS THE SIN WE NEVER ADMIT. YET, IT IS A GRAVE SIN THAT EATS AT THE SOUL. TO COVET SOMETHING IS DESIRING TO HAVE SOMETHING NOT ONE'S OWN AND WHICH BELONGS TO ANOTHER PERSON. TO COVET SOMETHING IS IN FACT TO DESIRE SOMETHING ONE HAS NO RIGHT TO HAVE OR POSSESS. IT IS WRONG TO COVET BECAUSE THE WRONG DESIRES WILL ULTIMATELY AND INEVITABLY LEAD TO WRONG ACTION. IN LUKE 12:15 JESUS POINTED TO COVETOUSNESS AND THE REASON WHY THE RICH FOOL WOUND UP IN HELL! HIS PROBLEM WAS NOT WHAT HE HAD BUT RATHER WHAT HE DIDN'T HAVE! RICH FOOL'S INORDINATE DESIRE FOR GAIN HAD BECOME HIS GOD. IN COL. 3:5 PAUL CALLS "COVETOUSNESS/IDOLATRY." IDOLATRY IS SIMPLY THE WORSHIPPING OF A CREATED THING INSTEAD OF THE CREATOR HIMSELF. SIMPLY STATED IT IS THE WORSHIP OF THINGS INSTEAD OF THE WORSHIP OF GOD. A MAN'S GOD BECOMES THAT WHICH DOMINATES HIS TIME, HIS TALENTS AND HIS TREASURE. IT IS THAT TO WHICH HE GIVES HIMSELF. WHenever a thing, a material thing, BEGINS TO HOLD THE PRINCIPAL PLACE IN A MAN'S HEART AND GOALS IN LIFE THAT THING BECOMES HIS IDOL AND TAKES THE PLACE OF GOD IN HIS LIFE. THESE THINGS APPEAL TO MAN'S HUMAN NATURE AND NOT TO HIS SPIRITUAL NATURE. I THINK IT IS THE NATURAL BENT OF THE ADAMIC NATURE TO COVET SOMETHING. IT IS ONLY WHEN JESUS CHRIST LIVES AND RULES IN THE HEART AND CONTROLS ONE'S DESIRES THAT COVETOUSNESS MAY BE ELIMINATED FROM THE LIFE. IN MY JUDGMENT, COVETOUSNESS MAY LEAD TO DISHONESTY, IT MAY LEAD TO GAMBLING IN ORDER TO GET RICH FAST IN ORDER TO HAVE MORE MATERIAL THINGS FOR ONE'S SELFISH GREED INSTEAD OF THE GLORY OF GOD. COVETOUSNESS MAY LEAD A PERSON TO ACHIEVE STATUS AND PROMINENCE IN AN ORGANIZATION. THE BASIC FAILURE OF A COVETOUS SPIRIT IS THAT IT MAKES MEN THINK THAT THE ACCUMULATION OF THINGS BRING HAPPINESS. WE MISTAKENLY

BELIEVE THAT IF WE HAVE SOMETHING WE'LL BE HAPPY. BARCLAY HAS WELL SAID: "ALL LIFE FROM CHILDHOOD TO OLD AGE PROVES WHAT A DELUSION THAT IDEA IS. IT IS QUITE TRUE THAT WHEN WE GET THE THING ON WHICH WE SET OUR HEARTS, THERE IS A BRIEF THRILL BUT THE THRILL DOES NOT LAST. IT LOSES ITS INTEREST; IT CEASES TO GIVE ENJOYMENT; AND ALL THAT HAPPENS IS THAT WE TRANSFER OUR DESIRES TO SOMETHING ELSE, AND THE WHOLE PROCESS BEGINS ALL OVER AGAIN. IT IS LIKE A CHILD WITH A NEW TOY, FOR AN HOUR OR TWO, OR A DAY OR TWO, HE IS ENGROSSED WITH IT AND THEN IT IS TOSSED ASIDE, AND HE IS STANDING LOOKING IN AT THE SHOP WINDOW AND SETTING HIS HEART ON SOMETHING ELSE."

(WILLIAM BARCLAY) WHEN A PERSON SEEKS TO SATISFY HIS COVETOUS DESIRE WITH THE ACQUISITION OF MORE THINGS HE IS REALLY ON A KIND OF MERRY-GO-ROUND BECAUSE THE MORE HE GETS THE MORE SOPHISTICATED AND COMPLICATED THE DESIRES BECOME AND THE MORE REFINED HIS TASTES BECOME. FINALLY IT TAKES MORE AND MORE ELABORATE THINGS TO PRODUCE EVEN A MOMENT'S TEMPORARY HAPPINESS. COVETOUSNESS SAYS TO THE HUMAN SOUL "IF YOU HAVE THIS YOU WILL BE HAPPY."

I DO NOT WISH TO MINIMIZE THE FACT THAT SOME THINGS ARE IMPORTANT IN LIFE. IT IS IMPORTANT THAT MEN BE FREE FROM HUNGER, DISEASE IF POSSIBLE, AND THE CONSTANT STRUGGLE FOR BASICS IN LIFE IS NOT NECESSARILY WRONG. TO HAVE ENOUGH TO EAT, A COMFORTABLE HOME, AND A REASONABLE INCOME IS IMPORTANT AND I WOULD NOT MINIMIZE THAT FACT.

BUT THESE THINGS ARE NOT WHAT MAKE HAPPINESS IN LIFE. IF THE POSSESSION OF THINGS COULD MAKE ONE HAPPY, THEN THOSE WHO ARE THE WEALTHIEST SHOULD BE THE MOST HAPPY OF MEN. WE KNOW THIS IS NOT TRUE. AS A MATTER

OF FACT, IF THINGS COULD BRING HAPPINESS, THEN OURS SHOULD BE THE HAPPIEST GENERATION IN ALL OF HUMAN HISTORY BECAUSE THE WESTERN WORLD HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER OFF IN MATERIAL THINGS THAN NOW. NEED I SAY THAT OURS IS THE MOST NEUROTIC, DISSATISFIED, RESTLESS ERA IN ALL HUMAN HISTORY. COVETOUSNESS MAY MANIFEST

ITSELF NOT ONLY IN THE DESIRE FOR SOME THINGS BUT ALSO THE DESIRE FOR SOME ONE! SOME PEOPLE BELIEVE THAT IF THEY COULD ONLY HAVE A RELATIONSHIP OR POSSESS SOMEONE WHO BELONGS TO SOMEONE ELSE THEN THEY WOULD BE HAPPY. IT MAY BE A MOMENTARY THRILL OF DANGER AND EXCITEMENT IN A FORBIDDEN RELATIONSHIP BUT ALL OF THIS WILL BE LOST IN A PERIOD OF TIME AND SUBSTITUTED WITH GUILT AND PANGS OF CONSCIENCE NOT TO MENTION THE

HUMAN TRAGEDY OF SHATTERED LIVES OF OTHER PEOPLE WHOM WE LOVE. IN SUCH RELATIONSHIPS IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO KEEP THEM SECRET BUT THERE IS THE EVER PRESENT FEAR OF DETECTION WHICH POISONS THE PLEASURE OF THE MOMENT. THERE CAN BE NO HAPPINESS IN A SITUATION WHICH BRINGS TRAGEDY AND MORAL DESTRUCTION TO OTHER HUMAN BEINGS. THE WAY TO CONTENTMENT IS NOT BY THE ROAD OF COVETOUSNESS BUT BY THE WAY OF PROPER RELATIONSHIP TO GOD IN JESUS CHRIST. IT IS CONTINUE IN OUR RELATIONSHIP TO OURSELVES AND OUR FELLOWMAN. THE MAN WHO MAKES JESUS CHRIST THE DELIGHT OF HIS LIFE WILL FIND REAL PEACE AND CONTENTMENT AND THE THINGS HE MAY ACQUIRE IN LIFE ARE ALWAYS SECONDARY TO HIS RELATIONSHIP TO THE SAVIOUR. THE CLASSIC ILLUSTRATION OF THE PERIL OF COVETOUSNESS MAY BE SEEN IN ACHAN. (JOSH. 7:FF) THIS CH. RECORDS THE FOUR DOWNWARD STEPS TOWARD SPIRITUAL FAILURE AND DOOM. THE BACKGROUND OF THE STORY HAD TO DO WITH THE TAKING OF JERICHO. ISRAEL TOOK JERICHO WITHOUT A SINGLE ARROW OR SINGLE CASUALTY. THEY SET OUT TO CONQUER AI PERHAPS IMPATIENTLY AND WITH OVER CONFIDENCE NOT REALLY SEEKING THE LORD'S DIRECTION. JOSHUA WAS DISTRESSED AT THE LOSS OF 36 MEN, THIS SHOULD NOT HAVE HAPPENED UNDER THE LEADING OF GOD, AFTER ALL HE HAD PROMISED TO FIGHT WITH THEM. WHEN ACHAN'S SIN CAME TO LIGHT IT REMINDED ALL OF ISRAEL THAT THEY WERE AN INDIVISIBLE UNIT AND ONE MAN'S SIN BROUGHT SORROW TO THE ENTIRE NATION.

(1) I SAW - v. 21 THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL HAD BEEN FORBIDDEN TO TAKE THE SPOILS OF BATTLE. ACHAN'S SIN WAS A BREACH OF TRUST DISOBEDIENCE IN HIS CASE WAS NOT A CASUAL MATTER FOR IT WAS DISOBEDIENCE OF A MILITARY ORDER. IN EFFECT IT WAS A SOLDIER IN THE FIELD, IN COMBAT, DISOBEYING THE ORDER OF A SUPERIOR OFFICER. PERHAPS ACHAN HAD SAID TO HIMSELF THAT THERE WAS NO HARM IN LOOKING AT THE SPOILS BUT THE LOOK LED TO A CAREFUL EXAMINATION TO THE POINT THAT HIS DESIRE FOR THE GOODS HE SAW KEPT GROWING.

(2) I COVETED - 21 FRANKLY, I AM SURPRISED ACHAN USED THIS STRONG WORD TO DESCRIBE HIS ACTION. THE WORD SUGGESTS AN INORDINATE LOVE OF MATERIALS OR THINGS TO SUCH AN EXTENT THAT HE COULDN'T TAKE HIS EYES OFF OF THE MATERIAL IN QUESTION. HE WAS HOOKED, HE COULD SEE HIMSELF WEARING THE CLOTHES AND SPENDING THE MONEY. (THERE IS A STORY ABOUT A LADY WHO HAD SPENT MORE THAN THE BUDGET WOULD REQUIRE OR PERMIT,

IN TRYING TO EXPLAIN IT TO HER HUSBAND HE ASKED HER WHY SHE HADN'T SAID "GET THEE BEHIND ME SATAN." HER ANSWER WAS THAT SHE HAD SAID THAT VERY THING AND HIS REPLY WAS "IT CERTAINLY DOES LOOK GOOD IN THE BACK."

(3) I TOOK - WHAT ACHAN HAD SEEN AND COVETED HE NOW TOOK AND ~~BECAME A THIEF~~. ~~THE DEED WAS DONE~~, THERE WAS NO TURNING BACK. HE HAD DONE SOMETHING GOD HAD TOLD HIM NOT TO DO. THERE WAS NOTHING ACCIDENTAL ABOUT THIS ACTION, IT WAS ~~DESIGNED TO DECEIVE~~.

(4) I HID - HIDING HAS ALWAYS BEEN PART OF MAN'S ACTION WHEN HE IS ~~FLEEING FROM GOD~~ AND SEEKING TO JUSTIFY HIS OWN ACTION. (CF. GEN. 3 - ADAM & EVE ~~HIDING IN THE GARDEN~~.) ONE WOULD THINK THAT PEOPLE WOULD HAVE THE GOOD SENSE NOT TO DO WHAT GOD SAYS IS WRONG. HOWEVER, THIS IS NOT THE CASE. LYING AND COVETOUSNESS ARE PART AND PARCEL OF HUMAN NATURE. THERE IS NO LONG LASTING HELP ~~FOR US APART FROM~~ GRACE OF GOD. THE PASSAGE IN LUKE 12:16 REMINDS MEN WHERE COVETOUSNESS LEADS AND ULTIMATELY ENDS. THE DESIRE OF EVERY MAN SHOULD NOT TO BE RICH FOR HIMSELF BUT TO RICH TOWARD GOD. QUESTION: ARE YOU RICH TOWARD GOD TODAY? UPON WHAT DO YOU BASE YOUR ANSWER?

CALEB: THE SON OF JEPHUNNEH
"ONE IN A MILLION"
 NUMBERS 13:6

THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL CAME OUT OF EGYPT, BUT EGYPT DID NOT COME OUT OF THEM. THEY LEFT THE BONDAGE OF THAT FOREIGN LAND DELIVERED BY A SERIES OF MIRACLES. GOD GAVE TO ISRAEL THE LAND OF CANAAN A GIFT FOR THE TAKING. INSTEAD OF MOVING IMMEDIATELY INTO THE PROMISE LAND, THEY WANDERED AROUND IN THE WILDERNESS A DISOBEDIENT AND DISBELIEVING GENERATION CONDEMNED TO WANDER UNTIL THE OLD GENERATION DIED AND A NEW GENERATION MOVED INTO THE LAND. OF THE TWO MILLION PEOPLE WHO CAME OUT OF EGYPT, ONLY TWO ARE MENTIONED AS MEN OF OBEDIENCE IN FAITH -- I SUPPOSE THAT WOULD MAKE THEM ONE IN A MILLION! THE TWO PEOPLE ARE MENTIONED IN OUR TEXT, NAMELY, JOSHUA AND CALEB. THE CITY WHERE ISRAEL STOPPED WAS AT THE GATEWAY OF CANAAN. THE CITY WAS KADESH-BARNEA. IN BIBLE TYPOLOGY, EGYPT IS A TYPE OF WORLD WITH ITS GLAMOUR, GOLD AND GLORY. HOWEVER, IT WAS A LAND OF BONDAGE AND SERVITUDE. CANAAN IS NOT A TYPE OF HEAVEN BUT RATHER A TYPE OF PLACE OF CHRISTIAN VICTORY WHERE ONE POSSESS HIS POSSESSIONS. IT SPEAKS OF APPROPRIATION OR TAKING WHAT GOD HAS GIVEN. THE WILDERNESS SPEAKS OF A PLACE OF TESTING AND REPRESENTS THE FLESH. IT SPEAKS OF THAT PLACE IN LIFE SHORT OF CANAAN WHERE MANY OF GODS PEOPLE WANDER SHORT OF GODS BLESSING AND WHERE SOME DIE NEVER HAVING LEARNED THE SECRET OF VICTORY IN THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE. WE WILL LOOK AT SEVERAL IMPORTANT LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE LIFE OF CALEB.

I. CALEB: A SPECIAL MAN FOR A SPECIAL MISSION -
NUMBERS 13:1-2

ACCORDING TO THIS CHAPTER, TWELVE MEN, ONE FROM EACH TRIBE, WERE SELECTED TO INVESTIGATE THE FEATURES OF THE PROMISE LAND. TWO OF THESE TWELVE WERE JOSHUA AND CALEB. ONE MIGHT SAY THEY WERE LEADERS FROM AMONG THE LEADERS. ACCORDING TO DEUTERONOMY 1:22-23 THE IDEA OF SENDING THE SPIES TO SEARCH OUT THE LAND OF CANAAN WAS AN IDEA OF THE

PEOPLE, GOD GRANTED THEM THEIR REQUEST KNOWING FULL WELL IT WOULD BE THE BEGINNING OF A DOWN HILL SLIDE TOWARD UNBELIEF AND FAILURE. THAT EXPEDITION LEAD TO TALK AND TERROR AND PANIC AND FAILURE. WHEN THE SPIES RETURNED FROM THEIR FORTY DAY EXPEDITION THEY WERE FILLED WITH FEAR OF WHAT THEY SAW AND THE OBSTACLES TO OVERCOMING AND TAKING THE LAND. (THIS CHAPTER TOUCHES ON THE IDEA OF WHAT GOD PURPOSES AND WHAT HE PERMITS. BY THAT, SCRIPTURE TEACHES THAT GOD PERMITS OTHERS TO DO OR BRING ABOUT CERTAIN THINGS IN CONTRAST TO THOSE EVENTS WHICH HE CAUSES THE FULFILLMENT. FOR EXAMPLE, GOD PERMITTED SATAN TO TEST JOB, HE PERMITTED SIN TO ENTER THE WORLD. ACCORDING TO THE WORD OF GOD, GODS PERMISSIVE WILL IS MENTIONED THROUGHOUT THE WORD OF GOD. APPARENTLY THERE ARE THOSE EVENTS WHICH HE DOES NOT ACTIVELY PROMOTE BUT WHICH HE PERMITS IN HIS SOVEREIGN PURPOSE. (A CAREFUL LOOK AT THE PURPOSE OF THIS EXPEDITION WILL REVEAL THAT THE TRIP WAS SIMPLY UNNECESSARY BECAUSE GOD HAD GIVEN THE LAND TO THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL.) HE HAD PROMISED TO PROTECT AND SECURE THEM IN THE LAND. THE PROBLEM AROSE WITH THEIR DESIRE TO SEEK THE THINGS WHICH GOD SAID WAS THEIRS FOR THE TAKING. THEIRS WOULD HAVE BEEN A JOURNEY OF FAITH TRUSTING OF GOD BUT ISRAEL DID NOT WANT TO MOVE ON THE BASIS OF FAITH BUT RATHER ON THE BASIS OF SIGHT. THEY COULD BELIEVE GOD FOR DELIVERANCE FROM THE BONDAGE OF EGYPT BUT NOT BELIEVE HIM FOR DELIVERANCE FOR THE SECURING OF THE PROMISELAND! THIS SUDDEN LAPSE OF FAITH IS ASTONISHING UNTIL ONE APPLIES THE SAME PRINCIPLE TO OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE! THE TERM "RULER" IS TRANSLATED AS FOLLOWS IN THE NASV, "EVERYONE A LEADER AMONG THEM". CALEB WAS A LEADER IN HIS TRIBE BEFORE HE WAS A LEADER IN HIS NATION. GOD IS LOOKING FOR MEN OF FAITH WHO WILL LOOK TO HIM FOR GUIDANCE AS THEY IN TURN LEAD HIS PEOPLE. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT OCCUPYING A POSITION DOES NOT MAKE ONE A LEADER. IN THE LORDS WORK, ABOVE ALL ELSE, SPIRITUAL QUALIFICATIONS ARE PRIMARY AND CALEB HAD THE COURAGE, FAITH AND OPTIMISM TO MOVE FORWARD ACCORDING TO GOD'S DIRECTIVE AND NOT BE UNDULY INFLUENCED BY THE WEAKNESS OF HIS PEERS. IN THE BIBLE, GOD HAS ALWAYS HAD HIS SPECIAL PEOPLE FOR SPECIAL PLACES OF LEADERSHIP. MOSES WAS PREPARED

?
CAUSES



IN EGYPT BEFORE HE MOVED TOWARD CANAAN. PAUL WAS PREPARED FOR THAT SPECIAL PLACE OF LEADERSHIP. IN BIBLE HISTORY, GOD HAS ALWAYS HAD HIS MAN FOR THE PARTICULAR NEED AMONG HIS PEOPLE. (COMMENT ON THE LEADERSHIP CRISIS AROUND THE WORLD.) OF ALL HIS ARRESTING QUALITIES, CALEB'S UNWAVERING CONFIDENCE IN GOD IS HIS OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTIC. (JOHN 1:6, 1 SAMUEL 13:14, EZEKIEL 22:30)

II. CALEB: A MAN OF FAITH AMONG MEN OF FEAR - NUMBERS 13:30

(Fear is contagious)
(Faith - ?)

WHILE THE SPIES WERE ON THEIR FORTY DAY EXPEDITION, THEY DEVELOPED WHAT SOMEONE HAS CALLED THE "GRASSHOPPER COMPLEX". THEY SAW A LAND RICH IN NATURAL RESOURCES BUT INSTEAD OF THINKING ON HOW THEY MIGHT CAPITALIZE ON THE RESOURCES THE TEN EXAGGERATED THE OBSTACLES IN THE LAND. UNBELIEF ALWAYS EXAGGERATES THE SIZE OF THE OBSTACLE! THESE MEN WHO HAD BEEN ACCUSTOMED TO SEEING EGYPTIANS WHO ARE GENERALLY SMALL IN STATURE SIMPLY COULD NOT HANDLE THE GIANTS IN THE LAND. WHEN THE MAJORITY REPORT WAS GIVEN BY THE SPIES IT CREATED PANIC AND FEAR IN THE HEARTS OF THE HEBREWS. THE TEXT SAYS THAT CALEB "STILLED" PEOPLE. THE PEOPLE SOUGHT TO STONE JOSHUA AND CALEB AND APPOINTED A CAPTAIN OR LEADER TO BEGIN ORGANIZING A RETREAT BACK TO EGYPT. FAITH ALWAYS HAS A CALMING OR QUIETING EFFECT IN THE MIDST OF PANIC. FAITH QUIETS THE HEART WHILE FEAR CREATES PANDEMONIUM. (RELATE PAUL AND HIS VOYAGE TO ROME - ACTS 27-28) CALEB'S ADVICE WAS TO GO FORWARD "AT ONCE." THERE IS AN IMMEDIACY ABOUT FAITH WHICH REQUIRES ACTION NOW. THERE ARE SOME DECISION IN LIFE WHICH REQUIRE TIME, WAITING AND CAREFUL REFLECTION. HOWEVER, THERE ARE SOME DECISIONS WHICH DEMAND IMMEDIATE ACTION AND THE INDECISION OF UNBELIEF ONLY CREATES GREATER OBSTACLES. (GENESIS 22:2, MATTHEW 8:21-22) CALEB ALSO REASSURED THE PEOPLE THAT THEY WERE "WELL ABLE TO OVERCOME" WHAT THEY SAW, NAMELY, THE SIZE OF THE MEN, THE WALLS OF THE CITY, SHOULD NOT KEEP THEM FROM ENTERING THE LAND BECAUSE GOD HAD SAID GO AND WHERE HE SAYS GO HE ALWAYS PROVIDES A WAY. THE TEN SPIES LOOKED AT THE CIRCUMSTANCES AND SURROUNDINGS AND DOUBTED GOD'S WORD. JOSHUA AND CALEB LOOKED AT GOD WITH LITTLE CONCERN FOR THE DIFFICULTIES. THE

SAD PART OF THE STORY IS THAT MEN ARE PRONE TO FOLLOW THE MAJORITY IN FEAR RATHER THAN THE MINORITY IN FAITH. THE TEN INFLUENCED AND ENTIRE NATION TO TURN BACK IN THE WILDERNESS AND RESTRICTED THEIR PROGRESS FROM WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN A ONE MONTH JOURNEY TO A GENERATION OF AIMLESS WANDERING! SOMEONE SAID: "UNBELIEF HAS A NOTORIOUSLY SHORT MEMORY." HOW SOON THE CHILDREN OF ISREAL HAD FORGOTTEN THE TASK MASTERS WHIP AND THE BITTERNESS OF SLAVERY FROM WHICH THEY HAD BEEN DELIVERED. COULD THEY NOT REMEMBER THE DIVIDING OF THE RED SEA OR GODS DEALING WITH PHARAOH? SURELY THE GOD WHO DELIVERED FROM EGYPT COULD DELIVER FROM THE GIANTS IN THE LAND. MANY BELIEVERS TURNED BACK FROM THE PLACE OF FAITH AND BLESSING TO THE WILDERNESS EXPERIENCE NEVER TO POSSESS THE LAND WHICH GOD HAS SIMPLY FOR THE TAKING. IN THE PRESENCE OF OBSTACLES WHICH MAYBE READILY SEEN WITH THE EYE, IT IS DIFFICULT TO TRUST GOD'S PROMISE AND HOLD YOUR GROUND AND MOVE FORWARD INSTEAD OF RETREATING IN FEAR. ANY SOLDIER KNOWS THE PANIC AND FEAR WHICH SWEPTS THE HEART WHEN FACED WITH OVERWHELMING PHYSICAL ODDS. HOWEVER, MEN ARE ENCOURAGED NOT TO LOOK AT THE OBSTACLES BUT RATHER TO LOOK AT THE OPPORTUNITY.

III. CALEB: A MAN WHO WAS WILLING TO BE NUMBER TWO - JOSHUA 1:2-9

WHEN MOSES DIED, GOD CHOSE JOSHUA TO BE ISRAEL'S LEADER. A CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF THE TEXT OF SCRIPTURE PRODUCES NO HINT OF DISAPPOINTMENT, DISCONTENTMENT OR BITTERNESS ON THE PART OF CALEB FOR NOT HAVING BEEN CHOSEN TO TAKE THE PLACE OF MOSES! PRIDE WOULD HAVE SAID THAT CALEB WAS EVERY BIT AS CAPABLE OF BEING THE LEADER OF ISRAEL AS WAS JOSHUA. IN THIS RESPECT, CALEB WAS A RARE MAN WHO COULD WATCH ANOTHER ELEVATED TO A POSITION OF LEADERSHIP AND RESPONSIBILITY WITHOUT BECOMING ENVIOUS AND JEALOUS. THIS IS ESPECIALLY MEANINGFUL BECAUSE JOSHUA WAS CALEB'S COLLEAGUE. UNIQUE IS THE PERSON WHO CAN WATCH HIS FELLOW PEERS ELEVATED TO A PLACE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND STILL BE SUPPORTIVE AND HELPFUL AND GRATEFUL TO GOD FOR SUCH ELEVATION. (THERE ARE THOSE FEW MEN SUCH AS AARON AND BARNABAS AND IN SOME MEASURE PETER WHO ARE WILLING TO STEP ASIDE WHILE OTHERS MOVE INTO

TRAIL

PLACES OF LEADERSHIP WHICH THEY HAVE KNOWN OR COULD HAVE FILLED. IN TODAY'S LANGUAGE, WE WOULD CALL CALEB A TEAM PLAYER. (RELATE THIS PRINCIPLE TO J. R. FAULKNER. A MAN CALLED TO BE NUMBER TWO!) SOMEONE DESCRIBED A MUTUAL ACQUAINTANCE AS A PERSON WHO "HAD TO BE THE BRIDE AT EVERY WEDDING AND THE CORPSE AT EVERY FUNERAL!" SOMETIMES IT IS NOT EASY TO TAKE THE NUMBER TWO POSITION TO SUPPORT THE QUARTER BACK OR THE ONE WHO IS STEERING AND NOT TRY TO TAKE OVER YOURSELF.

IV. CALEB: A MAN WHO LIVED UNTIL HE DIED -

JOSHUA 14:12

(6-10)

See Sermon on Sermonizing

THIS STATEMENT IS NOT MEANT TO BE TRITE OR SILLY. WHEN CALEB ASKED FOR THE MOUNTAIN, NAMELY, HEBRON HE WAS ASKING FOR THE PLACE WHERE THE SONS OF ANAK LIVED! THE IMPRESSIVE PART OF THIS STATEMENT IS THAT CALEB WAS 85 YEARS OLD WHEN HE MADE THIS REQUEST. CALEB SPOKE OF THE FACT THAT GOD HAD LET HIM LIVE WHILE OTHERS HAD DIED IN UNBELIEF. THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO ARE PHYSICALLY ALIVE BUT ARE NOT REALLY LIVING EITHER LIFE TO ITS FULLEST OR THEIR CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE IN VICTORY. ONE NEED NOT WAIT TILL HE IS PHYSICALLY DEAD TO REACH THE CEMETARY! VANCE HAVNER REMINDS US THAT MANY ARE INTERESTED IN MOLEHILLS WHEN WE SHOULD BE LOOKING AT MOUNTAINS! THESE VERSES REMIND THE READER THAT CALEB NEVER STOPPED GROWING OR CLIMBING IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE. HE DID NOT SUCCEED TO THE RETIREMENT SYNDROME. BARCLAY REMINDS HIS READERS THAT EVERY STAGE OF LIFE HAS ITS DANGERS. THE PERIL OF YOUTH IS THE DESIRE TO PERPETUALLY STAY THERE! THE PERIL OF MIDDLE AGE IS TO ACQUIRE COMFORTS AND PRESTIGE AND THEN TRY TO HANG ON. OLD AGE HAS ITS PROBLEMS NOT THE LEAST OF WHICH IS TO QUIT OR RETIRE AS FAR AS CHRISTIAN LIVING IS CONCERNED. "CALEB PROVIDES US WITH A GLORIOUS CONCEPTION OF THE POSSIBILITY OF OLD AGE." THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT HE DID HIS BEST WORK FOR GOD WHEN HE WAS OLDER. AT THAT TIME IN LIFE WHEN MOST PEOPLE THINK OF SECURITY AND COMFORT CALEB WAS PLANNING FOR GOD! HE SAW ANOTHER GOAL TO ATTAIN ANOTHER VICTORY TO WIN. IN THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE LAND TO THE TRIBES OF ISRAEL, CALEB DID NOT ASK FOR

*J.R. Faulkner
Paul
Charles
Hill*

(3)

Colson

- 90 yrs old -

*writing to inmates!
Best of us -*

THE FERTILE VALLEYS AND THE EASY PLACES BUT RATHER HE ASKED FOR HEBRON THE MOST POWERFUL STRONG HOLD OF THE ENEMY. YET ANOTHER REASON WHY CALEB SOUGHT THIS MOUNTAIN WAS BECAUSE IT WAS THE MOST ADVANTAGEOUS POINT AND IN ONE SENSE IT WAS THE BEST SPOT IN THE LAND. CALEB UNDERTOOK THE MOST DIFFICULT TASK IN HIS LIFE WHEN HE WAS OLD. IT IS EASY TO LOSE YOUR SPIRIT OF GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT WITH ADVANCING AGE. THE TEMPTATION IS TO LET THE YOUNGER PEOPLE DO THE DIFFICULT TASKS. I REALIZE THERE ARE PHYSICAL LIMITATIONS WHICH COME WITH OLD AGE BUT FAR TOO MANY OF THE LORD'S PEOPLE RUST OUT INSTEAD OF WEAR OUT IN HIS SERVICE! I DO NOT BELIEVE GOD CALLS OLDER FOLKS TO SIT IN THE CORNER WHILE THE YOUNG PEOPLE TAKE OVER. IT SEEMS TO ME, THERE IS A PLACE IN THE LORD'S WORK FOR US AT EVERY LEVEL OF LIFE. TO BE SURE THERE PERILS IN GROWING OLD BUT THERE ARE ALSO PLEASURES WHICH THE YOUNG KNOW NOTHING ABOUT. JUST AS THERE ARE LIMITATIONS FOR THE AGING CHRISTIAN THERE ARE ALSO UNIQUE OPPORTUNITIES. WITH ADVANCED AGE COMES A BROADING OF THE VISION A MATURITY OF OPINION WITH A WISDOM AND SANITY THAT ONLY EXPERIENCE CAN GIVE. THERE ARE VALUES WHICH COME WITH AGE THAT MOST PEOPLE RECOGNIZE. SOMEONE HAS WELL SAID OF CALEB THAT HE DIED CLIMBING!

V. CALEB: A MAN WHO WAS 100% FOR GOD 100% OF THE TIME -- JOSHUA 14:8,14 "wholly"
Num. 14:24

THE PHRASE "WHOLLY FOLLOWED" IN THE HEBREW LANGUAGE PICTURES A SHIP GOING OUT WITH FULL SAIL. CALEB WAS A MAN WHO LIFTED HIS SAIL AND LET GOD BLOW AND STEER WHEREVER GOD DESIRED. SOME MAY WANT TO QUIBBLE ABOUT THE USAGE OF THE TERM 100% AND IF YOU WANT TO SUBSTITUTE SOMETHING LESS SO BE IT. THE POINT IS WELL TAKEN. THE OUTSTANDING CHARACTERISTIC OF CALEB'S LIFE WAS HIS DEVOTION TO GOD. WHEN OTHERS WERE PANICKY HE WAS STRONG IN FAITH. HIS DEDICATION DID NOT WAIN IN HIS OLDER YEARS. THE MAN WHO FOLLOWS GOD WILL NOT DIE A LONELY, DISAPPOINTED, FRUSTRATED PERSON. THE CHRISTIANS ONLY REAL SECURITY IS TO WHOLLY FOLLOW THE LORD.

Summary:

1. A Special Man For a Special Mission
2. A Man of Faith Among Men of Fear
3. A Man who was Willing to Be #2
4. A Man who lived until the Dial
5. A Man who was 100% For God

See Sanders

"THE PSALM OF PSALMS"

PSALM 23

PSALM 23 IS THE MOST FAMILIAR EXTENDED PASSAGE IN THE WORD OF GOD. IT IS EVERYBODY'S FAVORITE. THIS PSALM MEETS THE NEED OF YOUNG AND OLD ALIKE. IT IS LEARNED BY YOUNG PEOPLE AT HOME OR IN SUNDAY SCHOOL AND IS QUOTED BY THE AGED AS DEATH NEARS. FOR THE THREE THOUSAND YEARS OF ITS EXISTENCE, THIS PSALM HAS BEEN QUOTED IN HOSPITALS AND ON BATTLE FIELDS. IT SEEMS TO MEET THE NEED OF HUMAN BEINGS AS NO OTHER PASSAGE IN THE WORD OF GOD. IN TIMES OF SPIRITUAL CRISES, WE FLEE TO PASSAGES LIKE THIS FOR SPIRITUAL HELP AND ENCOURAGEMENT. I SHALL NEVER FORGET A LATE NIGHT CALL TO A LOCAL HOSPITAL, WHICH I MADE SEVERAL YEARS AGO. A YOUNG LADY WAS IN A SEMICONSCIOUS STATE AND NOT EXPECTED TO LIVE THROUGH THE NIGHT. HER PARENTS WERE DESIROUS THAT A PASTOR MIGHT COME AND PRAY WITH AND FOR HER. TO THE BEST OF HER MOTHER'S KNOWLEDGE, THE GIRL HAD NEVER PROFESSED TO KNOW CHRIST AS SAVIOR. WHILE WE WERE STANDING NEAR THE BED, THE YOUNG LADY WHO APPEARED TO BE UNCONSCIOUS BEGAN TO QUOTE PORTIONS OF THE 23RD PSALM. TO BE SURE, IT WAS IN THE HALF WHISPER AND HALF GROAN BUT I RECOGNIZED THE WORDS. IN LIFE'S MOST DESPERATE AND DARK MOMENT, THIS GIRL WAS REACHING OUT TO ONE OF THE PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE SHE KNEW - THE 23RD PSALM. PERHAPS SHE HAD LEARNED IT IN SUNDAY SCHOOL OR DAILY VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL FOR THE MOTHER COULD NOT REMEMBERING TAUGHT HER THE PSALM. I MUST CONFESS, THERE WERE TEARS IN MY EYES AS I LISTENED TO THOSE FEEBLE WORDS THAT NIGHT FOR IT BROUGHT TO MIND THE MULTIPLIED THOUSANDS WHO HAVE TURNED IN LIFE'S DIFFICULT MOMENTS TO THAT SPIRITUAL OASIS CALLED THE 23RD PSALM. THIS WONDERFUL PSALM HAS BEEN A PEACEFUL HARBOR IN THE STORMS OF LIFE FOR SO MANY. I CANNOT NUMBER THE TIMES I HAVE READ THIS PSALM. BUT EVERY OCCASION BRINGS A NEW FRESHNESS. MOST OF US LEARNED THIS PSALM AS A CHILD AND IT INTRODUCED US TO ONE OF THE GREAT TRUES OF THE BIBLE, NAMELY GOD CARES FOR US. THIS PSALM SPANS THE RANGE OF HUMAN EMOTIONS, FROM DEEPEST SORROW TO HIGHEST JOY. (THE STORY IS TOLD OF A TELEGRAPH OPERATOR SITTING AT HIS KEY ONE NIGHT AS A SHIP MADE ITS WAY ACROSS THE OCEAN. IT WAS IN THE EARLY DAYS OF WIRELESS

COMMUNICATION AND THE MAN IN ALMOST IDLE MOTION SENT OUT THE WORDS OF THIS PSALM. IN A MOMENT HE RECEIVED A SINGLE WORD REPLY - AMEN! IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT PSALMS 22, 23, 24 FORM A UNIT. EACH OF THESE PICTURES OUR LORD IN A SPECIFIC ASPECT OF HIS SHEPHERDING MINISTRY. IN PSALMS 22, HE IS SEEN AS THE GOOD SHEPHERD. "I AM THE GOOD SHEPHERD: THE GOOD SHEPHERD GIVETH HIS LIFE FOR THE SHEEP." IN PSALM 23, HE IS SEEN AS THE GREAT SHEPHERD. "NOW THE GOD OF PEACE, THAT BROUGHT AGAIN FROM THE DEAD OUR LORD JESUS, THAT GREAT SHEPHERD OF THE SHEEP, THROUGH THE BLOOD OF THE EVERLASTING COVENANT, MAKE YOU PERFECT IN EVERY GOOD WORK TO DO HIS WILL, WORKING IN YOU THAT WHICH IS WELL PLEASING IN HIS SIGHT, THROUGH JESUS CHRIST; TO WHOM BE GLORY FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN. (HEB. 13:-20-21) IN PSALM 24, HE IS THE CHIEF SHEPHERD. AND WHEN THE CHIEF SHEPHERD SHALL APPEAR, YE SHALL RECEIVE A CROWN OF GLORY THAT FADETH NOT AWAY. (1 PET. 5:4)

I. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FAITH - V. 1

THE WORD "LORD" IN VERSE ONE WAS THE MOST REVERED NAME OF GOD IN THE BIBLE. THE WORD JEHOVAH REFERRED TO GOD AS THE LIVING ONE, THE SELF EXISTENT ONE. MEN CHANGE AND GROW OLD NEEDING ASSISTANCE FROM MANY SOURCES ONLY JEHOVAH IS CHANGELESS AND SELF-SUSTAINED. WE ARE TOLD THAT THE NAME JEHOVAH WAS SO SACRED THAT IT WAS ONLY PRONOUNCED ONCE A YEAR ON THE DAY OF ATONEMENT BY THE HIGH PRIEST AS HE ENTERED INTO THE MOST HOLY PLACE. DAVID SAYS THAT THIS GREAT GOD UPON WHOM ALL LIFE DEPENDS, THE ETERNAL UNCHANGEABLE ONE IS THE GOD IN WHOM DAVID'S FAITH WAS RESTING. NOTICE THE USAGE OF THE WORD MY. DAVID COULD HAVE USED THE WORD "A" OR THE WORD "THE" BUT IT WOULD HAVE NOT MEANT THE SAME. IT IS ONE THING TO SAY A CHILD IS SICK AND QUITE ANOTHER TO SAY MY CHILD IS SICK. THERE IS A GREAT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SAYING "JESUS IS A SAVIOR OR THE SAVIOR WHEN COMPARED TO THE LORD IS MY SAVIOR." THOMAS LEARNED THIS DIFFERENCE WHEN HE SAID "MY LORD AND MY GOD." WHAT A SHEPHERD IS AND DOES FOR HIS SHEEP, THATS WHAT GOD IS AND DOES FOR ME! I KNOW OF NO MORE TENDER WAY TO PICTURE ONES RELATIONSHIP TO GOD. EVERY MAN NEEDS A SHEPHERD THROUGH LIFE. "O LORD, I KNOW THAT THE WAY OF MAN IS NOT IN HIMSELF; IT IS NOT IN MAN THAT WALKETH TO DIRECT HIS STEPS." (JEREMIAH 10:23) IN ANCIENT TIMES

"THE PSALM OF PSALMS"

3.

WHEN THE SHEPHERD CALLED OUT THE SHEEP IN THE MORNING TO LEAD THEM TO PASTURE AND TO PROTECT THEM FROM HARM, SO WE NEED A SHEPHERD OF THE SOUL TO WATCH OVER US THROUGH LIFE. OUR NATURAL TENDENCY IS TO GO AWAY FROM THE LORD. (ISA. 53:6) IT IS ONE THING TO KNOW THAT JESUS IS SAVIOR OF THE WORLD AND TO BELIEVE THAT HE IS CAPABLE OF SAVING MEN WHO TRUST HIM. IT IS QUITE ANOTHER THING TO BE ABLE TO SAY "HE SAVED ME."

II. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FORTUNE - Vs. 1B-3A

"that all I want"
THE PHRASE "I SHALL NOT WANT" HAS BEEN TRANSLATED BY THE WORD DO. THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING YOU AND I NEED FOR WHICH WE CANNOT TRUST THE LORD. IN A WORLD WHERE WANT IS RAMPANT, THE LORD'S SHEEP MAY BE ASSURED OF HIS PROVISION. THE CRY OF THE PRODIGAL IS VERY APPROPRIATE "I PERISH WITH HUNGER." THE FATHERS HOUSE IS THE PLACE OF BLESSING WHERE ALL OUR NEEDS ARE SUPPLIED. R. A. TORREY WROTE THESE WORDS MANY YEARS AGO: "R. A. TORREY IS PROOF THAT MAN MAY THROW HIS WHOLE LIFE INTO THE HANDS OF GOD AND WANT FOR NOTHING." DR. TORREY HAD LEARNED DAVID'S SECRET. IT WOULD SEEM THAT THE PERSON WHO MAKES THE GLORY OF GOD HIS GOAL IN LIFE WILL FIND SATISFACTION TO THE DEEP LONGINGS OF THE HUMAN HEART. "DELIGHT THYSELF ALSO IN THE LORD; AND HE SHALL GIVE THEE THE DESIRES OF THINE HEART." (PS. 37:4)
THE PHRASE "GREEN PASTURES...STILL WATERS" SPEAK OF ADEQUATE PROVISION AND REST. THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL WAY TO SPEAK OF SATISFACTION IN LIFE. (MATT. 11:28) EVERY MAN NEEDS REST OF ONE KIND OR ANOTHER. NOT JUST REST FROM THE ROUTINE OF LIFE BUT REST DEEP DOWN INSIDE. OUR RESTLESS SPIRITS NEED TO FIND REST IN HIM. (RELATE THE COMMON CRY TO GET AWAY FOR A WEEKEND FOR REST.) SOMETIMES FOLK ARE LOOKING FOR REST FOR THE BODY WHEN THEIR PRIMARY NEED IS REST FOR THE SOUL.) MEN NEED TO BE AWARE OF THE FACT THAT ONLY GOD CAN SATISFY THE INNERMOST DESIRES OF THE HUMAN HEART. EVERYTHING ELSE WILL RESULT IN DISAPPOINTMENT UNTIL OUR FAITH RESTS IN HIM. "HE RESTORETH MY SOUL" - NOT ALL SHEEP ARE OBEDIENT SHEEP. SOMETIMES WE STRAY FROM THE SHEPHERD AND THE PROPER PATH. WE LOSE OUR INTEREST IN THE BIBLE, CHURCH AND CHRISTIAN SERVICE. WE ARE LIKE ISRAEL WHEN THEY WONDERED FOR 40 YEARS IN THE WILDERNESS BECAUSE OF UNBELIEF AND DISOBEDIENCE.

III. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FEET - V. 3B

NOTICE THE ORDER IN THE PHRASE "~~HE LEADETH ME~~" OUR DIFFICULTIES IN LIFE BEGAN WHEN WE FORGET THAT GOD IS THE LEADER OF OUR LIVES. TO OFTEN WE MAKE OUR PLANS AND ASK GOD TO PLEASE BLESS THEM! IT IS THE BUSINESS OF THE SHEPHERD TO LEAD THE SHEEP NOT VICE VERSA. WHEN THE SHEEP DO THE LEADING THEY ALWAYS STRAY INTO DANGEROUS PLACES. DR. BLAIR TELLS THE STORY OF A GUIDE IN PALESTINE WHO EXPLAINING TO A GROUP OF TOURIST THAT THE SHEPHERD ALWAYS LEADS HIS FLOCK. LATER IN THE DAY THEY SAW A FLOCK OF SHEEP WITH A MAN BEHIND THEM DRIVING THEM. ONE OF THE PARTY REMINDED THE GUIDE OF HIS EARLIER STATEMENT. "INQUIRY WAS MADE CONCERNING THIS UNUSUAL PROCEDURE." "SHEPHERD?" WAS THE REPLY OF THE MAN, "I'M NOT A SHEPHERD, I'M A BUTCHER DRIVING THE SHEEP TO SLAUGHTER." THE PLACE WHERE THE SHEPHERD LEADS HIS SHEEP IS CALLED "PATHS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS". THE LORD ALWAYS LEADS HIS OWN IN THE PROPER PATH. THE LEADING OF THE LORD IS ALWAYS IN "TRACKS" OF RIGHTEOUSNESS. THE LORD WILL NEVER LEAD HIS SHEEP TO A PLACE WHERE TESTIMONY AND GOOD NAME COULD BE MARRED OR DAMAGED. ONE OF THE ~~GRATE~~ PROBLEMS TODAY IS THAT THE BLEATING OF THE SHEEP SEEKING ATTENTION AS THEY STRAY INTO PATHS NEVER INTENDED FOR SHEEP. THE LORD'S SHEEP NEED TO STAY AWAY FROM THE TROUGHS OF THE HOG PEN. THE LITTLE PHRASE "FOR HIS NAME SAKE" REMINDS US THAT THE PRIMARY FUNCTION OF THE SHEEP IS TO BRING GLORY AND HONOR TO THE SHEPHERD. IT SHOULD BE OUR PRIMARY CONCERN. GOD'S GOOD NAME IS CONNECTED WITH THE CHRISTIAN.

IV. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FEARS - V. 4

IF WE DID NOT HAVE THE BIBLE, YOU AND I WOULD KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THE PLACE WHERE MEN GO WHEN THEY DIE. ALL OF US, IF THE LORD TAKES, MUST FACE THE PROBLEM OF DEATH. MUCH OF THE FEAR ASSOCIATED WITH DEATH IS FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN. THE REASON THE PSALMIST COULD FACE DEATH AS A MOST DIFFICULT SUBJECT WAS BECAUSE HE COULD SAY "THOU ART WITH ME." THE VERSE DOES NOT SAY THAT GOD WILL SPEAK A WORD OF CHEER OR HOLD OUR HAND IN THE TIME OF LIVES GREATEST CRISES IT SAYS HE IS WITH US! DIFFICULT SITUATIONS AND UNKNOWN SITUATIONS ARE NOT AS DIFFICULT WHEN SOMEONE IS WITH US! LISTEN TO THE PROMISES TO THE WORD OF GOD. (MATT. 28:20, HEB. 13:5) THE PERSON WHO HAS LIVED HIS LIFE FOR JESUS CHRIST NEED NOT FEAR DEATH

"THE PSALM OF PSALMS"

5.

EVEN THOUGH DEATH IS OUR FINAL ENEMY. SOMEONE HAS WELL SAID "TO THE BELIEVER, DEATH COMES NOT LIKE A POLICEMAN TO DRAG THE SOUL TO AN ETERNAL PRISON HOUSE BUT RATHER AS THE GENTLE HAND THAT OPENS THE DOOR OF THE CAGE THAT LETS THE RANSOMED SPIRIT FLY TO ITS NATIVE HOME IN HEAVEN." "AREN'T YOU AFRAID TO WALK TO THE CEMETERY IN THE DARK?" WAS ASKED TO A PERSON. OH NO, WAS THE REPLY MY HOME IS JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE." THE TWO BADGES OF THE SHEPHERD'S OFFICE, THE ROD A WEAPON OF DEFENSE AND THE STAFF A CROOK TO RESTRAIN AND CORRECT WONDERING SHEEP ARE MENTIONED IN THESE VERSES AS COMFORT TO THE SHEEP. I AM GREATLY COMFORTED TO KNOW THAT WHAT EVER LIFE MAY BRING TO MY DOORSTEP AND IF DEATH SHOULD COME THEY GREAT SHEPHERD OF OUR SOULS IS ABLE TO COMFORT AND TO HELP. PSALM 27 HAS LONG BEEN A FAVORITE OF MINE. (EXPLAIN)

V. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FOES - V. 5

WE DO NOT USUALLY THINK OF SPIRITUAL PEOPLE HAVING ENEMIES, BUT THEY DO! DAVID HAD ABSALOM AND SAUL WHO SOUGHT TO KILL HIM. EVERY MAN WHO SEEKS TO DO GOD'S WILL MAY EXPECT OPPOSITION AND ADVERSITY. THIS VERSE SPEAKS OF JOY AND CONFIDENCE IN THE FACE OF PROBLEMS. THE ANSWER TO THE PROBLEMS TO YOUR AND MY LIFE IS A CLOSER RELATIONSHIP TO THE SHEPHERD. FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION UPON THE SHEPHERD AND NOT UPON YOUR FOES. THIS IS DIFFICULT TO DO BUT IT IS THE ULTIMATE ANSWER TO LIFE'S CIRCUMSTANCES.

VI. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FUTURE - V. 6

DAVID REMINDS US THAT THE DAYS OF OUR LIVES AT BEST ARE BRIEF. FROM THE DEPTHS OF MAN'S SOUL HE CRIES OUT FOR SOMETHING PERMANENT AND ETERNAL. THE WORD "FOREVER" REMINDS US OF THOSE WHO HAVE LIVED IN THIS LIFE FOR THE SHEPHERD MAY BE ASSURED OF HIS PRESENCE FOREVER. (RELATE STORY OF DR. AND DOG.) QUESTION: TODAY YOU HAVE BEEN EXPOSED TO THE TRUTH OF PSALM 23 BUT DO YOU KNOW THE SHEPHERD?

" THE PSALM OF PSALMS "
Psalm 23

A few years ago, I was called to the hospital late in the night. A young lady was in a semi-conscious state and not expected to live thru the night. Her parents were desirous that a pastor come and pray with and for her. To the best of her mother's knowledge, the girl had never made a profession of faith in Christ. While we were standing near the bed, an unusual thing happened. Although she appeared to be unconscious, apparently the young girl knew I was in the room and for what purpose. Suddenly she began to quote the 23rd Psalm. To be sure, it was in the form of a half whisper and half groan but I recognized the words. In her desperate attempt to cling to something in life's most difficult and dark moment, her mind had gone back to perhaps the only passage of Scripture she knew. Perhaps she had learned it in Sunday School or D.V.B.S. --for I questioned the mother and she had never taught her the psalm. There were tears in my eyes as I listened to those feeble words that night for it brought to mind how many multiplied thousands have turned in hope to this spiritual oasis in the desert of life's experience. This wonderful Psalm has been a peaceful harbor in the storms of life. Even though it was written over 30 centuries ago, it continues to bless the souls of the saints with new freshness every time our eyes fall upon the pages of Scripture. Most of us learned this Psalm years ago and it introduced us to one of the greatest truths of the Bible---God cares for us.

I think it was Dr. Ironside who said that this Psalm is the first learned, most often repeated, longest remembered...and the one least believed! We quote the verses but really fail to appropriate the truths into daily experience.

This Psalm is for all ages and all experiences of life. It spans the range of human emotions--from deepest sorrow to highest joy. The story is told of a wireless operator sitting at his key one night as the ship made its way across the Atlantic. It was in the early days of this type communication and the man in almost idle motion sent out the words of this psalm. In a few moments he received a single word reply--Amen!

I am sure you are aware of the unity of Psalms 22, 23, 24. Each of them pictures our Lord in some aspect of His shepherding ministry. In Psalm 22, He is seen as the Good Shepherd. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." (Jn. 10:11) In Psalm 23 He is seen as the Great Shepherd. "Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, thru the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect

in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is wellpleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. (Heb. 13:20-21) As great shepherd he keeps the sheep. In Psalm 24 He is the Chief Shepherd. "And when the chief shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. (1 Pet. 5:4)

Let us look at some of the basic needs of life this Psalm points out:

I. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FAITH--v.1

When David thinks about God he refers to Him as Jehovah, the most revered name of God in the Bible. Jehovah--the Living One, the Self-existent One. That name which was so sacred that it was only pronounced once a year on the Day of Atonement by the High Priest in the most Holy Place. David is saying that this great God upon who all life depends and who is eternal and unchangable--this great God is not some far off detached force in nature---HE IS MY SHEPHERD. What a shepherd is and does for his sheep--thats what God is and does for me! I know of no more tender way to picture our relationship to God. Every man needs a shepherd. Just as in ancient days, when the shepherd called out the sheep in morning to lead them to pasture and protection from harm, so we need the shepherd of our souls to watch over us thru life. (Isa. 53:6)

The little word "my" arrests the attention. I do not know what the Lord is to you--but he is my shepherd, a very personal relationship. When you know him as Lord and Saviour, He then become your personal Shepherd! It is more than knowing Jesus is the Saviour. It is more than knowing that Jesus can save. It is knowing that He has saved me! I remember a friend who asked a man if he was saved. "Thats personal." "You are right--thats why I am asking you personally if you know Him personally."

*** One of the most often repeated stories about the 23rd Psalm is that of a stage actor who put this psalm into his performance as part of a cultural presentation to a very refined audience. After he had finished his recitation an elderly man stood in the audience and asked for permission to speak. It was granted and he too recited the psalm. After he had finished and sat down the actor said:"Sir, I know the 23rd Psalm, but you know the Shepherd." Most of us know the psalm--but it is far more important that we know the Shepherd.

II. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FORTUNE--v.1-3

(I do not mean money alone, but all that happens to us in life.)

"I shall not want"

Many years ago, R.A. Torrey penned these words about his experience with Christ: "R. A. Torrey is proof that a man may throw his whole life into the hands of God and want for nothing." Torrey had learned David's secret. ***⁷This week a friend and I were having lunch together and were talking about this same idea. When we started thinking about what we were after in life--it was not what \$ and ¢ can buy. Our goals in life, if we know them, are spiritual in nature. To win men to Christ. To send out missionaries and preachers, to reach our town, our generation for Christ. If we make His glory our goal in life, I think He will fully satisfy the deep longings of the heart. "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." (Psa.37:4)

"green pastures...still waters"

These verses speak in the most beautiful way of satisfaction and rest. (Matt. 11:28) Every man needs rest--not just rest from the routines of life but rest deep down in side of himself. Our restless spirits need to find rest and we cannot find such apart from Jesus Christ. *(My conversion--rest.)

Men needs to be made aware of the fact that God has reserved a place in man's heart that only God can fill and we search in many places to find satisfaction for this deep desire to be always disappointed until in faith and repentance we turn to Jesus Christ.

**Someone has said, perhaps crudely but correctly that man has an "itch" in his soul that only God can scratch!

"he restoreth my soul"

I am glad this verse is in the Bible for we do not always obey the Lord. We are not always attentive to spiritual matters. Sometimes we stray--we stray from the Bible, the Church, duties to our Lord. Sometimes the clouds dim our fellowship. ** Israel's illustration of restoration is a wonderful one. They wandered for 40 years in the wilderness because of unbelief but when they started forward once again to go into the land they came back to the exact place where they had gone wrong, to Kadesh-Barnea. It was there they had harkened to the unbelieving spies. This cost them 40 years short of Canaan. Peter is another example. Sometime the Lord brings us back by chastisement. Like the blacksmith of old. Into the fire and into the water to put temper into the metal. After repeated testing if it refused to be tempered--thrown on the scrapheap!

III. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FEET--v.3

Notice the order of the leadership. He leads me. Our difficulties begin when we make up our mind what we want to do and then ask the Lord to bless our plans! (Prov. 3:5-6) It is the business of the Shepherd to lead--not the sheep! When sheep do the leading they stray into all kinds of dangerous paths.
"paths of righteousness"

The Lord always leads us in the right way. The Lord will never lead you to places where your testimony will be damaged or His good name marred. One of our grave problems today is the bleating of the sheep as they seek paths that were never intended for sheep.
"for his names sake"

We sheep need to remember that the glory and honor of the shepherd should be our main concern. God's good name is connected with the way we behave.

IV. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FEARS--v.4 (Earthquake)

If we did not have the Bible, we would know nothing about where we came from, why we are here and where we are going. All of us ultimately come to the place where we must face death. Much of the fear associated with death is the fear of the unknown. The reason the Psalmist could face this most difficult subject was because..."thou art with me." Notice the verse does not say God will speak a word of cheer, or He will hold our hand---He is with us there! How many times have you heard a child say regarding a difficult or unknown situation: "I'll go if you will go with me." (Matt. 28:20, Heb. 13:5)

This verse is a great help about the hard subject of death. It is comforting to know that death is a transition for the believer. We descend to the valley but the shadow cannot harm. The shadow of an enemy cannot harm.

God wants us to live our lives without fear. If we have lives for Him--we need not fear death. The little phrase "fear not" is found at least 52 times in the Bible!

Someone has well said: "To the believer, death comes not like a policeman--to drag the soul to an eternal prison house---but as the gentle hand that opens the door of the cage and lets the ransomed spirit fly to its native home in heaven." "Aren't you afraid to walk thru the cemetery in the dark?" a person was asked. "Oh no, my home is just on the other side."

"rod and staff...comfort me"

V. Two badges of the shepherd's office. Rod as a weapon of defence. Staff--a crook to restrain the wandering sheep and correct the disobedient.

V. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FOES--v.5

In the midst of adversity---God provides.
David speaks of the same situation in Psalm 27:5-6
David had some great enemies in Goliath and Saul not
to mention Absalom. God blessing upon the life even
in the midst of difficulties. Joy in the midst of
problems.

VI. THIS PSALM DEALS WITH OUR FUTURE--v.6

~~It would appear that many people are determined
to prove they do not need the Lord in this life. And
yet in every heart there is the desire to catch hold of
something in this life that is lasting.~~**Lady in the
earthquake--glad to be alive we can start over and get
the other things.

David has spoken of the Lord's complete
protection and provision for His own:

Beneath us us--green pastures

Beside us--still waters

Before us-- a prepared table

Behind us--goodness and mercy

Between us and death--the Lord.

There is no uncertainty about David's destination.
He knew where he was going and who would be there.

WHOM SHALL I FEAR?

PSALM 27

Gerry
Byrd
- 4 yrs



RELATE THE STORY OF TWO SUPERSTITIOUS MEN WHO MET, AND THE INQUIRY OF ONE TO THE OTHER ABOUT HIS STAYING OVERNIGHT IN A HAUNTED HOUSE. ALSO, RELATE THE STORY OF WILKE CONCERNING THE QUESTION, DO YOU BELIEVE IN GHOSTS? WE TALK ABOUT FEAR, EVEN LAUGH ABOUT IT, BUT MOST OF US HAVE KNOWN REAL FEAR AT SOME TIME IN LIFE. HERBERT HOOVER ONCE SAID THAT THE DOMINATE EMOTION EVERYWHERE IN THE WORLD IS FEAR. IN HIS BOOK ENTITLED NERVOUS CHRISTIANS, DR. GILBERT LITTLE SUGGESTS "EVERY PERSON WHO SEEKS THE COUNSEL OF A PSYCHIATRIST IS DRIVEN BY FEAR," PERHAPS THE GREATEST FEAR OF ALL IS MAN'S DREAD OF DEATH. WHEN SOMERSET MAUGHAM, THE NOVELIST, CAME TO THE END OF HIS LIFE, HE WROTE A NEPHEW, "I STAND AT THE DOOR OF DEATH, AND AM AFRAID TO KNOCK." IT IS GENERALLY PUBLICIZED THAT ONE OUT OF TEN AMERICANS WILL REQUIRE SOME KIND OF PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT IN THE COURSE OF HIS LIFE. SIXTY MILLION AMERICANS ARE SAID TO HAVE SOME KIND OF (SERIOUS) EMOTIONAL DISORDER. HIGH ON THE LIST OF REASONS FOR THESE MENTAL PROBLEMS IS THE PROBLEM OF FEAR. IN OUR COUNTRY, WE ARE AFRAID OF WHAT THE ENERGY CRISIS WILL DO, WE ARE AFRAID OF LOSING OUR SAVINGS, WE ARE AFRAID OF A FUTURE FAMINE PREDICTED BY ECONOMISTS, HUNDREDS OF YEARS AGO, LONG BEFORE TERMS LIKE PSYCHOLOGY AND THE VARIOUS KIND OF PHOEBIAS WERE KNOWN TO MEN, DAVID HAD DISCOVERED THE SECRET OF LIVING A LIFE FREE FROM FEAR. IN ANSWER TO THE TWO-FOLD QUESTION IN PSALM 27:1, HE SUGGESTS THREE POTENTIAL FEARS IN HIS LIFE AND THE ANSWER TO EACH ONE.

I. THE FEAR OF FOES - VERSES 2-6

DAVID HAD ENEMIES. HE EMPLOYS THE TERM NO LESS THAN FOUR TIMES IN THIS PSALM ALONE.

(A) THE THREAT OF PERSONAL INJURY - "TO EAT UP MY FLESH" THE PICTURE DAVID HAD IN MIND WAS THAT OF WILD BEASTS SEEKING TO DEVOUR THEIR PREY. LET US THINK OF THREE PRIMARY ENEMIES IN DAVID'S LIFE AND THEIR ULTIMATE FATE. 1. GOLIATH - THE FIRST VERSE OF 1 SAMUEL 17: INTRODUCES US TO THAT ANCIENT AND SKILLFUL WAR-LIKE PEOPLE CALLED THE PHILISTINES. FOR A TIME THEY HAD PURSUED A GUERRILLA-TYPE WAR AGAINST ISRAEL. THEY WOULD SEIZE A FORTIFIED POSITION, SEND OUT TWO BANDS OF MARAUDERS TO SPOIL, PLUNDER AND STEAL WITH SUDDEN RAIDS ON UNSUSPECTING PLACES. IN THIS CHAPTER, THEY HAVE TAKEN TO THE

And Howard
10,000
billion per
year
Fam
* 1 problem
Stalin
8 billion

WHOM SHALL I FEAR?

Saul - most likely early part - (prelude to the battle) 2

FIELD AGAIN TO DO COMBAT AS AN ARMY. (A FEW YEARS AGO, ON A TRIP TO ISRAEL, WE STOOD ON THAT VERY SPOT AND I COULD ENVISION THE SCENE WITH WHICH DAVID WAS CONFRONTED.) THE OUTCOME OF THE CONFLICT WAS "GOLIATH STUMBLLED AND FELL." *M. Dyan - same David*

Sick! (2) SAUL - AFTER DAVID DEFEATED GOLIATH, SAUL APPEARED TO BE FRIENDLY AND THIS FRIENDSHIP CONTINUED UNTIL THE TIME WHEN SAUL AND DAVID RETURNED FROM BATTLE AND THE WOMEN CAME TO THE GATES OF THE CITY WELCOMING THE RETURNING TROOPS. ON ONE PARTICULAR DAY, THEY BEGAN TO CHANT A VICTORY SONG THE WORDS OF WHICH AROUSED THE RAGE OF SAUL. "SAUL HAD SLAIN HIS THOUSANDS BUT DAVID HIS TEN THOUSANDS!" SAUL, A VERY SENSITIVE, SELFISH AND SUSPICIOUS MAN, FROM THIS POINT IN LIFE MADE HIS PRIMARY GOAL TO GET RID OF DAVID. HE PLOTTED, SCHEMED AND USED EVERY AVAILABLE MEANS AT HIS DISPOSAL TO DO DAVID IN, BUT ALWAYS HE FAILED. SAUL AND HIS SONS DIED ON THE HILLS OF GILBOA AND HE DIED A MISERABLE, UNHAPPY MAN. WHEN HE ATTACKED DAVID, "HE STUMBLLED AND FELL." *Saul's*

dry (3) ABSALOM - DURING THE YEARS OF DAVID'S WANDERING, HE BROUGHT BACK FROM ONE OF HIS MILITARY RAIDS THE DAUGHTER OF THE KING OF GESHUR. FROM THIS WILD HILLBILLY WOMAN, ABSALOM WAS BORN TO DAVID. BY THE TIME ABSALOM HAD REACHED MATURITY, DAVID HAD GROWN OLD. MUCH OF THE EXCITEMENT AND COLOR OF HIS EARLY DAYS AS KING HAD BEEN FORGOTTEN. THE SINS OF DAVID'S LIFE HAD TAKEN THEIR TOLL TO THE POINT THAT HE HAD BECOME NEGLIGENT IN HIS ADMINISTRATION OF HIS AFFAIRS AS KING. HE HAD BECOME MOODY AND DISINTERESTED IN PUBLIC AFFAIRS. ONE OF THE IMPORTANT ASPECTS OF HIS DUTIES WAS TO HEAR THE LEGAL APPEALS OF HIS SUBJECTS. HE HAD FAILED TO BE CONCERNED WITH THIS, AND ABSALOM WAS QUICK TO SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PROMOTE HIMSELF. HE WAS HANDSOME, WITH A FLAIR FOR BOTH PUBLICITY AND POLITICS. HE PROMISED THE PEOPLE A MORE LIBERAL GOVERNMENT, THAT IS, ONE CONCERNED ABOUT THEIR NEEDS AND CONSEQUENTLY PROVOKED A CONSPIRACY IN GOVERNMENT AGAINST HIS OWN FATHER. HOWEVER, WHEN ABSALOM SOUGHT TO DO DAVID IN, "HE STUMBLLED AND FELL." IN THE BIOGRAPHY OF J. J. BACH, HIS BIOGRAPHER TELLS THE STORY OF HOW IN 1924, BACH WAS TRAVELING IN THE ANDES MOUNTAINS OF SOUTH AMERICA IN AN AREA THAT WAS NOTED FOR BANDITS. ON ONE PARTICULAR TRAIL WHICH BACH WAS REQUIRED TO TRAVERSE, THERE WERE WHITE CROSSES AT REGULAR INTERVALS INDICATING PEOPLE WHO HAD BEEN BEATEN AND MURDERED ON THAT PARTICULAR TRAIL. HE TELLS THE

STORY HOW WHILE TRAVELING ON MULE BACK ONE MORNING, HE NOTICED A RIDER COMING UP BEHIND HIM. AS THE RIDER DREW NEAR HE SAW A REVOLVER AND A DAGGER IN HIS BELT. SENSING HIS OWN DANGER, BACH MADE CAMP AND INVITED THE STRANGER TO EAT WITH HIM. THE HARD-LOOKING SPANIARD ACCEPTED HIS HOSPITALITY BUT IT WAS OBVIOUS HE WAS LOOKING FOR MORE THAN FOOD. HE FINALLY PULLED HIS REVOLVER, WALKED TOWARD BACH AND WITH HIS FINGER ON THE TRIGGER SAID, "DO YOU HAVE ANY AMERICAN GOLD?" BACH WAS BROKE EXCEPT FOR A GOSPEL OF LUKE. WHEN HE EXPLAINED HIS SITUATION TO THE MAN HE SAW THE BANDIT'S FINGER TIGHTEN ON THE TRIGGER, AND FOR A MOMENT PANIC SEIZED HIS HEART. BUT THEN HE REMEMBERED HE WAS GOD'S SERVANT AND I AM QUOTING WHEN HE SAID "SUDDENLY MY FEAR WAS GONE. I RECEIVED SUCH AN INFILLING OF THE BLESSED HOLY SPIRIT THAT I WAS COMPLETELY AT PEACE. IF THE BANDIT HAD RELEASED HIS BULLET, I WOULD HAVE BEEN THE HAPPIEST CHRISTIAN WHO EVER DIED." BACH TOLD THE MAN THAT WHAT HE HAD IN HIS HAND WAS BETTER THAN GOLD. THE BANDIT BEGAN TO LOOK THROUGH THE BOOK AND SUDDENLY THE HAND THAT HELD THE REVOLVER BEGAN TO TREMBLE. HE PUT THE GUN BACK IN HIS POCKET, WALKED TOWARD BACH AND GAVE HIM THE BIGGEST KUG HE HAD EVER HAD. HE SAID, "THANK YOU YOU ARE A GOOD MAN, THANK YOU VERY MUCH." (RELATE THE INCIDENTS IN THE LIFE OF SPURGEON WHEN A MENTALLY DERANGED MAN TRIED TO KILL HIM. ALSO, RELATE THE EVENTS OF THE BOOK DAKTAR AND THE STORY OF PETE WILLIAMS AS TIME WILL PERMIT.)

(B) THE THREAT OF MILITARY ATTACK - NOTICE, DAVID DOES NOT SPEAK OF THIS AS BEING A REALITY, BUT SUGGESTS IT AS A POSSIBILITY. EVEN IF WAR AND ITS DEVASTATING EFFECTS SHOULD BE PART OF HIS EXPERIENCE, EVEN IN THIS TIME OF DISTRESS, DAVID WOULD BE TRANQUIL. THIS POSSIBILITY WAS EVER A THREAT TO THE NATION OF ISRAEL FOR THEIR ENEMIES CONCERNING THE SURROUNDING NATIONS WERE CONSTANT. THE MIDDLE EAST HAS BEEN A BATTLEGROUND FOR MOST OF HUMAN HISTORY. MORE BATTLES FOUGHT AT MEGIDDO THAN ANY SINGLE BATTLEFIELD IN THE WORLD, AND JERUSALEM HAS BEEN DESTROYED MORE THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE CITY.

(C) THE SECRET OF PEACE - IN THE MIDST OF TROUBLE AND THE DIRE CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE, DAVID SETS FORTH IN THESE VERSES THE SECRET OF PEACE AND CONTENTMENT IN A WORLD FILLED WITH GODLESSNESS AND EVIL. DAVID'S ANSWER TO HIS FOES WAS THAT OF FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD. COMMUNION WITH THE LORD WAS HIS PRIMARY CONCERN. DAVID MADE THE LORD THE CENTER

AND UPPERMOST DESIRE OF HIS HEART. HE WOULD LIVE HIS LIFE IN THE PRESENCE OF THE LORD. "AS THE HART PANTETH AFTER THE WATER BROOKS, SO PANTETH MY SOUL AFTER THEE O GOD. MY SOUL THIRSTETH FOR GOD, FOR THE LIVING GOD...." (PSALM 42:1-2)

OUR CHURCHES ARE FILLED WITH UNHAPPY CHRISTIANS. THEY ARE PROGRAM CONSCIOUS AND ORIENTED AND MUCH OF THEIR TIME IS SPENT IN CHURCH WORK AND THE BURNING UP OF NERVOUS ENERGY. HOWEVER, CHRISTIAN WORK ALONE DOES NOT BRING SATISFACTION. IT IS A NECESSARY PART OF OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE BUT THERE IS SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT THAN FEVERISH ACTIVITY. OUR PRESSING NEED IS TO HAVE FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD. DR. ALVA MC CLAIN USE TO SAY, "THERE ARE TWO LINKS THAT BIND US TO GOD...." THE BELIEVER HAS UNION WITH CHRIST BY VIRTUE OF ETERNAL LIFE BUT HE NEEDS COMMUNION IN ORDER TO HAVE JOY. JOY IS THE MARK OF UNBROKEN FELLOWSHIP OR AS SOMEONE HAS SAID, "JOY IS THE FLAG THAT FLOATS OVER THE PALACE WHERE THE KING IS RESIDING AND IN CONTROL." (RELATE EITHER THE STORY OF MEL TROTTER REGARDING CONFESSION OF SIN AND THE ADMONITION GUESS AT IT OR SUGDEN'S STORY "I HAVEN'T MOVED."

DAVID LEFT HIS DEFENSE IN THE HANDS OF THE LORD. HE MADE FELLOWSHIP WITH THE LORD HIS PRIMARY CONCERN AND GOD MADE DAVID'S DEFENSE HIS CONCERN!

II. THE FEAR OF BEING FORSAKEN - VERSES 9-10

THE PRIMARY IDEA OR ROOT MEANING FOR THE HEBREW WORD "FORSAKE" IS THAT OF ABANDONMENT. DAVID THINKS OF THE MOST UNLIKELY OF HUMAN RELATIONSHIP BREAKDOWN, THAT IS, THE FORSAKING OF A PARENT OF ITS CHILD. IN THIS REGARD, DAVID THINKS OF HIS OWN CONDITION AS BEING HELPLESS AND FRIENDLESS AS THAT OF A CHILD DESERTED BY ITS PARENTS. BUT EVEN IN SUCH AN EXTREME SITUATION, DAVID IS REMINDED THAT THE LORD WOULD WATCH OVER HIM AND TAKE HIM TO HIS OWN BREAST AS A SHEPHERD PICKS UP AND CARES FOR A HELPLESS LAMB. AS A MATTER OF FACT, ONE'S PARENTS ARE THE LAST OF EARTH'S TIES TO ABANDON US. THE MOST HEARTLESS MURDERER IN THE EYES OF SOCIETY IS STILL SOME MOTHER'S BOY AND THEY NEVER FORGET THEIR OWN FLESH AND BLOOD. VERY FEW CHRISTIANS HAVE EVER HAD SUCH AN EXPERIENCE BUT IT DID HAPPEN TO A MISSIONARY DOCTOR MANY YEARS AGO. ON EASTER SUNDAY MORNING, 1908, DR. WILFRED GRENFELL, WHO WAS THEN A DOCTOR IN LABRADOR WAS CALLED UPON TO VISIT A MAN WHO WAS DYING OF INFECTION SOME 20 MILES AWAY.

DR. GRENFELL HARNESSSED A DOG TEAM AND TOOK A SHORT CUT ACROSS A PORTION OF ICE WHICH JUTTED OUT FROM THE MAINLAND. AS HE MADE HIS WAY ACROSS THE ICE, IT BROKE AWAY FROM THE MAINLAND AND SUDDENLY HE FOUND HIMSELF ADrift AT SEA. HE KILLED THREE OF THE DOGS, USED THEIR SKINS TO KEEP WARM AND, WITH THEIR FROZEN LEGS MADE A FLAG OUT OF A PIECE OF HIS SHIRT TO WAVE AT THE SHORE MANY MILES AWAY. HIS OWN OBSERVATION WAS IF EVER A MAN APPEARED TO BE IN A FORSAKEN SPOT, THAT WAS IT. "I COULD NOT HELP LAUGHING AT MY SITUATION STANDING THERE HOUR BY HOUR, WAVING MY SHIRT AT THOSE BARREN LONELY CLIFFS, BUT I CAN HONESTLY SAY THAT FROM THE FIRST TO THE LAST, NOT A SINGLE SENSATION OF FEAR CROSSED MY MIND. I KEPT THINKING OF THE WORDS OF AN OLD HYMN: "MY GOD, MY FATHER, WHILE I STRAY FAR FROM HOME ON LIFE'S ROUGH WAY, O HELP ME FROM MY HEART TO SAY, THY WILL BE DONE." SOME PEOPLE DID SEE DR. GRENFELD AND HE WAS RESCUED BY THOSE WHO SAW HIM WAVING THE FLAG WITH ONLY MINOR FROSTBITE TO HIS HANDS AND FEET. LOOK UP AND DEVELOP HEBREWS 13:5 THIS IS THE FAVORITE VERSE OF MANY PEOPLE AND THE VERSE I USE MOST OFTEN IN HOSPITAL VISITATION. I SUSPECT THAT THE FEAR OF BEING FORSAKEN HAS COME TO US ALL. WE WERE SURPRISED AT THE STATEMENT OF OUR 4-YEAR OLD DAUGHTER WHO CAME INTO THE LIVING ROOM ONE EVENING WITH A SAD EXPRESSION ON HER FACE AND ASKED THIS QUESTION: "ARE YOU GOING TO KEEP ME?" (RELATE THE STORY OF THE SANDY FAMILY IN NORTHVILLE AND USAGE OF HEBREWS 13:5 IN AN ACTUAL LIFE SITUATION WHERE MOTHER AND FATHER HAD ABANDONED TWO CHILDREN.)

④ *Mackie - Swimming here.*

III. THE FEAR OF FAINTING - VERSE 13

THE IDEA BEHIND THE WORD FAINTING IN THE TEXT OR AT LEAST THE IDEA SUGGESTED IN THE VERSE IS THAT OF GROWING WEARY, BECOMING DEPRESSED, AND GIVING UP. THESE ARE DAYS WHEN PEOPLE ARE FAINTING IN THE LORD'S WORK. TO BE SURE, SOME OF OUR "FAINTING FITS" ARE REAL, BUT SOME ARE NOT. (RELATE THE STORY OF THE MAN WHO DETERMINED TO SWIM THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.) IN SPURGEON'S LECTURES TO HIS STUDENTS, HE HAS A CHAPTER ENTITLED "THE MINISTER'S FAINTING FITS." IN THAT CHAPTER, HE RELATES THAT PREACHERS ARE SUBJECT TO MOMENTS OF DESPONDENCY JUST AS WAS ELIJAH AND JONAH IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. HOWEVER, HE GIVES SOME GOOD ADVICE WHEN HE SAYS, "TRUST IN GOD ALONE, AND LEAN NOT ON THE NEEDS OF HUMAN HELP. BE NOT SURPRISED IF FRIENDS FAIL YOU - IT IS A FAILING WORLD. BE CONTENT TO BE NOTHING FOR THAT IS WHAT YOU ARE." IN AN AGE THAT IS SELFCONSCIOUS, PROBLEM

Sunday
Nov.
"Sinners"

②

①

Edman

CONSCIOUS, CRISIS CONSCIOUS AND NOT VERY GOD CONSCIOUS, THERE IS A TENDENCY TO GIVE UP ON THE PART OF MANY PROFESSING CHRISTIANS. THEY SHY AWAY FROM RESPONSIBILITY IN THE LORD'S WORK. THEIR LIVES ARE FILLED WITH TENSION AND STRESS. SADNESS, GLOOM AND FEAR SEEM TO BE THE ACCEPTED NORM IN SO MANY CHURCHES TODAY. DAVID GIVES THE ANSWER TO THE FAINTING HEART IN ONE WORD THAT IS REPEATED TWICE IN THESE VERSES. IT IS THE WORD ~~WAIT~~ THE HEBREW WORD WAIT IS THE WORD "KAW-VAW" WHICH IS USED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT IN DIFFERENT WAYS. THE WORD WAIT SUGGESTS AMBUSH OR TO SERVE. HOWEVER, THE MOST IMPORTANT AND FREQUENT USAGE OF THIS WORD IS TO DEFINE THE ATTITUDE OF THE SOUL TOWARD GOD. IT IMPLIES A LISTENING EAR AND A RESPONSIVE HEART TO GOD'S DIRECTION. IT IS A CONCENTRATION OF SPIRITUAL FACULTIES ON HEAVENLY THINGS AS THE SOUL LOOKS UP TO GOD IN FAITH, PATIENCE AND EXPECTANCY. THE HASTE OF OUR GENERATION HAS MADE THE ABILITY TO WAIT UPON GOD A FORGOTTEN SPIRITUAL EXERCISE. THAT IS UNDOUBTEDLY ONE REASON FOR THE NERVOUSNESS AND SPIRITUAL IMPOVERISHMENT OF OUR GENERATION. SPEED AND HASTE DO NOT MAKE FOR SPIRITUALITY.

SUM UP THE MEANING OF THE PSALM WITH THE STORY, "I'M NOT AFRAID" - AND ISAIAH 40:28-31

"Give Up"

"Not Somehow... But Triumphantly" V. Raymond Edman

Dear Dr. Edman,

Currently I am a resident in neurosurgery at New York Hospital....

Last week it was my unusual privilege to help Dr. _____ Mid-way in the procedure the patient had a cardiac arrest, ~~and~~ but because of the alertness of the anesthesiologist we were immediately aware of it and instituted heart massage without delay... no response to efforts - massage - defibrillation... little hope... After the latter part of an hour one team member... "We might as well quit..." the chapel sang... "It's always too soon to quit..."

JULY 9, 1978
A.M."THE SUBTLE SIN: WORRY"

PSALM 37:1-7

Bee. fm
"A Worry Party"
"a worry wart"
Oct 1987

"I KNOW I'M NOT SUPPOSED TO WORRY, BUT I CAN'T HELP IT!" THIS IS THE ATTITUDE OF A HIGH PERCENTAGE OF CHRISTIAN PEOPLE. THEY KNOW WORRY IS A DESTRUCTIVE FORCE IN THEIR LIVES BUT HAVE GIVEN UP OR GIVEN OVER TO WHAT THEY BELIEVE IS INEVITABLE AND UNCHANGEABLE. HOW MANY TIMES HAVE YOU SAID TO SOMEONE "DON'T WORRY." SUCH A STATEMENT IS WASTED BREATH TO THE PERSON WHO IS WORRYING! WE REFER TO CHRONIC WORRYERS AS "WORRY-WARTS." "I'M WORRIED SICK" IS A PHRASE WE HEAR OFTEN. MANY TIMES WE HAVE GONE TO BED AND AFTER SEVERAL HOURS OF RESTLESS SLEEP AWAKENED JUST AS TIRED AS WHEN WE RETIRED. THE BODY MAY BE IN BED BUT THE MIND IS TURNING AND WORRYING. FATIGUE AND WEARINESS GRIP THE LIFE. IN THIS ONE PARTICULAR, MANY PROFESSING CHRISTIANS ARE NO BETTER OFF THAN THE UNSAVED PERSON. WE GO FUSSING AND FUMING THROUGH LIFE CAUGHT UP IN A WHIRLWIND OF RESTLESS ENERGY WITH NO INNER STRENGTH TO COPE WITH LIFE'S STRESS SITUATIONS. A WORRYING CHRISTIAN IS A CONTRADICTION OF TERMS. A MATURE CHRISTIAN SHOULD BE QUIET AND CALM IN HIS SOUL, UNHURRIED AND UNWORRIED IN THIS FEVEROUS AND FRETFUL WORLD. YET, THIS IS NOT THE CASE IN MOST OF OUR FUNDAMENTAL CHURCHES. WORRY HAS INVADDED EVERY PERSON'S LIFE. SOME HANDLE IT WELL, OTHERS NOT SO WELL. SOMEONE WROTE THIS LITTLE COUPLET TO DESCRIBE WORRY: "THE WORRIED COW WOULD HAVE LIVED TO NOW IF SHE HAD SAVED HER BREATH; BUT SHE FEARED HER HAY WOULDN'T LAST ALL DAY, AND SHE MOOD HERSELF TO DEATH." ONE COMMENTATOR SUGGESTED THAT THE WORD WORRY IS FROM AN ANGLO-SAXON WORD WHICH MEANS TO HARM AND IS A PICTURE WORD OF A WOLF MANGLING A SHEEP. WORRY MANGLES AND PARALYZES FAITH IN THE LIFE OF A BELIEVER. WHEN ONE IS CAUGHT UP IN THE THROES OF WORRY IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE SPIRITUALLY OBJECTIVE AND TO REFLECT ON THE TRUTH OF GOD'S PROMISES IN HIS WORD. LUTHER BURBANK, THE WORLD FAMOUS SCIENTIST IN PLANT BREEDING, SAW A TERRIBLE RAINSTORM WASH AWAY SEVERAL THOUSAND EXPERIMENTAL PLANTS WITH WHICH HE HAD BEEN WORKING OVER A LONG PERIOD OF TIME. WHEN SOMEONE EXPRESSED SYMPATHY FOR THE SITUATION BURBANK TOLD OF A COUPLET WHICH HIS MOTHER HAD TAUGHT HIM: "FROM THE DAY YOU ARE BORN TIL YOU RIDE IN A HEARSE, THERE IS NOTHING

THAT HAPPENS WHICH COULDN'T BE WORSE." HE THEN WENT ON TO TELL ANOTHER STORY OF HOW MARK TWAIN WAS VISITING WITH A FRIEND WHO WAS COMPLAINING AND, AS A MATTER OF FACT, SEEKING SYMPATHY FROM TWAIN BECAUSE THE MAN COMPLAINED OF HAVING A TOOTHACHE AND A HEADACHE AT THE SAME TIME. WHEN TWAIN REFUSED TO BE SYMPATHETIC AND IN FACT LAUGHED ABOUT THE SITUATION, HE WAS REBUFFED AND ASKED "CAN YOU IMAGINE ANYTHING WORSE?" "YES," REPLIED TWAIN, "A MAN COULD HAVE RHEUMATISM AND ST. VIDA'S DANCE AT THE SAME TIME!"

MANY BELIEVERS HAVE FALSELY ANALYZED THE PROBLEM OF WORRY. THEY LOOK UPON IT LIKE SUFFERING, INEVITABLE IN THE CHRISTIAN LIFE, WITH NO HOPE OF DOING MUCH EXCEPT ENDURING IT WHEN IT COMES. ONE OF THE PROBLEMS CONCERNING WORRY IS THAT MANY OF US WOULD RATHER WORRY THAN PRAY. FOR SOME FEW WORRY IS A CHRONIC SITUATION THAT PEOPLE RATHER ENJOY. WE HAVE ADOPTED THE WRONG APPROACH TO WORRY AND DO NOT LOOK UPON IT AS SIN. HAVE YOU EVER HEARD A CHRISTIAN PRAY "LORD, FORGIVE ME FOR WORRYING TODAY"? OR, "LORD, I'M HAVING AN ANXIETY ATTACK AND NEED YOUR HELP!" THE BIBLE TEACHES THAT WORRY IS PART AND PARCEL OF MAN'S NATURAL UNSPIRITUAL MAKE-UP. WHEN YOU BECOME A CHRISTIAN WE NEED TO LEARN HOW TO TRUST GOD IN SITUATIONS WHERE WE WOULD NORMALLY WORRY. MOST OF THE SITUATIONS ABOUT WHICH WE WORRY NEVER MATERIALIZE. WORRY USUALLY INVADES OUR LIFE IN THE FORM OF ANXIETY OVER ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY IN AREAS WHERE WE ARE INCAPABLE OF DISCHARGING THAT RESPONSIBILITY. THERE IS A FINE POINT OF DISTINCTION IN THE BIBLE AND IN LIFE. ALL OF US HAVE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY WHICH ARE GOD GIVEN AND WE ARE GIVEN THE CAPACITY TO ACCEPT AND DISCHARGE THESE RESPONSIBILITIES. WORRY MOVES IN WHEN WE ASSUME RESPONSIBILITY FOR THINGS WHICH WE CANNOT CONTROL AND FOR WHICH WE HAVE NO RESOURCES TO COPE. WHEN WE MOVE INTO AN AREA WHICH IS OUT OF OUR CONTROL WE BEGIN TO WORRY AND THE GHOSTS OF IMAGINATION AND FEAR INVADE OUR MINDS. GHOSTS OF WHAT MIGHT OR COULD HAPPEN HAUNT OUR LIVES AND OFTEN WRECK OUR EMOTIONAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING.

"THOU WILT KEEP HIM IN PERFECT PEACE WHOSE MIND (IMAGINATION) IS STAYED ON THEE; BECAUSE HE TRUSTETH ON THEE." IT IS THE WORLD OF IMAGINATION AND FEAR THAT GETS THE BELIEVER IN TROUBLE. WE ARE HAUNTED BY DARK AND FORBODING POSSIBILITIES WHICH WE IMAGINE BUT WHICH IN FACT SELDOM OCCUR. THE TRUSTING HEART WILL NOT FEAR WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN BUT WILL RELY UPON HIM, WHO NOT ONLY PLANS BUT CONTROLS THE LIFE OF HIS

CHILDREN. IN THE TIME ALLOTTED, WE WILL LOOK AT THREE KEY PASSAGES WHICH DEAL WITH THE SUBJECT OF WORRY.

I. WORRY AND THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE - Ps. 37:1-7

IN THIS PSALM, DAVID WAS CONCERNED ABOUT THE PROBLEM OF EVIL AND EVIL DOERS. IN PSALM 73, THE PROSPERITY OF THE WICKED PRESENTED A PROBLEM TO ASAPH ALSO. PSALM 37 WAS WRITTEN WHEN DAVID WAS AN OLDER MAN AND REFLECTS THE MATURE JUDGMENT OF A LIFE AND THE LESSONS LEARNED THROUGH THE DIFFICULTIES OF LIFE. THREE TIMES IN THIS PSALM HE SAYS TO "FRET NOT." (V.1,7,8) - THIS IS THE HEBREW EQUIVALENT OF "DON'T WORRY!" THE HEBREW ROOT WORD FOR THE WORD FRET SUGGESTS SOMETHING GETTING RED WITH THE GLOW OF HEAT. DAVID'S ADVICE FOR GOD'S PEOPLE IN THE FACE OF EVIL WHETHER ON A PERSONAL OR PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS, STOP WORRYING ABOUT IT AND ADOPT THE ANTIDOTE OF DOING GOOD. THERE IS NO NEED TO GET "OVERHEATED" ABOUT SOME PROBLEMS IN THE WORLD. WHATEVER OUR PROBLEMS, THE HUMAN SYSTEM IS NOT DESIGNED TO CARRY EXCESSIVE OVERLOADS. WHEN THIS OCCURS FOR A PROLONGED PERIOD, WE HAVE A TENDENCY TO "BLOW A FUSE." RELATE INCIDENT REGARDING O.A. S. HOUSE WIRED MANY YEARS AGO WHEN THE ONLY ELECTRICAL NEED OR OUTLET WAS A 75 OR 100 WATT BULB. SINCE THAT TIME, AIR CONDITIONER, T.V., TOASTER, TOASTER OVEN, FANS, RADIO, WASHER, DRYERS AND MANY OTHER ITEMS HAVE BECOME HOUSEHOLD NECESSITIES. THAT HOUSE WAS NOT WIRED TO CARRY SUCH A HEAVY LOAD AND WHEN TOO MANY THINGS ARE PLUGGED IN IT WILL BLOW A FUSE EVERY TIME. IN ORDER TO ADD HEAVY APPLIANCES IT HAS TO BE REWIRED. THE ANTIDOTE TO WORRY IS MENTIONED IN SEVERAL KEY WORDS: TRUST, DELIGHT, COMMIT, REST. ANY ONE OR ALL OF THESE WORDS WILL CHANGE THE FRETFUL SOUL INTO A TRUSING SOUL.

II. WORRY AND PRAYER IN THE LIFE - PHIL. 4:6-7

IF ANY PERSON HAD A REASON FOR WORRYING IT WAS PAUL. HE HAD PROBLEMS WITH CHURCHES AND PEOPLE, NO STEADY INCOME, NO FIXED DWELLING PLACE, FICKLE FRIENDS AND SUBTLE ENEMIES AND THE CONSTANT PERIL OF IMMINENT DEATH. INSTEAD OF WORRYING ABOUT HIS SITUATION HE DID JUST THE OPPOSITE. TO SAY "I'M NO APOSTLE PAUL" IS NO EXCUSE. PAUL'S GOD IS OUR GOD. IN THESE VERSES

C + C

PAP

PAUL LINKS CARE AND CHAOS, PRAYER AND PEACE. MOST OF US DO NOT DOUBT GOD'S ABILITY TO HELP, WE FEAR OUR OWN DISABILITY TO LET HIM. WHEN WE ARE FULL OF CARE, IT IS BASICALLY A DISTRUST OF GOD WHOM WE PROFESS TO TRUST. PAUL SAYS THAT THE PERSON WHO PRAYS ABOUT EVERYTHING WILL RECEIVE A SENTINEL FROM GOD FOR HIS HEART CALLED PEACE. IF I UNDERSTAND THESE VERSES CORRECTLY, THE REASON WE WORRY IS BECAUSE WE DO NOT PRAY. IF WE PRAY AS WE OUGHT, WE NEED NOT WORRY AND PEACE WILL BE OUR PORTION. ALMOST EVERY TRANSLATION I CAN QUOTE ABOUT V. 6 SAID SIMPLY "DON'T WORRY ABOUT ANYTHING..." THERE ARE LEGITIMATE RESPONSIBILITIES FOR EVERY CHRISTIAN BUT NO LEGITIMATE WORRIES. ARE YOU WORRIED ABOUT YOUR FAMILY, ACTIONS OF YOUR CHILDREN, JOB SECURITY, NEIGHBORS, THE FUTURE? SUGGESTION: TAKE A SHEET OF PAPER. PUT THE DATE AT THE TOP AND CAPTION IT MY WORRY LIST. THEN LIST THE WORRIES WHICH ARE CURRENTLY TROUBLING YOU MOST. SET A TIME OR PRAYER SCHEDULE EVERY DAY. PRAY OVER THIS LIST FAITHFULLY EVERY DAY FOR 30 DAYS. DON'T MISS A SINGLE DAY OR A SINGLE WORRY. AT THE END OF THE 30 DAYS SEVERAL INTERESTING THINGS WILL HAVE HAPPENED. OUR CIRCUMSTANCES WILL CHANGE AND WE WILL CHANGE, AND GOD WILL HAVE CHANGED BOTH. GOD DOES NOT WANT US WORRIED SICK WITH THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE. HE HAS GIVEN THE INSTRUMENT WHEREBY PEACE FROM HIM MAY BE OURS AND THAT INSTRUMENT IS PRAYER. IF WE DO NOT USE IT OUR RESORT TO IT, WE HAVE NO ONE TO BLAME FOR OUR CONDITION EXCEPT OURSELVES. IF YOU ARE WORRIED AND REFUSE TO PRAY, PLEASE DON'T CRY ON SOMEONE ELSE'S SHOULDER, YOU HAVE NO ONE TO BLAME BUT YOURSELF. IF YOU ENJOY YOUR MISERY, PLEASE DO SO IN ISOLATION AND DON'T BOTHER EVERY BODY ELSE WITH YOUR PROBLEM.

III. WORRY AND THE PRIORITIES OF LIFE - MATT. 6:25-F

SOME PEOPLE HAVE MISINTERPRETED THE PHRASE "TAKE NO THOUGHT." THEY BELIEVE THAT LIFE IS MOVING FROM ONE AREA OF IRRESPONSIBILITY INTO ANOTHER WITHOUT PLANNING, FORETHOUGHT OR CONSIDERATION OF ANYONE AND ANYTHING. THESE FOLK BELIEVE THAT IT IS SINFUL TO PLAN IN ADVANCE FOR ANYTHING, INCLUDING CLOTHING YOU EXPECT TO WEAR TOMORROW. THAT IS EXACTLY WHAT THIS VERSE DOES NOT TEACH. THE PHRASE MEANS "BE NOT ANXIOUS, DON'T WORRY." THE PERSON WHO KNOWS GOD IN A PERSONAL WAY SHOULD NOT BE WORRYING OR UNDULY CON-

(2)
"AD
Worry
Partly"

God's
Prescription
for
Peace
of Mind

CERNED OVER THE BASIC NECESSITIES OF LIFE. FOOD AND WATER WERE NOT PLENTIFUL IN PALESTINE AND JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES NOT TO BE UNDULY ANXIOUS ABOUT THESE BASIC NECESSITIES. WHAT WE EAT AND WEAR ARE FUNDAMENTAL AND IMPORTANT TO EVERY PERSON, BUT THERE IS MORE TO LIFE THAN WHAT WE PUT IN OUR MOUTHS AND ON OUR BODIES. JESUS MENTIONS THREE BASIC IDEAS FOR CONSIDERATION: FOWLS, FLOWERS AND FOOD. THE HEATHEN GIVE THEIR PRIMARY CONSIDERATION TO BODILY NEEDS AND LITTLE OR NONE TO SPIRIT. (V. 32) THE LORD REMINDED HIS DISCIPLES THAT THERE IS A SCRIPTURAL PRIORITY AND IF IT IS VIOLATED MEN WILL WALK WITH RESTLESS HEART THROUGH LIFE AND UNSATISFIED. GOD'S PRIORITY LIST IS FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND RIGHTEOUSNESS. JESUS TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES TO CONCENTRATE ON THE THINGS OF THE LORD AND LIVE ONE DAY AT A TIME. EVERY DAY HAS ITS OWN PARTICULAR NEED AND THE CHRISTIAN SHOULD NOT BORROW TOMORROWS BURDENS TODAY. ALSO, THE IMPORTANT SPIRITUAL LESSON THAT RIGHTEOUSNESS PRECEDES PEACE. (THE WORLD WANTS PEACE FROM GOD WITHOUT HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.) IF EVER THERE WAS A GROUP OF MEN WHO SHOULD HAVE BEEN CONCERNED HUMANLY SPEAKING, ABOUT THE FUTURE, IT WAS THE DISCIPLES. THEY HAD BEEN INDEPENDENT BUSINESSMEN, INVOLVED WITH THEIR WORK IN THE WORLD TO SUPPORT THEMSELVES AND NOW FOR 3 YEARS THEY HAD LIVED AND WORKED WITH JESUS. DURING THAT TIME, HE HAD FED AND CLOTHED THEM, SHELTERED THEM AND GUIDED THEM, THEIR EVERY NEED HAD BEEN SUPPLIED. BEFORE HE WENT BACK TO THE FATHER HE ADMONISHED THEM NOT TO WORRY OR FRET ABOUT THE FUTURE. (JOHN 14:1) LET US TAKE ALL THREE PASSAGES EXAMINED TODAY AND LET THEM SPEAK TO OUR PARTICULAR NEED. IF YOU ARE WORRIED ABOUT SOMETHING TODAY BRING IT TO THE LORD, LEAVE IT WITH HIM, AND IN QUIET CONFIDENT FAITH EXPECT GOD TO HELP. WORRY IS NOT A DESIRABLE ATTITUDE FOR THE CHRISTIAN. IT MIGHT BE WELL TO PRAY A PRAYER LIKE THIS: "LORD, I'M WORRIED ABOUT _____. IT IS A SITUATION OVER WHICH I HAVE LITTLE OR NO CONTROL. I AM HELPLESS AND AT THE MERCY OF OTHER PEOPLE'S DECISION. IF I CONTINUE TO WORRY IT WILL DESTROY MY EMOTIONAL AND SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING. I AM WILLING TO WORK AND TO DO EVERYTHING NECESSARY ON MY PART TO CORRECT THE SITUATION, BUT FOR THAT WHICH I CANNOT CONTROL, I WILL TRUST YOU TO WORK OUT THE DETAILS. AMEN."

EVEN IF THE WORLD BLOWS UP

PSALMS 46

THE TITLE TO THIS MESSAGE WAS TAKEN FROM A MODERN TRANSLATION OF PSALMS 46:2. THIS IS A STARTLING STATEMENT TO MOST PEOPLE WHO ARE PETRIFIED AT THE AVERAGE SUMMER ELECTRICAL STORM! MORE AND MORE MEN ARE USING ARMAGEDDON TO DESCRIBE WHAT SOME BELIEVE THE FINAL SUICIDAL BATTLE OF A DESPERATE WORLD STRUGGLE WHICH WILL BE CENTERED IN THE MIDDLE EAST. THE NAME ARMAGEDDON IS SIMPLY A COMPOUND HEBREW WORD REFERRING TO THE MOUNT OF MEGIDDO A SMALL MOUNTAIN LOCATED AT THE END OF A BROAD VALLEY IN NORTHERN PALESTINE. THIS WILL BE THE FOCAL POINT OF THE FINAL WORLD CONFLICT. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT IN MY MIND THAT THE STAGE IS BEING SET THE DRAMA OF ARMAGEDDON WHEN IT WILL TRANSPIRE IS KNOWN ONLY TO GOD BUT THE LEADING CHARACTERS ARE ALREADY IN PLACE AS PREDICTED IN BIBLE PROPHECY. (COMMENT ON THE FOUR MAJOR DIVISIONS OF THE NATION.) SOMEONE HAS CALLED THE MIDDLE EAST A POLICAL POWDER KEG THE PLACE WHERE WORLD WAR III WILL TAKE PLACE. UNDOUBTEDLY, THIS WILL BE THE PLACE FOR THE FINAL WORLD CONFLICT AGAINST ONE ANOTHER AND GOD. IT WILL BE THE GREATEST WAR OF ALL HISTORY WITH MILLIONS PERISHING IN THE STRUGGLE. THE PSALMIST WAS THINKING OF THE ULTIMATE KIND OF DISASTER. EVEN IF THIS SHOULD OCCUR, HE HAD SOMEONE AS A PLACE OF REFUGE FOR TIME AND ETERNITY. THE TITLE TO THE PSALM IS "A SONG UPON ALAMOTH." THIS WORD COMES FROM THE HEBREW WORD "ALMAH" WHICH MEANS VIRGIN. THIS PARTICULAR PSALM IS A PSALM FOR SOPRANOS. IT WAS TO BE SUNG IN THE TEMPLE SERVICES. (COMMENT ON THIS KIND OF MUSIC AND THE KIND WE ARE HEARING IN CHURCHES TODAY. IT LACKS SUBSTANCE.) ANOTHER TECHNICAL WORD IN THE PSALM IS REPEATED AT SPECIFIC INTERVALS. THE WORD SELAH. SOME RENDER THE TERM TO MEAN "PAUSE AND THINK ON THAT." BECAUSE HEBREW MUSIC WAS RENDERED IN UNISON AND WAS DESTITUTE IN HARMONY ITS EFFECT DEPENDED ON CONTRAST IN QUALITY OF TONE OR PARTICIPATION OF A LARGER OR SMALLER NUMBER OF SINGERS IN ANTIPHONAL SINGING. SOME HAVE THOUGHT THE WORD SELAH REFERRED TO AN INSTRUMENTAL INTERLUDE.

To Christ
D. 1975SA
Soprano
Soloist

OUR KNOWLEDGE OF HEBREW MUSIC IS VERY LIMITED. MUCH IS GUEST WORK. PSALMS 46 WAS MARTIN LUTHER'S FAVORITE PSALM.

I. GOD'S HELP IS AVAILABLE IN THE TIGHT PLACES OF LIFE - VERSES 1 - 3. *Time of Trouble (Tight place)*

THE PSALMIST KNEW THAT GOD IS "A VERY PRESENT HELP IN TROUBLE." THE WORDS OF THIS PRASE REFERRED TO ONE WHO HAS EXPERIENCED WITH GOD AND KNOWS WHAT HE IS SAYING IS TRUE. IT IS MORE THAN THEORY. HE IS SAYING "I KNOW GOD IS AVAILABLE IN TIME OF TROUBLE BECAUSE HE HAS HELPED ME!" THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THIS PSALM TOOK PLACE IN THE DAYS OF ISAIAH, HEZEKIAH AND SENNACHERIB. (ISAIAH 36-38) PICTURE THE HISTORICAL SITUATION, THE CAREER OF SENNACHERIB, KING OF ASSYRIA, HAD BEEN ONE OF UNINTERRUPTED SUCCESS. CITY AFTER CITY HAD FALLEN BEFORE THE WAKE OF HIS ENORMOUS ARMY. FINALLY, HE SET HIS TARGET TOWARD JERUSALEM AND THE TRAMP OF THE ASSYRIAN INFANTRY AND THE RUMBLE OF THEIR CHARIOTS COULD BE HEARD AS THEY PREPARED TO TAKE JERUSALEM AS THEY HAD EVERY OTHER CITY. ALREADY, SOME 46 SMALLER TOWNS HAD CRUMBLLED IN THE WAKE OF THIS CAMPAIGN. AS THE SCARLOT CLOAKS AND BRIGHT RED SHIELDS OF THE ASSYRIAN ARMIES APPEARED OUTSIDE THE GATES OF JERUSALEM AND AS THE COUNTLESS CHARIOTS AND SOLDIERS AND TENTS COULD BE SEEN EVERYWHERE DELIVERANCE SEEMED IMPOSSIBLE. IT WAS A CRISES FOR JERUSALEM THE LIKES OF WHICH THEY HAD NEVER SEEN. JUDAH HAD NO FRIENDLY ARMIES TO HELP THEM. THEY WERE SHUT UP "LIKE A BIRD IN A CAGE". THE ASSYRIANS BOASTED OF ALL THEIR VICTORIES AND CASTOUTS WITH REFERENCE TO GOD'S ABILITY TO PROTECT JERUSALEM. THE CRUELITY OF THE ASSYRIANS WAS WELL KNOWN. SOMEONE HAS DESCRIBED SENNACHERIB AS FIENDISHLY CRUEL AND INHUMAN GUILTY OF IMPALING AND FLAYING HIS FOES ALIVE WITH INCREDIBLE ATROCITIES. THE RELIGIOUS LEADER IN JERUSALEM WAS ISAIAH AND THE POLITICAL RULER WAS HEZEKIAH, A WISE AND GODLY RULER WHO HAD BEEN PREPARING HIS COUNTRY TO OPPOSE THE ASSYRIANS AND HIS FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE HAD BEEN SWEEPING RELIGIOUS REFORMS SUCH AS REPAIRING AND CLEANSING THE TEMPLE. HE HAD PREPARED JERUSALEM FOR THIS DAY. (ONE OF THE INTERESTING ACTIVITIES OF HEZEKIAH WAS THE GREAT CONDUIT ALMOST 1800 FEET

LONG HEWN OUT OF SOLID ROCK TO PROVIDE A LARGE RESERVOIR FOR THE POOL OF SILOAM. THIS WAS ESPECIALLY CONDUCTED LAKE OF WATER FROM THE SPRING OF GIHON TO PROVIDE JERUSALEM WITH AN ADEQUATE WATER SUPPLY FROM THE KIDRON VALLEY.) THIS PSALM WAS WRITTEN TO CELEBRATE THE VICTORY OF GOD'S DEFENSE OF JERUSALEM. ISAIAH, A PROPHET OF ABOUT 60 YEARS OF AGE, WAS UTTERLY UNMOVED BY THE ARMY SURROUNDING JERUSALEM! HIS CONFIDENCE WAS IN GOD'S PROMISE AND THAT ALONE! ~~WHO~~ WOULD HAVE BELIEVED THAT THAT ENORMOUS ARMY WOULD BE REDUCED TO ONE MASSIVE CEMETERY IN LESS THAN 24 HOURS! GOD INTERVINED TO PROTECT JERUSALEM! SENNACHERIB MADE A FATAL MISTAKE, HE FORGOT THAT GOD ALWAYS HELPS HIS PEOPLE - ALWAYS! THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF GOD'S PEOPLE IS IN HIM ALONE.

A. GOD IS ABLE TO DEAL WITH OUR FEARS - V. 2

WOULD YOU CONSIDER AN ARMY IN EXCESS OF 200,000 MEN ALL ARMED FOR A BATTLE A REASON TO FEAR? THE PSALMIST REFUSED TO BE AFRAID EVEN IF THE WORST KIND OF NATURAL OR POLITICAL DISASTERS OCCUR! HIS SECURITY WAS IN GOD. (THIS IS A LESSON AMERICANS NEED TO LEARN. RELATE THE STORY OF JAMES SCHLESINGER WHO IN A RECENT ARTICLE SUGGESTS THAT OUR BASIC PROBLEM IS ONE OF MORALE STAMINE AND WILL. DO WE HAVE THE WILL TO DEFEND OUR VALUE OR ARE WE WILLING TO ACCEPT AN ATHEISTIC POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY CALLED COMMUNISM IN ORDER TO SURVIVE.) THE PSALMIST IS TELLING THE BELIEVER THAT THERE ARE NO TIGHT SITUATIONS WHICH SHOULD CAUSE US TO FEAR. (COMPARE PSALM 27) THE TERM "FEAR NOT" IS RECORDING IN THE BIBLE NO FEWER THAN 52 TIMES - ONE FOR EVERY WEEK OF THE YEAR! THE MAN WHO IS IN CHRIST HAS NOTHING TO FEAR. GOD IS HIS REFUGE AND STRENGTH.

B. GOD IS ABLE TO DEAL WITH SITUATIONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL - V. 2B - 3

THESE WORDS DISCRIBE SITUATIONS IN WHICH MEN ARE POWERLESS. IN SITUATIONS BEYOND OUR CONTROL, GOD IS AVAILABLE AND ABLE. IN UNCERTAIN TIMES IT IS GOOD TO KNOW THAT GOD IS LIKE THIS. (COMPARE DANIEL 3 AND DANIEL 6) QUESTION: ARE YOU IN A TIGHT PLACE TODAY? ARE YOU FACING A SITUATION WHICH APPARENTLY HAS NO HUMAN ANSWER? DON'T

The beginning of the Christian story - a tale of Christ - like Christ - dead!

DISPAIR. GOD SPECIALIZES IN SUCH EMERGENCIES!
 READ ISAIAH 37 AGAIN IN LIGHT OF YOUR CURRENT NEEDS.

II. GOD'S HELP FOR HIS PEOPLE IS ALWAYS ON TIME - VERSES 4 - 7.

THE USE OF THE TERM RIVER IS INTERESTING IN THE LIGHT OF THE HISTORICAL SITUATION. THE TUNNEL WHICH HEZEKIAH CUT OUT OF SOLID ROCK WAS 6 FEET HIGH AND OVER A QUARTER OF A MILE LONG. THIS TUNNEL AFFORDED A SECRET WATER SUPPLY WHICH COMBINED WITH JERUSALEM'S GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION MADE THE CITY AN ANCIENT FORTRESS. THE TERM RIVER THROUGHOUT THE BIBLE IS A SYMBOL OF THE PRESENCE OF GOD. IT WAS SO IN EDEN AND IT WILL BE SO IN THE NEW JERUSALEM. WHEN ALL SEEM TO BE GONE IN THE CITY OF JERUSALEM, GOD MOVED IN THEIR BEHALF ACCORDING TO HIS OWN TIME TABLE. IN VERSE 5, THE PHRASE "AND THAT RIGHT EARLY" LITERALLY MEANS "WHEN THE MORNING DAWNS OR APPEARS." THE DANGERS OF THE NIGHT ARE RESOLVED WITH THE COMING OF THE DAY. THE BIBLE IS FILLED WITH OCCASIONS IN WHICH GOD'S HELP CAME ON TIME. ① EXODUS 14 - 30. ② MATTHEW 14:30. ③ ESTHER 6:1 -
"ON THAT NIGHT COULD NOT THE KING SLEEP...." IT WOULD HAVE MADE LITTLE DEFERENCE IF THE KING HAD HAD INSOMNIA 24 HOURS LATER! WE ARE PRONE TO THINK THAT GOD IS LATE WITH REFERENCE TO OUR NEEDS. ACCORDING TO VERSE 7, IT IS THE "LORD OF HOSTS" ④ AND THE GOD OF JACOB ⑤ WHO IS OUR REFUGE. LOOK AT THESE 2 TERMS. THIS TERM IS A TITLE OR NAME OF GOD USED FREQUENTLY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. IT SUGGESTS THAT ALL CREATED AGENCIES AND FORCES ARE UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF GOD. IT IS A NAME TO EXPRESS THE LORD'S GREAT POWER! THE WORD HOST WAS SOMETIMES USED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT TO REFER TO ANGELS AS THE LORD'S HOST OR ARMY AND HE HIMSELF IS THE LEADER OF THIS GREAT ARMY. IF ONE ANGEL COULD UTTERLY DESTROY THE ASSYRIAN ARMY THINK WHAT A COMBINED FORCES OF THIS ANGELIC GROUP COULD DO IF GOD SO DESIRED! THE REFERENCE TO JACOB COULD REFER TO GOD'S COVENANT BUT I LIKE TO THINK OF IT AS GOD WHO IS ABLE TO CHANGE PEOPLE AS WELL AS CIRCUMSTANCES! IN JACOB, THERE IS A PERSON WHO IS ONCE A DECEIVER BUT WHO WAS COMPLETELY CHANGED TO BECOME A PRINCE WITH GOD. IT IS INTERESTING THAT WE BELIEVE THAT GOD CAN DO GREAT WORKS IN THE NATURAL WORLD BUT IS UTTERLY HELPLESS WHEN

IT COMES TO PEOPLE! IF GOD COULD CHANGE JACOB
HE COULD CHANGE ANYONE! F. B. MEYER SUGGESTS
THAT GOD SEEMS TO TAKE SPECIAL DELIGHT IN USING
THIS TITLE WHICH LINKS HIS HOLY NATURE WITH ONE
WHO, SO FAR FROM GIVING PROMISE OF SAINTSHIP,
WAS NATURALLY ONE OF THE MEANNESS OF MEN. GOD
HAS NOT CHANGED SINCE THOSE DAYS WHEN HE DEALT
WITH JACOB. HE IS READY NOW AS HE WAS THEN TO
DEAL WITH REBELS AND PEOPLE OF REBELLIOUS NATURE.
IF GOD COULD MAKE A PRINCE OUT OF JACOB HE COULD
DO IT FOR ANYONE.

III. GOD'S HELP FOR HIS PEOPLE IS ALWAYS FOR THEIR GOOD AND HIS GLORY - V. 8 - 11.

IT IS THE LORD WHO IS ABLE TO STOP THE CONFLICTS
OF EARTH. NATIONAL LEADERS MIGHT WELL READ
PSALMS 46:9 AND AND UNDERSCORE THE WORD HE! IT
IS GOD'S SON WHO IS CALLED THE PRINCE OF PEACE.
THREE TIMES THE PERSONAL PRONOUN HE IS USED IN
VERSE 9. IT IS THE LORD WHO WILL ULTIMATELY DEAL
WITH WEAPONS OF WARFARE AND IN THE TERMS OF THE
PROPHETS BEAT THEM INTO PLOWSHARES. GOD WILL
BE EXALTED AMONG THE NATIONS AND HIS NAME WILL
BE EXALTED IN THE EARTH. THIS AWAITS A FUTURE
DAY WHEN THE HONOR AND GLORY OF GOD WILL BE MANI-
FESTED ON EARTH. THIS IS GOOD NEWS FOR CHRISTIANS
WHO SEEM TO BE ON THE LOSING SIDE SO OFTEN. ALL
OF THE LEGISLATION SEEMS TO BE IN OPPOSITION TO
THAT WHICH IS MORAL. PUBLIC MORALITY SEEMS TO
BE EDGING AWAY AND THE NAME OF GOD IS PROFANED
MORE THAN PRaised. ONE DAY HE WILL HAVE THE HONOR
TO HIS NAME. IN VERSE 10 THE WORDS "BE STILL"
LITERALLY MEAN LET GO, RELAX, LET YOUR HANDS FALL
TO YOUR SIDE OR CEASE YOUR OWN EFFORTS. AS THE
BELIEVER RELAXES AND LETS GOD CONTROL NOT ONLY
HUMAN HISTORY BUT HUMAN LIVES CALMNESS AND ASSURANCE
OF THE FUTURE WILL BE HIS LOT. IT IS LITTLE
WONDER THAT THE CHURCH AND CHRISTIANS HAVE SUCH
LITTLE AFFECT UPON THE WORLD. FAR TOO MANY
CHRISTIANS ARE RESTLESS AND FRETTERING ABOUT THE
CIRCUMSTANCES OF LIFE WHEN THEY OUGHT TO BE TRUSTING
GOD COMPLETELY! I REMEMBER THE STORY THAT IS TOLD
CONCERNING JOHN WESLEY WHILE HE WAS ABOARD A
SHIP IN ROUTE TO GEORGIA AND A GREAT STORM CAME
UP IN WHICH PEOPLE TERRIBLY FRIGHTEN TO THE POINT
OF PANIC. WESLEY SAID THAT EVEN HIS OWN HEART
HE WAS GREATLY AFRAID BUT WAS IMPRESS WITH A GROUP

Moravian missionaries who prayed. Shamed by his fear.

Read Rom. 8: 31-39.