

# BIBLE MONITOR

VOL. XCX

JANUARY, 2022

NO. 01

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“For the faith once delivered unto the saints”

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OUR MOTTO: Spiritual in life and Scriptural in practice.	OUR WATCHWORD: Go into all the world and preach the gospel.
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OUR AIM: Be it our aim to be more sanctified, more righteous,  
more holy, and more perfect through faith and obedience.

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## I AM RESOLVED NO LONGER TO LINGER

I am resolved no longer to linger,  
Charmed by the world's delight;  
Things that are higher, things that are nobler,  
These have allured my sight.

I am resolved to go to the Savior,  
Leaving my sin and strife;  
He is the true one, he is the just one,  
He hath the words of life.

I am resolved to follow the Savior,  
Faithful and true each day,  
Heed what he sayeth, do what he willeth,  
He is the living way.

I am resolved to enter the kingdom,  
Leaving the paths of sin;  
Friends may oppose me, foes may beset me,  
Still will I enter in.

—Palmer Hartsough

## NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

With the coming of the new year, many will be making new year's resolutions. Those resolutions may be repeats from past years or new resolutions for needed adjustments this year. Often resolutions are concocted to impress others but there is a lack of diligence in fulfilling them. Resolutions may be spoken of lightly rather than seriously.

Many resolutions fail, often by the end of January. It is difficult to change our lives, habits, or routines. A special desire must be applied to make it happen. That desire must overcome the usual ennui that defeats such change.

If we resolve to lose weight, there will be many times daily when a decision must be made about actions that could impact the keeping of the resolution. An

extra cookie may not seem to be a deal breaker but if an extra cookie becomes a habit, the desired weight change will not happen. If increased exercise is the desire, missing opportunities each day to engage in exercise will negate the desire to exercise. Serious resolutions must be taken seriously, or they will become another statistic of failure.

Resolutions when made should be treated as commitments rather than expected failures. Resolving to change habits or lifestyle should be done to further the goals of our Christian lifestyle. They may involve ending habits tainted with sin or perceived as impediments to living an active, godly Christian life. The resolution may concern our health or a change in appearance. While these may

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## THE BIBLE MONITOR JANUARY, 2022

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Published monthly by the Board of Publication of the Dunkard Brethren Church in the plant of Haines Printing Company.

**Postmaster:** Send address changes to Haines Printing Company, 10575 West Main Road, North East, PA 16428.

Terms: Single subscription \$5.00 a year in advance.

Send all subscriptions and communications to the editor.

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reflect health consciousness, they can also better display our faith.

Change is never easy. It takes at least three weeks to develop a new habit. When the changes we desire affect our witness and Christian growth, we must face the difficulty of making the change, plus our soul's enemy will try to tempt us to not change.

Commitment engages not only our physical powers but also our spiritual and mental powers. Keeping resolutions demand a high level of resoluteness. We may face obstacles in making our desired change, it may not be popular within our social circle. Improvements in our lives require meaningful changes in habits and attitudes. Commitment demands daily and even hourly awareness of doing the right thing despite the discouragement.

Commitment requires integrity. Integrity is doing the right thing even when no one else would ever know if we failed to do so. God always knows. God figures heavily in the development of that level of integrity because no one would want to disappoint God even if it were not made public. God's love, mercy and grace are beyond the measure of this world; He also desires holiness in His children's lives.

He wants believers to exercise holiness in their living imitating His demonstration of holiness in His dealings. A commitment is needed to keep God's image as displayed within His human creation as pure as possible. God is holy and He wants us to mirror that.

As the recipients of His grace, mercy and love, believers have made verbal and internal commitments to Him. We have made promises (vows) that we will strive to our utmost to love, serve, and worship Him. We will believe Him above all others. We also have made similar vows to our fellow believers that we together will strive to unitedly serve together for the promotion of God's will in our individual lives and our lives together as a body of believers.

During our lives we are presented with many opportunities to make commitments. We commit to be law-abiding citizens of our country. We make a life-long commitment to our spouse. We are expected to commit our lives to doing good, the promotion of God's kingdom, and of being good witnesses in believing His Word and in practicing its precepts. These are commitments we may not think about often, but they are active as we meet the challenges of life. If we are serious about our

commitments, they will influence our choices and actions.

At the beginning of the new year, we may not need to make resolutions about various areas of our lives, but we must be serious about our commitments. Are we as committed to Him, His Word,

and His kingdom as we are to the physical things in our lives?

Our new year's resolutions may not be important but our daily and hourly commitment to God must be our utmost priority.

M. C. Cook

## TAKE A MOMENT TO REFLECT

Job 1 – (Take time to read this scripture). This article is about a man who it says sinned not.

Most of us at some point in our lives, think we can relate with Job. The 22nd verse would not be attached to my life story. We have had some difficult trials this year; financially, loss of a beloved friend, an accident and sickness.

So, I want to take a moment and share with you some of my thoughts. There can be many things swirling around in our minds from everyday life. There may not be enough hours in the day to accomplish the necessities for our families and households. Keeping the house clean, laundry done, animals fed, outside chores done, vehicles serviced/repaired/cleaned, yard mowed, bills paid; besides children's activities, grocery shopping, planning/preparing meals, aches/pains, doctors' visits, health concerns, and then the

house A/C goes out and the ice maker quits working on the hottest day of the summer. This list can be longer than mentioned (family tragedy, betrayal from a friend, and so forth) and we have not even started with your workweek to provide financially.

There are no ways around life, it happens! I know you have been strong, brave, and even tough, that is honorable, but think about the morning you were sitting at the foot of your bed overwhelmed to face another day. Remember what that felt like? When you let down your tough exterior with no one looking and allowed your heart to speak its hurt. In that moment, you felt a debilitating hollow loneliness that overwhelmed you, but I need to tell you, you were not alone. There was someone sitting next to you, and he heard the cry of your heart. When we get real, that is when Jesus can help us. When we get honest and

realize this life's journey is too much for any one person to bare and we need help, we need mercy, and we need a real friend; Jesus is there!

Mark 11:24 – “Therefore I say to you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.”

Prayer should always be our first response to every situation. I do admit it is not always my first response. I pray because I believe in the power of prayer. I pray because I have no doubt that God has answered my prayers. I pray because God allowed me to wake up to see another day and serve him.

I Thessalonians 5:18 – “In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.”

Even though it is not natural to do so, start giving God praise for all things, all the time. You might say, “How can I give God praise for the hard times.” If you are like me, I can look back in my life, and the hardest things that I had to face are the ones that are valuable lessons for me now. They made me stronger and made me draw closer to God. When we understand this principle, we can give God thanks for and in the hard times because we realize he is doing something powerful

within our hearts.

Nahum 1:7 – “The Lord is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him.”

What a blessed truth to understand that, in the middle of all our difficulties and calamities, we have a refuge. God truly is a refuge in times of trouble and sorrow. He brings a calm and a peace like nothing else.

Romans 8:28 – “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.”

Jesus is not simply standing at a distance, wishing you the best, hoping you make it. (Isaiah 49:1) He knew you from your mother's womb; David implies he has bottled every tear you have cried. (Psalm 56:8) “Thou tellest my wanderings; put thou my tears into thy bottle: are they not in thy book?” He knows the very number of hairs on your head (Matthew 10:30).

I know life is tough, and then you have someone come along and say you need to be a student of God's Word. I know you might be struggling like I do with understanding the word, so much so that you have never really found a starting point. I want to encourage you, do not give up!

Keep taking it in, even when you do not understand, then apply what you do understand, to your real life and not the outer shell.

What goes in will eventually start coming out. The word of God is powerful! It has a way of going into the heart and making sense of what can otherwise seem to be chaos. I know all the other duties and issues in life make it seem like you do not have time for the word of God, but the word of God is the answer to all those things that weigh you down.

If you are discouraged, do not give up; listen to what your heart is telling you in those real moments. Jesus knows right where you are, and he loves you more than you can comprehend! He has every answer the heart needs.

Hebrews 4:12 – “For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” And we hear this often referring to Jesus in the last part of – Proverbs 18:24 – “... and there is a friend that sticketh closer than a brother.”

John 15:11 – “These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that

your joy might be full.” God wants to bless us.

Proverbs 4:23 – “Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life.”

Psalms 51:10 – “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.”

This makes it sound like we have a heart issue. Would God truly love us if he did not allow us to choose? This thought is awesome and frightening all at the same time.

If we are honest with ourselves, we have desires that do not always match up with God’s will. Because of our bad choices as human beings, we are born into sin (Romans 5:12). Some people want to blame it on Adam and Eve, but I must take responsibility for myself.

Jeremiah 17:9 – “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it?”

This is the frightening part. Our own heart, carnal by nature, is working against us; but thank God, he has given us the power of choice.

Psalms 20:4 – “Grant thee according to thine own heart, and fulfil all thy counsel.” Another version says: “May He grant you according to your heart’s desire, and fulfill all your plans”.

Psalms 37:4 – “Delight thyself

also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart.”

The only question is, what do we want? If we have the wrong desires, we can start by asking God to help us change our mind and deprive ourselves of such things. It can seem difficult because it can feel like we are fighting against ourselves. God has called us for the regeneration of our souls, giving us a clean conscience, writing his laws on the tables of our heart, transforming us into the best version of ourselves. We are in the refiner’s fire; sometimes we feel like we have been scorched. But then we are reminded of Job and all the trials that he faced.

When you are down and out, and you feel the pressures of life pressing in on you, look at Romans 7:24-25 – (I have paraphrased some of this) O wretched man that I am! Who will save me from my problems and sin that brings death to my body. I thank God who saves me through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 8:38-39 – “For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Though our feelings come and

go, God’s love for us does not.

We constantly take in information with an abundance of unwelcome news available for us to hear. There is a laundry list of national and global issues, disaster, and turmoil reported daily, but one universally known news source actually matters and his name is Jesus!

What does Jesus have to say about it? He has given us the news before it ever happens. The Bible challenges us, corrects, and provokes as well as encourages, strengthens, and empowers us; but the ultimate reasoning for it all is to bring lasting joy into our lives the unwelcome news cannot take away.

Do not let the weight of the world get you down, do not let anyone tell you, “you can’t” or “you’re not good enough” and above all, don’t be afraid of anyone or anything! The word of God is full of good news, and we do not need to put much stock in anything else.

Paul tells us in (I Corinthians 9:17) we are living in the dispensation of grace or the dispensation of the gospel. Which will not conclude until Jesus returns the second time. We are living in an awesome time, and the best is yet to come!

Brother John Metzger

## YOUR WAY OR GOD'S WAY?

I have built several “systems” of organization. One is a tool trailer. The system works well and if everyone puts things where they go, everything flows smoothly and everything fits.

I was in the trailer the other morning and one of the guys was complaining that one of the big tools did not stay put like it should without being tied in. I had not designed it to need to be tied in, so I looked over the situation. Someone had put in an extra brace to hold up a weak shelf and without knowing it had put it in the way of this tool fitting where it was designed to be. With further interrogation, I found that not only had this tool needed tied in, but it was not performing to its full potential when they tried to use it in the place it was designed to fit.

This caused me to think of how many times I, as a human, try to do things differently than the way God has designed them. Maybe, it is not drastically different, but not the way God set them into motion.

I think of the “state” of the world. Crime, corruption, murder, death, idolatry, immorality, and the list could go on and on. It is the result of people doing life in a way God never intended. Doing it the way they like, the way they want.

I have concluded that if you are doing it differently than the God of the universe says, you are either ignorant or arrogant. The problem in my trailer was easily remedied because the user was just ignorant of the way I had designed it. Once I showed them and fixed the issue, they were fine with it. If they had been arrogant and thought that their way was better, we would have had a battle of the wills and the solution would have been harder to reach.

The quicker we can conclude that God is right, and His ways are right, the better off we will be. Psalm 119:1-3, “Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep his testimonies, and that seek him with the whole heart. They also do no iniquity: they walk in his ways.” If God is always right and our ways do not align with His, it leaves only one choice, and that is, we are wrong. If we find ourselves out of alignment with God, we are the ones that need to adjust.

As this new year starts, I commit to more fully seeking and obeying God. Coming to the throne room boldly and often. Hebrews 4:16, “Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace



to help in time of need.” Sharing the truth with the ignorant and the arrogant. Showing them God’s way is best. Showing them love where they are and pointing them to Jesus, where they can find everything.

The Lord has seen fit to put you and me here “for such a time as this” and until He returns, He expects us to seek Him and be salt and light. “Dare to speak God’s word publicly. Trust Jesus for the result.” Fount Lee Schults.

The following are the words to a favorite song of mine. “We place

You in the highest place, for You are the great High Priest, we place you high above ALL else, ALL else, and we come to You and worship at Your feet.”

If we can successfully do this, we have a better than fair chance of realizing our ways are only right, if they align with Gods. This new year is fresh, with it comes many opportunities to broaden the boarders of God’s kingdom. I pray that He finds us faithful!!

Brother Joe Cover  
Dallas Center, IA

## SAINT LUKE THE HISTORIAN

It is interesting to consider that Luke wrote approximately a quarter of the entire New Testament. He was not one of the twelve Apostles and is the only gentile writer of the New Testament. Luke’s gospel and the Book of Acts are really two parts of one continuous history of the life and work of Jesus Christ, from John the Baptist to about 60 AD.

Both books are incredibly historically accurate. Why is that so important? Refer, if you will, to the very first chapter of his gospel. Those first verses reveal Luke’s purpose for writing,

(see Luke 1:3-4). He writes so Theophilus would know of the certainty of those things of which he had been instructed. That term “certainty” is key!

If any detail of Luke’s writings could be found to be mistaken, false, or inaccurate that would likely increase the cloud of doubt over his entire account! Skeptics actually seem to enjoy doing that very thing – finding what they consider to be an error even in some small detail of the Bible and using that to attempt to cast doubt on the truthfulness of all of scripture.

Allow me to tell you about Sir

William Ramsay. He lived 1851-1939. He was a historian and archeologist. He was educated in liberal schools of the latter 1800's that taught the New Testament was not a reliable historical document. They doubted, in particular, the Book of Acts. So, Ramsay had the mindset to doubt the veracity of the scriptures.

He did research in the lands mentioned in the Bible and his mind was changed. Sir Ramsay writes: "I began with a mind unfavorable to (the Book of Acts)." Remember, he had been previously convinced that the New Testament was not historically accurate. He continues: "It was gradually borne in upon me that in various details the narrative showed marvelous truth."

As an historian himself he applied his skills of careful investigation, honestly, and with an open mind. As a result, he refers to Luke as one of the most, if not the most, trustworthy historian of the ancient world. Again, this is important because historical accuracy and spiritual truth are closely related. How so? Because if anyone could prove error in the one (such as the historical aspect), one could go on to challenge the truthfulness

of the other (spiritual aspect).

We believe that God is the author of the Holy Bible. "... holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Peter 1:21). "All scripture is given by inspiration of God..." (2 Timothy 3:16). Since the infallible God wrote this book any information given on any subject this book would touch upon would be without error. If any verifiable error could be found in scripture, that would imply that God Himself is prone to error.

However, the truthfulness of God's Word has been remarkably proven over and over. We can be assured that we have not followed cunningly devised fables as Peter writes (2 Peter 1:16). We can trust the truthfulness of scripture.

Of course, assenting to the historical reliability of scripture alone is not enough to become a child of God. By faith we put our trust in what God has accomplished through the life, death, and resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ. And since the Word has been proven to be authoritative in other matters, we must also seek to obey the precepts found therein.

Edward Trone

## THE JUST PATH

“But the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Proverbs 4:18

“...The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1:17

The Oregon Trail stretches from Missouri to the Pacific Ocean. At first in the 1830's, it was just a cow path travelled by a few hunters and trappers. Soon others followed: on horseback and eventually wagon trains, whole families searching for a new life in what they envisioned as the Promised Land.

If a person wanted to go west, all he needed to do was walk toward the setting sun or use a compass. But if that were all he used, he would have run into high mountains, deep rivers, hostile natives, and wild animals. The Oregon Trail was available so that thousands of people, heading west, could avoid those things.

The Psalmist, in 27:11, tells us, “Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies.” The word “plain” here means clear, distinct, pure, simple, unadorned, honest, or common. There should be no mistake on this path. There can be no doubt

which way it goes. God's way is plain.

Psalm 119:105 says, “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” That shining light is the Word of God. The incarnate Christ said, “I am the light of the world.” (John 8:12) Our pathway, the path of the just, is lit by Jesus Christ, and if people see us walking that path, they see Jesus.

O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way;  
O how bright the path grows from day to day;  
Leaning on the everlasting arms.

(Elisha Hoffman)

Do we have any doubt? Not if we are on the path. It grows brighter from day to day. Our hope of heaven grows stronger as we get closer to that beautiful city. Likewise, others that see us, see the path. Jesus said in John 14, “I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go to prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also.”

I am waiting for the Master  
Who will rise and bid me come,  
To the glory of His presence  
To the gladness of His home.

“And make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed. Follow peace with all men, and holiness,

without which no man shall see the Lord.” Hebrews 12:13-14

Brother Lynn H. Miller  
Mohler’s Congregation

## PHIL’S PONDERINGS

As we “*study to shew ourselves approved unto God...*”

### January 2022 Study Questions

#### January 2 – Ruth 1:1-22

Where is Moab in relation to Bethlehem?

What is an Ephrathite of Bethlehem?

What would it be like to be foreigners in Moab?

What cultural and spiritual issues might Naomi’s family dealt with?

What may have caused Mahlon and Chilion to die at such a youthful age?

What reasons can you think of that explains Ruth’s attachment to her mother-in-law?

Do you ever blame God for the circumstances in your life?

**Commentary:** Ruth has the book named after her because she is the star. Her profession of enduring love for Naomi has been incorporated into the wedding vows made by many a couple. But some of us, perhaps even many of us, are more like Naomi. We have followed others dutifully even when we were not sure they were pursuing a faithful direction. We depended on their strengths while uncertain of our own. Then they were gone. Death, divorce, or emotional distance has left us feeling lost and abandoned. Children die too soon or disappear from our lives as they pursue their own futures. We are left with strangers who are closest to us. We reside in a strange land that can never be home. We conclude that

we are at fault and God is punishing us for all our poor choices in life. The eyes of faith become clouded with cataracts that blur and distort our vision of a merciful God. While the Ruth's in our life may be few and far between, there is One who is more faithful than Ruth and bids us rest our weary souls in His care. We seem stuck in our past. But Jesus sees the future that confirms the promise, "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)

### January 9 – Ruth 2:1-23

Did Ruth determine ahead of time to work in Boaz's field or was it a coincidence?

Why did Ruth go up to the house to rest?

What change took place that allowed her to drink where the young men drank?

Who is Boaz's mother?

What commonality exists between Boaz's mother and Ruth?

How might this influence Boaz's attitude and actions toward Ruth?

How does Boaz's behavior impact Naomi?

**Commentary:** The book of Ruth is often thought of in the context of a love story. But it is a love story defined by a character trait often in short supply: integrity. It is an integrity that can leave certain things of real value behind for an uncertain future. Ruth could not forsake her widowed mother-in-law, leaving Naomi to fend for herself. Such a choice would result in great regret. Whatever Naomi's shortcomings she had taken both Ruth and Orpha into her home and into her heart. Despite tragedy her heart revealed a living God stronger than the losses of a husband and two sons. When integrity guides our choices, we often discover that doors begin to open because of what others have heard about us. Boaz had not yet met Ruth but already knows much about her. His integrity in turn resulted in care for her safety, a shared meal with Boaz and the reapers, easier access to water supplies, and increased bounty as Ruth labored in her

gleaning. All this although she was a foreigner. Generosity is one of the fruits that grows from a heart nurtured by integrity. It both gives and receives with equal pleasure. Before the doors of romance ever opened between Ruth and Boaz, they shared the benefits of living lives of integrity.

### **January 16 – Ruth 3:1-18**

What estimate of time passed from the end of chapter two till the beginning of chapter three?

What is Naomi's prime concern for Ruth?

What is the likely age difference between Ruth and Boaz?

What term of endearment do both Naomi and Boaz use when referring to Ruth?

Why hasn't Boaz courted Ruth since he is obviously fond of her?

How do the sleeping arrangements both protect Ruth's virtue and communicate her hopes?

**Commentary:** If we read this chapter through the lens of our contemporary value system, we could imagine many possibilities that will only obscure our understanding. Nor is there any biblical text that reveals the basis of the behavior described. So, the only other option for understanding what is described is the character of those involved. Naomi's purpose in proposing such a plan is her desire for a secure future for her daughter-in-law. Ruth has progressed from an unknown foreigner to being accepted socially, at least within the sphere of Boaz's extensive influence. Her gratefulness toward Boaz bridges the difference in age between them. Boaz's fondness for Ruth is likely shaped in part by his mother's experience, Rahab, in making a home and family within the context of Israel. But in his own mind the difference in age seems like too wide a chasm to cross. What we see playing out on the threshing floor that night was a culturally accepted way that a woman could make known her willingness to be the wife of her intended husband without usurping his authority and leadership. Her virtue remains intact, and his self-esteem remains unthreatened.

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**January 23 – Ruth 4:1-22**

How was land subdivided in ancient Israel?

Why was it important for a close relative to redeem the land?

Why didn't Boaz mention Ruth at the beginning of the meeting with the close relative?

What does the close relative mean when he says that it will ruin his own inheritance?

What physical interaction in our culture has had a similar meaning to taking off a sandal?

Why do the neighboring women refer to Obed as the son of Naomi?

**Commentary:** We mentioned in the commentary on the first chapter about Ruth's vows to Naomi and how they sometimes are used in wedding ceremonies. How ironic that there is nothing ever mentioned about a wedding in the marriage of Boaz and Ruth. Rather, we are treated to something more akin to a courtroom scene taking place at the city gate with ten elders of the city acting as the judicial witnesses of what transpires. First, Boaz makes sure that the first close relative is not interested in acquiring Ruth as a wife as a condition of buying the property. Then Boaz announces that he will buy the property and purchase Ruth as his wife. This is not the typical romantic ending we are used to. But it is not for lack of love on Boaz's part. It is merely the cultural/judicial means that governed the process for redeeming the land owned by a widow with only a close relative to inherit it. However, it does bear a resemblance to our salvation in Christ. Jesus is our close relative who has purchased our salvation on a blood stained cross. His death pays the debt for our sins. We accept, by faith, the gracious saving of our souls. We are redeemed by the blood of the lamb. This is called Justification. It is given, without merit, to all willing to receive it by faith. As we experience being justified, we are freed to live out our calling as the Bride of Christ and bear fruit for His kingdom.

**January 30 – I Samuel 1:1-20**

What is an Ephraimite?

Why did Elkanah go to Shiloh to worship instead of Jerusalem?

Why did Elkanah have more than one wife?

How many stories in the Bible revolve around women who are barren?

Have you ever misjudged or been misjudged by someone?

How did Eli change the nature of the conversation with Hannah?

**Commentary:** Most of us have had some experience of our minds and our emotions being disconnected from each other. We worship God with many high thoughts but our praise and joy in Him is lukewarm. A hymn may draw our spirits heavenward, but we cannot remember a thing that was said from the pulpit. We feel broken and barren of spiritual fruit. But the truth may be that we are experiencing growing pains. The pain masks the spiritual growth that is taking place. Hannah had many deep hurts. She was barren and felt like a failure as a woman. Her rival, her husband's other wife, reveled in reminding and taunting her barrenness. But the pain she felt was creating a willingness in her heart to do the unthinkable: to surrender a son she would bear to the Lord. What is the chief fame of our God that we worship and serve? "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16) Out of the brokenness of her heart she touched the heart of God who knew exactly what she felt and the depth of love she gave. Hannah was way ahead of the curve spiritually, centuries ahead. Once Eli understood the reality of her sorrow, he could minister peace to her heart. Now she could rest her confidence in the Lord.

Brother Phil Franklin  
Modesto, CA



## OBEDIENCE: THE DECIDING FACTOR

I must confess at times I get a little weary of all the dos and don'ts in life. It seems that everything has a list of what we can do and what we cannot do. It seems at times that the cannot do list is much larger than the can-do list.

No matter what membership you join whether it is a health club, a financial institution, or a church there are rules. Sometimes we get a little legalistic with those rules and yet without rules our entire world would end up in chaos.

Some people are always complaining that the churches are too legalistic. Yet, I never hear them say their doctor is too legalistic. Never once do I hear them complain that the bank, they have their checking account in is too legalistic. Everything in the world is based upon being legalistic. You must obey the rules.

I know we can go overboard with this rule business. A little wisdom should help us in this regard. The key to rules is obedience.

Trust and obey together is the only thing that really pleases God. Regardless of who you are, only one thing gets God's

attention. It is the one thing everyone can do, and that is obedience. Regardless of where you have built your theological fences, it is within the scope of every person to obey God otherwise nobody could disobey God. You cannot have one without the other.

Out in the world we expect people to obey us, and every relationship is built upon this as a foundation. We expect people to obey us, but we fail to obey God. Somebody needs to write a new theme song for humanity, "I am God, hear me roar."

After reading the Bible for quite some time, I have really concluded that obedience is the path to receive what God has for me. Studying the characters of the Bible I discover the key to getting where God wants them to be was obedience. Calamity came to them because of disobedience.

This brings me to the idea that God always responds to obedience or disobedience. It is the thing that really gets God's attention. God will honor both obedience and disobedience.

Of course, when we think of obeying God, we think of being richly blessed and honored

by God. Time after time in the Scriptures, we read of men and women who obeyed God and were blessed by God because of that. We also read of people who disobeyed God even a whole nation and they incurred the wrath of God.

It is through obedience that we obtain the favor of God. When we do what God asks us to do, it ushers us into the throne room of His favor. God delights in our obedience. God responds most favorably when we set our hearts to obey Him in all things.

Sure, we make mistakes. The reason it is a mistake is that we did not intend to do it that way. God will always forgive us of our sins if we come to Him, confess them, and invite His blessing upon our life.

In the same way, disobedience incurs the anger of God. How many people today are living under God's anger and don't really know it? How many people are struggling in life because they are under the displeasure of God because of some disobedience?

I believe it is one of our duties as Christians to bring to an unsaved world the path to God's pleasure and favor. We call it evangelism because it is

bringing the lost people the good news of God's favor and how to get there.

The great delight of the Christian life is living in obedience to the Lord. You see, when a person really is in love with someone, all the rules of marriage are immaterial. None of those rules are forcing me to do anything but is bringing me to the place of obedience is the fact that I love this one I am living with. Marriage is based not upon rules and regulations but upon love. The rules and regulations are for those who refuse to live in love.

I believe the key to divine blessing is simply obedience. It cannot be said any simpler. If I am to receive what God has for me, I need to be on the path of obedience. It is not a matter of interpretation or, as the Scripture says, any private interpretation. Rather, it is a matter of simply obeying what God says.

We can take the Scripture apart piece by piece and parse every word and phrase but if we are not obeying the Word, it does not mean anything at all to us. Not knowing what a word means it does not matter that much but obeying that

word is crucial. Why is it we made sure an interpretation and explanation but fail in simple application?

Obedience is simply a matter of faith. Faith is a matter of hearing God's Word and doing it, and sometimes doing it without knowing all the details.

The question of the unbeliever is always why. When Saul of Tarsus met Christ on the road to Damascus, he did not ask why, but said rather "what

wouldst thou have me to do?"

Behind every blessing from God is a simple act of obedience. God has always expressed His pleasure when a man or woman obeyed His Word. My whole life rides upon one thing, and that is obedience. Who am I obeying?

Either I am obeying God or, I am obeying the god of this world.

James L. Snyder  
324 Bahia Circle  
Ocala, FL 34472

## THE UPPER ROOM

Rudy Cover

Luke 14:7-11

Do you like to have people speak well of you – to get praise for a work well done – to have honor in the sight of men? I believe most people do; it is only human nature to be that way. If this is what you want, Jesus has shown us how it should be done.

The Pharisees were a class of people who liked the praise of men very much. They would stand on the street corners or in the marketplace and recite long prayers to show how righteous they were. Do you know what Jesus called these people? He called them hypocrites; they were

like whitewashed sepulchers which appeared nice and clean on the outside but inside they were full of all manner of uncleanness. If we would appear good outside, we should get clean inside first. Good thoughts and concern for others can help us to be clean inside.

Jesus gave an illustration about those who were invited to a wedding. The well-to-do Jews had special rooms for special people. These surrounded a courtyard where the wedding took place. They were on a balcony and were open on the side next

to the court. If you were in one of these upper rooms, you had an unobstructed view of the bride and groom, and it was a great honor to be seated there. There were also rooms below, under the upper rooms. They were less desirable, and it was difficult to see the wedding.

Jesus said, "When you are invited to a wedding, don't go to the highest room and take the best seat because it might be that the one who invited you had a more honorable person in mind for that place. He would come to you and say to you, "Give this man your place," and you would begin with shame to take the lowest room. Instead of taking the highest room you should sit in the lowest room and the poorest seat you can find; then, when the one who invited you saw you there, he would say, "Friend, go up higher": then you would have the praise

of men. "Whosoever exalteth himself should be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Jesus taught that to be humble it is necessary for us to learn how to live and respect those around us. We can all understand that even in our work – the jobs we do, it is first necessary to start at the bottom and accept the lowest pay until we learn how to do the work efficiently. It is essential to do this way in our natural occupations and it is even more so in our spiritual lives.

For the Christian, humility is a necessary virtue all the time. To come up higher – to take our place in the upper room – comes only after this life is over – when Jesus calls us home to Heaven.

Selected from the  
June 1, 1981  
issue of the Bible Monitor

## I HEREBY RESOLVE

Sylvia Parker

The word resolve means to determine or decide. There are many and varied views on the custom of making New Year's resolutions. Some feel that it is a waste of time. Others regard

it as just an old custom and following such, make a list of those habits which they expect to break tomorrow or next week. Yet there are many who sit down and soberly review their attitudes and

actions during the past year, and with a prayer on their hearts, list the things that need to be corrected or improved, that they may develop more interesting and useful lives.

When resolutions are made in this spirit and conscientious effort is made to live true to our decisions, then the time is indeed not wasted, but becomes a real asset in helping us to live more abundantly. The fact that we have made these resolutions on New Years Day, simply gives us a calendar date that is easy to remember and serves as a constant challenge, that during the year of 1962 we shall or shall not do certain things, which will cheapen our lives physically, morally, or spiritually.

Let us look into the mirror of reflection and see the "Inner man of the heart" with its deep emotions, attitudes, and thoughts from which source springs the actions and behaviors, which others see and feel. The real person is one who searches his heart and life and strives daily to improve.

Among other resolutions, may we consider our relationship with the church of Jesus Christ, our attitude towards it in being a faithful member, that our steadfastness in the faith may prove to the unsaved, the reality in serving the Lord Jesus Christ.

Selected from the  
January 1, 1962  
issue of the Bible Monitor

## WONDERFUL JESUS

Herbert Parker

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Isa. 9:6. Isaiah the prophet told of the coming of the Christ Child into the world.

When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth His Son and He was to be born in Bethlehem,

"But thou, Bethlehem 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.

In this subject we are considering only the title "Wonderful" as given by Isaiah.

### Wonderful In His Birth

"Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and call his name Immanuel." Isa. 7:14. Matthew

1:18-25 confirms this prophecy.

### **Wonderful In His Influence**

Born in a strange town, a rude manger for a cradle, where the oxen ate hay. Later was taken to Egypt, to be protected from harm by the King. Coming back to the City of Nazareth, here He grew to manhood; as a youth he toiled at the carpenter's bench. After baptism He started His ministry as a homeless Preacher traveling throughout the country. He wrote no books, led no armies, held no offices, made no discoveries: but His influence has set more pens in action, inspired more sacred music, produced more works of art, kindled more missionary enthusiasm, cast down more Idols, liberated more slaves, done more to dignify womanhood and elevate the standard of morality, than any other influence in the world.

### **Wonderful In His Evangelism**

His pulpit was the mountain side, the seashore and desert places. To these places the people thronged and assembled to hear Him unfold in simplicity God's message of love. "Never man spake like this man." Jno. 7:46. He did much personal work. Nicodemus came to Jesus by night and here Jesus gave him the great

lesson on the new Birth, which includes you and me. Jno.3:1-7. If more people would be like Jesus in example, this would be a different world to live in.

### **Wonderful in His Prayer Life**

This life is mentioned 19 times in the Gospel. He withdrew himself into the wilderness and prayed. "He went up into a mountain apart to pray." Jesus said to the disciples, "Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder." Matt. 26:36.

In John 17 is Christ's Wonderful intercessory prayer for His church. If we read this chapter once a week, it will bring us into a closer fellowship with Him, who loved us so.

### **Wonderful In His Love and Forgiveness**

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Rom. 5:8. What a glorious thought. This brings us hope of eternal life. Christ had love and compassion for all, even the rich young ruler. But he did not accept his council.

"Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Jno 13:1. In this chapter Jesus demonstrated His love by washing the disciples'

feet. "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done unto you." Jno. 13:15. Then to the man of the Palsy – "Son, be of good cheer, thy sins be forgiven thee."

### **Wonderful In His Death**

The spotless Son of God hung upon the tree, flesh opened by stripes, those hands so often reached out in blessings, now nailed to the cross. His feet so tireless on ministries of love, spiked to the tree, that royal head pierced with the crown of thorns, the pain of His soul when God turned His head. In all of this He could say "Father forgive them for they know not what they do." "Now when the centurion, and they that were with him, watching Jesus, saw the earth quake, and those things that were done, they feared greatly, saying, Truly this was the Son of God." Matt. 27:54.

### **Wonderful In His Resurrection**

He broke the seal of death; He gives to all who fall asleep in Him the assurance of life beyond the grave. "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys to hell and of death." Rev. 1:18. "Because I live ye shall live also." Jno. 14:19.

"Verily, Verily, I say unto you, the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." Jno. 5:25. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." I Thess. 4:16.

### **Wonderful As Our High Priest**

"For such a High Priest became us, who is Holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." Heb. 7:26. Jesus lived a sinless life in a sinful world. Has ascended to heaven as our faithful High Priest, and advocate at the Father's throne.

He assures us that He is able to save to the uttermost, and bids us to come boldly to the throne of grace. "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Heb. 4:16.

This Wonderful Jesus has promised His presence with us. "Lo I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:20. No wonder the prophet wrote, "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor,

The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.”

He is worthy of our highest admiration; He deserves our most exalted praise. He is the foundation of our Peace, Hope and Salvation. How supremely should we love and serve Him? This question I leave with you.

Wonderful, Wonderful, Jesus is to me, Counsellor, Prince of Peace, mighty God is He. Saving me, keeping me from my sin and shame, Wonderful is my redeemer, Praise His name.

Selected from the  
January 15, 1962  
issue of the Bible Monitor

## DUNKARD BRETHERN HISTORY

The Dunkard Brethren Church in June 1926 separated from the larger Church of the Brethren, formerly known as the German Baptist Brethren before 1908. That event did not happen suddenly or without recognition of the seriousness of that event. There had been a series of changes that had affected the Church of the Brethren during the previous decade or more. There had been a shift from the Biblical beliefs and lifestyles by many of the members and especially of those in leadership. Decisions made at several Annual Conferences assumed a need for modernizing the Church and making it more popular particularly with younger believers. Many who were older also desired these changes.

These changes began to draw the attention of various leaders across the Brotherhood. As they exchanged their views and alarms, they wondered what could bring the Church back to its former spiritual beliefs and practices. Among the leaders who were concerned was Matthew Mays Eshelman who then lived in Glendora California, another concerned leader was Benjamin Elias Kesler, then living in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. Eshelman had been known across the Brotherhood since 1870's. He had been active in promoting various Brethren college ventures and had authored at least two books. Kesler had been a long-time missionary supported by the General Mission Board in developing congregations in various communities, particularly in Missouri, Arkansas, and Colorado.

These leaders developed a Statement of Principles that they



wanted to share as the basis for the continued belief and practice of the Church. To do so, they contemplated the establishment of a Church paper. When Eshelman died in 1921, those plans were postponed. Since conditions did not improve within the Church, the remaining leaders decided in 1922 to move ahead with those plans.

The Bible Monitor was established with B. E. Kesler as the Editor with the first issue mailed in October 1922. This year marks one hundred years of the Bible Monitor. After existing as a private stock company established in 1923, the Bible Monitor was gifted to the Dunkard Brethren Church in 1928.

Brother Milton Cook  
Beaumont, CA

## OBITUARIES

### FRANK E. SHAFFER

Brother Frank E. Shaffer, 75, of Greencastle, Pennsylvania, passed away on November 9, 2021, at his home.

Born July 7, 1946, in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, he was a son of the late Frank D. and Martha (Ebersole) Shaffer.

Frank was a 1964 graduate of Greencastle-Antrim High School. He served two years 1-W service at Lancaster Osteopathic Hospital. He drove truck hauling fruit and potatoes up and down the East coast. He later drove truck for Dart Container in Leola, Pennsylvania for twelve years. In 1984 he returned to Greencastle to take over his father's business, Shaffer Products, to manufacture surveying stakes. He retired in January 2005 after his sons took over the business.

In his younger years, Frank enjoyed restoring vehicles. He also enjoyed camping and traveling the United States and abroad. He loved spending time with his family at his cabin. He also spent time doing mission work and serving his church. He was a member of the Chambersburg Dunkard Brethren Church.

He is survived by his wife of fifty five years, Janet (Johns) Shaffer, whom he married on January 15, 1966; five children, Dean

Shaffer (wife Mary) of Fredericksburg, Virginia, Rodney Shaffer (wife Tammy) of Greencastle, Pennsylvania, Tina Beck (husband Shawn) of Montrose, Colorado, Beverly Priest (husband Matt) of Greencastle, Pennsylvania, and Tim Shaffer (wife Tawnya) of Greencastle, Pennsylvania; eighteen grandchildren; two great grandsons; and three siblings, Angeline Mallow (husband Eldon) of Clearville, Pennsylvania, Linda Stitely of Greencastle, Pennsylvania, and Myron Shaffer (wife Joyce) of New Creek, West Virginia.

In addition to his parents, Frank was preceded in death by a grandson and a granddaughter.

Funeral services were held November 16, 2021, at the Upton Church of the Brethren, Greencastle, Pennsylvania. Brethren Ray Stuber, Rudy Shaffer and Marlin Marks officiated. Interment followed in the adjoining church cemetery.

We wish to thank everyone for the outpouring of love and prayers at our unexpected loss.

The Frank Shaffer Family

## DOROTHY M. NELL

Dorothy M. (Yohe) Nell of York, Pennsylvania, age 93, passed away on November 18, 2021, at her home. She was the loving wife of the late Paul L. Nell, who passed away in 2017.

Dorothy was born on July 9, 1928, in Spring Grove, Pennsylvania to the late William Yohe and Stella (Kemper) Yohe. She was a greenhouse worker and enjoyed quilting and sewing in her free time. She also enjoyed traveling. She was a loving and devoted wife, mother, and grandmother and cherished the time she spent with her family. Dorothy was a long-time member of Pleasant Hill Brethren Church in Spring Grove, Pennsylvania.

Dorothy is survived by her daughters Glenda Martin and husband Arthur of York, Pennsylvania, Dorene Ehrhart and husband Sprugeon of York, Pennsylvania, and Jill Beck and husband James of York, Pennsylvania, her son P. Kevin Nell and wife Sydney of Spring Grove, Pennsylvania; her ten grandchildren, twenty-four great-grandchildren, and two great-great grandchildren. She was also survived by her brothers Robert Yohe and David Yohe; her sisters Carolyn Baadte and Patricia

Johnson, and many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her brother Charles Yohe and sister Ruth Yohe.

Funeral services in celebration of her life were held November 26, 2021, at the Pleasant Hill Brethren Church, Spring Grove, Pennsylvania with Elders Larry Miller, Paul Shirk, and Dwane Schildt officiating. She was laid to rest following the service next to her husband in the church cemetery.

## NEWS ITEMS

### MINISTERIAL LIST CHANGE

The Bethel Congregation recently had an election for a Minister. Brother Dennis Klinedinst was elected and installed. His contact information is: Brother Dennis Klinedinst, 59 Browns Rd., Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972. Phone 570-237-1717.

### NOTICE

I am requesting that each Presiding Elder or his designate inform the Editor of any changes in the standing information concerning each congregation normally listed in the February issue. Please, inform by phone: 951-845-6231, by email: mcookdb@gmail.com or miltoncook1943@gmail.com, by text: 951-206-9180 or by mail: 1138 E 12th Street, Beaumont, CA 92223. Thank you.

## CONNECTIONS

As members of the Bible Study Board our hope in writing monthly articles related to the Adult Sunday School Lessons is that we all see afresh different points of connection that reveal the Word made flesh.

Ruth 4:18-22, "Now these are the generations of Pharez: Pharez begat Hezron, And Hezron begat Ram, and Ram begat Amminadab, And Amminadab begat Nahshon, and Nahshon begat Salmon, And Salmon begat Boaz, and Boaz begat Obed, And Obed begat Jesse, and Jesse begat David.

While these verses are not odd in themselves, they are an odd choice to comment upon. My interest in genealogy is confined to living relatives, aunts, uncles, and cousins, my children, grandchildren, and soon to be

two great grandchildren. I am related to first cousins, first cousins twice removed, second cousins once removed, and straight across third cousins. If you do not understand these terms do not take on any tasks where you need to know the answers. Beyond my own immediate family, I am hard pressed to know names or faces or interests in life of those on different branches of my family tree.

We are hard pressed to know much more about some of the names listed above. We have learned a lot about Ruth and some about Boaz. Jesse is mentioned several times as we learn about David. For the most part, the rest of the names are obscure only sharing in the genealogy of David. His life is what adds prominence to the names before him. Since God also promised David that the Messiah would come through his offspring David adds prominence to every name listed after him in Matthew's genealogy till, we come to Jesus, who is the promised Messiah.

However, there is a shift between the Old and New Testament. In the New Testament righteousness no longer is associated with the ancestors of Abraham. There are no ancestral lines mentioned coming from Peter or Paul or any of the other apostles. Our inclusion into the promises of God is based on one name only. It is the name above all other names both in this age and the age to come. It is the name of Jesus. My relationship with Him is not based on who my parents are or any other relative of mine. It is based on my faith in Jesus. Such saving faith is itself a gift of God. (Ephesians 2:8) So I have no ground upon which to boast except in the grace of God through Jesus Christ.

Nonetheless, there is a record of each of our ancestral lines. It is not a biological record but a record of all those who have been born again. There will be only one be-getter in the whole book, one Father of us all. It is the Book of Life and in it is the record of all the children of God from first to last. Perhaps there may be some asterisks beside our names. Those asterisks will be the names of those who were used by God, who helped assist in our new birth. It may be an earthly parent, friend, neighbor, stranger, or evangelist who shined the light of God upon our darkened soul. Regardless of who, it means that we will have many, many brothers and sisters with whom to love and learn for all eternity. It is a family reunion none of us want to miss.

On behalf of the Bible Study Board,

Brother Phil Franklin

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## ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSONS FOR FEBRUARY 2022

### Feb. 6 – Hannah’s Upside-Down Kingdom Prayer – I Sam. 1:21-2:11

1. Does Hannah’s answered prayer encourage you to pray more fervently?

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2. How has God been your Rock?

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3. Is Hannah’s willingness to yield Samuel to God’s service the most striking facet of her story?

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### Feb. 13 – God’s Preparation for a Father’s Negligence – I Sam. 2:12-30

1. How do you misuse what God has given you?

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2. What effect does other people’s sin have on your relationship with God?

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3. Why was Eli disciplined by God?

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### Feb. 20 – Hearing and Identifying the Caller – I Sam. 2:31-3:14

1. What was God’s promise to Eli?

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2. When has God spoken directly to you?

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3. God's direct contact with Samuel identified him as what?
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### Feb. 27 – False Hope on Shaky Ground – I Sam. 3:15-4:11

1. Why was Samuel afraid to tell Eli what God had told him?
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2. What was the purpose of taking the ark of the covenant into battle?

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3. How do we misuse God's power today?
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