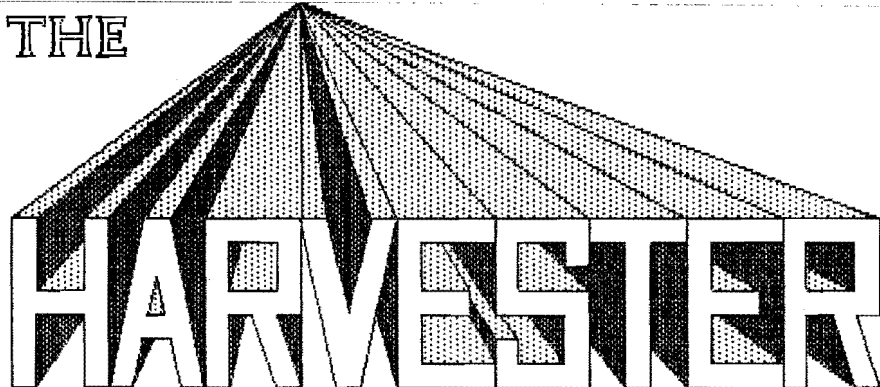


THE



"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]

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No. 63

WRONG DIRECTIONS

There was a train going west one time during the winter. The train had two engines plowing along. There was a woman, with a little baby in her arms, who wanted to leave the train at a certain small station. The brakeman came in and called the name of the station when they were getting near. The woman said, "Don't forget me", and he replied, "Sure." Nearby there was a man who said, "Lady, I will see that the brakeman doesn't forget you -- don't worry." A while later the train stopped and he said, "Here's your station." She hopped out of the train into the storm ... The train had gone on about three-quarters of an hour when the

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brakeman came in and the man said, "She got off." The brakeman said, "Then, she's gone to her death; we only stopped the train yonder because there was something the matter with the engine." They called for volunteers and went back and looked for her. They searched for hours and finally found her out on the prairies, covered with a shroud of ice and snow woven about her by the pitiless storm, and with the little babe folded to her breast. She had followed the man's directions, but they were wrong. She had followed the wrong directions and they led to her death and the death of her little one. *"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."* (Prov. 14:12)

How many of us have been in situations where someone once gave us wrong directions? Certainly we remember how frustrating and what a waste of time it was. Invariably we would get more lost than what we already were and like in the story above, there was always some element of danger involved. In the spiritual realm, wrong directions can especially be fatal.

Notice the episode of the young prophet in I Kings 13. He was told by the Lord specifically not to eat bread or drink water in Bethel nor to return home by the same route. However, an old prophet in Bethel said to the young man of God, *"I am a prophet also as thou art; and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, Bring him back with thee into thine house, that he may eat bread and drink water."* The rest of verse 18 then states: *"But he lied unto him."* The old prophet gave out wrong directions and the young prophet followed them! Later the young man was killed by a lion because of his disobedience to God's word. Let this be a warning to all.

Today millions are asking for directions in the spiritual world. Is there a God? Where did everything come from? What is my purpose in life? Who was Jesus Christ? What must I do to be saved? In essence, all these questions are seeking for directions. There is a right way and there is a wrong way. Our goal is to find the right directions.

To answer the questions that millions are asking, let us first take note of the places where NOT to find solutions. The answers will NOT be found in creed books, manuals, or disciplines written by man. Neither are the answers to be found in man-made religions such as cults or denominations. The preacher, the 'televangelist', and the Pope are usually good at getting people lost. Do not waste time consulting astrologers, palm readers and such. They will give wrong directions. We must also rule out the advice given by sports figures, popular singers, TV celebrities, world leaders, family members and friends. These are all men, incapable of giving right directions. *"It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps"* (Jer. 10:23)

Since this rules out man, there is only one other source that can give true directions. Since man himself cannot provide the answers to his own questions, then those answers must come from the Creator. God is our only true and perfect map. His word, as recorded in the Bible for us, can answer any question we may have. *"The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple. The statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes."* (Psa. 19:7,8) To go anywhere else for directions will result in getting eternally lost!

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Is there a God? Definitely yes! *"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God"* (Psa. 53:1) Where did everything come from? *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"* (Gen. 1:1) What is my purpose in life? *"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man"* (Eccl. 12:13) Who was Jesus Christ? *"Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earthquake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God"* (Matt. 27:54)

What must I do to be saved? The directions to this question are clearly given in the book of Acts: Believe (8:12; 16:31; 18:8), Repent (2:38), Confess (8:37), and be Baptized (2:38; 8:12; 8:38; 10:48; 16:15; 16:33; 18:8; 22:16). In every example of conversion, the recipients went away happy (2:41; 8:39). They were no longer lost; they were saved! Truly these were the right directions and they were followed as such.

Next time we need directions in our spiritual life, let us make sure we get the right ones. Don't go by the directions that 'sound' right, or 'feel' right, or 'seem' right. These are wrong directions because they come from man. The only place where the right directions can be found is in God's word. *"Thy word is true from the beginning"* (Psa. 119:160)

RAY McMANUS

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES

1. Where does every good and perfect gift originate?
2. What did the Lord allow the Israelites to do when attacking Ai, that they could not do when attacking Jericho?
3. Before Paul became a Christian, in what religion was he involved?
4. In which book of the Bible are the Ten Commandments first recorded?
5. When Isaac said Rebekah was his sister, how did people find out he was lying?

ANSWERS NEXT MONTH ...

and remember last month's questions?

1. What prisoner entertained the Philistines in Judges 16? **SAMSON** (Judg. 16:25)
2. How much was Job's final prosperity, compared to his original possessions? **DOUBLE** (Job 42:10)
3. To what was Jesus referring when He spoke of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees? **THEIR TEACHINGS** (Matt. 16:12)
4. What weapon did the early church use against the authorities? **THE WEAPON OF PRAYER** (Acts 12:5)
5. What was the woman given in the book of Revelation to escape the dragon? **TWO WINGS OF A GREAT EAGLE** (Rev. 12:14)

"It seems a lot easier for folks to get worked up about something if they're against it than if they're for it."

CHRIST IN THE BIBLE

The period begun in the book of Judges now comes to a close in I SAMUEL. The transition is made to the establishment of a monarchy in Israel. The judge named Samuel, who also served as prophet and priest, helps to bring in this new era. In the same manner the Messiah will usher in a new covenant as Prophet, Priest and King. Later we are introduced to Jesse's youngest son, David. One of the primary portrayals of the person of Christ will be seen in this young lad. David was born in Bethlehem, worked as a shepherd, and ruled as the greatest king of Israel. David was a man after God's own heart and after his seed would the Messiah spring forth.

The book of II SAMUEL continues the story of David. It is a glorious and righteous throne from which David rules. From his throne he enjoys a faithful relationship with God. He never allows idolatry to become a problem and his reign is distinguished by justice, wisdom, integrity, courage, and compassion. A thousand years later man's Redeemer will sit upon that same throne. In this book we also read about David's city of Jerusalem where Israel was centralized religiously. This is the same city where the Messiah will bring together all of mankind through His crucifixion.

I KINGS gives the history of David's famous son, Solomon, and the beginning of the divided kingdom. Fabled for his wisdom, Solomon's fame, glory, wealth, and honor are known throughout the world. His rulership brings knowledge, peace, and worship to God's people. He builds the Temple and the altar of sacrifice on the same mount where our Saviour's cross will one day rise. Truly, in many ways Christ shines forth through this king, except in a much greater fashion.

II KINGS is an interesting study of contrasting kingdoms. The northern kingdom consists of nine different dynasties while the kings of Judah reign as one continuous dynasty. Israel faces disaster after disaster due to their disobedience while Judah enjoys the prosperity associated with loyal, faithful obedience to God. Against this background many of God's prophets appear. Elijah is a figure of John the Baptist, a forerunner of the Lamb of God, living apart from the people and stressing law, judgment, and repentance. Elisha reminds us more of Christ, living among the people and emphasizing grace, life, and hope. The translation of Elijah into heaven and the passing of the mantle to Elisha will prepare us for a similar event at the Mount of Transfiguration.

God's divine plan was not at all affected by the fall of Judah to Babylon. The Messianic hopes still prevailed as shown in I CHRONICLES. Chronicles means "diaries, journals, annals." This book is significant in that it provides a trustworthy record of genealogies, proper rank and order of priests and Levites, and the correct assignments of land. This information will be vital when Judah returns from its exile in Captivity and resumes its position in God's plan for man's redemption. The genealogy portion will especially be important in tracing out the Christ who is to come from the seed of Abraham and the seed of David.

One of the last books of history in the Old Testament is II CHRONICLES. It parallels the books of Kings but focuses more on the southern kingdom. In particular it deals with the religious reforms developed by Judah's few good kings. The temple prefigures Christ. It was built by Solomon, destroyed by Babylon, and then rebuilt. From Adam to Zerubbabel, the Anointed One survives!

RAY

GOSPEL MEETINGS

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Place & Time</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
March 3-9	Jigger, LA	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
March 3-17	Cloud 9 Church Sierra Vista, AZ - Series on Daniel & Revelation -	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
March 8-10 (F-Su)	Pleasant Grove Church near Alex City, AL 7:00pm/10:30am & 6:00pm	Tommy Bulger (Prattville, AL)
March 24-31	Durango, CO	Harry Cobb (Wedowee, AL)
March 29-31	Owens Road Church Prattville, AL	Sam Dick (Cave City, KY)
April 1-5	Westwood Church Ashland, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)
April 7-12	West Broad Street Wedowee, AL	Gerald Carter (Eubank, KY)
April 15-19	Verona Church Verona, KY	James McDonald (Woodbury, TN)

* * * * *

Four things that never return:

The spoken word,

The sped arrow,

The past life,

The neglected opportunity.

Anonymous