

Back To Basics

Volume 6

MAY 2008

Number 5

A Monthly Journal Dedicated To Teaching First Principles

WHY NO INSTRUMENTS OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP?

Joe R. Price

The practice of only singing in worship without playing music is perplexing to some and upsetting to others. All can agree it is proper to sing “psalms, hymns and spiritual songs”—it is the addition of playing that disrupts unity by adding to the New Testament pattern of acceptable worship (Eph. 5:19; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2 Jn. 9). Why do some so strenuously defend using instrumental music in worship?

SOME CONFUSE AN AID WITH AN ADDITION. Some try to parallel using instrumental music to using song books or a sound system. This is comparing apples and oranges. Song books are tools that aid us in obeying the Lord’s instruction to “sing.” When used, singing results. However, an instrument does not sing, nor is it an aid to vocal music. Instrumental music is not vocal music at all; it is another kind of music. When used, one plays and sings. In Ephesians 5:19, “singing” is not “playing.” To add “play” is to go beyond what is written, which violates the revealed will of God (1 Cor. 4:6; Rev. 22:18; 2 Jn. 9).

SOME BELIEVE THE SILENCE OF GOD’S WORD GIVES THEM PERMISSION TO ACT. The assumption is made that in the absence of a positive statement allowing instrumental music in worship, one can add it to what the word of God actually says. The Scriptures say to “test

all things; hold fast what is good” (1 Th. 5:21). Using instrumental music in worship is not found in the New Testament; it fails the test of what is good in worship.

SOME VIEW THE NEED TO BE RESTRAINED BY WHAT THE TEXT ACTUALLY SAYS AS “LEGALISM.” It is not legalism to do what the Bible says to do. Carefully following the doctrine delivered to us by the apostles of Christ is repeatedly commended in Scripture (1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 3:10). Failure to be content with the word of Christ is rebuked and rejected (1 Tim. 6:3-5). Charging legalism does not approve of additions to the Scriptures.

We must not defend any type of worship that is not revealed in the word of Christ. We must energetically contend for the faith that has been delivered to the saints, including the truth that singing is the music Christ commands and commends of us (Jude 3; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Heb. 2:12; Jas. 5:13). Only worship that is “in spirit and in truth” pleases God; all else is self-imposed religion based on the commandments and traditions of men (Jn. 4:23-24; Col. 2:20-23; Mt. 15:7-9).

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THE SOWER'S SEED

Basic Sermon Starters

"HE THAT GOETH FORTH AND WEEPETH, BEARING PRECIOUS SEED, SHALL DOUBTLESS COME AGAIN WITH REJOICING, BRINGING HIS SHEAVES WITH HIM."

WHEN A FATHER OFFERED HIS SON

Introduction

1. Abraham offered up his only son, Isaac (Gen. 22:1-19; Heb. 11:17-19).
2. Notice some valuable lessons from when a father offered his son.

Discussion

I. OUR FAITH MAY BE TESTED

- A. Genesis 22:1
- B. This was a test to Abraham's faith.
- C. Would you have passed the test as Abraham did? (Heb. 11:17; Gen. 22:12).

II. WE MUST LOVE GOD ABOVE ALL

- A. Abraham loved his son (Gen. 22:2).
- B. Abraham did not offer his son because he did not love him, but because he loved God more!
- C. We must love God above everyone and everything (Mt. 10:37; 22:37).

III. WE MUST BE ZEALOUS IN WORSHIP

- A. Genesis 22:3-5

B. Abraham's zeal is seen in that he rose up early to worship God!

C. We need this kind of zeal today! (Jn. 4:24; Ti. 2:14).

IV. FAITH MUST BE COUPLED WITH WORKS

- A. Hebrews 11:17-19
- B. James 2:21-24
- C. The faith that saves is the faith that obeys!

V. GOD PROVIDES FOR OUR NEEDS

- A. Genesis 22:7-8, 13-14
- B. Psalm 23
- C. Matthew 6:31-33

VI. GOD BLESSES THE OBEDIENT

- A. Genesis 22:15-18
- B. You can be blessed with faithful Abraham (Gal. 3:9; Eph. 1:3).

Conclusion

1. The story of Abraham offering Isaac looked forward to God the Father sacrificing His Son for our sins (Jn. 19:16-18).
2. Come to Jesus today!

Back To Basics

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Back To Basics, published by Edwards Publishers, is a 16-page monthly journal dedicated to teaching first principles. www.bcktobscs.com

Subscription Information:

One Year: \$12.00
Single Issue: \$1.00

Available in bundles of 10 or more

TOGETHERNESS IN MARRIAGE

John Isaac Edwards

God's design for male and female, from the beginning, is for them to dwell together in marriage. Today, with the man and the woman keeping different schedules, many couples are like two ships passing in the night, with very little time together.

NOT GOOD THAT THE MAN SHOULD BE ALONE. One reason God created woman and brought her unto the man was, "It is not good that the man should be alone..." (Gen. 2:18). How can man have the companionship he needs, when he is one place and she is another most of the time?

LEAVE AND CLEAVE. There is to be leaving and cleaving in marriage as Genesis 2:24 points out. Some have it backwards as they leave their husband or wife and cleave unto their parents! Young couples just need to learn to stick together and work through whatever problems or difficulties come along, instead of running home to mommy and daddy! I know of a situation where the husband lived in an apartment in one town and the wife lived with her mother and dad in the neighboring town and came home to him on the weekends. Some young couples (and their parents) need to learn what it means to "leave" and "cleave."

FREE AT HOME ONE YEAR. The law of Moses provided for togetherness in marriage. "When a man hath taken a new wife, he shall not go out to war, neither shall he be charged with any business: but he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken" (Dt. 24:5). The first year is one of the most crucial in marriage. Most marriages that end up wrong did not start out right!

DEFRAUD YE NOT ONE THE OTHER. Paul penned, "Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the

husband...Defraud ye not one the other...that Satan tempt you not for your incontineny" (1 Cor. 7:3-5). A lack of togetherness in marriage can give occasion to the adversary (1 Pet. 5:8)!

DWELLING-HEIRS TOGETHER. "Likewise, ye husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving honour unto the wife, as unto the weaker vessel, and as being heirs together of the grace of life..." (1 Pet. 3:7). "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mt. 19:6).

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AND SOME FELL AMONG THORNS

Melba Edwards

In the Parable of the Sower, seed fell by the wayside, on stony ground, among thorns and on good ground (Mk. 4:1-10). In explaining the meaning of the parable, Jesus stated, “And these are they which are sown among thorns; such as hear the word, And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lusts of other things entering in, choke the word, and it becometh unfruitful” (Mk. 4:18-19). I’d like to concentrate on the seed that fell among thorns in regards to a mother and her children.

THE CARES OF THIS WORLD CHOKES THE WORD. Many times we are caught up in the cares of this world. We may attend all or some of the worship services, but our children can’t miss baseball, basketball or some other sporting event. We make sure our children are in this club or in 4-H. We are so busy with the things of this world, we forget about the importance of studying our Bibles daily and teaching our children the same as the example in Acts 17:11 reveals. Social activities have their place, but could they not turn into the cares of this world? There are so many distractions today to keep our children from being fruitful. Computers, TV, games, movies, music, sports—to name a few. They can take so much of our time. They can become an addiction. What has happened to the word? It has been choked out because we have been so wrapped up in making sure our children are accepted socially. Some children can tell us more about movie or TV characters than about Bible characters. They know every word to the music on the radio, but don’t know the words to the spiritual songs. This should

cause us to be ashamed. We need to be like Eunice and Lois and teach our children in their childhood the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make them wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ (2 Tim. 3:15).

THE DECEITFULNESS OF RICHES CHOKES THE WORD. Today, we think that in order to be accepted socially we must have riches. To get riches one must work. The more we work, the more we make. We teach our children the importance of work (Lam. 3:27). Work teaches them responsibility and honesty, along with many other important values. But could work choke out the word? When our children learn to use their money, are they using it for things they need or trying to keep up so they will be accepted with their friends. Does their work take the place of worshipping God? Do our children come in too tired to do their Bible lesson? Let’s be careful when we teach our children to work that we don’t allow the word to be choked out.

THE LUSTS OF OTHER THINGS ENTERING IN CHOKES THE WORD. Lust means a strong desire. Lust, in the Bible, is used in regards to a woman (Prov. 6:25; Mt. 5:28), evil things (1 Cor. 10:6), and things of the flesh (Gal. 5:16; 1 Jn. 2:16)—to name a few. Lust allows sin to reign in our lives, thus choking out the word. Paul told Timothy, “Flee also youthful lusts...” (2 Tim. 2:22).

Mothers have a grave responsibility in teaching their children. Let’s not allow the word to be choked out of our children’s hearts making them unfruitful.

In Few Words

THE BIRTHPLACE OF JESUS

The place of Jesus' birth shows the accuracy of the Bible and how the teachings of men often contradict the Bible.

Bethlehem, the prophesied place. About 700 years before Christ, Micah prophesied, "But thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel..." (Micah 5:2). Bethlehem was the prophesied place.

Bethlehem, the birthplace. A reading of Luke 2 will show Jesus being born at Bethlehem just as Micah prophesied. Due to a tax decree, Joseph and Mary "went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth, into Judaea, unto the city of David, which is called Bethlehem" (Lk. 2:4). Luke 2:6-7 informs us that Jesus was born "while they were there." The announcement of the angel to the shepherds confirms Bethlehem as the birthplace (Lk. 2:11-15).

Jerusalem, not the place. The book of Mormon says Jesus would be born "at Jerusalem" (Alma 7:10). Jerusalem is not Bethlehem and Bethlehem is not Jerusalem! This is one of many examples where the book of Mormon and the Bible do not agree. If the Mormon book is wrong about the birthplace of Jesus, what else might it be wrong about?

RELIGIOUS TITLES

The use of titles in religion is a common occurrence. Yet, the Scriptures condemn the giving and the wearing of such.

Let not. It is written, "Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away" (Job 32:21-22). The use of such titles is a spiritual "let not"!

Be not called and call no man. Jesus declared, "But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Fa-

ther, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ" (Mt. 23:8-10). "Rabbi" is a title often given to Jewish teachers of the law. Catholic priests are generally called "Father." "Worshipful Master" is a Masonic title. To designate or be designated by such is to be in violation of the Scriptures.

"Reverend" as a title. Many are referred to as "Reverend" or "Right Reverend." "Reverend" is found only once in the Scriptures and in reference to God: "holy and reverend is his name" (Ps. 111:9). I never read where any of the apostles were ever called Rabbi, Father, Master or Reverend, do you? Let's respect what the Bible says about such.

WAS MOSES HIGH ON DRUGS?

According to a March 4, 2008 Breitbart.com news report, "High on Mount Sinai, Moses was on psychedelic drugs when he heard God deliver the Ten Commandments, an Israeli researcher claimed in a study published this week. Such mind-altering substances formed an integral part of the religious rites of Israelites in biblical times, Benny Shanon, a professor of cognitive psychology at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem wrote in the Time and Mind journal of philosophy. 'As far as Moses on Mount Sinai is concerned, it was either a supernatural cosmic event, which I don't believe, or a legend, which I don't believe either, or finally, and this is very probable, an event that joined Moses and the people of Israel under the effect of narcotics,' Shanon told Israeli public radio on Tuesday. Moses was probably also on drugs when he saw the 'burning bush,' suggested Shanon, who said he himself has dabbled with such substances" (*Moses was high on drugs: Israeli researcher*). Wonder if Shanon was dabbling when he said this?

This shows the lengths to which some go to try to discredit the Scriptures and undermine the confidence of men in the accuracy and authority of the Bible. Jesus recognized the Old Testament record as accurate and authoritative (Mk. 12:26; Lk. 24:27; Jn. 1:17).

Thru-the-Bible

THE PATRIARCHS: JOSEPH #6 JACOB BLESSES HIS SONS; THE DEATH OF JACOB & JOSEPH GENESIS 49-50

JOHN R. GENTRY

After blessing Ephraim and Manasseh (Gen. 48), Jacob, knowing he was about to die, “called his sons and said, ‘Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you what shall happen to you in days to come’” (Gen. 49:1).

JACOB BLESSES HIS SONS. His sons came to him, and he blessed them and prophesied concerning them. Reuben, though the firstborn and most powerful, would not be preeminent, for he had sinned against his father (Gen. 49:3-4; 35:22). Simeon and Levi, though next in age, were also not given preeminence because of their violence (Gen. 34:25-26). In fact, Jacob prophesied that they would not have any real possession in the land of Israel, but would instead be scattered throughout Israel (Gen. 49:5-7; Lev. 18:20-24; Josh. 19:1-9; 1 Chr. 4:24-43). Judah was told he would have preeminence in power and praise and that his brothers and all people would obey him (Gen. 49:8-12). Jacob then gave less detailed blessings to Zebulun, Issachar, Dan, Gad, Asher, and Naphtali (Gen. 49:13-21). Turning his attention to Joseph, Jacob praised and blessed him in great detail (Gen. 49:22-26). He concluded by blessing his youngest son Benjamin (Gen. 49:27). We see these blessings and prophecies unfold in the twelve tribes of Israel (Gen. 49:28) through the rest of the Old Testament.

THE MESSIANIC PROPHECY OF GENESIS 49:10. “The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the peo-

ple be” (Gen. 49:10). This prophecy has reference to Jesus. He descended from the tribe of Judah, through the ruling dynasty of David, to sit on the throne forever as King of kings (2 Sam. 7:4-17; Ps. 45:6-7; Mt. 1:1-16, 30-33; 3:23-38; 1 Tim. 6:15).

JACOB’S DEATH AND BURIAL. After “blessing each with the blessing suitable to him,” Jacob commanded his sons to bury him “in the cave that is in the field at Machpelah” (Gen. 49:29-30). He did not want his body left in Egypt, but wanted to be buried in the grave of his fathers, Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebekah and his wife, Leah (Gen. 49:31). Jacob died (Gen. 49:33) and after 40 days of embalming and 70 days of mourning, “a very great company” went to the land of Canaan and there buried Jacob’s body (Gen. 50:1-14).

GOD MEANT IT FOR GOOD. After the death of Jacob, Joseph’s brothers were afraid he would attempt to seek revenge for how they had treated him years before (Gen. 50:15-18; 37). Joseph alleviated their fears by assuring them that “God meant it for good” and that he would take care of them (Gen. 50:19-21).

THE DEATH OF JOSEPH. The book of Genesis ends with the death of Joseph. He lived to be 110 (Gen. 50:22). He lived to see his great, great grandchildren (Gen. 50:23). Before dying, he requested that they carry his bones with them when they went up out of Egypt (Gen. 50:24-25). What faith! It would be another few hundred years before his dying request would be fulfilled (Ex. 13:19; Josh. 24:32; Heb. 11:22).

Genesis teaches us that God keeps His promises as we see the unfolding of the Scheme of Redemption.

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INTRODUCTION TO EXODUS, LEVITICUS, NUMBERS, AND DEUTERONOMY

DAVID ELDRIDGE

The “Thru-the-Bible” series in *Back to Basics* has thus far covered the period from Creation to the time when “Jacob went down to Egypt; and he died, he and our fathers” (Acts 7:15). This article serves as an introduction to the next section to be covered in this series—the last four books of the Pentateuch. All of these books were written by Moses. The interwoven messages of these inspired writings are of great benefit to us today. They offer us learning, comfort, and hope (Rom. 15:4; 1 Cor. 10:1-11).

EXODUS. *Exodus* means “departure” or “going out.” This book begins with a description of the events by which “the Lord brought the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt” (Ex. 12:51). It ends with the completion of the Tabernacle. The keynote for Exodus is Passover. Prior to the tenth plague in Egypt, the Israelites are told, “The Lord will pass through to strike the Egyptians; and when He sees the blood...the Lord will pass over the door and not allow the destroyer to come into your houses to strike you” (Ex. 12:23). Exodus records, for our learning, the power of the Almighty God, the giving of the law under Moses, and the importance of building according to God’s pattern.

LEVITICUS. In Hebrew, *Leviticus* means “and He called.” In later generations, the Jews also called this book the “law of the priests” and the “law of offerings.” The priestly tribe of Israel was the Levites. The keynote of Leviticus is Atonement. This book details how “to make atonement for the children of

Israel” (Lev. 16:34). The first section of Leviticus describes the actual worship itself (Lev. 1-17). The second section contains exhortations given to the worshipper (Lev. 18-27).

NUMBERS. The book of Numbers is so named due to the two numberings of the people it records. The first took place at Mt. Sinai (Num. 1-4). The second numbering took place in Moab (Num. 26). In Hebrew, the book of Numbers is called *Be-mid-bar*—“in the wilderness.” The keynote of Numbers is Sojourning. Numbers records “the journeys of the children of Israel, who went out of the land of Egypt by their armies under the hand of Moses and Aaron” (Num. 33:1). The book of Numbers follows Israel from their last days at Mt. Sinai through the 40 years of wilderness wandering due to their unbelief.

DEUTERONOMY. The title of this book in the Greek (*Deuteronomion*) means “second law.” However, this is not a second law that supplants the first. Rather, the book of Deuteronomy is Moses’ farewell address to the Israelites before his death. In this address, he emphasizes and repeats many of the laws which were given on Mt. Sinai some 40 years earlier. The keynote of Deuteronomy is Obedience. This is clearly seen in these words of Moses: “And now, Israel, what does the Lord your God require of you, but to fear the Lord your God, to walk in all His ways and to love Him, to serve the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul, and to keep the commandments of the Lord and His statutes which I command you today for your good?” (Dt. 10:12-13). Deuteronomy contains the inspired words of a 120 year old servant of the Lord pleading with the people to be faithful to their God.

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Thru-the-Bible

MOSES' EARLY YEARS

EXODUS 1-2

SHANE WILLIAMS

Seventy people had moved to Egypt during Joseph's days. The sons of Israel were "fruitful, increased greatly, and multiplied" so that they filled the land (Ex. 1:7). Stephen talks about a king rising up in Egypt that didn't know Joseph and "took shrewd advantage of our race" (Acts 7:18-19). The people were mistreated and male infants were ordered to be killed (Ex. 1:16-22; Acts 7:19). It was during such a time that Moses was born.

THE BIRTH OF MOSES. The midwives feared God and were not following the orders of Pharaoh (1:17). When Moses was born, his mother managed to hide him for three months. She built a basket, waterproofed it, and put Moses in it. She placed the basket in the Nile River and had Moses' sister follow from a distance to see what would happen. Pharaoh's daughter had come down to bathe in the river and saw the basket. She recognized the child as being a Hebrew and took pity on him (2:6). Moses' sister asked Pharaoh's daughter if she needed a nurse for the child. She then went and got his mother (2:8). Can you imagine the joy of his mother being able to care for her son? It is at this point that the child is named *Moses*. "Because I drew him out of the water," Pharaoh's daughter said.

MOSES' EARLY LIFE. The text in Exodus 2 tells us very little about the childhood and adult life of Moses. According to Stephen in Acts 7, Moses is close to 40 years old by the events of Exodus 2:11. Stephen's account does give his readers some insight on the matter. Moses was

educated in all the learning of the Egyptians. He was a man of power both in word and deed (Acts 7:22).

ESCAPE TO MIDIAN. Moses was out looking at his brethren's hard labor when he saw an Egyptian beating one of the Hebrews. When he saw no one was around, he struck the Egyptian down and hid him in the sand. Stephen adds that Moses thought his brethren would understand that God was granting them deliverance, but they did not (Acts 7:25; Heb. 11:24-26). The next day Moses broke up a fight between two Hebrews. They were aware of what Moses had done the day before and said, "Who made you a prince or a judge over us? Are you intending to kill me, as you killed the Egyptian?" (Ex. 2:14). Moses, realizing the matter had become known, fled from the presence of Pharaoh to the land of Midian. While dwelling in Midian, Moses stood up to some shepherds who were driving off the seven daughters of the priest. The priest's daughters were trying to bring back water for their father's flock. They went back to their father, Reuel, and told him what had happened. Moses was invited in and agreed to dwell there (2:21). Reuel's daughter, Zipporah, was given to Moses for his wife. She bore a son whom Moses named Gershom ("I have been a sojourner in a foreign land.")

After a time Pharaoh died, the sons of Israel cried out for help and God heard their groaning. He remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Ex. 2:24). The time of their deliverance was near!

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MOSES RETURNS TO EGYPT

EXODUS 3:1-7:13

KEITH WELCH

Forty years have passed. Moses is about eighty and tending the flock of Reuel, his father-in-law, when...

MOSES IS CALLED BY GOD. From the midst of a burning bush, God spoke to Moses saying, "I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob...I have surely seen the affliction of my people...I am come down to deliver them" (Ex. 3:1-9). Moses has been chosen by God to lead the people out of Egypt. To this calling Moses responded, "Who am I?" God answered, "I will be with thee" (Ex. 3:10-12). Moses then asked, "...when I come unto the children of Israel...what shall I say unto them?" God said, "I AM THAT I AM...I AM hath sent me unto you" (Ex. 3:13-14). God has no beginning and no end, He is eternal (Ps. 102:25-28). God instructs Moses to go to the elders of Israel and tell them to speak to the king of Egypt, "let us go." God, being sure that Pharaoh would not let the people go, is ready to "stretch out his hand, and smite Egypt with all His wonders." After this, the people shall be let go with jewels of silver, gold, and raiment (Ex. 3:15-22).

MOSES RETURNS TO EGYPT. When Moses speaks to the people concerning the Lord's words, he is concerned that they will not believe him. So, God gave Moses the ability to work wonders to confirm God's word (Ex. 4:1-9). But Moses said unto the Lord, "...I am not eloquent... I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." The Lord said, "Who hath made man's mouth?...Have not I the Lord?...I will be with thee" and God appoint-

ed Aaron to be Moses' spokesman (Ex. 4:10-17). Moses returns to Egypt. God said that if Pharaoh would not let Israel, God's firstborn son, go, He would slay his firstborn son. Moses and Aaron spoke to the children of Israel and they believed and bowed their heads and worshipped (Ex. 4:18-31).

ISRAEL'S DELIVERANCE ASSURED. Moses and Aaron go to Pharaoh saying, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Let my people go..." Pharaoh responded, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice to let Israel go?" (Ex. 5:1-5). This is the fatal mistake Pharaoh made, not knowing God. Pharaoh then proceeds to increase the oppression on the people, Israel responded with a cry of help, and murmur against Moses (Ex. 5:6-23). Moses turns to God in prayer. God returns dialog with Moses saying that the people will be delivered, "I am the Lord," the land promise will be fulfilled (Ex. 6:1-8). "Moses spake so unto the children of Israel: but they hearkened not unto Moses for anguish of spirit, and for cruel bondage" (Ex. 6:9). We have a reading of the family of Moses and Aaron in Exodus 6:14-26. God commands Moses and Aaron to speak to Pharaoh. Moses is still concerned. However, He and Aaron "did as the Lord commanded them, so they did" (Ex. 6:27-7:6). "And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, When Pharaoh shall speak unto you, saying, Shew a miracle for you... Take thy rod, and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent" (Ex. 7:8-9). A rod was cast down by Aaron, some wise men, sorcerers, and magicians. The rods became serpents and Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods and "Pharaoh hearkened not unto them; as the Lord had said" (Ex. 7:10-13).

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ALCOHOL—SATAN IN A CAN OR BOTTLE

Art Adams

Alcohol is a drug. When ingested in its various forms, it is quickly absorbed into the blood stream and affects almost every cell and system in the body. The effects of alcohol on the brain are felt within about five minutes resulting in slowed reactions, rapidly making body movements and coordination more difficult. These symptoms become more pronounced as the amount or type of the alcohol is increased. Alcoholic beverage destroys internally, externally, and eternally!

INTERNALLY. Remembering that our body is the “temple of the Holy Spirit” and that we “are not our own for we were bought with a price,” the Christian is mandated to practice self-control and to use the body for God’s glory (1 Cor. 6:19-20). Organs and systems of the body negatively impacted by alcohol include: pituitary glands, the gut, pancreas, heart and circulation, sleep function, sexual function, memory problems, increases in the risk of some cancers, changes in physical appearance, dementia symptoms, and other physical systems. In extreme cases, Wernicke-Korsakoff syndrome, a neurological disorder, involving encephalopathy and psychosis may be present. Detoxification can result in DTs and/or death. Alcohol poisoning, which often results in death, is becoming more frequent especially in young adults. Christians are to “nurture and cherish the body” (Eph. 5:29). The body is the vessel in which we glorify God (1 Th. 4:3-8). Thus, the use of alcohol is a sin against the body.

EXTERNALLY. Alcohol destroys lives, families, churches, and the moral fiber of cultures. It affects the ability of a person to think and perceive. This often leads to risky behaviors and poor choices such as: indecent proposals, impulsive behaviors, drunk driving, verbal outbursts, expressions of anger/rage, physical violence, suicidal thoughts/

actions, and sharing secrets about self and others. It puts one in the very company of those who practice the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21). One gets caught up in impulsive behaviors and is easily persuaded to join in by taking dares, promiscuity, partying, revelry, and more. These evil companions that travel together corrupt good morals and make an empty shell of the Christian who practices such (1 Cor. 15:33). Living with an alcoholic is not pleasant at all! The family walks on “egg shells” trying to avoid anything that will set the alcoholic off. The family begins to adopt dysfunctional unspoken rules: don’t trust, don’t feel, and don’t tell. The isolation that results creates further issues for the family: embarrassment, fear of bringing friends around, real fears that the alcoholic will hurt themselves or others, irrational behaviors, picking fights, vulgar comments or advances to family or friends who visit. The family gets warped, living with the insanity produced by the effects of alcohol. The long term effects of growing up sideways in an alcoholic family can be carried three or four generations whether those future generations use alcohol or not. Thus, the use of alcohol is a sin against the dignity of one’s personhood, their influence as a Christian, their family, persons they inappropriately approach, the church and the culture in which they live.

ETERNALLY. Three levels of alcohol use are condemned by Scripture: excess of wine, reveling, and banqueting (1 Pet. 4:1-4). We would say this as: falling down drunk, half-drunk, and social drinking. All levels are off limits for the child of God AND with good reason. Alcohol consumption is an attempted shortcut to spirituality. Using alcohol is an effort to forget and be forgotten, to fit in, to be more social, to take the edge off, to relax or to celebrate. A problem is that the “buzz” wears off and the problems are still there or may

have worsened. Jesus offers peace that passes understanding, forgiveness of sins, fellowship with people who truly care and the ability to relax, knowing all is well with Him. The two (alcohol and Jesus) do not travel together. We have a choice. We cannot have both. So, which will it be? The use of alcohol violates the command for self-control and “not being brought under the power of any” (1 Cor. 9:27; Rom. 13:14). Alcohol makes one a slave as demonstrated by the drunkard who said, “when I awake I will seek it again” (Prov. 23:35). It

is a work of the flesh that excludes people from heaven (Gal. 5:21). Its use is specifically forbidden for God’s word says, “be not drunk with wine wherein is excess, but be filled with the spirit...” (Eph. 5:18). Thus, the use of alcoholic beverage is a sin against God and one’s own soul. Using alcohol casts away the hope of heaven. “Whoever is deceived thereby is not wise” (Prov. 20:1).

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WHAT TO DO WITH FALSE TEACHERS?

Johnie Paul Edwards

Jesus said, “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Mt. 7:15). The apostle Paul described the false teacher as a gainsayer and prescribes some strong medicine for such. Let’s notice Paul’s solution to our question.

THEIR MOUTHS MUST BE STOPPED. Paul, writing concerning the gainsayer, said, “Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre’s sake” (Ti. 1:11). The word “stopped” means to muzzle or bridle. Their mouths must be stopped to prevent their doing damage to the Lord’s people. It is possible for the gainsayer to “subvert whole houses.”

THEY MUST BE SHARPLY REBUKED. “This witness is true. Wherefore rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith” (Ti. 1:13). The sharp rebuke is a severe reproach. They must be sharply rebuked if they are going to be loyal to Christ. When the false teacher is rebuked he is convicted and refuted. Many times we are too soft on those who advocate false teaching. We must never be afraid to rebuke false teachers!

THEY ARE TO BE REJECTED. Paul said, “A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject” (Ti. 3:10). A heretic is one who holds to false teaching. Notice that there must be an admonition before rejection. After a second admonition, a more serious action must be taken. Paul taught that we are to mark them that are causing divisions and occasions of stumbling (Rom. 16:17). John explains what this rejection is. “Whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds” (2 Jn. 9-11). This one is to be rejected because he is “subverted, and sinneth, being condemned of himself” (Ti. 3:11). This may seem to be rather harsh, but it must be done for the safety of the Lord’s people.

Let’s develop the same attitude of the Galatians who “gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour; that the truth of the gospel might continue with you” (Gal. 2:5).

ADULTERY—IT'S A CRIME!

Craig Thomas

Long ago Job said, “For this [adultery] is an heinous crime; yea, it is an iniquity to be punished by the judges” (Job 31:11). Adultery remains a “heinous crime” and, sadly, a crime that’s more and more common in our society, even among Christians. Adultery is a crime because it is an offense against both God and man. Statistics suggest that by the age of 40, 50-65% of husbands and 45-55% of wives will have engaged in at least one adulterous relationship.

ADULTERY IS CRUEL. Cruelty intentionally inflicts pain and grief to another. What’s more cruel than knowing the companion who vowed to be faithful to you alone has violated your marriage bed? (Heb. 13:4). Adultery produces jealousy and anger in the heart of the offended that cannot be assuaged (Prov. 6:34-35). It’s a sin that destroys hopes and dreams and brings untold suffering to everyone involved. There is no greater cruelty we could perpetrate upon our children than to be unfaithful to their mother who we’ve vowed to “love and cherish,” “forsaking all others...keeping yourself unto her, for so long as you both shall live.”

ADULTERY BRINGS SELF-REPROACH. The wise man said, “So he that goeth in to his neighbour’s wife; whosoever toucheth her shall not be innocent” (Prov. 6:29). What could be more reproachful than causing another to sin and rob them of their virtue to satisfy one’s own selfish lusts? No wonder David said his “sin” was “ever before” him (Ps. 51:3). Adultery is such a “heinous crime” against God and man that one who commits it cannot get it off his/her mind!

ADULTERY BRINGS SHAME TO ONE’S LIFE. What a stain adultery brings to one’s character, for “A wound and dishonour shall he get; and his reproach shall not be wiped away” (Prov. 6:33). One who commits adultery brings shame upon their name, for adulterers “give thine honour unto others” (Prov. 5:9).

Committing adultery brings shame upon oneself, one’s family, one’s friends, and the church (1 Cor. 5:1). Would a sane man even contemplate it?

ADULTERY CORRUPTS ONE’S CHARACTER. Adultery destroys one’s moral qualities. An adulterer is a flatter and liar (Prov. 7:21; 2:16), is loud and rebellious (Prov. 7:11), is a covenant breaker (Prov. 2:16), is one who takes advantage of others (Job 31:9), and is one who is a “sneak” (Job 24:15). Don’t be deceived! Adultery destroys all who flirt with it, “Yea, many strong men have been slain by her” (Prov. 7:26).

ADULTERY BRINGS IMPOVERISHMENT. “For by means of a whorish woman a man is brought to a piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life” (Prov. 6:26; 29:3). Many a man/woman has lost family, wealth, jobs, and their good name because of adultery. And ultimately, the greatest loss of all will be one’s soul, for “he that doeth it [adultery] destroyeth his own soul” (Prov. 6:32).

Adultery promises excitement and pleasure, but delivers heartache, sorrow and destruction. Why resort to shameful lust when God blesses us with lawful, honorable, and fulfilling love? The wise man describes this type of love between a husband and wife and all the God-approved pleasure it brings (Prov. 5:15-19). True satisfaction and happiness comes only when we follow God’s way and “drink water from [our] own cistern,” “rejoice with the wife of [our] youth,” and allow only “her breasts [to] satisfy you at all times.” Don’t be fooled by adultery! We can no more commit this “heinous crime” and not suffer its dire consequences than “a man take fire to his bosom, And his clothes not be burned” (Prov. 6:27).

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GOD'S POWER OVER THE ELEMENTS

Eric Krieg

Oftentimes, mankind believes he is the one who is in control of the world. While there are many things we cannot control, one stands out to me—the elements of the world. What man can cause it to snow or to rain? What man can tell a deadly tornado to stop in its tracks? What man can make the sun to shine or the wind to blow? No matter what the technological advancement, these things ought to prove to us that God is in control. Let's observe some Scriptures that illustrate God's power over the elements.

“LET THERE BE LIGHT.” The Law of Conservation of Mass says that matter is neither created nor destroyed. In science, we learn that men consider something a scientific “law” when it is a certain fact that something will or will not occur. However, when God created the earth, it was first without form, void, and darkness was everywhere. Yet, the God of the universe said, “Let there be light”; and there was light” (Gen. 1:3).

“LIFT UP YOUR ROD...” When the children of Israel were being released from Egyptian bondage, God told Moses to lift up his rod, stretch out his hand over the Red Sea, and divide it. When he did so, “the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided (Ex. 14:16, 21). Later, as the children of Israel were about to inherit the promised land, God offered them a sign to ensure them that He would be with them. That sign would occur when the children of Israel were able to cross the Jordan River. “And it shall come to pass, as soon as the soles of the feet of the priests who bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of the Jordan, that the waters of the Jordan shall be cut off, the waters that come down from upstream, and they shall stand as a heap” (Josh. 3:14).

“PEACE, BE STILL!” After Jesus and His disciples got into a boat, there was a great wind-storm that arose—resulting in waves beating against the boat and causing the boat to begin to retain water. Christ, who had been asleep, was awakened and asked, “Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?” Jesus then proceeded to get up and rebuke the wind and say to the sea, “Peace, be still!” “And the wind ceased and there was a great calm.” After seeing these things, the others “feared exceedingly, and said to one another, ‘Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!’” (Mk. 4:35-41).

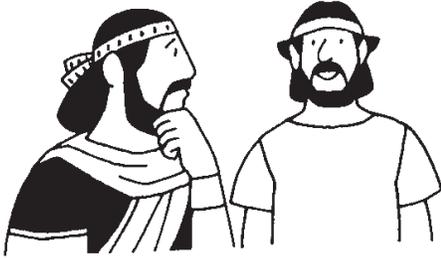
“IF THE LORD CREATES A NEW THING...” Korah and a number of others spoke and gathered against Moses and Aaron—complaining that they exalted themselves above the rest of the congregation. Furthermore, they complained that they had not fulfilled the promise to bring them into a land flowing with milk and honey. Moses said, “By this you shall know that the Lord has sent me to do all these works, for I have not done them of my own will. If these men die naturally like all men, or if they are visited by the common fate of all men, then the Lord has not sent me. But if the Lord creates a new thing, and the earth opens its mouth and swallows them up...then you understand that these men have rejected the Lord” (Num. 16:28-30). After Moses finished speaking, the ground split apart and the earth swallowed them up, and they went down alive into the pit, closing over top of them.

Consider God's power over the elements. How great and awesome our Creator is! Let us all submit to His authority.

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Kids Activity Page

Aleisha Edwards



The Twelve Apostles

Jesus called unto Him twelve apostles. He gave them power to cast out unclean spirits and to heal all manner of sickness and disease. Unscramble the names of the apostles as given in Matthew 10:2-4.

nmSio teerP _____

mhTosa _____

rwAdne _____

ttMhaew _____

Jsmæ _____

saemJ _____

nhoJ _____

dadhTseau _____

hiipPl _____

onmSi _____

moolweBrath _____

udJsa _____

Who took Judas' place? (Acts 1:26)

Who was "born out of due time"? (1 Cor. 15:8-9)

**"Suffer the little children to come unto me,
and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God" (Mark 10:14).**

THE GOOD SAMARITAN

Matt Foster

Located in Luke 10:30-35, the story of the good Samaritan was told in response to a teacher of the law who came testing Jesus with the question, “What shall I do to inherit eternal life?” Jesus got this man to answer his own question by asking him what the law stated. He replied, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” But this condemned the man. He, trying to justify himself, asked Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” To illustrate to this man just who it is that he should love as himself, Jesus tells him about the good Samaritan.

THE ROBBERS. These men were going about their business of making a living. They did so by taking that which others had worked for. They lived by the philosophy of the Iron Rule—“might makes right.” In two thousand years this problem has not been solved by man. Yet, the law of Christ contains the solution to the problem (Eph. 4:28), if men would only apply these teachings in their lives.

THE VICTIM. Many believe Jesus implied this man was a Jew, but we can not be sure that was His intent. What we do know is that this man was robbed, beaten, and left for dead. He was helpless and in need of someone to love him. Love comes from three sources—natural, admiration, and pity. This man needed someone to show pity on him.

THE PRIEST. It seems that when the priest came by and saw the man, he looked the other way and got as far from him as he could. If the priest felt any compassion for the man, he did not show it. This was a religious man—a child of God—a man who should have known God’s law, but failed to make application of it. Had the law specifically said, if you see a man hurt on the side of the road go over and help him; then he might have done so. God’s

law does not deal with every specific thing we will come across in this life, but the principles are there for us to make application of. Are we guilty of doing the same? The priest evaded his responsibility to love his neighbor. His philosophy was that of the Bronze Rule—“every man for himself.”

THE LEVITE. Though he was not a priest, he was of the priestly tribe—a religious man—a child of God. It seems he went just a little further than the priest, in that it says he looked upon him before he passed by him on the other side. It seems the Levite lived by the Silver Rule which was spoken by the Chinese philosopher Confucius. He stated it as, “Do not to men what you would not want them to do to you.” The Levite did not go and kick the man while he was down, nor did he spit on him; however, neither did he do the man any good.

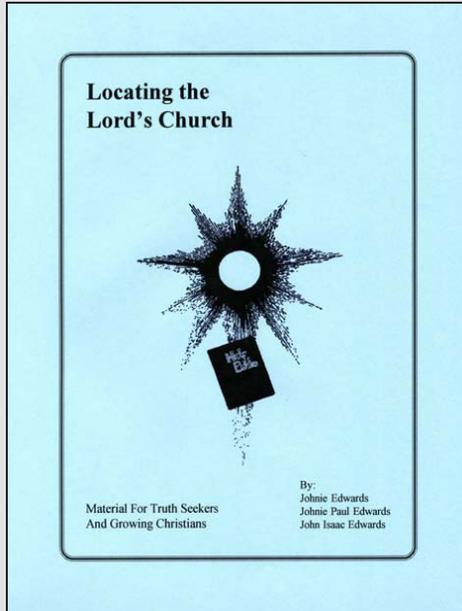
THE SAMARITAN. Of all the people to help this man, Jesus said it was a Samaritan. A man who would be despised by the Jews. Yet, a man who did what was right while the children of God did wrong. The Samaritan lived by the Golden Rule which Jesus stated in Matthew 7:12, “Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.” Notice that the Samaritan’s help was impartial, spontaneous, unselfish (He used his own goods and money to help this man), sincere (expected nothing in return), and sacrificial (He gave of his time, goods, and money to help).

THE LESSON. Jesus asked the lawyer which of these men was the neighbor to the injured man. He told Jesus it was the man who showed mercy. Jesus then told him to go and do likewise. Have you gone and done likewise?

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