

## THE HORSE

In my opinion, no animal has affected human history more than the horse. Dogs have provided companionship and protection. Cows have provided meat and milk. But the horse has been ridden, used to pull chariots, wagons, and plows, and has bravely carried innumerable warriors into battle.

When God chided Job for his attitude and behavior, one of the examples He used was the mighty horse. "*Hath thou given the horse strength? Hast thou clothed his neck with thunder? Canst thou make him afraid as a grasshopper? The glory of his nostrils is terrible*" (Job 39:19-20). God's point was that the power and might of the horse is completely beyond any man's ability to create. Only God could be responsible for such a magnificent creature.

I cannot think of horses without seeing images of the Old American West. The Cowboys and Indians riding across the endless prairies and deserts on back of their trusty and tireless steeds. Many of these horses, especially in the case of the Indians, had once roamed wild and free. They were the wild mustangs, descendants of horses brought here by early Spanish explorers.

The mustang, perhaps more than anything else, typified the wild untamed nature of the Old West. They answered to no master and heeded no one's will but their own. But from man's point of view, as long as horses roamed free, they were doing no one any good. In order to be made useful they had to be captured and broken.

But what does it mean to "break" a horse? As long as the mustang still had a mind to do as he wished, he would allow no man to sit upon his back. However, if he could be made to think that he had no choice, that no matter how hard he bucked he couldn't throw the man. Or, even if he did manage to throw his rider, he would just climb right back on. Eventually, tired and disheartened, the horse would simply give up and accept his fate. His will was crushed and replaced by the will of whatever man commanded him.

In a similar way, as long as any man or woman runs wild and free, simply

doing as they please, they are of no use to God whatsoever. In order for God to make use of us He must first "break" us. *"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise"* (Psa. 51:17). We must be willing to yield to Him completely and do His bidding.

Think of the great figures of the Bible and how God often had to "break" them before He could use them. Moses was very reluctant to serve God as he had been commanded. But after hardship and adversity he made a leader of unparalleled accomplishment. Pharaoh needed ten plagues, including the death of his firstborn son, to "break" him and force him to yield to God's will.

David spent many years in hardship fleeing the wrath of Saul. During this time God succeeded in "breaking" him and creating a man who served Him fully (1 Kin. 15:5). Paul had to be deprived of his eyesight in order to "break" him and make him a tremendous servant of God. Peter had to suffer humiliation and doubt several times before he was "broken." Jonah had to spend three days and nights in the belly of a great fish before he yielded to God's will. Even Jesus endured a 40 day fast before facing the temptation by Satan in the wilderness.

*Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy*

*God, and him only shalt thou serve. Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him. (Mat. 4:1-11)*

In many areas of human endeavor, this same idea can be seen. Military recruits must endure basic training before beginning their regular service. Basic training not only teaches recruits the basics, as the name suggests, but also attempts to “break” them. Stress is applied physically, mentally, and emotionally in an attempt to break the individual will and create soldiers who conform and follow orders. In sports such as football where teamwork is so vital, successful coaches know how to “break” players with inflated egos so that they become part of the team.

Paul tells us that we should be "*transformed by the renewing of your mind*" (Rom. 12:2). That is, God is continually in the process of "breaking" us and causing us to be more concerned with doing His will, and less with doing our own.

Jesus told us that we should have the humble attitude of a child.

*And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Mat. 18:2-4)*

Children, if reared properly, exemplify the "broken spirit" spoken of in Psalm 51:17. They do not run wild (as so many children do today) but are in complete subjection to their parents as they should be (Eph. 6:1-3). But a child is not born with this "broken spirit," rather their spirit must be tamed by their parents.

When a child is born he knows nothing of right and wrong, of respect for others, of self discipline, or of humility. All these things he learns as he is taught and essentially "broken" by his parents. Some might think this a harsh way to express child rearing, but it is an accurate way. Without discipline, any child would become the temper-tantrum-throwing, disrespectful monsters we have all seen in Wal-Mart, the grocery store, etc.

A child must first learn to control his desires and impulses for the benefit of himself and others. He must learn to yield to the laws and customs of

the land in which he lives. Later, as he matures, that child must learn further to yield himself to his Creator. Until he is broken by God, any child or adult is useless to God.

The scriptures make it abundantly clear that God does use trials and problems in our lives to temper us for His benefit.

*That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: (1 Pet. 1:7)*

When we face difficult circumstances, instead of questioning God's love and care for us, perhaps we should embrace the opportunity for growth and draw even closer to Him. *"Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing"* (Jas 1:3-4).

*"But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand"* (Isa. 64:8). Being broken is certainly no easier for us than the proud mustangs of the Old West. But for our own good we must lay aside our pride and yield ourselves to the Almighty. I pray that the Lord may be able to "break" us all and find us profitable in His service.

TONY WHIDDON  
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## **APOLOGIA**

QUESTION: Is it a sin for a Christian to take medication? Is prayer the only solution to fight against sickness?

ANSWER: Prayer is surely God's intent for His children. Paul taught, *"In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God"* (Phil. 4:6). The effect of prayer is beautifully explained in James 5:14-18:

*Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.*

Medicines also have God's approval, however, and it would be well to use medicine along with prayer. Paul instructed Timothy, "*Take no longer water [only], but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine oft infirmities*" (1 Tim. 5:23). Revelation 3:18 refers to anointing "*thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.*" Luke is referred to as "*the beloved physician*" (Col. 4:14). Jesus said, "*They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick*" (Luke 5:31).

God provided many natural medicines in the trees and plants which grow wild in our forests. Isaiah 38:21 speaks of taking "*a lump of figs, and lay it for a plaster upon the boil, and he shall recover.*" Aspirin, a modern medicine, came originally from the bark of a willow tree. In Ezekiel 47:12 reference is made of trees, "*The fruit thereof shall be for meat, and the leaf thereof for medicine.*" Surely both prayer and medicine are intended by God for our well-being.

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## GOSPEL MEETINGS

### DATES

October  
3 – 9

### PLACE

Goochtown  
Eubank, KY

### SPEAKER

Hunter Bulger  
(Fort Deposit, AL) &  
Joe Hill  
(Hager Hill, KY)

October 9 – 12	Oak Grove Eubank, KY	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)
October 13 – 16	Marrowbone Marrowbone, KY	Wilbur Bass (Auburn, AL)
October 14 – 16	Dowell Hill Columbus, IN	Donald Thompson (Wedowee, AL)
October 17 – 21	Pansy Church Near Blanchester, OH	J.D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
October 21 – 23	Napoleon Woodland, AL	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)
October 28 – 30	Antioch Douglasville, GA	Bill Prince, Jr. (Oxford, AL)
October 28 – 30	Verona Verona, KY	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)
October 28 – 30	Willow Oaks Russell Springs, KY	J. D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Seven months after capturing the ark, the Philistines returned it to Israel, why?
2. When Samuel was getting old, what did the people ask him to do?
3. Why was Michal, David's wife, angry at him?
4. James said that everyone should be swift to what?
5. Faith without what is dead?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH . . .

and remember last month's questions?

1. Where did Aaron die? MOUNT HOR (Num. 20:27-28)

2. After they had mourned Saul and Jonathan's deaths, David and his household went up to Hebron, where he was anointed king of Judah. Who was installed as king of Israel? ISHBOSHETH, SAUL'S SON(2 Sam. 2:8-10)
3. Solomon writes in Proverbs that there is more hope for a fool than for whom? A MAN WHO IS WISE IN HIS OWN EYES (Pro. 26:12)
4. According to John's gospel, the parents of the blind man whom Jesus healed feared the Jews who questioned them about their son because they knew anyone who confessed that Jesus was Christ would be punished in what way? BY BEING PUT OUT OF THE SYNAGOGUE (John 9:22)
5. Paul said that he and his companions wanted to visit the Thessalonians, but didn't. Why? SATAN HINDERED THEM (1 Thes. 2:18)