

The Enduring Grace of God

Psalm 136

“His mercy...for ever”

By James Pilgrim

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James Pilgrim, Author

250 County Road 550

Ripley, MS 38663

pilgrimbiblestudy.com

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PSALM 136

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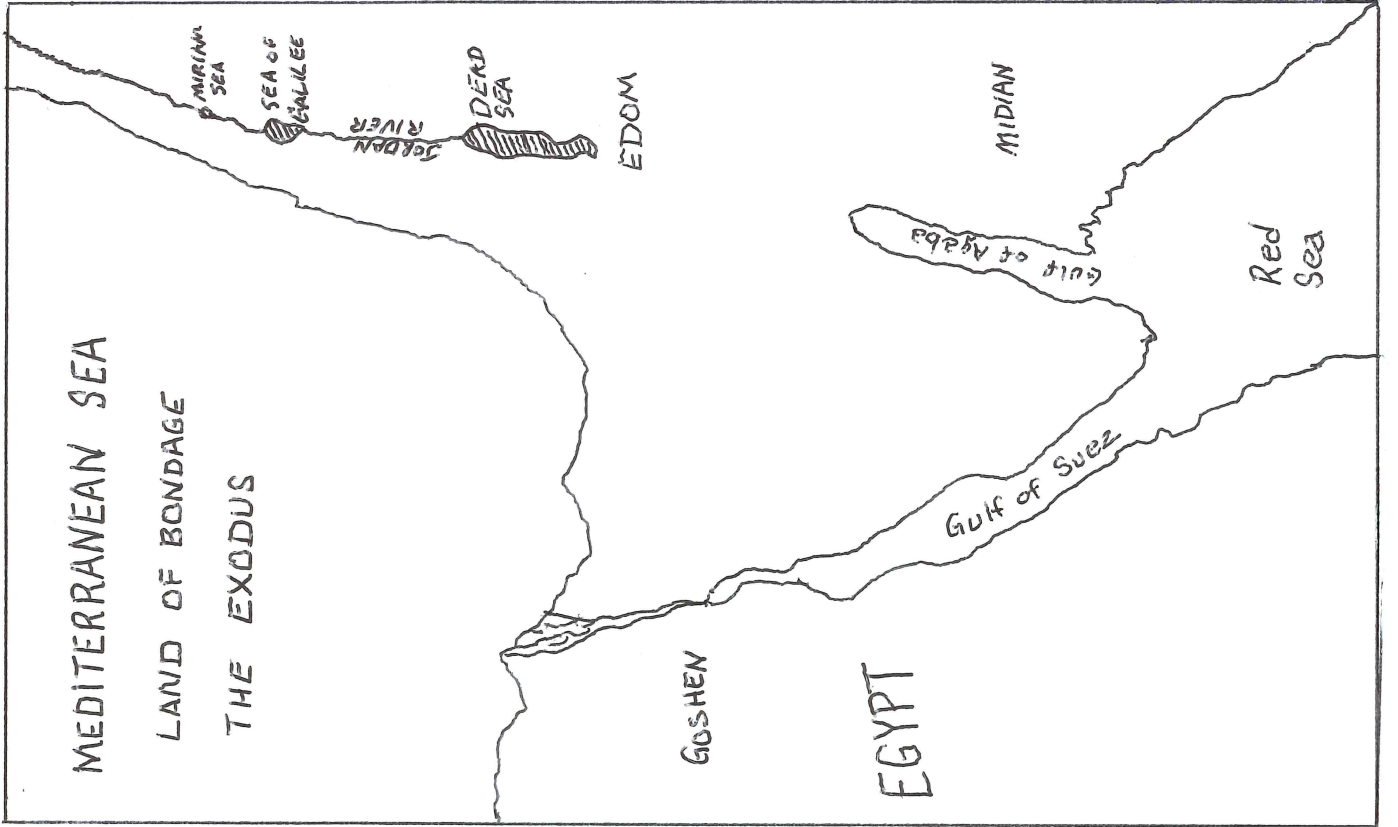
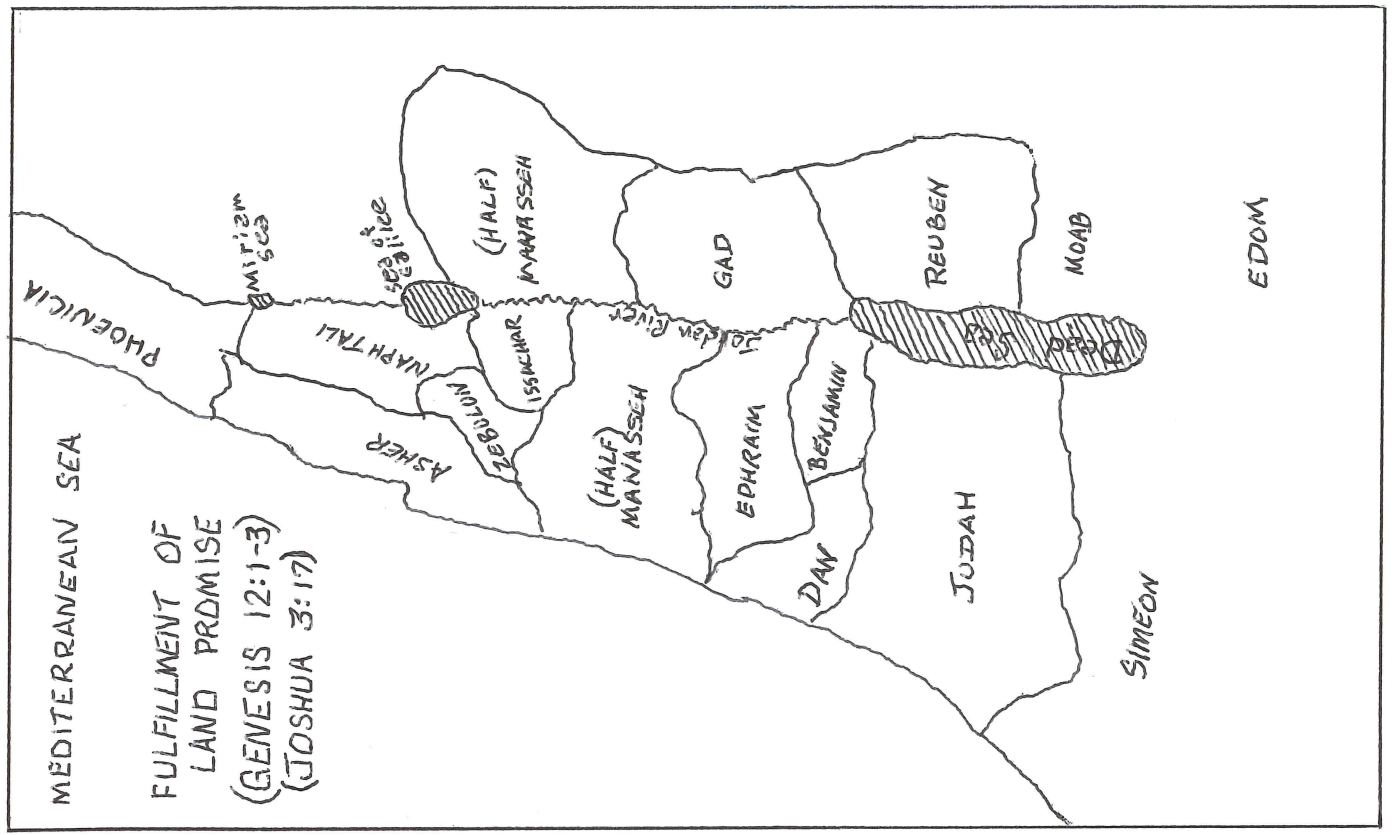
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Chapter 1

HIS MERCY FOR EVER

The enduring mercy of God is abundantly and emphatically set forth in Psalm 136. The word “endureth” is supplied by the translators, as is seen in it appearing in an italicized form. Though not in the original Hebrew text, the idea of enduring is implied. The Hebrew words “for ever” in these verses mean eternal, always, perpetual, and they are so translated. The expression “his mercy endureth for ever” is found in each of the twenty-six (26) verses of Psalm 136.

Psalm 136 is a tribute to the mercy of the God of heaven for all that He has done. The word “Selah” is from the Hebrew word, CALCILLA or CALA, which means to lift one up, and speaks of one’s strength. Reference is made to two cities in connection with the word Selah. Joktheel of Palestine is one city, and Joktheel of Idumaea is the other. (Joshua 15:38; 2 Kings 14:7). Both of these have reference to a rock, something solid. Thus, Selah seems to have a meaning of something rock solid or as strong as a rock. That would certainly describe God and/or anything with which He had to do.

This lesson, one of thirteen (13), deals with verses one thru three, which admonish the reader to “give thanks unto the Lord.” (Verse 1). The idea of giving thanks unto the God is found frequently in both testaments, the old and the new. For example, 1 Chronicles 16:4 says, “And he appointed certain of the Levites to minister before the ark of the Lord, and to record, and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel.” They were “to stand every morning to thank and praise the Lord, and likewise at even.” (1 Chronicles 23:30). Jesus gave thanks unto God. (Matthew 11:25). Paul thanked God for the widespread faith of the saints at Rome. (Romans 1:1, 7, 8). Paul also thanked God “always” on the behalf of the church of God at Corinth. (1 Corinthians 1:1, 2, 4), even though they had contentions among them. (1 Corinthians 1:11-17). Paul did not praise them in their contentions, their divisions, but besought them in the name of, by the authority of Jesus to be united. (1 Corinthians 1:10). The beloved apostle also uttered prayers to God for the church at Philippi. (Philippians 1:3). He prayed for the church of the Thessalonians. (2 Thessalonians 1:1, 13). He expressed his gratitude to God for entrusting him to be a servant after he obeyed the gospel. (1 Timothy 1:12-17). Paul prayed for Philemon. (Verse 4). One wonders how many Paul prayed to God for who are not named in the inspired books he wrote.

On the way to Rome, knowing that he would certainly face death sometime after arriving there, Paul was still praying. (Acts 28:15).

Verse 26 of Psalm 136 concluded with the call to “give thanks unto the God of heaven:....”

The Psalmist called upon the readers to give thanks to God, “for he is good.” (Psalm 136:1). The goodness of God is seen in so many ways from Genesis through Revelation. His goodness is spoken of a number of times (1 Chronicles 16:27-36; Psalm 106:1; 2 Chronicles 20:21), and is seen even where no mention of it is made. God’s dealings with Abel show His goodness. (Genesis 4). Noah and his family were recipients of God’s goodness. (Genesis 6-9). Consider Abram, later called Abraham, and his offspring. (Genesis 11:27, and forward). John 3:16 speaks of God’s great love for the world. He only had one Son of a kind, but He willingly, without reluctance, gave Him to shed His precious blood for the sins of the world. Romans 2:4 says, “Or despiseth thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?” Although God is good, He will act with severity. Romans 11:22 says, “Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God; on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou shalt be cut off.” All who obey God will be recipients of His goodness. (Matthew 25). Punishment will be meted out to the disobedient. (Matthew 25:1-13; 48-51). God is good, and He will do good and right, either in saving the upright, or in punishing the wicked.

We are to give thanks to the God of gods. Daniel said, “There is a God in heaven.” (Daniel 2:28; Genesis 22:15). There is only one God. (Ephesians 4:6; Malachi 2:10; 1Corinthians 8:5, 6). This has been proved, as the late beloved gospel preacher, Paul D. Murphy, might have said, “Beyond a shade of a shadow of a flicker of a doubt.” Turn to 1 Kings 18, and read the following story. Elijah challenged Ahab and all four hundred fifty (450) prophets of Baal, and the four hundred (400) prophets of the groves which ate at Jezebel’s table, to call on the name of their gods to send fire to light a dry altar with a bullock on it. They cried upon their god Baal from morning till noon, UNSUCCESSFULLY. “Elijah mocked them”, challenging them to cry louder. He told them that since Baal was a god, he might be talking, pursuing (in a private place), in a journey, or even sleeping. They cried, and even cut themselves till the blood gushed out. Again, they prophesied until evening WITHOUT SUCCESS.

Elijah built an altar, had it soaked with four (4) barrels of water three (3) times, even filling the trench with water. He then asked the God of heaven to prove that He is the God. “Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench.” (Verse 38). “And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces, and said, The Lord he is the God; The Lord, he is the God.” (Verse 39). Notice that they proclaimed God to be THE God, and this they said twice. This is but one instance of God proving Himself to be the one and only true God. John 1:1 declares Jesus to be Deity, God. Acts 5:3, 4 show the Holy Spirit to also be God. 1 John 5:7 shows them to be one, or as Colossians 2:9 says, “the Godhead”, the God family.

Lastly, in this first chapter, verse three reads, “O give thanks to the Lord of lords:....” The Lord is mentioned over seven thousand (7000) times in the word of God, with most of them being in the first covenant. Deuteronomy 10:1 says, “For the Lord your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward.” John called Jesus Lord, saying, “For he is Lord of lords, and King of kings:....” (Revelation 17:14; 19:16).

Thanksgivings are to be made because God’s mercy never ends. Luke 6:36 says, “Be ye therefore merciful, as your Father also is merciful.” Paul said it is “God that sheweth mercy.” (Romans 9:16). Gentiles need to thank God for His mercy (Romans 15:9), because He is “rich in mercy.” (Ephesians 2:4). Paul told Timothy that mercy comes “from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.” (1 Timothy 1:2). Lest we forget, mercy is extended to the obedient no matter how bad one’s sins are. (Acts 2:23, 37, 38; 1 Timothy 1:13-16). Titus 3:5 shows that one is saved by God’s mercy, if one has been washed, baptized. Cf. Ephesians 5:23-27; Acts 22:16.

Beloved, give thanks to God for His goodness and His mercy, and that “the most High ruleth in the kingdom of men.” (Daniel 4:17). By the way, “Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift.” (2 Corinthians 9:15). We have so much for which we should be thankful. Read, study, look around you, and do not be remiss in expressing thanks to God.

Chapter 2

THE GOD OF GREAT WONDERS

Psalm 136:4 says, “To him who alone doeth great wonders: for his mercy endureth for ever.” David prayed, “Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things.” (Psalm 72:18). Moses was inspired to write, “Who is like unto thee, O Lord, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?” (Exodus 15:11). It is no wonder that David proclaimed, “Wherefore, thou art great, O Lord God: for there is none like thee, neither is there any God beside thee, according to all that we have heard with our ears.” (2 Samuel 7:22). It is obvious that graven images, gods made with hands, cannot do anything, seeing that they can “neither see, nor hear, nor eat, nor smell.” (Deuteronomy 4:28).

God alone doeth great wonders. Immediately following the declaration of Psalm 136:4, the Psalmist lists a number of God’s wonders. First, he wrote, “By wisdom God made the heavens.” (Verse 5). In verse 6, he wrote, “To him that stretched out the earth above the waters.” Genesis 1:1 describes these events, “In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.” Genesis 1:6-10 describes how God by speaking wondrously separated the waters from the land. Jeremiah 51:15 says, “He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding.”

Second, Psalm 136:7 continues, “To him that made great lights.” This refers to Genesis 1:14-19. There we learn that God made a great light, the sun (Jeremiah 31:35), to rule the day, and a light, the moon (Jeremiah 31:35; Isaiah 13:10), to rule the night. He made the stars also, and they give light in the night. (Jeremiah 31:35). They were placed “in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth by night.” (Jeremiah 31:35). What wondrous power to simply speak, and these things come to pass! By the way, the Bible is totally accurate in the account it gives. All seeing people view these great wonders daily. The Psalmist gives us but a part of all that God did at creation, using only His word. Ever keep in mind that all of this (physical), and more (spiritual), was done from nothing but by the word of His power. (Hebrews 1:1-3).

Third, consider the rest of God’s creation. The Psalmist in speaking of God’s wondrous creation says He by wisdom created the heaven and the earth, separated the waters, and made the

sun, moon, and stars. How mighty God is, when He can create all else we see, things which are not named in Genesis 1, and do so by only speaking.

Fourth, God also said, “Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together unto one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so.” (Genesis 1:9). Thus did the earth and Seas appear. God then created full grown plants, “yielding seed after his kind.” (Verse 11, 12). In light of verses 11, 12, which came first, the chicken or the egg? “Yielding fruit after his kind” (Genesis 1:11) is why no one goes to an okra plant expecting anything other than okra, certainly not tomatoes, apples, or any other vegetable or fruit. One kind does not produce a different kind. Cattle do not produce humans, nor visa versa, etc.

Fifth, creatures of the water and fowl of the air were created on the fifth (5th) day. (Genesis 1:20-23). God only spoke, and it happened. Imagine God only saying something like, “Let Orca whales appear”, and Orca whales instantly appeared and began to swim. Perhaps God but said, “Let Gray whales appear”, and immediately there they were. And on and on it went until God was finished and saw that it was good. God did similarly with all creatures of the air. And, dear student, do not forget, and do not be convinced otherwise, that each of these creations reproduce after their own kind. They never produce something of another kind. Dogs do not reproduce humans, cattle, horses, or anything other than dogs. Humans do not give birth to snakes, salamanders, or such like. Evolutionists cease to reason properly in this area when they teach otherwise.

Sixth, day six, the final day of creation is perhaps the climax of God’s great wonders. He created the creatures of the earth, and then man. (Genesis 1:24-31). Imagine God only speaking, and all that He said came to pass exactly as He spoke. The beasts, cattle, and all other things came into being as a result of God’s powerful voice. It seems that God waited until last to say, “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness:....” (Genesis 1:26). “Us” is plural, and speaks of God (plural, Genesis 1:1) the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. (Genesis 1:1, 2; John 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:1, 2). There are said to be seven (7) great wonders in the world. This writer begs to disagree. There is one truly great wonder, creation. (Genesis 1). Creation is the great wonder of all time. Then, there are seven. Think of the perfection of God’s creation. Each thing created had exactly what it needed, and in proportion. Each man and woman has two legs. Each one’s legs are equal in length, depending on how tall each one is. The same is true of arms. Each human has

one heart, two lungs, two kidneys, and so on. Each animal has the proper number of legs. Imagine an elephant with two legs. God created, and He did so according to what each creation needed. What would people do with three, four, or more legs? An individual with one or three legs would have a rather difficult time of doing many things.

Seventh, consider God's great wonder in Noah's day. (Genesis 6-9). People turned their backs on God, becoming exceedingly sinful, imagining evil continually. (Genesis 6:5). Their actions caused God to repent that He had made man, and He decided to destroy mankind. (Genesis 6:6, 7). To do so, God chose Noah, who "found grace in the eyes of the Lord" because he was "a just man and perfect in his generation, and Noah walked with God." (Genesis 6:8, 9). God gave Noah the task of building an ark (Hebrew and Greek, BOX) 300 cubits (approximately, 450 feet) x 50 cubits (Approximately, 75 feet) x 30 cubits (approximately, 45 feet) of gopher wood, with three (3) floors, one door (size not given), and one window one cubit (Approximately, 18 inches) finished above. The ark within itself was a great wonder, but it had to have much water to float it. This is an extension of God's great wonder. Genesis 7:11 says, "All the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened." God caused it to rain forty days and forty nights. (Genesis 7:12). The highest mountain in the earth was covered by fifteen cubits (approximately, 22 1/2 feet)). This was not a local flood; it covered the whole earth, and was a universal flood. (Genesis 7:14-24). Notice that "all" died. (Verse 21). The only survivors were Noah, his wife, his three sons and their wives (8 souls), and the creatures God told Noah to bring into the ark. (Genesis 7:1, 13-24; 1 Peter 3:20, 21). The seven billion people on earth today, all working in total harmony, could never do this.

Dear student, God has shown His might through the great wonders He has done. Serve Him faithfully, and live with Him eternally. Is it any wonder that the Psalmist speaks of God's great and enduring mercy, and that we should be thankful for it? Give thanks for God's great and loving mercy, His wondrous power.

Chapter 3

THE DELIVERANCE OF ISRAEL

Our third lesson looks at God delivering Israel from Egyptian captivity, as is stated in Psalm 136:10-12. A famine arose in the land of Israel, as in “all countries...all lands.” (Genesis 41:54-57). Jacob’s sons had betrayed Joseph, selling him to the Ishmeelites (Genesis 37:23-28), who sold him in Egypt. (Genesis 37:36). Joseph ended up in the house of Potiphar as his servant. (Genesis 37:36). Through all of this adversity (Genesis 39:1, 7-20) Joseph arose to become second in command over all Egypt, being second only to the Pharaoh. (Genesis 41:40ff). The sons of Jacob were sent to Egypt by their father to buy corn. (Genesis 41:57; 42:1, 2). God was with Joseph through all of this. (Genesis 39:2-6, 21-23). Joseph recognized his blood brothers who had sold him into slavery. (Genesis 42:7, 8). Joseph did not do to them as they had done unto him. Cf. Matthew 7:12; Leviticus 19:18. Rather, after a few events, Joseph, at Pharaoh’s command (Genesis 45:16-21), brought his family to Egypt and gave them the land of Goshen, letting them eat of the fat of the land. (Genesis 45:10, 18; 46:28). Joseph explained to his brothers that they were not responsible for what they had done to him, that they meant it for evil, but God meant it for good, to preserve their lives. (Genesis 45:5-7; 50:19, 20). This is a great example of providence, rather than the miraculous.

As time passed, a new king arose who did not know Joseph. (Exodus 1:8). How could this be with all Joseph had done??? The new Pharaoh thought the growing Israelites would be a threat to Egypt, and he acted to reduce their numbers by attempting to have all baby boys killed. (Exodus 1:9-16, 22). The newborn baby Moses was spared by his mother, Jochebed. (Exodus 6:20; 2:2, 3). Moses was brought to Pharaoh’s house (Exodus 2:9, 10), but he would fight for Israel. (Exodus 2:11, 12). He fled to Midian where he remained for forty years, then spent the next forty years delivering Israel from Egyptian bondage. (Exodus 2:15; Acts 7:29, 30, 36; 3:10-12:36).

God appeared to Moses in a burning bush, telling him to return to Egypt to deliver His people. (Exodus 3:1ff). Moses obeyed God and appeared before the new Pharaoh (Exodus 2:23) with a request from God to let His people go worship Him. (Exodus 3:18; 5:1, 3). The King refused, stating emphatically, “Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go.” (Exodus 5:2). This arrogance would change to humble

submission, and he would not only let them go, he would run them out. Pharaoh tried to get Moses to compromise, which he refused to do, and which we should refuse to do. Israel's burdens were increased. (Exodus 5:4ff). They still did not compromise!!! God's wonders and power were soon to begin. (Exodus 3:20).

Exodus 3 is God, the great I AM's plan to free His people from their burdensome bondage, using Moses, accompanied by Aaron, as their leaders. Chapter 4 is the beginning process in deliverance, first, convincing Israel that he, Moses, was to do this. (Verses 1-9). He used a rod and blood to convince them. God warned the king of the serious consequences of fighting against Him. (Exodus 4:23). Aaron is given to Moses for his spokesman. (Exodus 4:10-16). The people believed the words and signs God gave them. (Exodus 4:30, 31; Compare John 20:30, 31). Chapter 5 is the beginning of Moses and Aaron's pleas to the Pharaoh to let Israel go. (Verse 1). Pharaoh's refusal to let Israel go was met with great signs, wonders, and power. (Exodus 7:3, 4; 9:16).

After Pharaoh increased the burdens of Israel (Exodus 5:4-23), God sent Moses and Aaron to Israel, reminding them of God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Exodus 6:3, 4; Genesis 12:1-3; 26:1-5, and 28:10-15). They were reminded that God would fulfill His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Exodus 6:6-8).

Following His assurances to Israel, God sent Moses and Aaron to Pharaoh with another plea to let Israel go. (Exodus 6:11). Failure to do so would result in God exercising great power that would cause the Egyptians to know that they were dealing with the Almighty God. (Exodus 7:4, 5). Moses is now eighty years old, and Aaron is eighty-three. (Exodus 7:7).

God sent Moses and Aaron unto the Pharaoh. Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. (Exodus 7:10). Pharaoh's wise men and sorcerers, magicians, "did in like manner." (Verses 11, 12). However, "Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods" (Verse 12), showing God's superior power. Likely, the magicians used illusions, rather than actually duplicating Aaron's real act. The king "hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said." (Exodus 7:13). The revelation of God's mighty power now begins. Ten plagues follow.

First, all water (rivers, ponds, pools) is turned into blood, and the fish died, leaving an odor, and an absence of drinking water. (Exodus 7:17-21). Again, "the magicians of Egypt did so with

their enchantments.” (Exodus 7:22). Remember, they are magicians, illusionists, those who make things **seem** to be so. Second, God smote all the borders of Egypt with frogs, even in their houses, bedchambers, beds, ovens, kneadingtroughs, including their servants. (Exodus 8:2-6). “And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.” (Exodus 8:7). Real? Likely not. They used enchantments. Ask any magician if he/she really does what appears to happen. For example, cutting one in half, then restoring that one. Pharaoh refused God’s plea again. Third, God turned all the dust of the land into lice in man and beast. (Exodus 8:16, 18). The magicians tried, but failed in this matter. (Exodus 8:18). The Magician’s conclusion: “This is the finger of God.” (Exodus 8:19). Pharaoh refused to listen to his own people, hardened his heart, and denied Israel’s request to leave.

Fourth, Pharaohs refusal to let Israel go led to swarms of flies being sent on the land of Egypt. The word “flies” is not in the Hebrew text in Exodus 8:21, 22, 24, 29, and 31. However, Psalm 78:45 says, “He sent divers sorts of flies among them,....” Did this convince Pharaoh to let Israel go? No! Rather, he tried to get them to compromise (Exodus 8:25, 28), which Moses refused. (Exodus 8:26, 27). Pharaoh again hardened his heart, refusing to let Israel go, dealing deceitfully. (Exodus 8:28-32). Fifth, murrain, a plague or pestilence, possibly some deadly insect, was sent upon the Egyptians cattle, horses, asses (donkeys), camels, oxen and sheep. (Exodus 9:1-7). The Egyptians lost so many animals, but not one of Israel’s died. (Exodus 9:4, 6, 7). “And the heart of Pharaoh was hardened, and he did not let the people go,” (Acts 9:7). Sixth, handfuls of ashes from a furnace were sprinkled up toward heaven before Pharaoh, and it became boils and blains upon man and beast, including the magicians. (Exodus 9:8-11). “The Lord hardened the heart of Pharaoh, and he hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had spoken unto Moses.” (Verse 12).

Seventh, due to Pharaoh’s rebellion, God sent thunder and rained hail from heaven, and fire along upon the ground, except for the land of Goshen. (Exodus 9:13-26). The king made another promise which he did not keep. (Verses 27-35). Pharaoh confessed, “I have sinned this time: the Lord is righteous, and I and my people are wicked.” (Verse 27). He asked for the Lord to be intreated to stop the thunder and hail, promising to let Israel go. (Verse 28). However, when God stopped the thunder and hail, Pharaoh “sinned yet more, and hardened his heart, he and his servants...neither would he let the children of Israel go, as the Lord had spoken by Moses.” (Verses 33-35). Eighth, locusts so numerous that the sun could not be seen were sent upon

Egypt, and they filled the houses of the Egyptians and ate every tree in the field, and every herb the hail left, even all the fruit trees. (Exodus 10:12-19). Pharaoh did not learn, but again hardened his heart, and he refused to let Israel go. The king made so many promises, but he broke every one of them.

Ninth, darkness so great that it could be felt was brought upon the land for three days. (Exodus 10:21-27). Pharaoh again tried to get Moses to compromise. Compromise is not in God's plan. Moses refused. Again, "The Lord hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he would not let them go." (Verse 27). Pharaoh even threatened to kill Moses if he saw him again. (Verse 28). Moses replied, "Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face again no more." (Verse 29).

Tenth, and one might say that this was the final straw that broke the camel's back. God told Moses that He would bring one more plague upon Pharaoh and Egypt, and Pharaoh would let Israel go. (Exodus 11:1). That was the death of every firstborn in the land, including the firstborn of Pharaoh, the maidservant, and even of beasts. Chapter 12 tells how Israel would be spared. (Verses 3-13). That day, the Passover, would be a memorial, which was to be kept throughout their generations. (Verses 14ff). It would remind all future generations of God's ever present mercy, and that He was powerful enough to deliver them from this severe slavery.

The arrogant Pharaoh humbled himself. He not only told Israel to leave, but asked them to bless him. (Exodus 12:31, 32). The Hebrew word "borrow", SHAEL, here has the primary meaning of requesting or demanding. Generally, it is similar to one who asks if he/she can borrow a staple or clip. The lender does not expect that such will be returned. The writer sometimes in fun, asks, "When do you plan to return it?"

"O give thanks unto the Lord." (Psalm 136:1, 2, 3, 26). Only the God of heaven possesses such great and wondrous power. He certainly proved that in bringing Israel out of Egyptian bondage, out from under such a powerful tyrant.

Chapter 4

DIVIDING THE RED SEA

All should give thanks unto God for His mighty division of the Red sea. (Psalm 136:13). What power He showed! That action alone superseded by far anything man could have ever imagined! All God did was to have Moses lift up his rod, and stretch out his hand over the Red sea, and divide it, and the children of Israel would go on dry ground through the midst of the sea. (Exodus 14:16). “Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided” (Exodus 14:21), and “The children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.” (Exodus 14:22; Psalm 66:6; 78:13; 1 Corinthians 10:1; Hebrews 11:29). The words, “ground” and “land” are italicized in the Hebrew, showing that they were not in the original text, but were supplied by the translators. However, one may know that land or ground was implied, because Nehemiah, in recounting this great event, says, “they went through the midst of the sea on dry land;...” (Nehemiah 9:11). The word “land” is in the text there, thus, proving that land or ground was what was meant in Exodus 14. Verse 21 says God “made the sea dry....”

Exodus 14:22 says, “the waters were a wall unto them.” The waters were a wall, not some man-made structure, not boards or any other materials. The waters were the wall. “Wall” also suggests that there was depth. No one knows how deep, but “wall” suggests depth. In spite of this, some deny the miracle of the parting of the Red sea, claiming that the children of Israel waded across a shallow part of the sea. One Hollywood movie had the sea parted, but had them walking through in ankle deep muddy water. What part of “dry” (Exodus 14:16, 21, 22, 29) is difficult to understand? What part of “wall” (Exodus 14:22) would ever lead one to think shallow? In any other situation, all would picture deep waters and dry ground. The division of the Red sea was truly a great wonder of God.

Israel passes through the Red sea on dry ground. Picture being in that multitude, seeing this miraculous event. You see the waters of the Red sea flowing. You hear an east wind blowing all night. You awaken the next morning, and at daylight you see a great gap in the waters, with the floor of the sea dry. The waters are stilled, and they have become a great wall on the right and

left, being held in place by the Almighty God of heaven. You have seen His mighty power before, and you know what He is capable of doing. You are somewhat surprised, but not really. You are reminded of His power to create (Genesis 1), of what He did in the days of Noah (Genesis 6-9), of his care for Joseph and his family, and other countries (Genesis 37ff), of the plagues upon the Egyptians, while sparing Israel (Exodus 7-14), and so much more. You are confident beyond any doubt that God can and will deliver you through the Red sea. Perhaps you think, WOW! What a powerful merciful, loving God! You give thanks to the Lord for His great mercy He has just showed to you, and for all other acts of mercy He has bestowed upon you. You have seen by sight and faith how merciful God is.

Psalm 136:15 says God “overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea.” The original account of the event recorded in Exodus 14:23 leaves the reader wondering if Pharaoh drowned in the sea with his host. That question is answered in Psalm 136:15, where the Holy Spirit moved the writer (2 Peter 1:20, 21) to say, “But overthrew Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea:....” This Pharaoh was such an arrogant king. He foolishly and unsuccessfully fought against God, even allowing his own people, animals, plants, and all else to die. Lastly, he bears the guilt for the firstborn of the Egyptians dying, including his own firstborn. One cannot help but wonder if he never realized that he could not win a battle with the powerful God, especially when he saw miracle after miracle. Cf. Acts 5:34-39.

The Pharaoh was king over the powerful nation of Egypt. They were in control of so much. Perhaps their successes led the king to believe that he was not vulnerable to anyone. During the great world-wide famine, Joseph, whom the Pharaoh had made second in command only to the king (Genesis 42:40), produced so much corn (Genesis 41:49), that “all countries came into Egypt to Joseph to buy corn;....” (Genesis 41:57). Acts 7:22 speaks of Moses being “learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and deeds.” The nation of Egypt was rich in worldly knowledge. (1 Kings 4:30). Remember, they built the great pyramids and many other magnificent things, including, sadly, idols. They were, and continue to be a productive agricultural nation. The Pharaohs had great numbers of chariots and soldiers. (Exodus 14:6, 7; Deuteronomy 11:4). Of all his chariots, the Pharaoh chose six hundred (600) to pursue the children of Israel as they fled Egypt. The Hebrew writer alludes to the riches of Egypt in chapter 11, verses 24-29. History describes the riches of Egypt in a number of ways. Horses (2

Chronicles 9:28) and fine linen (Amos 7:16) are but a few things that came out of Egypt at various times.

Potiphar bought Joseph (Genesis 39:1), and he “saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand.” (Genesis 39:3). One Pharaoh’s dream was interpreted by God through Joseph, which he made known to the king. (Genesis 41:16, 25). This Pharaoh recognized the God of Joseph, saying, “Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the spirit of God is?” (Genesis 41:38, 39). He made Joseph second only to himself in the land. (Genesis 41:40-45). The seven years of plenty, followed by the seven years of famine Joseph predicted came to pass, and Egypt and all countries were fed by Joseph. (Genesis 41:25ff). Likely, all of Egypt’s successes erroneously led the king to think he was greater than he was. The Egyptians would shortly learn the truth about who was powerful, and who was not.

The king of Egypt did not learn very well. After seeing God’s grace extended to Israel, and after running the Israelites out of Egypt, for some strange reason, he still thought he could successfully fight God. Thus, Pharaoh pursues the children of Israel, and is drowned in the Red sea, along with his army. (Exodus 14:23-31).

The writer of Psalm 136 was totally accurate when he wrote of the great wonders of God. (Exodus 7:3, 4; 9:16). It should be natural for all to give thanks to the Lord for His enduring mercy. There can be no doubt that God’s mercy is for ever. The servants of Pharaoh were accurate in pleading to their king to let Israel go to serve the Lord their God, asking him, “Knowest thou not yet that Egypt is destroyed?” (Exodus 10:7). The king’s people realized what the situation was. How could he not have seen the same???

Read the song of Moses. (Exodus 15:1-19). Miriam, the prophetess, the sister of Aaron...and all the women rejoiced over God leading them in triumph. (Exodus 15:20, 21). Moses then led Israel from the Red sea toward the land of Canaan.

The land promise God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob would soon be fulfilled. The spiritual promise God made to them would be fulfilled in Christ.

Chapter 5

GOD'S VICTORIOUS LEADERSHIP

Psalm 136:16 speaks of God's victorious leadership, and rightly encourages one to "give thanks" unto him. Verse 16 speaks of God's victorious leadership through the wilderness. The writer of Psalm 136 rightly concludes that God's mercy has not ceased, that it is "for ever."

Israel had just witnessed the miracles of Aaron's rod becoming a serpent and swallowing the magician's rods, and the plagues in Egypt (Exodus 7 through 12:36). Israel went from (1) Rameses (Exodus 12:37), (2) to Succoth (Exodus 12:37), to Etham (Exodus 13:20), to Pihahiroth (Exodus 14:9), to the Red sea (Exodus 15:22), where they saw the dividing of the sea's waters, and they marched through on dry ground, with the walls of water on their right and left side. (Exodus 14:21, 22). This was not hear-say, nor was it a lesson from teachers. Israel experienced this! They "saw that great work which the Lord did upon the Egyptians: and the people feared the Lord, and believed the Lord, and his servant Moses." (Exodus 14:31). "Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto the Lord, and spake, saying, I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously;...." (Exodus 15:1ff). The song speaks of what God had done, and what He was about to do. Miriam, the prophetess, and Aaron's sister, and the ladies began to sing about God's glorious triumph. (Exodus 15:20, 21).

It is estimated that Israel would have gone into the land God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in two (2) years, or less, from the time they left Egypt, **but** shortly after crossing the Red sea, they displeased the Lord in various ways, and fell. (Exodus 12ff; 1 Corinthians 10:1-11). All today need to walk circumspectly (exactly), not as fools, but as wise. (Ephesians 5:15). Failure to walk thusly may have us thinking that we are standing and taking heed, yet, we may be falling. (1 Corinthians 10:12).

The journeys of Israel from the Red sea to their crossing over the Jordan river, entering Canaan, the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, can be seen in Exodus 12:37 through Joshua 3. God provided all along the way. They often complained and murmured. For example, although they saw and knew that God had delivered them from Egyptian bondage, that He lead them by a cloud in the day, and lighted their way at night in a pillar of fire (Exodus 13:21, 22;

Psalms 105:39), they murmured because the waters at Marah were bitter. (Exodus 15:23, 24). God made the waters sweet with a tree cast into them. (Verse 25). God provides.

Just two months after leaving Egypt, after instituting the Passover, and seeing all that God had done, in the wilderness of Sin, “the whole congregation of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron.” (Exodus 12:2; 16:1-3, 7, 8, 12). Their complaint: “Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness, to kill this whole assembly with hunger.” (Exodus 16:3). God provided manna, a light bread, in the morning and quail in the evening. (Exodus 16:4-31). God told them how much to gather, and warned them against gathering too much. They were told how and when to gather each food, including the instructions for provisions for the Sabbath. (Exodus 16:22-31). Israel looked back. Do not look back. Cf. Luke 9:62, “And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God.” Do what God says, as He says, without change. (Deuteronomy 4:2; Proverbs 30:6; Revelation 22:18, 19; John 2:5; Galatians 1:6-9). Moses told Aaron, “Take a pot, and put an omer full of manna therein, and lay it up before the Lord, to be kept for your generation.” (Exodus 16:33-36; Hebrews 9:4). It is said that the omer was about 6.4 pints. The children of Israel ate manna forty years, from the time God first sent it until they entered Canaan. (Joshua 5:10-12). God was merciful to provide them food and water. Their shoes and clothes did not even wear out in the forty years they trod through the wilderness. (Deuteronomy 29:5).

No Israelite who was twenty years old and older was allowed to enter Canaan. (Numbers 32:1ff; 14:29, 30, 34; Jude 5). Why? God said, “because they have not wholly followed me:....” (Numbers 32:11). Caleb and Joshua were the two exceptions. (Verse 12). Why? “They...wholly followed the Lord.” (Verse 12). The result of Israel listening to the negative twelve (Numbers 13:31-33, 21-29), rather than Joshua and Caleb (Numbers 13:21-29; 30:31-33), and not going into Canaan, was to wander in the wilderness one year for each of the forty days they spied out the land. Thus, they wandered forty years until those twenty years old and older died. (Numbers 32:13). Obey God. The people “cried; and...wept that night, and murmured against Moses and Aaron, wishing that they, Israel, had died in Egypt. (Numbers 14:1, 2). The children of Israel (Verse 2) said, “And wherefore hath the Lord brought us unto this land, to fall by the sword, that our wives and our children should be a prey? Were it not better for us to return into Egypt? And

they said one to another, Let us make a captain, and let us return into Egypt.” This is what listening to negative words not based upon the will of God can do to a congregation. Their actions were equal to rebellion. (Numbers 14:9). Moses and Aaron knew they could take the land because “the Lord is with us: fear them not.” (Verse 9). “The glory of the Lord appeared” (Verse 10). God asked, “How long will this people provoke me? And how long will it be before they believe me, for all the signs which I have shewed among them?” (Verse 11). Moses made a strong appeal to God for the people that day, appealing to the greatness of His mercy. (Verses 13-19). God heard Moses, and pardoned according to his words (Verse 20), but decreed that those twenty and older would not enter into the land He promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Verses 21-23). Imagine what they would have been and done if God had not lovingly led them using corrective discipline along the way.

Aaron and Moses died without being able to enter the land of Canaan. (Numbers 33:38, 39; Deuteronomy 34:5-8). Moses was shown Canaan, but was denied entrance into the land because he disobeyed God. (Deuteronomy 32:51, 52; 34:4, 5). “After the death of Moses the servant of the Lord it came to pass, that the Lord spake unto Joshua the son of Nun, Moses’ minister,” telling him to lead the people over Jordan into the land He had given them. (Joshua 1:1-3). The land was given to them, but they had to travel to it, and possess it.

Time and space did not allow the mentioning of all else that happened along the way. You are encouraged to read the rest of the story in Exodus, Leviticus, Number, Deuteronomy, and the first three chapters of Joshua.

Do not overlook God’s patience with Israel, His forgiveness when they repented, His great leadership, and all else. Can’t you just feel your hope growing as you read of the great love and mercy of God? Cf. Romans 15:4, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” “In hope of eternal life, which God that cannot lie, promised before the world began.” (Titus 1:2).

Chapter 6

GOD DEALS WITH ENEMIES

The Psalmist called upon each reader of the 136th Psalm to give thanks for God who smote great and famous kings. (Verses 17, 18). Psalm 135:10 says God “smote great nations, and slew mighty kings.” Two of those kings are named, “Sihon king of the Amorites” (Psalm 136:19; 135:11), and “Og the king of Bashan.” (Psalm 136:20).

Israel requested passage through the land over which Sihon ruled, assuring him that they would not eat or drink anything of his without purchasing it. (Numbers 21:21, 22; Deuteronomy 2:26-28). “Sihon would not suffer Israel to pass through his borders: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and went out against Israel...and fought against Israel, And Israel smote him....” (Numbers 21:23-31). Deuteronomy 2:24, 33 inform us that God gave Sihon the Amorite into the hands of Israel. Israel was reminded of this event more than once. (Numbers 21:34; 32:33; Joshua 2:10; 9:10; Psalm 136:19; etc.).

“Og the king of Bashan went out against them, he, and all his people, to battle at Edrei.” (Numbers 21:33). “And the Lord said unto Moses, Fear him not: for I have delivered him into thy hand, and all his people, and his land; and thou shalt do to him as thou didst unto Sihon king of the Amorites, which dwelt in Heshbon. So they smote him, and his sons, and all his people... and they possessed his land.” (Numbers 21:34, 35). “The kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about” were given to the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and half the tribe of Manasseh. (Numbers 32:33). Deuteronomy 3 is a parallel account of Og’s unsuccessful rebellion against God’s people, ending with God delivering Og into their hands. (Verses 1-4, 10, 11, 13). This chapter also pictures the division of the land. See a map. Cf. Deuteronomy 29:7 and 31:4. Joshua reminded Israel of these events. (Joshua 2:10; 9:10; 12:4; 13:12, 30, 31). The writers of 1 Kings and Nehemiah speak of these events. (1 Kings 4:19; Nehemiah 9:22). So also does the penman of Psalm 136, verses 19, 20.

While Sihon and Og are named, we must remember that God’s enduring mercy to His people enabled them to remove other kings who thought they could successfully fight against God and Israel. However, all such battles were futile. Remember how the arrogant Pharaoh, who thought he could win fighting against God, and his army were drowned in the Red sea. (Psalm 136:15). 2

Thessalonians 1:7-9 clearly show that rebellious people will be dealt with by the God of the universe. Paul wrote, “The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ: Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;....”

On their journey through the wilderness the Israelites with God’s mercy being clearly shown saw a number of nations destroyed. They were told, “Dread not, neither be afraid of them. The Lord your God which goeth before you, he shall fight for you, according to all that he did for you in Egypt before your eyes.” (Deuteronomy 1:29, 30). God, however, did not allow His own murmuring people to enter the land promised to Abraham and his seed. Only the obedient would go therein; God fought against the rest. (Deuteronomy 1:32-46). We live in a day when people do all sorts of wrong, yet are neatly “given” passage into heaven by preachers at their funerals. It appears that some who would disavow universalism espouse it when the sinful die. They try to get some in heaven whom the word of God says will not be saved. For example, one sinful man had a pain to run through his body on his death bed in a hospital. He cried, “O, Lord. That hurt.” At his funeral the preacher declared that he was saved because he called on the name of the Lord. When have you ever been to a funeral when the deceased was not given passage into heaven?

Beloved, NOT ONE, except Joshua and Caleb, who were twenty years old, and older, entered Canaan. (Numbers 32:11-12). All but two in this category died in the wilderness. Everyone is not going to heaven. Matthew 7:13, 14 point to the majority being lost. “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.” (Matthew 7:21-23; Revelation 22:14). As God’s mercy gave entrance into Canaan to those who obeyed Him, so will He mercifully save the obedient today.

Along the way to Canaan by the mercy of God Israel destroyed many who were rebellious. (Exodus-Joshua). Even after they entered the land that flowed with milk and honey (the fruitful land), God’s mercy continued aiding them in battles. (For example, Joshua and Judges).

Consider some of the battles Israel fought and won with God’s merciful help:

Amalek. (Exodus 17:9-16).

250 rebellious Israelites. (Numbers 16:1-35).

14,700 murmurers against Moses and Aaron. (Numbers 16:36-50).

King Arad the Canaanite and his people. (Numbers 21:1-3).

Sinful Israelites. (Numbers 21:4-9).

Idolatrous Israelites. (Numbers 25:1-5).

Nadab and Abihu, sons of Aaron. (Leviticus 10:1-3).

The Midianites. (Numbers 31:1ff).

Followers of Baalpeor. (Deuteronomy 4:1-3).

People who served other gods. (Deuteronomy 13:12-18).

God's mercy was not extended to a point, and then it stopped. The mercy of God continued throughout the history of Israel. It is spoken of frequently in the books of the first covenant.

God's mercy has not ceased. Those who honestly seek God and do His will are recipients of His mercy today. Some in New Testament times when the church was in preparatory stages, before the books of Matthew through Revelation were even written, knew of and asked for the Lord's mercy. For example, two blind men, cried, saying, "Son of David, have mercy on us." (Matthew 9:27-31). "A woman of Canaan...cried unto him, saying, Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil...Then came she and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me... Then Jesus...said...O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter was made whole from that very hour." (Matthew 15:21-28). Though mercy is not mentioned, it is seen in the verses that follow, verses 29ff.

God shows mercy. (Romans 9:16). His mercy is still alive, and He is rich in it. (Ephesians 2:4; 1 Peter 1:8). Even the most sinful, like Saul (Paul), may receive His mercy. (1 Timothy 1:13-15). It is by the Lord's mercy that one is saved today (Titus 3:5), when one obeys Him. (Mark 12:29; Romans 10:17; Acts 17:30, 31; Romans 10:9, 10; and Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:20, 21; Revelation 2:10; 1 Corinthians 15:58).

"O give thanks unto the Lord;..." (Psalm 136:1).

Chapter 7

THE LAND PROMISE FULFILLED

Many today are still looking for the land promise God made to Abram and his offspring to be fulfilled. However, Psalm 136:21, 22 shows that God's promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was fulfilled. Of Sihon and Og, the Psalmist said, "And gave their land for an heritage: for his mercy endureth for ever. Even an heritage unto Israel his servant: for his mercy endureth for ever." Take a moment to remember and reflect on the land promise God made to Abraham, and repeated to Isaac and Jacob. God said it would be "a land that I will shew thee." (Genesis 12:1). Do not miss the fact of (1) a physical land promise, and (2) a spiritual seed promise. (Genesis 12:1-3). Joshua 12 is a description of the physical land part of the promise God gave to Abraham. Chapters 13 and 14 continue to tell the people of the land they would be given, and how it would be divided. The spiritual promise came to pass in Acts 2; Galatians 3; etc.

In spite of the murmurings and failures of the children of Israel, the merciful God never failed. The faithful Israelites were able to go into the land of their promised inheritance. (Joshua 3). **Do not forget two things!** First, their inheritance was a **gift**. Joshua 1:2, "the land which I do give to them"; Verse 3, "given"; Verse 5, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee"; Verse 6, "give"; Verse 11, "God giveth"; Verse 13, "God hath given...given you"; Verse 15, "Given...giveth...gave"; 2:9, "Given"; Verse 14, "Given"; Verse 24, "Delivered"; etc. Second, Although God **gave** them the land, they had to **do** something, **work**, to get it. 1:2, "go over"; 3, "tread upon"; 5, "There shall not any man be able to stand before thee"; 6, "Be strong and of good courage"; Verse 7, "Observe...do"; 8, "Meditate therein day and night...observe...do"; Verse 11, "Possess"; Verse 14, "Pass before"; Verse 14, "armed...help them"; Verse 15, "possessed the land"; Verse 16, "do... go"; Verse 18, "hearken"; etc. The land was a gift, but they had to do something to get it. Joshua 12:1 says "Now these are the kings of the land, which the children of Israel smote, and possessed their land...." (Joshua 12:1-13:33). Do not miss the fact that God **gave** the children of Israel the land, **but** they had to **do** their part to obtain it. Some gasp at the idea of **gift** and **works** being used in the same sentence, but this is a Bible doctrine frequently seen. Two examples are the fiery serpent upon a pole (Numbers 21:4-9), and Naaman dipping in Jordan seven times (2 Kings 5:1-14) to be cleansed of his leprosy.

Faith and works are often placed together. In addition to the previous paragraph, Genesis 4 speaks of Abel offering a sacrifice to the Lord. Hebrews 11:4 says, “By faith Abel offered unto God....” Genesis 6-9 tell us of Noah building an ark. Hebrews 11:7 says, “By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house;...condemned the world, and became the heir of righteousness which is by faith.” **BUT NOT BY FAITH ONLY!** Cf. James 2:14, 26, 17, 20, 24, 22. Genesis 12:1-3 tells of Abram’s call. Hebrews 11:8-10 says, “By faith Abraham,...obeyed...went...sojourned...dwelling...looked.” Notice the words of action connected to the word faith in the rest of the chapter. The working of faith is as old as the word of God itself. It is no wonder that the Holy Spirit had Paul pen these words, “For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.” (Romans 15:4).

Similarly, salvation is a **gift of God**, to the spiritual seed of Abraham (Galatians 3), but one has to **do** what God has ordained to obtain it. (Ephesians 2:8-10). Do not forget to read verse 10, with verses 8 and 9. The New Testament ties faith, works, and salvation together. Although the blood of Christ saves sinners (Romans 5:9), Peter, inspired by the Spirit (Acts 2:4), told the sinful audience to “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...Save yourselves from this untoward generation.” (Verses 38, 40). “The saints in Christ Jesus...at Philippi” (Philippians 1:1) were told, “work out your own salvation with fear and trembling.” (Philippians 2:12). Since Jesus is the Savior, and no other (Acts 4:12), one who seeks salvation must go to Him to find out what He calls one to do to be saved. Jesus finished the work He came to do when He died on the cross, pouring out His blood. (John 19:30; Matthew 26:26-29). “The author of eternal salvation to all them that obey him” (Hebrews 5:9) calls upon each one who comes to Him to be saved (Matthew 11:28-30), to **hear** that “The Lord our God is one Lord.” (Mark 12:29). He then requires that the hearer **believe** that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, (John 8:24; Acts 8:37). The believer must then **repent** of any and all sins. (Luke 17:3, 5; Acts 17:30, 31). All who have repented of sin(s) must **confess** his/her faith, that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Matthew 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37). All believers who have repented and confessed the Deity of Jesus are commanded to be **baptized** (Acts 10:48) by burial in water (Romans 6:1-5; Colossians 2:12), to be saved (Mark 16:16) or wash away sins (Acts 22:16), to

enter Christ (Galatians 3:26, 27) and His church (1 Corinthians 12:13), being added to the church by the Lord. (Acts 2:41, 47).

All who have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine, the doctrine or gospel of Christ, are then, at that point, freed from sin, and become servants of righteousness, of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 6:17, 18; 1:16). Such persons are as newborn babes, desire`ng the sincere (Greek, ADOLOS, undeceitful, i.e. (fig.) unadulterated:--sincere” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, page 931) milk of the word. (1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18). Children of God are to grow to the level of being able to teach others. (Hebrews 5:11-14; 2 Timothy 2:2). Christians are to remain faithful unto death (Mark 13:13; Revelation 2:10), being “stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord.” (1 Corinthians 15:58).

As Israel entered into the land God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, due to His prevailing mercy, so will God’s faithful be able to enter into God’s everlasting kingdom when Jesus delivers it up to God the Father. (1 Corinthians 15:24; 2 Peter 1:11). Just as God was merciful and faithful to keep His word to those of old, so will He be merciful and faithful to keep His word to the spiritual seed of Abraham. (Titus 1:2).

Dearly beloved, be faithful. Do not be as some of the children of Israel, who were not allowed to enter the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, because of their unfaithfulness. (Numbers 14:29, 30; 1 Corinthians 10:1-13). “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil...Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand....” (Ephesians 6:10-18). Have strength enough to say under any and all temptations (Matthew 4:1; James 1:2), “Get thee hence, Satan.” (Matthew 4:10; Luke 4: 8).

Chapter 8

GOD REMEMBERS THE POOR

Psalm 136:23 speaks of the merciful God, saying, “Who remembered us in our low estate.” This is clearly a reference to Israel when they were in Egyptian bondage. All was well with them when the Pharaoh who knew Joseph was alive and ruling. (Genesis 41:37-45; 45:16-20; 47:1-4). “The children of Israel were fruitful and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceedingly mighty, and the land was filled with them.” (Exodus 1:7). The abundant mercy of God was with them. All was well. However, “there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph.” (Exodus 1:8). He was afraid of the children of Israel because of their numbers. (Exodus 1:9, 10). “He set over them taskmasters to afflict them with their burdens. And they built for Pharaoh treasure cities, Pithom and Raamses.” (Exodus 1:11). Imagine how fatigued they must have become physically and mentally doing all of this. However, the Israelites grew and multiplied. (Verse 12). This caused the Egyptians to grieve, and they “made the children of Israel to serve with rigour.” (Verse 13). “They made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field: all their service, wherein they made them serve, was with rigour.” (Verse 14). The Egyptians were cruel and punishing, bringing them low.

Pharaoh became so cruel that he commanded the Egyptian midwives to kill each newborn son. (Exodus 1:15-17). “The midwives feared God, and did not as the king of Egypt commanded them, but saved the men children alive.” (Exodus 1:17). This may be the one bright spot in Israel’s history at this point. The Pharaoh issued another edict to his people, telling them to cast every Israelite son in the river. (Exodus 1:22; Acts 7:19). In other words, drown all the male babies of the Israelites. Moses’ mother, Jochebed (Exodus 6:20), hid him three months, then she put him in the river, but in an ark (box) made of bulrushes (papyrus plant), daubed with slime and pitch (something like asphalt), and placed him in the flags by the river’s brink or edge. (Exodus 2:2, 3). Moses’ sister, Miriam (Numbers 26:59), was watching her baby brother, and she convinced Pharaoh’s daughter to let her bring a Hebrew woman to nurse Moses. (Verses 5-10). Thus, God in His great never-ending mercy saved Moses to save and deliver the children of Israel from their low estate, and to lead them to the land He had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and

Jacob. The nation of Israel would go through many other low points on their way to the land God had promised to give them.

Moses would enjoy many things in the Pharaoh's house before being threatened, and having to flee for his life from Egypt. Meanwhile, Israel would have to face adversity. (Exodus 2:23). They cried unto the Lord, and He heard them. He remembered (not that He had forgotten) the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Exodus 2:23-25). God's mercy had not become extinct. God sent Moses, accompanied by Aaron, to deliver Israel from their low estate. (Exodus 3). The cruel king of Egypt died (Exodus 2:23), but another Pharaoh just as evil arose. (Exodus 3ff).

Rather than allowing Israel to go worship God according to the specifications God had set forth, the king increased their burdens. (Exodus 5:4-23). The groanings of the children of Israel continued. (Exodus 6:5-7, 9). God brought plagues 1-10 upon Egypt, but spared the children of Israel, their land, plants, and animals. (Exodus 7-12). The new Pharaoh would rebel, but would eventually run Israel out of Egypt. Israel's low estate was due to their sin. Their lack of faith caused them to doubt Moses and God. (Exodus 14:5-12). However, God delivered Israel through the Red sea on dry ground. (Exodus 14:16, 21, 22). Pharaoh and his army pursued, but all drowned, including their horses. (Exodus 14:23-28; Psalm 136:15). Israel was finally free from Egypt, but because of sin, not one man twenty years old and upward would be able to enter Canaan, except Caleb and Joshua. (Numbers 14:27-33). Moses, because of his trespass, was not permitted to enter Canaan. (Deuteronomy 34:1-6; 32:51, 52). The low estate of Israel as they journeyed through the wilderness is well documented in Exodus thru Deuteronomy, and other Old Testament books, as well as New Testament books.

Israel had one low point after another in their history. However, God's mercy was never lacking. The period of the Judges is a great example of God's fluent and ceaseless mercy. The people would sin. God would punish them. They would cry out in repentance. God would forgive them, and He would raise up a deliverer (judge) to give them peace. This was repeated over and over. (Book of Judges). What mercy! God's mercy can be seen from the Garden of Eden (Genesis 3) through the book of Revelation. Perhaps the greatness of God's mercy is seen at the cross (John 3:16; 19:16-21), and the great resurrection. (Matthew 28:1-6; Romans 1:4).

God's mercy for those who rejected Jesus is seen in His dealing with those who repented. (Matthew through John). Consider those on the day of Pentecost who had crucified Jesus with their wicked hands. (Acts 2:23). They were envious of Him (Matthew 27:18), ignorant (Acts 3:17), lied about Him (Matthew 26:59-61), and so on, yet, He was willing to, and did, forgive the repentant who were baptized (Acts 2:38), adding them to His church. (Acts 2:41, 47). While on the cross, Jesus had even prayed that God's mercy would be extended to repentant sinners. (Matthew 26:12, 14, 15; Cf. Romans 5:6-9; Acts 2:38; Luke 17:3, 4).

Paul told Titus, "Not by works of righteousness, which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost...being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:5, 7). Cf. Ephesians 5:25-27; John 3:3-5; Acts 22:16. Mercy is to be shown with cheerfulness (Romans 12:8), which God does. (Luke 15:3-7; 8-10; 11-32). There is no end to God's mercy. One may see it from Eden (Genesis 3) to the present day (Hebrews 2:17; 8:12), and looking forward.

You may undergo low points here, but know that as the song says, "He Is Able to Deliver Thee" (Matthew 5:10-12; 2 Peter 2:9), and in the song, "Heaven Will Surely Be Worth It All." Compare anything you might have to give up here to the gains in heaven. The heavenly gains almost make it seem like an unfair trade. (Matthew 19:9).

God will not desert you here or hereafter. His mercy lasts. All you have to do to receive and enjoy it is turn to him in obedience. **Think Heaven! Live Heaven! Live in Heaven!**

Chapter 9

GOD IS THE REDEEMER

Psalm 136:24, in speaking of God, says, “And hath redeemed us from our enemies.” Again, the Psalmist attributes this to God’s never-ending mercy. The word redeemed in this passage is from the Hebrew word PARAQ, meaning, to break off or redeem, to buy back. Following Israel’s departure from Egypt, Moses and the children of Israel sang a song unto the Lord (Exodus 15), in which they praised God for gloriously triumphing (Verse 1), becoming their salvation (Verse 2), being a man of war, casting Pharaoh’s army in the sea (Verses 3-5), having a powerful hand (Verse 6), and more. Verse 16 speaks of God redeeming them.

Speaking of God, Moses and the children of Israel said they would “prepare him an habitation; my father’s God, and I will exalt him.” (Exodus 15:2). Verse 18 says, “The Lord shall reign for ever and ever.” They planned to serve God, but some did not. (Exodus 15:23, 24). They had good intentions, but it takes more than that; it takes commitment and faith to follow through.

Following the song of Moses and the children of Israel, “Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand; and all the women went out after her with timbrels and dances”, singing of how God “triumphed gloriously.” (Exodus 15:20, 21). Is it any wonder that worshippers today continue to sing of God’s redemptive powers? We sing of Jesus redeeming us on the cross? Such songs are frequently heard, being sung or read. For example, “I Will Sing of my Redeemer”; “Singing Redemption’s Song”; “The Great Redeemer”; and others. Job said, I know that my redeemer liveth,...” (Job 19:25).

Moses gave the law of God, the Ten Commandments, to Israel. (Deuteronomy 5). Other laws were also given to them. (Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy). These were laws other than the Ten Commandments. They were as binding as the Ten Commandments, and they reminded the Israelites of how God had redeemed them and loved them. (Deuteronomy 7:8). The 136th Psalm kept God’s mercy ever before them.

God’s mercy in redeeming Israel assures us of His power, faithfulness and mercy, and that He is able to redeem. Jesus “gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.” (Titus 2:14). The word peculiar is

from a Greek word, PERIOUSIOS, meaning, “special (one’s own),” and is translated, peculiar. (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, page 777). Cf. 1 Peter 2:9. Compare Exodus 19:5; Deuteronomy 14:2; Psalm 135:4. Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon, page 504, has, “that which is one’s own, belongs to one’s possession.” The ASV has, “...unto himself a peculiar people for his own possession.” That harmonizes with 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20, “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” It is also parallel to Acts 20:28, where Paul told the elders from Ephesus (Act 20:17), that “the church of God” was “purchased with his own blood.” The church is made up of Christians, and belongs to God. He owns Christians, the church.

The redeemed people of today are owned by the Lord, and are to serve Him. (Colossians 3:24). That means we are to think and do what He commands, which will see the Christian doing correctly. Strong’s Concordance, page 907, defines the word serve, DOULENO, thusly, “to be a slave to (lit. or fig., invol. or vol.)”, and translates the word, “be in bondage, (do) serve (-ice).” Read carefully, Romans 6:6-23. The saved will “come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing;...” (2 Corinthians 6:17). God’s promise to those who do this, is, “I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (Verses 17, 18). Christians are to separate themselves from evil people and things. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Colossians 3:1-11). They are God’s special people, having “put on” holy things. (Colossians 3:12-4:6). Being “The redeemed of the Lord” (Psalm 107:2) and having been bought with the blood of Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:20; 2 Peter 2:1), the saved are no longer to be servants of men. (1 Corinthians 7:20). The saved are now “servants of the most high God” (Acts 16:17), of Christ (1 Corinthians 7:22), doing the will of God from the heart (Ephesians 6:6), and of righteousness. (Romans 6:18). Titus 2:12 says, “denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world.” Faithful Christians will cease to commit the sins of Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; Revelation 21:8, and such like. Rather, they will seek to add the following to their lives: Galatians 5:22-26, the fruit of the Spirit; 2 Peter 1:5-7, the Christian graces; and more. All will know that they have been “washed...sanctified...justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.” (1 Corinthians 6:11). Genuine repentance will

find one with godly sorrow, being careful in living, clearing oneself...In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear....” (2 Corinthians 7:10, 11).

Have you been redeemed by the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world? John 1:29; 1 Peter 1:18, 19). Jesus is the only Lamb God uses for that purpose today. (Acts 4:12). God’s mercy is everlasting. As He used Moses to deliver Israel from Egyptian bondage, so will He deliver all in bondage to sin today by Jesus, the author of eternal salvation to all who obey him. (Hebrews 5:9). Have you heard the gospel (Romans 10:17), believed (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24), repented (Acts 17:30, 31; 2 Peter 3:9), confessed (Matthew 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37), and been baptized (Acts 10:48) by burial in water (Romans 6:1-4; Acts 8:38, 39), for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16) to enter Christ (Galatians 3:26, 27) and His church/kingdom (1 Corinthians 12:13; John 3:1-5, 23; Ephesians 1:22, 23) by addition. (Acts 2:41, 47). He calls the saved to a life of faithfulness. (Revelation 2:10). He calls on the saved to “sin not.” (1 John 2:1). However, God knows that Christians will not live without sin, so He provides a way of returning to faithfulness. (1 John 2:2; 1:7-10; James 5:16; Acts 8:22-24).

Beloved, Jesus wants to redeem you. Let Him do so today. Tomorrow may be too late. **Do NOT WAIT ANOTHER MINUTE!**

Chapter 10

GOD PROVIDES

Psalm 136:25, speaking of God, says, “Who giveth food to all flesh.” This was not a one-time event, then God quit providing for them. God’s mercy is forever, even to the unjust. Matthew 5:45 says, “He maketh the sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust.” Peter told Cornelius, his kinsmen and near friends, Gentiles (Acts 10:24; 10:45; 11:1), “Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation, he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him.” (Acts 10:34, 35). God provides for man’s every need, whether physical or spiritual. In spite of God’s merciful provisions, some refuse to accept God’s wondrous spiritual love. John 5:40 says, “And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.” “A man sent from God, whose name was John” (John 1:6), said, “He came unto his own, and his own received him not.” (John 1:11). Jesus said, “And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.” (John 3:19). Again, this was in spite of the love God and Jesus extended to all. (John 3:16; 15:13; Romans 5:8, 9).

Consider how the children of Israel had something to eat during the great world-wide famine of Joseph’s day. Joseph’s blood brothers sold him to the Ishmeelites, who sold him into Egyptian slavery. (Genesis 37:27-36). His blood brothers meant it for evil. Joseph looked at their evil deed as providence, saying, that “God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive...I will nourish you, and your little ones.” (Genesis 50:20, 21).

As a result of Joseph being sold into Egyptian slavery, he eventually became second in command over all of Egypt, second only to Pharaoh himself. (Genesis 41:40, 41). This position allowed him to feed many, including his family. (Genesis 42:1-5; 50:21). When sending his sons back to Egypt, and still unaware of who Joseph was, Jacob said, “And God Almighty give you mercy before the man,....” (Genesis 43:14). Later, Joseph, at Pharaoh’s command (Genesis 45:17-20), brought his family to Egypt, where they were given the land of Goshen, the best part of the land of Egypt. (Genesis 45:9, 10; 47:6, 11). They enjoyed the fat of the land. God again provided food for them by Joseph.

When the people cried out for food, God sent them manna, a light bread, in the morning (Exodus 16:8), and quail in the evening. (Exodus 16:13). This was done from the wilderness of Sin (Exodus 16:1, 4, 8, 13-15) until Israel entered Canaan, the day after they ate the old parched corn after the Passover. (Joshua 5:10-12). Israel never went hungry from the time they left Egypt. God always provided for them during their forty (40) years of journeying in the wilderness. As is often true, many do not appreciate what they have at the time they receive it. Many are like the nine lepers who were healed by Jesus. (Luke 17:11-19). Ten were healed, but only one returned to glorify God for being healed. Nine ingrates went on their way. Paul wrote, "Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ." (Ephesians 5:20). Some are like those in the story of the farmer who gave thanks for his food before he ate. A few mischievous boys who saw him give thanks before he ate in a restaurant. They thought they would embarrass him. They asked, "Say old fella, does everyone give thanks for their food before they eat where you live?" He paused a moment, and replied, "Nope, pigs don't." Israel is a prime example of some who did not take time to give thanks unto God for His provisions. A sad example of such is seen shortly after their deliverance from Egypt. The 136th Psalm and other chapters in the books of the Old Testament are great reminders of God's provisions, and that recipients should be grateful to God. Although Israel had seen that God provided for them, even in providing food and water, at times, they doubted His care for them.

As Israel was being led out of Egypt, they found themselves without water at Rephidim. (Exodus 17:1). Thirst is an awful thing. The people chided (argued) with Moses, tempting God, murmuring, and wondering if God had forsaken them. (Verses 2-7). God provided water by having Moses smite a rock in Horeb, with the rod with which he smote the Red sea. (Verses 5, 6). The place was called Massah and Meribah, because of Israel's chiding and temptations. (Verse 7).

David said, "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread?" (Psalm 37:25). How could David say this? Have not saved people ever been in need? Indeed, they have. However, read James 1:27 and Galatians 6:10. We are to take care of the needy, all of them, whether saint or sinner, but "especially unto them who are of the household of faith."

Other examples of God taking care of His people at other times is seen in the stories of the fowls, lilies, and grass. (Matthew 6:26-34). Jesus talked about these things for which He provides, assuring the saved, that if He cares for these things, He will surely care for them. The promise, “I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee” assures the saved that God is ever aware of them in all situations. He did not leave us without hope. (Titus 1:2; Luke 2:11). Neither will He leave us without sustaining food for our bodies. The great Sermon on the Mount, assures those who “seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.” (Matthew 6:33). The conclusion is so beautifully stated in verse 34, “Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” One who can work is not being told to sit around and wait for someone to feed them, but assurance is given that food is there for the worker and the needy.

Jesus taught His hearers to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread.” (Matthew 6:11). Does it stand to reason that Jesus would tell us to ask for something God would not do? That would be teaching one to ask foolishly, and in vain. Paul wrote, “Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” (Ephesians 4:28). Paul told “the church of the Thessalonians” (2 Thessalonians 1:1), to work to eat. (2 Thessalonians 3:8-10). The scriptures inform all as to how one should eat. The children of God should provide for themselves, their own, and others who may be in need. God has tied eating to working, unless one is hindered from working. Harvesting is tied to sowing. Isaiah speaks of sowing and having bread. (Isaiah 30:23). The parable of the sower joins sowing and harvesting. (Luke 8:5-8). 2 Corinthians 9:6, 7 speaks of sowing and reaping. Cf. also Galatians 6:8, 9. One today cannot expect to be fed with manna and quail as God fed Israel. Able people are to work.

The virtuous woman of Proverbs 31:10-31, did not eat the bread of idleness. (Proverbs 31:27). Of her it was said, “Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates.” (Proverbs 31:31). The writer has asked women to test themselves with this lady as their example, and then has asked, “Did you pass or fail?” God will feed all who are willing to work. He will also provide for any who are unable to labor.

God’s mercy has not ceased. For that, all should be more than grateful. Give thanks!

Chapter 11

THE GOD OF MIRACLES

The 136th Psalm reminds the reader of the great power of God, and is full of reminders of the miracles which He did at that time. The miracles of the entire word of God are ever before the diligent Bible student. There is a variation of beliefs concerning miracles. Some deny that there were miracles. Others believe that there were miracles, but have different ideas about them. For example, some believe that miracles continue to be done, and that they or others perform them. Others believe that there were miracles, but claim that they have ceased. Most believers in current miracles accuse those who believe that they have ceased of not believing in miracles. As is the case with any Bible subject, one should pursue the teaching of the word of God to determine what the truth is.

First, one who believes the scriptures has no doubt that the miracles recorded in God's word are one hundred per cent (100%) correct. That is not the issue! How can one come to know this fact? A study of Christian evidences proves the word of God, called the Bible, to be inspired of God. Apologetic Press has a number of masterful works along this line. The author has published a book, entitled, "There is a God in Heaven", which proves the Bible to be from God. The proven truth that the Bible is inspired of God necessitates the content of the scriptures being truth. A few examples in the author's book are Jeremiah 31:31-34 and Hebrews 8:6-13 (the new or second covenant replaced the old or first covenant); Isaiah 7:14 and Matthew 1:16-25 (the virgin birth); Joel 2:28-32 and Acts 2, especially verses 16-18 (the coming of the Holy Spirit in the last days); design and Designer; and many more.

Second, with the belief that the Bible is the verbal (word for word), inerrant (no errors), plenary (full, complete), inspired (God-breathed) word of the living God, one must conclude that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God,...." (2 Timothy 3:16, 17; 2 Peter 1:20, 21). This belief demands that every believer accepts every word therein, including the fact that the miracles therein were done.

Third, miracles were performed under the first and second laws, the law of Moses and the law of Christ, and even during the previous dispensation, the Patriarchal dispensation, prior to the giving of the law of Moses at Mount Sinai. (Exodus 20). For example, before the giving of the

law at Mount Sinai: There were the miracles of creation (Genesis 1; 2), length of life (Genesis 5, 969 years, and less; 11:10-26, 600 years, and less vs Psalm 90:10, 70-80 years), the waters of the flood (Genesis 6-9, especially 7:11, 12), the plagues (Exodus 7-12), the parting of the Red sea (Exodus 14:19-31), and more. Israel saw many miracles during the wilderness wanderings.

Fourth, the book of Matthew describes the miraculous birth of Jesus. (Matthew 1:18-25; Isaiah 7:14). Matthew describes “Jesus...healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people.” (Matthew 4:23, 24). Jesus was neither selective, nor did He fail to completely heal immediately. Matthew 8:1-4 is a picture of Jesus healing a leper immediately. A centurion’s grievously tormented servant, sick of the palsy (a paralytic), was “healed” by Jesus “the selfsame hour”, without Jesus even going to the centurion’s house. (Matthew 8:5-13). Peter’s mother was healed of a fever. (Matthew 8:14, 15). Many possessed of devils, and all sick who were brought to Jesus were healed by Him. (Matthew 8:16, 17). Even the winds were obedient to Jesus. (Matthew 8:23-27). None who have read of God parting the waters of the Red sea with “the blast of his nostrils”, using “a strong east wind all that night” (Genesis 15:8; 14:21), should have a problem believing the miracles of the New Testament. A miracle is seen in the healing of the two possessed with devils. (Matthew 8:28-34). More could be cited. However, the mercy of God and His miracles shines through in these, and more, miraculous events.

Fifth, the miracles of God were performed for a reason. They were not done to give those afflicted perpetual life. They are all dead. Why then were miracles performed? John 20:30, 31, tell us, “And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.” The purpose of miracles was to produce faith. The writer has read the miracles, and believes. He does not have to see a miracle performed. His “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” (Romans 10:17). A second reason for the miracles was to confirm the word of God preached to others. (Mark 16:17-20). Hebrews 2:1-4 says God did what He did, and bore them witness with “signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost,...” Cf. 1 Corinthians 12:1-11.

Sixth, while God’s mercy does not stop, certain things He has used and done does change. For example, “God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2:7). That was a one-time thing. You did not get

here that way. Neither did any other wife get here like Eve. (Genesis 2:21, 22). Naaman was healed of leprosy by dipping in the Jordan River seven times. (2 Kings 5:1-14). One with leprosy today could dip in the Jordan River seven or seventy times and never be healed. Read Luke 17:11-19 to see that these ten lepers were not healed as Naaman was. Further, since the priesthood has been changed, one could not go to one of the sons of Levi. (Hebrews 7). Jesus selected twelve apostles (Matthew 10:1ff), then seventy (Luke 10:1ff). We do not read of Jesus continuing this. Likewise, God used the gifts of the Spirit for a specific time and reason. Consider that (1) the gifts of the Spirit were in part (1 Corinthians 12:1-11); (2) the gifts of the Spirit given in part would be done away (1 Corinthians 13:8-10); (3) The gifts of the Spirit given in part to be done away, would be done away when the perfect came (1 Corinthians 13:10), (4) the perfect has come (James 1:25); (5) Therefore, the part (gifts of the Spirit) has been done away. One today must go to the word of God to develop faith. (Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."). One's faith today comes by hearing what God has said in His word. (John 20:30, 31). Things written, not miracles performed, produce faith today. (Romans 10:17). The purpose of the gifts of the Spirit was to confirm the things being taught, and to bring the church to adulthood. (Ephesians 4:1-16). That was achieved in the first century. One who will not believe the miracles of the word would not believe a miracle if it were performed before him/her. Cf. Luke 16:27-31.

Challenges to anyone who believes in the working of miracles today. Challenge 1—Matthew 10:8 says, "Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils: freely ye have received, freely give." One who claims to be able to miraculously heal the sick should also be able to raise the dead. Meet the writer at the cemetery of your choice. Pick the grave of your choice, and call on the dead to arise. The author will tell the deceased to remain there. Let all see what happens. If one could heal the sick as per this verse, one could also raise the dead, If not, why not? Too, if one could do this, but does not, that one is allowing people to die lost.

Challenge 2—Empty your buildings of the sick, cripple, and such like, and remove wheelchair ramps. Heal those dying of Covid-19. End the pandemic.

Challenge 3—Miraculously heal "all" (Matthew 4:24; 8:16), "whole" (Matthew 9:22), "immediately" (Matthew 8:3), to "produce faith" (John 20:30, 31), and "confirm" the word. (Hebrews 2:1-4).

Those who claim to miraculously heal people today, but who do not do so, are allowing them to die lost in sin, the result of which “is death.” (Romans 6:23). Those who cannot do what they claim to be able to do are playing a tragic game with the souls of others.

While miracles were given for a specific time and purpose, the fact that no miracles are being performed, does not mean that God’s mercy and power has ceased. The God of miracles used them to do His will. However, the God of miracles continues to save those who obey Him. (Hebrews 5:9).

EXTRA FOOD FOR THOUGHT-----

Years ago, the writer heard a popular radio and TV evangelist proclaim that everything he was saying was the Holy Ghost speaking through him, that he was not responsible for the words he was using. He came to the end of his program and said something like this: Well, I, I, I just don’t know how to end this program. The writer remembers thinking, Dumb Spirit leadeth _____.

He has recently heard the same man who still claims to speak as the Spirit gives him utterance ask panel members to remind him of things, and have trouble remembering events, days, times, and such like. Has the Holy Spirit become senile? Did any of those in the first century who were actually moved by the Holy Spirit to speak have trouble remembering things?????

Beloved, imitating the noble Bereans would allow many to see that some people are led by some spirit, but it is certainly not the Holy Spirit.

Chapter 12

THE HARDENING OF PHARAOH'S HEART

God told Moses that He would harden Pharaoh's heart, "I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go." (Exodus 4:21). Exodus 7:13 says, "And he hardened Pharaoh's heart." From the two foregoing passages some have concluded, that God determines what one will do, without the person having any choice in the matter, that God decided before the foundation of the world that Pharaoh would be disobedient in hardening his heart, and that Pharaoh is an example of God electing, predestinating, foreordaining, and irreversibly choosing one's actions. Is this doctrine true? Did God determine before creation what each person would do, and that nothing God decided could be changed? What does God say in His word?

First, take a look at the Pharaoh reigning when Joseph was sold into Egypt. The Egyptians knew about God. Joseph was sold to the Ishmeelites (Genesis 37:28), who sold him into Egypt. (Genesis 37:36). Joseph served in the house of Potiphar, and he introduced he and his wife to God. (Genesis 37:36). Potiphar "saw that the Lord was with him, and that the Lord made all that he did to prosper in his hand." (Genesis 39:3). "The Lord blessed the Egyptians house for Joseph's sake." (Genesis 39:5). Joseph's statement to Potiphar's wife was another opportunity for her to learn about God, "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Genesis 39:9).

The keeper of the prison and the prisoner's knew about God as a result of Joseph. He was in prison. (Genesis 39:21, 22). "The Lord was with Joseph...and that which he did, the Lord made it to prosper." (Genesis 39:21-23). Question: Does my life introduce others to God?

The butler and baker were introduced to God through their contact with Joseph. They were in prison, and under Joseph. (Genesis 40:1-4). Joseph revealed God to them, asking, "Do not interpretations belong to God?" (Genesis 40:8). Question: Do I introduce others to God?

Pharaoh knew about God because of Joseph being in Egypt. Joseph told Pharaoh, "God shall give Pharaoh an answer of peace." (Genesis 41:16). He also told Pharaoh, "God hath shewed Pharaoh what he is about to do." (Genesis 41:25, 17-24). As Joseph describes what God is about to do he teaches Pharaoh about God. Notice two of his statements: "What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh" (Genesis 41:28), and, "The thing is established by God, and God will

shortly bring it to pass.” (Genesis 41:32). Do not miss Pharaoh’s comment, showing his belief in what Joseph has said, “And Pharaoh said unto his servants, Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?” (Genesis 41:32). The king also said, “God hath shewed thee all this.” (Genesis 41:39). Pharaoh placed Joseph over all his house and Egypt, and he paraded him before Egypt to show his power. This strongly implies that God was revealed to the nation. Only the Pharaoh was above Joseph in Egypt. (Genesis 41:40-45). The Lord blessed Joseph in all he did. The more Joseph did the greater God was seen to be. Question: Does my life glorify God?

Joseph’s wife and children knew about God. His first son’s name was Manasseh, meaning, “For God hath made me forget all my toil, and all my father’s house.” His second son’s name was Ephraim, meaning, “For God hath caused me to be fruitful in the land of my affliction.” (Genesis 41:52). Moses’ father-in-law, Potipherah, priest of On, knew about God through his grandchildren. He could not even utter either of their names without using the name of God. Thus, God was introduced to the religious leaders. Question: Have I ruled religious leaders out?

The midwives of Egypt knew about God, and they “feared God.” (Exodus 1:17, 21). “God dealt well with the midwives.” (Exodus 1:20). These, and others mentioned, recognized God, saw what and who He was, and did not stand in Israel’s way of worshipping Him. Question: Do I help or hinder others?

Second, look at the second Pharaoh of Egypt and his rejection of God. The new Pharaoh knew about God. He had years of history before him. (Genesis 37-50). His personal years of history with Moses should have taught him much. He had many opportunities to learn about the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Exodus 1; 2). Examples of the king’s opportunities to learn about God are seen in a number of events. For example, the growth of the nation of Israel (Exodus 1:7) would have seen a growth in worship, of which he should have been aware. “Up out of the land” (Exodus 1:10), could suggest his knowledge of the promise God made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. (Genesis 12:1-3). The action (or lack of) of the Egyptian midwives who feared God should have told this king something about God. (Exodus 1:17, 21). Moses’ choice to help the Israelites certainly should have taught Pharaoh something. However, the king died in rebellion against God. Thus we see a rebellious nation, rejecting God under the leadership of her king. Question: Does what I do aid others to follow God, or reject Him?

Third, the third Pharaoh led Egypt to reject God. This Pharaoh learned the hard way about the God of heaven. He was surely not ignorant of Israelite history, with the famine being foremost. (Exodus 37-Exodus 2). His dealings with Moses, Aaron and the children of Israel certainly made him aware of Israel's God. (Exodus 3-14). We know he heard of God, because Moses went before him at God's command, saying, "The Lord God of the Hebrews hath met with us: and now let us go, we beseech thee, three days' journey into the wilderness, that we may sacrifice to the Lord our God." (Exodus 3:18). He saw the miracles of Moses and Aaron (Exodus 7:10), which should have made him a believer in God. Cf. John 20:30, 31. The miraculous plagues, ten in number, were abundantly clear. However, we see a rebellious king leading Egypt to defy God. Notice Pharaoh's rebellious mind set. God foresaw, but did not predestinate, the future, saying, "And I am sure that the king of Egypt will not let you go, not by a mighty hand." (Exodus 3:19). Pharaoh then asks, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" (Exodus 5:2). He then says, "I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go." He did know God, but he was stubborn and rebellious. (Ibid). Rather than letting Israel go, Pharaoh commanded that their burdens be increased. (Exodus 5:4-14).

Fourth, Pharaoh's rebellion against God brought judgment against him and his people. This has always been the case. For example, remember Adam and Eve (Genesis 3), the people of Noah's day (Genesis 6-9), the tower of Babel (Genesis 11), and more. Pharaoh's heart is hardened because of his rebellion. It was not until God saw his rebellious mindset that He said, "Now shalt thou see what I will do to Pharaoh:...." (Exodus 6:1). God added, "And I will harden Pharaoh's heart,...." (Exodus 7:3). God did not do any of this until He saw that Pharaoh was evil, rebelling against Him. Later, we also read of the king being deceitful. (Exodus 8:32).

Fifth, consider other matters. "Let my people go" (Exodus 5:1; 7:16; 8:2) demands that it was in Pharaoh's power to let Israel go. Otherwise, the plea is unjust and foolish. God does not want anyone to be lost. (2 Peter 3:9). God did not prior to creation determine that certain ones would be allowed, even forced to do His will, and be saved in heaven, while others could not obey His will and be saved in heaven. Were this true the words of 2 Peter 3:9 would never have been written. 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12 shows that God sends strong delusions to those who receive not a love for His truth, **after** their rejection of truth, **never before**. The delusions of Isaiah 66:3, 4, came to those who have turned from Him, **after, and as a result of** their turning

away, **not before**. Verse 3 says, “Yea, they have chosen their own ways, and their soul delighteth in their abominations.” God did not choose their delusions before the foundation of the world. They refused to answer God’s call, hear when He spoke and chose that in which God did not delight. **THEN**, not prior to creation, God sent delusions. (Verses 3, 4). If God had made these decisions regarding what they could and could not do prior to creation, they did what they did in obedience to God, and could not have done to the contrary. Thus, they would be saved.

Beloved God loved, and still does, the whole world, and sent His only begotten Son into the world to willingly shed His precious blood for the remission of the sins of every person. (John 3:16; 2 Peter 3:9). If you die lost, as did the rebellious Pharaoh, it will be due to your own rejection of a loving God’s longsuffering and generous gift of love for you. (Romans 5:1-9). If you die with a rebellious delusional heart it will be your own fault. (Romans 14:12; John 5:28, 29). Do not be like the Pharaohs whose heart were hardened because of their rejection of God.

Actually, if Calvinism were correct, it would be incorrect. It would teach Universalism, that all will be saved no matter what they do. (Matthew 7:13, 14). Calvin taught, as do many today, that God before the foundation of the world decided whom He would allow to obey Him, and be saved in heaven, and whom He would disallow to obey Him, and be lost in hell. Either way you look at this, all would be saved in heaven. Jesus is “the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him.” (Hebrews 5:9). Thus, those who do His will would be saved. (Matthew 7:21). Those who obediently do His will not to obey His will would also be saved due to their obedience of His will not to obey Him. If not, why not??? Some denominational preachers have learned and now preach the truth on this matter. Recently, one such preacher said if Calvin’s doctrine were right, murderers, thieves, and other sinners, could not be arrested, charged, and imprisoned. He then gave an astonished look to his audience. Sadly, he gravely taught many other religious errors, but he understood that teaching of the word of God.

Friend, Jesus will save anyone who obeys Him, including murderers (Acts 2), sorcerers (Acts 8), etc. Jesus calls all, “Come unto me....” (Matthew 11:28-30; Revelation 3:20; 22:17). Now, read Romans 10:17 (Hear/Believe); Acts 17:30, 31 (Repent); Romans 10:9, 10 (Confess); and Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38; 22:16 (Be baptized).

Saved ones are to remain faithful, laboring in the Lord’s work. (Revelation 2:10; Mark 13:13; 1 Corinthians 15:58; Titus 3:1).

Chapter 13

THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

Not one verse in the twenty-six (26) verses of the 136th Psalm, or in any of the other verses of the entire word of God would mean anything if Jesus had not been raised from the dead. He would have been equal to, but certainly no better than any other person who was entombed. However, glory to the merciful God of heaven and earth, the crucified Jesus who was buried, was “raised” from the dead on the “third day” after His burial (Matthew 12:40), “upon the first day of the week.” (Luke 24:1). Consider the information supplied in the remainder of chapter 13.

First, Jesus was crucified as He prophesied. “And Jesus going up to Jerusalem took the twelve disciples apart in the way,....” (Matthew 20:17). He told the twelve apostles, “Behold, we go up to Jerusalem; and the Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him unto death...and to crucify him.” (Verse 18). Verse 19 says they “shall deliver him to the Gentiles to mock, and to scourge, and to crucify him:....” This they did. (Matthew 27:20, 22, 23, 26, 31, 35). Pilate “washed”!?! his hands of the matter, and he delivered Jesus to the frenzied mob to crucify Him. (Matthew 27:24-26). While on the cross, Jesus uttered eight (8) statements: First, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani.” “That is to say, My God my God, why hast thou forsaken me?” (Matthew 27:46); Second, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” (Luke 23:34). Third, “Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.” That was a statement, not a question, as some teach. (Luke 23:43). Fourth, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit:” (Luke 23:46). Fifth, “Woman, behold thy son!” (John 19:26). Sixth, “Behold, thy mother.” (John 19:27). Seventh, “I thirst.” (John 19:28). Eighth, “It is finished.” (John 19:30). “He bowed his head, and gave up the ghost. (John 19:30). As James would say, “For as the body without the spirit is dead,....” (2:26). Jesus died according to prophecy. (Isaiah 53:8-10; Romans 5:6-10).

Second, Jesus was buried in the new tomb of Joseph of Arimathaea, a disciple of Jesus. (Matthew 27:57-60). Nothing fishy or suspicious took place, because “the chief priests and Pharisees came together unto Pilate” reminding him that Jesus had prophesied that He would rise from the dead after three days. (Matthew 27:62, 63). They asked Pilate to “command therefore that

the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead:....” (Matthew 27:62-66).

Third, HOWEVER!!! In spite of all that had been done, “Upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning” (Luke 24:1), “when it was yet dark” (John 20:1), came Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, and those with them, bringing spices to anoint the body of Jesus. (Luke 24:1). They found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre, “and they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.” (Luke 24:2, 3). The stone had been removed by an earthquake, and an angel of the Lord from heaven, who sat upon it. (Matthew 28:2). Some deny the resurrection, saying that Jesus did not actually die, that He only fainted, revived, and rolled the stone away (Swoon theory). Really??? That would have been a miracle itself, considering the weight and placement of the stone. Others say the disciples stole the body. Does any rational person believe the guards who were charged with their lives of making sure the body remained in the tomb would have allowed this? Some have said the soldiers removed the body to play a trick on the followers of Jesus. How foolish! If this happened, why did they not say something equivalent to, “April fool”, and produce the body? Also, would they have put their lives in jeopardy? The only rational answer to the empty tomb is Matthew 28:1-6. Cf. Romans 14:9; 2 Corinthians 5:15.

Fourth, Jesus was “declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead.” (Romans 1:4). The resurrection proves Jesus’ Deity beyond any doubt. Speaking of Jesus, Acts 1:3, says, “To whom he shewed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of them forty days, and speaking of things pertaining to the kingdom of God.” Proof of the resurrection is the fact that He was seen by so many for so long. Count those mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:5-8. He was seen of Cephas (Peter), the twelve, above five hundred brethren **at once**, James, the apostles again, and lastly, by Paul. Hundreds! Possibly over one thousand. Count those who saw Jesus as recorded in Matthew 28, Mark 16, Luke 24, and John 20, 21. How many does John 20:30, 31 include? How many saw Jesus more than once after the resurrection? (John 20:19-25; 24:26-31). The evidence of Jesus’ resurrection from the dead is abundantly clear, and beyond any and all reasonable question.

The merciful miracles of Jesus, including His glorious resurrection are great in function and number. They were written to produce faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of the living God, and to lead all readers to heaven. (John 20:30, 31; Acts 8:37).

Some in the day of the Christ denied the resurrection, saying, “There is no resurrection.” (Matthew 22:23; Acts 23:8). They were the Sadducees, and they were sad you see (Saducees). There are many today who deny the reality of Jesus, and they obviously deny that He was raised from the dead. However, Christians believe the abundant evidence set forth.

Paul told “the church of God” (1 Corinthians 1:1, 2), “If Christ be not raised, your faith is in vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” (1 Corinthians 15:17, 18). If Christ has not been raised from the dead, and we have hope only in this life, we are of all men most miserable. (Verse 19). The “sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints” (1 Corinthians 1:2), have hope of being raised from the grave (John 5:29, 29) because Jesus was raised. (1 Corinthians 15:20). Martha believed in the “resurrection at the last day.” (John 11:24). Peter quoted the Psalmist, who prophesied the resurrection of Christ. (Acts 2:31; Psalm 16:10). Peter and John believed in the resurrection of Jesus, and were willing to be imprisoned and threatened for preaching the good news. (Acts 3:1; 4:8, 19). None of their persecutions stopped them from preaching Jesus and the resurrection. (Acts 4:19, 28, 31; 5:18, 28, 29). At Athens, Paul was accused of being a babbler and gossip for preaching the resurrection, but he persisted in declaring the gospel of hope. (Acts 17:16-34). Later, Paul stood before the Jewish council, which included Ananias the high priest, the Sadducees and Pharisees, declaring the resurrection, and telling them that he was called into question for his faith in the resurrection. (Acts 23:1-6). Paul told Governor Felix (Acts 24:1, 3, 10ff), among other things, of the resurrection of the just and unjust. (Verse 15). Cf. Acts 24:21; Philippians 3:10, 11. Paul, speaking before Agrippa, asked, “Why should it be thought a thing incredible with you, that God should raise the dead?” (Acts 26:8). Cornelius was informed that “God raised up” Jesus “the third day, and shewed him openly.” (Acts 10:40, 41).

Beloved, “If we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” (1 Thessalonians 4:14). Many “so-called saviors” (Mohammed, Bahai, Confucious, and all others) remain in their tombs this day, and will continue to do so until the Lord comes back (1 Thessalonians 4:14-18) to open the graves of the good and evil. (John 5:28, 29). Jesus was raised from the dead, and is now in heaven preparing a mansion for the saved. (John 14:1-6). The “self-proclaimed saviors” have shown that they are nothing more than mortals by continuing to lie silently in their graves. However, Jesus was declared to be God’s only begotten

Son by His resurrection from the dead, and His present work in heaven. (John 3:16; Romans 1:4; John 14:1-6).

You will one day stand before “God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom” (2 Timothy 4:1) to “give an account...to God.” (Romans 14:12). Make sure that you are “now ready to be offered”, that you have “fought a good fight...have finished” your “course”, and “have kept the faith”, so that you may have and enjoy “the crown of righteousness laid up for” you. (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

The marker on a headstone in a cemetery is reported to have read read something like this:

**Reader beware
as you pass by.
As you are now,
So once was I.
As I am now,
So will you be.
Therefore prepare
to follow me.**

It was also said that someone wrote on the headstone:

**To follow you
I'm not content,
Until I know
where you went.**

Dear reader and/or student of God's word, “Study to shew thyself approved unto” this merciful “God, a workmen that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” (2 Timothy 2:15; Psalm 136). Do His will. (Matthew 7:21; Revelation 14:13; 22:17). **Be victorious!!!**

God and His beloved Son are so merciful. Obey God, and give thanks.

QUESTIONS (Chapter 1-13)

Chapter 1---His Mercy For Ever

1. The enduring _____ of God is in every verse in Psalm 136.
2. What does Selah seem to mean?
3. Unto whom should we give thanks?
4. T or F (Circle One) Jesus never gave thanks because He was God.
5. For whom did Paul give thanks?
6. T or F (Circle One) Paul quit praying when he realized that he would die.
7. T or F (Circle One) God is good.
8. Name some who were recipients of God's goodness.
9. What leads to repentance?
10. T or F (Circle One) God will never act with severity.
11. T or F (Circle One) God is God of gods.
12. T or F (Circle one). God's people have never mocked or murmured.
13. Tell how Elijah proved that God is God.
14. T or F (Circle One) Jesus is only one lord among many lords.
15. To whom is God's mercy extended?

Chapter 2---The God of Great Wonders

1. Who alone does great wonders?
2. T or F (Circle One) There are many as powerful as God.
3. Briefly discuss the difference between creation and evolution.
4. What lights were created, and on what day?
5. T or F (Circle One) God built all things out of existing items.
6. T or F (Circle One) Things evolve from one kind to a different kind.
7. T or F (Circle One) Air and water creatures have always existed.
8. T or F (Circle One) Adam and Eve evolved from lower forms.
9. How many legs do the following have: Humans? ____ Dogs? ____ Birds? ____ Fish? ____
10. Why did God have Noah build an ark?
11. T or F (Circle One) Noah could build the ark any way he chose.
12. What does the Hebrew and Greek words for "ark" mean?
13. From where did the water come to float the ark?
14. How many humans were saved in the ark, and why?
15. T or F (Circle one) Psalm 136 shows that God is merciful.

Chapter 3---The Deliverance of Israel

1. T or F (Circle One) Joseph's brothers loved and protected him.
2. How were Joseph and his family reunited?
3. Discuss how the story of Joseph shows providential care.
4. T or F (Circle One) All of the Pharaohs knew and loved Joseph.
5. T or F (Circle One) All of the Pharaohs protected Jewish baby boys.
6. How many years was Joseph in Midian?
7. How did Pharaoh react to the request to let Israel go worship God?
8. T or F (Circle One) Israel gladly compromised with Pharaoh.
9. Who was given to Moses for his spokesperson?
10. What promise did God remember, and had he forgotten it?
11. Tell what Aaron did with his rod, what it did, and how Pharaoh reacted.
12. Name and discuss the ten plagues, and tell how Pharaoh responded.
13. What was established to remind future Israelites of God delivering them from Egypt?
14. T or F (Circle One) The arrogant Pharaoh never humbled himself.
15. T or F (Circle One) Israel unjustly borrowed things from the Egyptians.

Chapter 4---Dividing The Red Sea

1. God's power is shown in dividing what?
2. How do we know Israel went through the Red sea on dry land?
3. What does the word "wall" suggest?
4. How were the waters of the Red sea divided?
5. Who was drowned in the Red sea, how and why?
6. T or F (Circle One) Pharaoh never fought God.
7. How do we know Egypt was affluent?
8. How did anyone know God was with Joseph.
9. How powerful did Joseph become, and where?
10. What did Joseph tell Pharaoh to do to survive the famine, and where did He get his information?
11. What did Pharaoh's servants plead with him to do, and what did they ask?
12. What did Moses say in his song?
13. What did Miriam and others do following the crossing of the Red sea?
14. What promise would be fulfilled?
15. T or F (Circle One) The New Testament does not mention Israel crossing the Red sea.

Chapter 5----God's Victorious Leadership

1. What did Israel experience?
2. Why did Israel not enter into Canaan two years after they left Egypt?
3. How are all not to walk today, and how are all to walk?
4. T or F (Circle One) God left Israel defenseless to fend for themselves.
5. T or F (Circle One) Israel followed God in full faith without murmuring.
6. How did God lead Israel by day? By night?
7. What was Israel's complaint?
8. With what did God feed Israel?
9. T or F (Circle One) God approves of us changing His law to our day and desires.
10. How many years did Israel eat manna, and from where to where?
11. T or F (Circle One) Every person who left Egypt entered Canaan.
12. T or F (Circle One) Israel never looked back to Egypt after leaving.
13. T or F (Circle One) Both Moses and Aaron entered Canaan.
14. Whom did God choose to lead Israel after Moses died, and why?
15. Why were things written aforetime?

Chapter 6---God Deals With Enemies

1. Name some kings whom God smote.
2. Who were Sihon and Og, and why did God smite them?
3. To whom were the lands of Sihon and Og given, and who were the recipients?
4. How did God deal with rebellious people on their way from Egypt to Canaan?
5. Why was Israel told not to dread or fear anyone?
6. T or F (Circle One) All, especially chosen saved ones, will go to heaven whatever they do.
7. Name the two who were twenty years old or older when they left Egypt who entered Canaan.
8. T or F (Circle One) God never destroyed any of the children of Israel.
9. Name some non-Israelites whom God aided Israel to destroy.
10. T or F (Circle One) God's mercy only goes up to a point.
11. What did two blind men say to Jesus?
12. What did a Canaanite woman say to Jesus?
13. What did Jesus say in answer to the woman of Canaan?
14. T or F (Circle One) God is rich in mercy.
15. T or F (Circle One) God's mercy plays no part in one's salvation.

Chapter 7---The Land Promise Fulfilled

1. Show how God's land promise to Abraham's seed was fulfilled.
2. How does one know the land promise was a gift?
3. How does one know the gift of the land promise required works to inherit it?
4. What are some lessons of the fiery serpent and Jordan River to be learned?
5. Show how Hebrews 11 teaches the need to believe and work to receive promises.
6. Using scripture, how that salvation is not by faith only.
7. T or F (Circle One) According to Ephesians 2:8-10, one is saved by grace through faith when one walks in the good works God has ordained. GRACE→FAITH→WORKS OF GOD→SALVATION
8. T or F (Circle One) Romans 5:9 says one is saved by the blood of Christ alone.
9. According to Philippians 2:12, what were the Philippian saints to do.
10. Give the plan of salvation.
11. T or F (Circle One) The church must vote people into it.
12. People who obey the gospel become _____ from _____, and become _____ babes.
13. T or F (Circle One) Saved people may continue to live as they were prior to salvation.
14. What was said of an everlasting kingdom?
15. What should one put on who has been saved?

Chapter 8---God Remembers The Poor

1. T or F (Circle One) God does not remember anyone who is in a lower state.
2. Show from the new Pharaoh that not everyone will like us.
3. What did the new Pharaoh demand that the Egyptian midwives do?
4. Name Moses' mother, and tell what she did.
5. Name Moses' sister, and tell what she did.
6. T or F (Circle One) Moses was never accepted in Egypt.
7. What did God remember, and had He forgotten it?
8. T or F (Circle One) The Pharaoh who succeeded the deceased one was good.
9. T or F (Circle One) The new Pharaoh let Israel go to worship God.
10. What Old Testament books document in detail Israel's freedom from Egyptian bondage?
11. T or F (Circle One) Israel was sinless during the period of the Judges.
12. Where and when does God's mercy seem greatest?
13. Describe the wicked people who crucified Jesus.
14. Discuss justification in light of Titus 3:5.
15. Name some songs that we sing to show God's mercy, and our belief in that mercy.

Chapter 9---God Is The Redeemer

1. T or F (Circle One) God has never redeemed anyone from their enemies
2. What does “redeemer” mean?
3. What did Moses and the children of Israel say they would do?
4. What did the children of Israel plan to do, and did they?
5. Name some songs of redemption that we sing.
6. Who gave Israel God’s law, what was it called, and where is it found?
7. Why did Jesus give himself for us?
8. Does “peculiar” mean fanatics; if not, what does it mean?
9. How do we know that God owns Christians?
10. T or F (Circle One) Christians are servants of the Lord.
11. T or F (Circle One) Christians may bid God speed to sinners and continue to live in sin.
12. What will all know about genuine Christians?
13. What will one know about one who has genuinely repented?
14. What must one do to be redeemed?
15. What does God provide, and why?

Chapter 10---God Provides

1. T or F (Circle One) God does not provide physical food for anyone.
2. T or F (Circle One) Unjust people cannot expect anything from the Lord.
3. T or F (Circle One) Gentiles cannot be saved.
4. How does Joseph being sold into slavery suggest providential care?
5. T or F (Circle One) Israel enjoyed the fat of the land (Goshen in Egypt).
6. T or F (Circle One) God turned a deaf ear to Israel’s cry for food.
7. How long did Israel eat manna?
8. What is learned from nine lepers?
9. T or F (Circle One) One should give thanks unto God for all things.
10. What happened at Massah and +Meribah?
11. What did David say about the righteous?
12. What is taught in Matthew 6 about God providing?
13. For what did Jesus teach His disciples to pray concerning bread?
14. What are Christians taught not to do, and what do?
15. What do we learn from the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31?

Chapter 11----The God of Miracles

1. How do different people feel about miracles?
2. What does one who believes the Bible is God-inspired, believe about the reality of miracles?
3. Give some examples of the inspiration of the Bible.
4. Define the following words: Verbal; Inerrant; Plenary; and Inspired.
5. Does the New Testament show that miracles were performed? If so, where?
6. Name some miracles of the Old Testament.
7. Tell of the birth of Jesus.
8. Using the book of Matthew, name some whom Jesus healed.
9. Give one reason miracles were performed.
10. Give a second reason for miracles.
11. Show how God has not always done things the same way.
12. Show how long the miraculous was to last.
13. T or F (Circle One) All scripture is given by inspiration of God.
14. What produces faith today?
15. What challenges does the author set forth, and are they valid?

Chapter 12---The Hardening of Pharaoh's Heart

1. What do some believe is taught by the hardening of Pharaoh's heart?
2. What did Potiphar see about God and Joseph?
3. What did the keeper of the prison, and the butler and the baker see about God and Joseph?
4. How did a Pharaoh come to know about God, and what did he say?
5. Who was paraded before Egypt, by whom, and why?
6. Name the children of Joseph, and define their names.
7. Who was Potipherah, what did he know, and what was he unable to do?
8. Whom did the midwives of Egypt fear, and how did God deal with them?
9. T or F (Circle One) The second and third Pharaohs were devout believers in God.
10. What did God say about the third Pharaoh of Egypt?
11. What did the third Pharaoh of Egypt say about God?
12. What did rebellion move God to do?
13. To whom does God send strong delusions, and when does He do so?
14. Does God love the world; if so, how much?
15. Show how Calvinists would be wrong if they were right.

Chapter 13---The Resurrection of Jesus

1. What happened to the entombed Jesus?
2. What did Jesus prophesy concerning Himself, and the chief priests and scribes?
3. Give the eight recorded statements Jesus made while on the cross, and briefly discuss each one.
4. T or F (Circle One) Jesus died on the cross.
5. Where was Jesus buried, how was the tomb secured, and why?
6. T or F (Circle One) Jesus is still in the tomb.
7. What theories are set forth about the resurrection of Jesus; show their fallacies.
8. What was Jesus declared to be, and how?
9. T or F (Circle One) Jesus was never seen again after His burial.
10. What did Jesus do, why are they not written, and why are some written?
11. T or F (Circle One) No one has ever denied the resurrection of Jesus.
12. What is the situation if Christ has not been raised from the dead?
13. What did Martha and others believe, of what were they accused, and how were they treated?
14. Where are the so-called “saviors”, and what does that prove?
15. What should all do because all will stand before God to be judged for things done or not done?

CHALLENGE----

Dear Student, and Teacher,

Review the things in Psalm 136, thinking of the things revealed in the scriptures as they relate to the 136th Psalm.

Continually remind yourself of the events studied herein, and more.

Memorize the verses that pertain to each chapter herein.

Memorize: 2 Timothy 2:15; 1 Peter 3:15; Colossians 4:6.

The children of God should ever “Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? Behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white unto harvest. And he that reapeth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that repeat may rejoice together.” (John 4:35, 36).

Jesus said, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” (Mark 16:15).

Matthew 28:19, 20 says, “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost....”

LIST OF TRACTS IN PRINT

1. A BABY WAS BORN
2. A ROUND TUIT FOR YOU
3. A SERPENT ON A POLE, AND THE SON OF MAN ON A CROSS
4. ACTIVITIES THAT BRING CONVERSIONS
5. ARE YOU DOING GOD SERVICE?
6. BEAUTIFUL GOD ORDAINED/DESIGNED MARRIAGE
7. BOOK: THERE IS A GOD IN HEAVEN (Irrefutable book on Christian Evidences for all ages).
8. CAN A CHILD OF GOD BE LOST ONCE SAVED ALWAYS SAVED No. 1
9. CAN A CHILD OF GOD BE LOST ONCE SAVED ALWAYS SAVED No. 2
10. CHRIST IN YOU, THE HOPE OF GLORY
11. CONVERSATIONS IN HADES
12. DANIEL FROM YOUTH TO THE AGED
13. DO ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS
14. ENEMIES OF THE CROSS OF CHRIST
15. EVIL COMMUNICATIONS
16. FOR WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS THERE WILL YOUR HEART BE ALSO
17. GAMBLING
18. GET THEE BEHIND ME, SATAN No. 1
19. GET THEE BEHIND ME, SATAN No. 2
20. GET THEE BEHIND ME, SATAN No.3
21. GOD'S ETERNAL CHURCH
22. HAPPINESS IS APPLYING KNOWLEDGE
23. HATE SPEECH
24. HAVE A GOOD (GREAT) DAY
25. HIS BLOOD WILL I REQUIRE AT THY HAND...THY SOUL
26. I AM A PILGRIM, AND SO ARE YOU
27. I BELIEVE EQUALS GOD SAID
28. I LOVE YOU
29. I REMEMBER
30. I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH/KINGDOM
31. I'M GOING TO STOP PROCRASTINATING TOMORROW
32. IF I HAD MITES
33. ILLUSIONISTS
34. INSEPARABLES
35. ISLAM VS CHRISTIANITY ISLAM'S PLAN OF SALVATION VS JESUS' PLAN OF SALVATION WHICH IS RIGHT?
36. IT IS FINISHED
37. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO ASSEMBLING
38. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO BAPTISM
39. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO COMMUNION
40. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO GIVING
41. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO MARITAL HAPPINESS
42. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO MARRIAGE
43. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO MODESTY
44. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO MORAL PROBLEMS
45. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO PRAYER
46. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO PREACHING
47. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO RACE RELATIONS
48. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO SALVATION
49. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO SINGING
50. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO TERRIORISM
51. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO THE CHURCH/KINGDOM
52. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO UNITY
53. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO WHEN CHILDREN COME
54. JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO WORSHIP
55. JESUS WANTS YOU
56. JESUS WEPT
57. JESUS, A NAME WHICH IS ABOVE EVERY NAME
58. JOHN THE BAPTIST FAITHFUL JESUS PREPARER
59. LEARNING FROM THINGS WRITTEEN AFORETIME
60. LESSONS LEARNED FROM A THREE YEAR OLD
61. NAILED TO THE CROSS
62. NOAH, OTHERS AND FAITH ONLY
63. OPINIONS, INTERPRETATIONS AND FACTS
64. PLAYING CHURCH
65. PREACH THE WORD
66. QUESTIONS
67. Red Letter Edition of the Bible
68. SALVATION IS OF THE LORD
69. SELECTIVE OBEDIENCE
70. SERVING THE LORD
71. SHE HATH DONE WHAT SHE COULD
72. SHEW THYSELF A MAN/WOMAN
73. THE BIBLE (13 Lesson Class Workbook for teens or adults)
74. THE BLOOD OF CHRIST
75. THE BOOKS WERE OPENED
76. THE DEVIL IS A LIAR No 1
77. THE DEVIL IS A LIAR NO. 2
78. THE DEVIL IS A LIAR No.3
79. The Grace of God Teaches Us
80. THE HIGHER POWERS (GOVERNMENTS)
81. THE RISE AND DEMISE OF JUDAS ISCARIOT FROM APOSTLE TO TRAITOR
82. THE SAVING LAW OF GOD NO 1
83. THE SAVING LAW OF GOD NO 2
84. THE TERROR OF THE LORD
85. THE UNCHANGING CHANGING GOD
86. THERE IS A BALM IN GILEAD

87. THEY REPENTED NOT
88. THINGS SCHOOL BRINGS
89. THOU SHALT NOT KILL
90. THY WILL BE DONE, AS IN HEAVEN, SO IN
EARTH
91. TULIP
92. TWO PREACHERS SPENT A DAY TOGETHER
93. WHEN THE LIPS OF THE SWEET PSALMIST OF
ISRAEL WENT SILENT
94. WHO DECIDES WHAT IS RIGHT?
95. WHY CHURCHES SHRINK OR CLOSE

96. WHY MY FATHER LEFT THE METHODIST
CHURCH
97. WILL YE ALSO GO AWAY
98. WITHDRAWING FROM THE DISORDERLY
99. YE SHALL NEVER FALL
100. YOU ARE GOING TO LOVE THE CHURCH OF
CHRIST AFTER YOU READ THIS
101. YOU HAVE HEARD AND SEEN, BUT I SAY UNTO
YOU
102. YOU HAVE SEEN AND HEARD, BUT IS IT SO?
103. YOUR NEXT STEP—WHERE WILL IT TAKE U?

-----FREE BIBLE MATERIALS-----

You may download any of these materials. The author of this short book has materials for FREE on his web page, pilgrimbiblestudy.com, to use in sermons, Bible classes, home Bible studies, and for any other use, with the stipulation that they are NOT TO BE SOLD OR EDITED.

There are currently over one-hundred (100) tracts available to read and/or download, with more planned. Introductions to many Old and New Testament books, along with questions are available for personal and class study. Sermon outlines are provided. Feel free to download any of them to read, teach, preach or to be handed out FREE.

The author is available for presentations on these thoughts. Number of days and subjects are flexible, ranging from Friday thru Sunday, or Sunday thru Wednesday, or Saturday: 9:00-9:45 A. M.; 10:00-10:45 A. M.; 11:00-11:45 A. M.; 11:45 A. M.-1:00 P. M (LUNCH, provided by host church); 1:00-1:45 P. M.; 2:00-2:45 P. M. (5 Lessons). 5 lessons on Sunday could be arranged. Various visual aids are used. Churches will be encouraged to provide a FREE book to each attendee from their congregation at a low cost.

The author is now retired, healthy, and is available for speaking engagements of various kinds, from filling in when the local preacher is away, to summer series, gospel meetings, and such like. He has many subjects for various occasions, or is happy to develop one or more lessons on important, needed, edifying, and instructive Bible subjects. References provided if desired.

James Pilgrim
250 County Road 550
Ripley, MS 38663
Email: jamesandrewpilgrim@gmail.com
Website: pilgrimbiblestudy.com

The Enduring Grace of God

ABOUT THE AUTHOR----James Andrew Pilgrim, Jr., is known to his brethren in Christ and friends as James. He was born to James Andrew Pilgrim, Sr. and Cora Lee (Elliott) Pilgrim on November 8, 1942. His father was a devoted gospel preacher, who worked to support himself, and used part of his income to preach the gospel via radio. Cora Lee was a devoted gospel preacher's wife. She was affectionately called Cora, aunt Cora, or Cora Lee. She worked after her two boys were in their teens. This couple had another son, Paul Samuel Pilgrim, called Sammy.

James attended Welmyer Elementary school (Grades 1-8), Trion, Georgia, Summerville High School (9th Grade), Summerville, Georgia, and graduated from Trion High School, Trion, Georgia, in 1960. He attended Freed-Hardeman College, Henderson, Tennessee, 1960-62. Though he did not get a college degree, he has studied under some of the best Bible teachers known to man. Over the years he has spent countless hours in a study of the scriptures. He has spoken on the Freed-Hardeman College (now University) Lectureship, Bellview School of Preaching Lectureship, Memphis School of Preaching Lectureship, Florida School of Preaching Lectureship, and a number of lectureships held by churches. James taught classes at Alabama Christian College (now Faulkner University) in Birmingham, Alabama, for two years. He has been asked to write chapters on various subjects in books by the brethren, and his articles have been printed in other books and papers. He has written for the Gospel Advocate, Words of Truth, and other religious papers. His tracts number over 106, with others planned.

James was greatly blessed on May 30, 1962, when the former Sammie Joyce Tyler, of Ripley, MS, became his beloved wife. She has been a great source of joy and wisdom through the years. Their marriage took place on the last night of college, in the Henderson Church building, after the services, with the beloved J. Walker Whittle, officiating. Sammie and James have three children, James Samuel, Gary Dan, and Donna Joy McMillin. They have five grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

James retired from full time preaching in 2015, to write and publish Bible centered material for others to study and use to the glory of God. All of his works are written simply, and in hopes that readers will learn and/or be edified. The existence of God the Creator is evident everywhere one looks. The 13-lesson studies motivate one to study and work. To GOD be the Glory in ALL we do!