

THE



*"The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2)*

---

July 2013

No. 331

---

## WHAT KIND OF TREE ARE YOU?

*And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. (Psa. 1:3)*

The Bible contains many figures that have spiritual applications. How about a tree? Yes! We have qualities that can relate to types of trees. What kind of timber/wood/tree are you? Let's look at some famous trees in

---

**THE HARVESTER**  
1120 Sun Hill Road  
Birmingham AL 35215-4106  
**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**



the Bible.

**Noah's Gopher Tree.** *"Make thee an ark of gopher wood"* (Gen. 6:14). While we are not sure what exactly the gopher wood is, many scholars think it is the cypress wood. What's so special about it?

It is useful to the saving of souls. *"In the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water"* (1 Pet. 3:20). One example of a Gopher Tree is Andrew, who brought Peter to Jesus (John 1:40-42). Philip also led Nathaniel to Him (John 1:45-46).

The wood of the gopher tree must have had tremendous strength. Consider how many animals and how much food the ark held in addition to Noah's family. It was able to bear the burdens of the whole world. Likewise we are to *"Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ."* (Gal. 6:2)

The gopher wood had great endurance. The ark was perhaps one hundred years in building (Gen. 5:32; 7:6). And then it endured nearly half a year in the water (Gen. 7:11,24; 8:4). We also need to endure to the end: *"But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved."* (Matt. 24:13)

**Jonah's Gourd Tree.** *"And the LORD God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd."* (Jonah 4:6)

According to Smith's Bible Dictionary, this is the castor-oil plant, with leaves similar

to a palm tree. It was capable of good and promised much--shade in Jonah's case. This is like young King Saul (1 Sam. 9:2). He was a large man, and good, brave, and humble. But as a little worm destroyed the gourd tree, a little worm of sin destroyed King Saul. He was impatient with Samuel to sacrifice unto the Lord (1 Sam. 13:8-14). Another time he disobeyed God's command and spared Agag and the flock (1 Sam. 15:3,9). He then became jealous of David (1 Sam. 18:8-9).

**Zacchaeus' Sycomore Tree.** *"And [Zacchaeus] sought to see Jesus who he was; and could not for the press, because he was little of stature. And he ran before, and climbed up into a sycomore tree to see him: for he was to pass that way."* (Luke 19:3-4)

The Biblical sycomore tree (not to be confused with the American sycamore) belongs to the family of the fig tree. It can grow to at least fifty feet tall and has branches lower to the ground that make it suitable for climbing.

Zacchaeus was of short stature. Many people are "short" religiously today. Some "short" members are described in Hebrews 5:11: *"Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing."* Some are tired of hearing God's word every week, go to sleep, or let their minds wander. Some are not getting prepared like in the Parable of the Ten Virgins (Matt. 25:1-13). Some are not using their abilities as in the Parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14-30). And some are not helping others, not having compassion, or not feeding the flock as in the Parable of the Last Judgment (Matt. 25:31-46).

The multitude hinders Zacchaeus from seeing Jesus. Crowds today will hinder: "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. 15:33)

The sycomore tree lifted Zacchaeus above the crowd so that he was able to see Jesus. Are you helping men to see above the world, past the materialism, the pleasure? Salvation is only possible when men see Christ. They must hear the preaching of Christ and Him crucified.

**The Mustard Tree.** "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." (Matt. 13:31-32)

The mustard tree grows rapidly; from the smallest seed it reaches up to 15 feet in height. Some Christians have small beginnings, but grow into great, helpful servants of God. Many apostles were fishermen, and Matthew was a publican, for instance. Small beginnings could mean coming from slums and a poor background, having wicked parents, not having much education, etc.

David a shepherd boy, became a "man after [God's] own heart" (Acts 13:22). It is where we end up that counts the most! It is how we finish the race that matters!

*Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind,*

*and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. (Phil. 3:13-14)*

**The Cedars of Lebanon.** *"The voice of the LORD breaketh the cedars; yea, the LORD breaketh the cedars of Lebanon." (Psa. 29:5)*

The Cedars of Lebanon are trees of the pine family native to Lebanon. They are a symbol of strength and beauty and demonstrate the power of the Lord. They were used as the strongest beams in the Temple of Solomon (1 Kings 6:9,15-16; 7:12).

These cedars constitute pillars in the church. The strong! They fasten God's temple together. Like glue they hold everything together. Does this describe us? Do we help keep our congregation together and growing in grace and knowledge? Or are we divisive, seeking to destroy at every opportunity? We need to support, be dependable, be strong, edify others. There is no church (congregation) without these. Consider Peter, Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy.

Try to be a Cedar of Lebanon! Paul was able to say, *"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ"* (1 Cor. 11:1). Be a pillar in the church. Be a source of strength to others!

What kind of tree are you? A Gopher Wood, Gourd Tree, Sycomore Tree, Mustard Tree, or a Cedar Tree? Matthew 7:17-20 tells us that a tree is known by its fruit:

*Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot*

*bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.*

Based on a sermon by RAY MCMANUS  
(Deceased October 2004)

---

## APOLOGIA

QUESTION: Please explain Jesus' statement in Luke 14:26, "*If any man come to Me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife...*" which appears to be contracted by Paul in Ephesians 5:28-29, "*So men ought to love their wives.*"

ANSWER: Notice Luke 14:26 in contrast with Ephesians 5:28-29.

*If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. (Luke 14:26)*

*So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: (Eph. 5:28-29)*

The word "hate" as used here is an expression

THE HARVESTER is a monthly publication intended to encourage all men everywhere to become laborers into God's harvest (Luke 10:2). This paper is mailed free of charge to anyone who wishes to receive it. Please submit name, address, address changes and all correspondence to:

The Harvester

141 County Road 474 \* Woodland, AL 36280

Phone: (256) 449-9221\* Email: raymcmamus@hotmail.com

Web Page: [www.churches-of-christ.org](http://www.churches-of-christ.org)

not used by us Westerners, but which is clearly understood by those of Eastern society. Among those of the Eastern culture the word does not mean "hate" as we use the term but rather to "love less."

The word is translated from the Greek ***miseo***, explained by Thayer to mean "love less."

Consider its usage in Genesis 29:31, "*And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, He opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.*"

Yet, Leah bore Jacob six sons and one daughter. This is simply explained that Rachel was Jacob's first choice as a wife and through deceit Leah was given to be his wife before Rachel. Thus Leah was not Jacob's first love; he loved Leah less than Rachel.

"*And his own life also*" in Luke 14:26 further supports this understanding when viewed in light of Matthew 10:39, "*He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for My sake shall find it.*"

Matthew 10:37 states the same truth as Luke 14:26 but in words more accustomed to our Western way of thinking,

*He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.*

HARRY COBB  
(Wedowee, AL)

---

## SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. How old was Sarah when her son Isaac was born?
2. Which of David's sons rebelled against him?

# Gospel Meetings

<b>DATES</b>	<b>PLACE</b>	<b>SPEAKER</b>
July 12 - 14	Mt. Olive Arab, AL	Joe Hill (Hager Hill, KY)
July 15 - 19	Owens Road Prattville, AL	J.D. McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
July 21 - 26	Oak Grove Woodland, AL	Various Speakers
July 28 - August 2	Napoleon Woodland, AL	Tim Eldridge (Woodland, AL)

- 
3. "Everyone that is proud in heart" is what to the Lord?
  4. Where did Jesus find Zacchaeus, the tax collector?
  5. Which apostle was a Pharisee?
- ...and remember last month's questions?
1. What was the first thing Noah built when he came out of the ark? AN ALTAR (Genesis 8:20)
  2. Which son did Jacob not send to Egypt for grain during the famine? BENJAMIN (Genesis 42:4)
  3. Who brought Elijah bread and meat to eat during the drought? RAVENS (1 Kings 17:4)
  4. Who wanted to kill Jesus when he was a baby? HEROD (Matthew 2:13)
  5. Towards what city was Saul travelling when he encountered a light from Heaven? DAMASCUS (Acts 9:3)