

TRUST

"And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came unto the wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after their departing out of the land of Egypt. And the whole congregation of the children of Israel murmured against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness: And the children of Israel said unto them, Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of 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 16:1-3)

We read the account of the Exodus with wonder in our hearts at how the people could have so little faith. These same people witnessed the ten plagues. They observed that, when they heeded Moses' warnings, they did not suffer with the Egyptians. The final plague was the killing of the firstborn. And even after they fled from Egypt, when it looked completely hopeless, God rescued them from Pharaoh's army by parting the Red Sea.

Yet only three days after this happened, they murmured because they had no water. And twelve days after that they murmured again because they had no food. How could people who had witnessed such incredible miracles have so little faith and trust in God?

I believe the answer lies in the fact that they were human, and were in the flesh. We also are sometimes guilty of exactly the same thing when we allow ourselves to become too burdened with the cares of this life.

"Consider the lilies how they grow: they toil not, they spin not; and yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. If then God so clothe the grass, which is to day in the field, and to morrow is cast into the oven; how much more will he clothe you, O ye of little faith?" (Luke 12:27-28) *"But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you."* (Luke 12:31)

When was the last time you missed a meal because you couldn't afford to buy food? Sometimes we may not know where our next meal is coming from, but doesn't it always come?

Many of us can look back on some tough times in our lives. We have been in difficulties where we didn't know how we would ever make it through. We didn't know how we were going to make the next house or rent payment, but, at the last instant, money arrived from an unexpected source to cover it. Or perhaps we were out of work, and at the last possible moment a job opportunity arose. We look back on that time and think, "Boy, if it hadn't been for (whatever), I don't know what we would have done!" And in our carnal reasoning, we hope never to be put in that situation, because the odds of escaping next time are so small.

But isn't the fact that we escaped against all odds evidence of God's care and protection of us? Shouldn't we learn from this that, no matter what happens, God can get us through it? *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* (Romans 8:28)

"There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." (1 Cor. 10:13)

We who are in the Body of Christ are "the called" referred to in Rom. 8:28. When we submit to God, we come under His protection. That may not be easy to remember when we are faced with a hopeless situation, but He will never leave nor forsake us. Surely a hopeless situation, where there was no rescue, would indeed be a temptation beyond that we are able to bear. We have the Lord's assurance that that won't happen. It has never happened to you yet; why do you think it might tomorrow?

It seems that the Lord wants us to learn to trust in Him. Christ taught us to "give us **this day** our daily bread". Why not just ask once and be done with it? But that's not how it works. Each day we are to ask for what we need to deal with that day. Beyond that, we need not worry.

We have to do our part. The man who will not provide for his own is worse than an infidel. We should be as prudent with our resources as we know how to be. I believe that it is appropriate for us to buy insurance, plan for retirement, and take whatever precautions we can to provide for our own future. But there is no need to worry about things which are beyond our control. To do so betrays our lack of trust in God. The man who has no job should, if he has the maturity in Christ, be able to sleep

peacefully at night, knowing that he spent the day doing his part searching for a job, and that the Lord will bless his efforts in His Own good time. *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God;"* (Phil. 4:6, NKJV)

If we are worried about something, we should pray about it. Turn it over to God. It is God's job to worry about all of the world's problems, not yours or mine! We need to set our lives in order, and put God first. We should worry about the things that are our responsibility. Beyond that, we should put our trust in the Lord. He is worthy of our trust. *"Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time: Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for you."* (1 Peter 5:6-7)

BOBBY D. RAMSEY
10841 E Placita Metate
Tucson, AZ 85749

TRAGEDY IN WOODLAND

Usually our high school days are filled with good times and celebrations: seeing friends, passing a test, attending football games, going to the prom, making graduation, etc. But on May 3, 2004, bad news struck our local high school.

Four teenagers were involved in a terrible car accident after school that Monday. The vehicle was estimated at traveling 130 mph, lost control, and slammed into a tree. None of the passengers wore seat belts. Two were killed, a 16 yr. old and a 19 yr. old. The other 16 yr. old is still in critical condition and the 19 yr. old driver is slowly recovering. My prayers are with them all.

I am sure accidents like this or similar events occur nearly everyday throughout our country. But Woodland is a small town, where everybody knows everybody, and many folks are related in some way. (Two years ago I, personally, taught the two 16 yr. olds their 8th grade math.) Thus, this tragedy in Woodland affected many and touched us all.

There are a few thoughts I would like to share about this disaster. One, it reminds us that life is indeed like *"a vapor, that appears for a little while, and then vanishes away"* (Jas.

4:14). One minute the young adults were full of life, excited over the idea of getting out of school. Within the next hour their spirit had returned to God (Eccl. 12:7).

They didn't get a chance to say goodbye. Few of us rarely do. On the average we may live to be 70 (Psa. 90:10). Some make it longer, but some also pass away at a very young age. We just never know when our time will come, therefore, we need to always be ready to meet our Maker.

Two, man is "stronger" than he thinks. Usually we think God is so all-powerful that he sits in heaven and controls everything while men are insignificant specks on the earth, like puppets on a string. But that is not so! God created us with the ability to make choices. We are creatures of free-will and therefore, we must accept the responsibility of our decisions.

At a time like this, some will want to blame God for the tragedy in Woodland. But God cannot be accountable for man's actions (Jas. 1:13-15). Sadly, those four teenagers made their choice to go "for a joyride" and they must now accept the consequence of their decision. It wasn't God's fault.

Three, human suffering is a result of sin. This can be traced to a decision made by Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden when they disobeyed God's command (Gen. 3:6). The outcome introduced pain, sorrow and even death to our world (vs.16-19). So when we think of these young people and their families and the suffering they have endured, it is all a result of man's sin. Again, let us watch that tendency to point our fingers at God.

Finally, as terrible as this tragedy was, I hope we can find a bright side because *"we know that all things work together for good to them that love God"* (Rom. 8:28). I already hear that the other students are being more cautious when they drive. At the end of the school day, their goodbyes are more sincere and heartwarming because they know life can be so short and no one is promised a tomorrow. Expressions of love are more common, especially during the memorials. And it caused many of them to think and to pray.

RAY

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>DATES</u>	<u>PLACE & TIME</u>	<u>SPEAKER</u>
June 4 – 6	Marrowbone, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 6 – 11	Taylor's Crossroads Church Roanoke, AL	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
June 7 – 11	Globe Church near Ashland, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 13 – 18	Mt. Carmel Church Woodland, AL	Sun-Ricky Murphy Sun-Chad Prince Mon-Brad Prince Tue-Wilbur Bass Wed-Ray McManus Thu-Allan Daniel Fri-Mark Carpenter
June 20 – 24	Hokes Bluff Church near Gadsden, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
June 20 – 25	Ephesus, GA	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
June 25 – 27	Chapel Hill Church Pell City, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
July 4 – 9	Mt. Carmel Road Church near Alvaton, GA	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Which of the following helped David by killing the Philistine giant Ishbi-benob: Benaiah, Absalom, or Abishai?
2. On the day of the Lord, what mountain does Zechariah say will split in two, forming a great valley?
3. According to Psalm 69, who does God hear?

4. What happened while we were yet sinners?
5. What happened to the earth when the sixth seal in Revelation was broken?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. In the Old Testament, was Saul a prophet or a king? BOTH (1 Sam. 10:1,9-11)
2. Where among men does Job declare wisdom and understanding are found? AMONG THE AGED (Job 12:12)
3. The Son of Man spoke to John in Revelation 1 saying He had the keys of what? DEATH AND HADES (Rev. 1:18)
4. When people of Nazareth tried to kill Jesus by throwing Him off a cliff, what did He do? WALKED THROUGH THE CROWD AND WENT ON HIS WAY (Luke 4:30)
5. Why did Naomi encourage her two daughter-in-laws to remain in Moab? SO THEY COULD FIND HUSBANDS (Ruth 1:11)