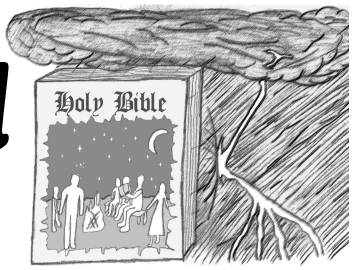
Shelter in the Word



He who dwells in the shelter of the Most High will rest in the shadow of the Almighty
You are my refuge and shield: I have put my hope in your Word. ***—Psalm 91:1; 119:114***

Vol. 4, No. 1 Helping you become self-sufficient in the Word—for a lasting relationship with the Almighty **Jan/Feb 2001**

Prophets in the Church

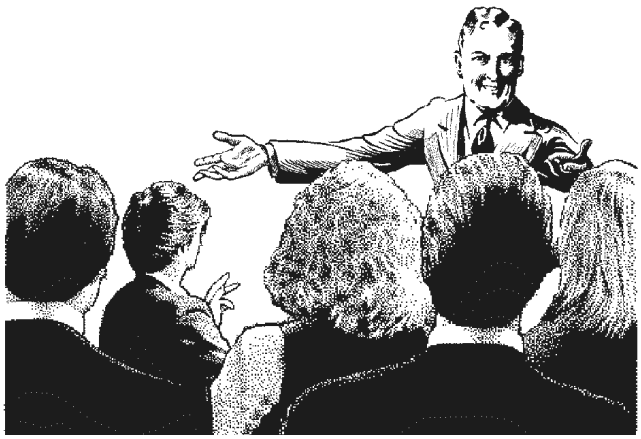
By Toli Bohonik

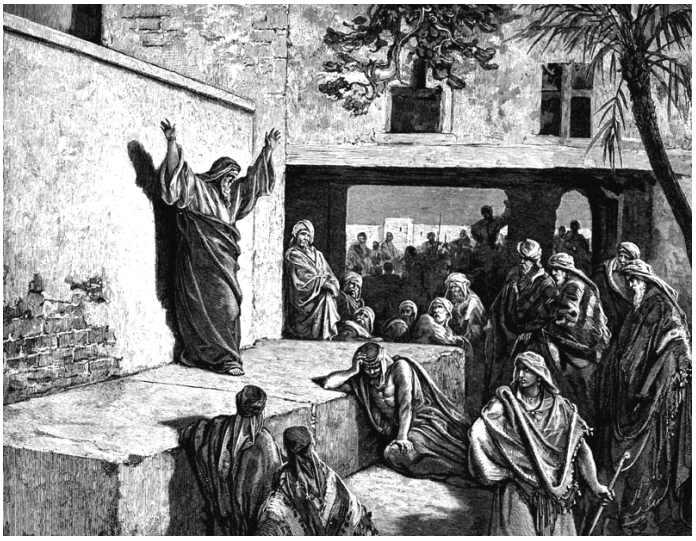
Prophets are less common in the New Testament than they are in the Old. Few New Testament prophets are mentioned by name, but they are present. Jesus said prophets would be part of the fabric of His "Church".

The "Church" in the New Testament is **not** a building or a church denomination, but the entire body of those who believe in Jesus. The gift of prophecy will be given to some who are among us in the church:

> Luke 11:49 Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill and others they will persecute.'

> Eph 4:11 And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,
> 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ (NKJV).





From my Bible Study on prophets, I see that there are five different types of prophets in the New Testament:

1. **Jesus is "that prophet"**
2. **Those whose secondary function is that of prophets**
3. **Prophets to the nations**
4. **Prophets who warn the church of coming events or the significance of what is currently happening**
5. **Prophets who teach in the church**

The last three are what I would call "pure prophets"—it appears to be their main or only function. The main focus of this study is on these latter three, the "pure prophets".

Also In This Issue:

5 All I Need I Learned from Noah's Ark (poem)
5 I Asked God For... (poem)
6 News of Interest to Christians
8 Many Names for False Shepherds
10 Emotionalism Dethrones Reason
11 The Trials of Life

A separate article, *How Can You Meet Other Singles, is included at the end of this issue.* Please share it with someone.

Jesus Is "That Prophet"

Jesus is "that Prophet" and He is uniquely in charge during the New Testament dispensation. We no longer have prophets in an Old Testament sense.

> Heb 1:1 God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways,
> 2 in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world (NASB) .

Jesus said **He would personally** send prophets. Christ gives to His servants, the prophets:

- inspiration
- revelation
- messages for His churches
- messages for individuals

> Matt 23:34 Therefore I am sending you **prophets** and wise men and teachers. Some of them you will kill and crucify; others you will flog in your synagogues and pursue from town to town.

Secondary Role of Prophet

Some of the apostles prophesied. But their major role was that of apostle. Their secondary role may have been that of prophet. One can prophecy on occasion and yet not be a prophet. Notice how John introduces the book of Revelation:

> Rev 1:1 The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show to His bond-servants, the things which must shortly take place; and He sent and communicated it by His angel to His bond-servant John (NKJV).

The Pure Prophets

The prophets and the apostles comprise the "foundation" of the Church. Jesus reveals major portions of "the mystery of Christ" to them, and they in turn pass this on to the church. This is a special revelation that was not available in the days of the Old Testament.

> Eph 2:20 [The Church] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

> Eph 3:4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,
> 5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.

Prophets were persecuted and sometimes killed. The religious community generally did not want to "receive" them. During each generation since the time of Jesus, the established Christian community appears to have fought their influence.

> Luke 11:49 Because of this, God in his wisdom said, 'I will send them prophets and apostles, some of whom they will kill

Shelter in the Word is designed to help people become self-sufficient in their Bible study, so that they may be able to serve the Almighty Creator, and receive salvation through His Son. *Shelter* is not affiliated with any denomination, and teaches that eternal life is available to **individuals** who live by the Bible, regardless of their belonging to a church organization.

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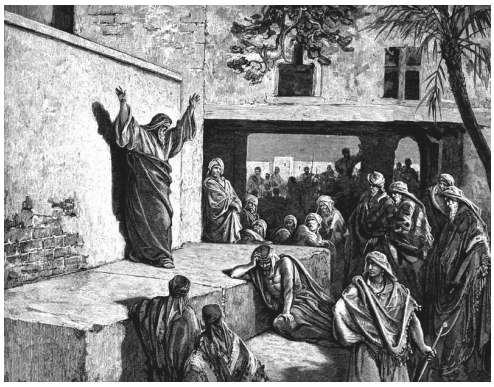
and others they will persecute.'



The first century church had only a small number of prophets. We do not know exactly how many and who they were. Very few are actually named. The following is a list of those who are named as prophets in the New Testament.

- **Anna** (Luke 2:36)
- **John the Baptist** (Luke 7:26)
- **Agabus** (Acts 11:28; 21:10)
- **Judas and Silas** (Acts 15:32)
- Possibly **Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, and Saul** (Acts 13:1)

Some New Testament verses about prophets tell us nothing about the names of the prophets, the people to whom they prophesied or the nature of their message. Maybe our main lesson is that God chooses whom He wants to prophecy and we should be ready to "test the spirits" of whomever speaks in His name. He may not use the people that we think He should.

> Acts 21:8 Leaving the next day, we reached Caesarea and stayed at the house of Philip the evangelist, one of the Seven.
> 9 He had four unmarried daughters **who prophesied.** [This is all the Bible says.]

A Prophet To The Nations

John the Baptist is the only New Testament prophet that was sent to the nations—to the Jerusalem, Judea, and the surrounding region. No other prophet in the New Testament fits into this role, of going to nations.

John was a **great** prophet who prepared the way for Jesus. He preached to the entire nation and apparently spoke frequently and gave long messages. He came in contact with the great religious and political leaders of his day.

He was put in prison and was brutally killed.

> Luke 7:26 But what did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet.

> Matt 3:3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: "A voice of one calling in the desert, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.'"
> 4 John's clothes were made of camel's hair, and he had a leather belt around his waist. His food was locusts and wild honey.
> 5 People went out to him from Jerusalem and all Judea and the whole region of the Jordan.

Prophets Who Warn the Church of Coming Events or the Significance of What Is Currently Happening

Anna is the very first pure prophet mentioned in the New Testament. She spoke about the coming of Messiah, she "spoke of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem". But she did not go to the nations. Here ministry was to the church.

> Luke 2:36 Now there was one, Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Asher. She was of a great age, and had lived with a husband seven years from her virginity;
> 37 and this woman *was* a widow of about eighty-four years, who did not depart from the temple, but served *God* with fastings and prayers night and day.
> 38 And coming in that instant she gave thanks to the Lord, and spoke of Him to all those who looked for redemption in Jerusalem (NKJV).

In Acts 11:26-28 we read "there were prophets in Jerusalem". Of those that were there, only one is here mentioned by name, Agabus. Why is only one mentioned? Who were the others and what did they say? We don't really know.

The messages Agabus gave were very short and succinct.

His message was extremely important to church at large, because it had to do with events that would impact the lives of brethren all over the world, a great famine was coming.

> Acts 11:27 During this time some

prophets came down from Jerusalem to Antioch.

28 One of them, named Agabus, stood up and through the Spirit predicted that a severe famine would spread over the entire Roman world. (This happened during the reign of Claudius.)

Agabus is mentioned once again in Acts 21:10-12. He had been in Jerusalem, and here he is in Caesarea. In this case Agabus has a message for Paul, one of the leaders of the church.

Note he quotes the Holy Spirit. Again it is a short message, and it is a very serious warning given personally to Paul. The Holy Spirit did not speak to the apostle, the Holy Spirit for some reason chose to speak to a prophet, who then passed the warning on to Paul.

We need to look out for this pattern in the church today.

Acts 21:10 After we had been there a number of days, a prophet named Agabus came down from Judea.

11 Coming over to us, he took Paul's belt, tied his own hands and feet with it and said, "The Holy Spirit says, 'In this way the Jews of Jerusalem will bind the owner of this belt and will hand him over to the Gentiles.'"

12 When we heard this, we and the people there pleaded with Paul not to go up to Jerusalem.

So let's compare John the Baptist and Agabus. John was a great prophet. He prepared the way for Jesus. He went out and preached to the entire nation.

We know much less about Agabus.

He is mentioned only twice. He doesn't say much. He gave very short terse warnings. He seems to have no exposure to the religious and political elite. He passed information on to the church and it's leadership. It was information the church needed. The Holy Spirit chose to speak through Agabus and not to the apostle or church leader. Agabus passed on a message from Jesus.

Prophets Who Teach

There are a relatively small group of men and women in the New Testament whose role as pure prophet was to teach under inspiration. They were not just "teachers", as you can see below (Acts 13:1), both "teachers" and "prophets" are mentioned. These men were in Antioch.

Acts 13:1 In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.

Judas and Silas are mentioned in Acts 15:30-33. They were in Jerusalem. They "exhorted the brethren". A very different role then that of John the Baptist, Anna, and Agabus. Yet they are still called prophets.

Acts 15:32 Judas and Silas, who themselves were prophets, said much to encourage and strengthen the brothers.

33 After spending some time there, they were sent off by the brothers with the blessing of peace to return to those who had sent them.

Desiring to Prophesy

The following verse contrasts "speaking in tongues" and prophesying in the Church. We are told to desire the gift of prophecy.

1Cor 14:1 Follow the way of love and **eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.**

2 For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit.

3 **But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort.**

4 He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church.

5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but **I would rather have you prophesy.** He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified.

1Cor 14:39 Therefore, my brothers, **be eager to prophesy**, and do not forbid speaking in tongues.

Some believers, in their eagerness to fulfill these verses, have simply begun calling their teaching or preaching "prophecy" and claim that they "have the gift". They indeed may be doing a good work through their teaching and preaching, but it is probably a mistake to call it "prophesying".

Each place in the Bible where a "prophecy" is written, it is God-inspired knowledge—not simply a restatement of scripture or humanly devised encouraging words. If we assume teaching and preaching to be the "gift of prophecy", then we are not likely to seek or recognize the true gift of prophecy.

Is it better to avoid all prophesying in order to avoid "false prophesying"? Paul Answer that:

1Cor 14:29 Let two or three prophets speak, and **let the others judge.**
30 But if *anything* is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent.
31 For you can all prophesy one by one, that all may learn and all may be encouraged.

Prophets for Now

Where are the prophets in the Church? Where are the pure prophets?

1. Prophets to the nations are very rare, but we can look forward to an end time Elijah, one like John the Baptist.
2. We can expect a singular simple message from the Lord at times of need, as was given to Anna and Agabus.
3. We can try and discern who has the gift of prophecy, men and women like Judas and Silas, and we can attempt to let them use their gifts.

Many congregations who sincerely seek God do not allow prophesying. Why should God inspire prophets if they will not be heard? 🕮

All I need to know I learned from Noah's Ark....

(author unknown)

1. Don't miss the boat.
2. Remember that we are all in the same boat.
3. Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah built the Ark.
4. Stay fit. When you're 600 years old, someone may ask you to do something really big.
5. Don't listen to critics; just get on with the job that needs to be done.
6. Build your future on high ground.
7. For safety's sake travel in pairs.
8. Speed isn't always an advantage. The snails were on board with the cheetahs.
9. When you're stressed, float awhile.
10. Remember, the Ark was built by amateurs, the Titanic by professionals.
11. No matter the storm, when you are with God there's always a rainbow waiting.

I Asked God For...

(author unknown)

I asked for Strength,
And God gave me Difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for Wisdom,
And God gave me Problems to solve.

I asked for Prosperity,
And God gave me Brain and Brawn to work.

I asked for Courage,
And God gave me Danger to overcome.

I asked for Love,
And God gave me Troubled people to help.

I asked for Favors,
And God gave me Opportunities.

I received nothing I wanted;
I received everything I needed.

News of Interest to Christians

Help With *The Jesus Video Project*

The Jesus Video Project is an effort to give an 83-minute video about the life of Jesus to the entire USA and ultimately the world (600 international language version have already been made). Although I found minor discrepancies between the video and the Bible, the vast majority of it is an accurate, though abbreviated, portrayal of the Gospel of Luke. This is a very important teaching tool in an age when millions of people own and watch videos, but read fewer and fewer books.

Over 13 million copies have been distributed, including 1.8 million to every household in Alabama. This is a non-denominational effort with over 20,000 churches and 300,000 volunteers participating. Some videos are distributed by mail, others door-to-door. Some distributions are funded by the combined efforts of thousands. In other cases, wealthy men have paid for entire cities or parts of states by themselves.

You can have a part in this distribution of this video or in follow up visits with interested people by contacting: The Jesus Video Project; 275 W. Hospitality Lane, Suite 315; San Bernardino, CA. 92408; 888-JESUS-36. web-site: www.jesusvideo.org.

Who Cares?

If we can only realize how much a card or a note means to someone who is sick or lonely, everyone would keep the post office busy.

A man was dying of cancer and a help line volunteer corresponded with him and told him they would pray for him. After his death, his wife sent a wonderful uplifting letter and picture of her and her husband. She told of her husband's last months of physical life here on earth and the suffering he went through. She told of how much he appreciated mail—how he looked forward to the mailman coming each day. This letter and picture made a lasting impression.

The needs of the people are often overwhelming! With so many people moving so often to find the "right job", the "right school" or the "right housing", families and friends are frequently scattered across the country—and too busy to help. Severe physical ailments are commonplace. There are also many with addictions, family problems, emotional difficulties and personal needs. Too frequently many have no where to go for help.

Would you like to be able to help someone like that? Do you need that kind of help?

Help Line has operated a free service for about one year to provide ongoing assistance in those situations. It is made up of volunteers with different backgrounds and experiences. It is not intended to provide professional care or advice, but personal concern and friendship. Interestingly, many who have had great personal trials of their own have been some of our most active and effective help line staff.

We can all pray. Almost everyone can listen, talk, send a card or send letter to another. Although some people are not able to respond to cards and letters, you can be sure that all are deeply appreciated.

> James 1:27 Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world.

If you have a need for our free service or would like to assist, contact us and we will respond:

Steve & Suzanne Kieler
2193 Sheker Dr.
Fort Dodge IA 50501-8707
e-mail: sskieler@juno.com

The Holy Land Experience, A New Florida Theme Park

Located nine miles northeast of Walt Disney World and two miles northeast of Universal Studios; (Interstate 4 exit 31A), The Holy Land Experience opened Feb 5, 2001 as the USA's first biblical theme park. This $16 million, 15-acre "living biblical museum," recreates in elaborate detail the city of Jerusalem and its religious importance between the years 1450 B.C. and A.D. 66 (through the Old and New Testaments, from Genesis through Revelation). It is a total sensory experience that is educational, historical, theatrical, inspirational, and evangelistic, blending sights, sounds, and tastes that transport guests 7,000 miles away and 3,000 years back in time.

Its purpose is three-fold: 1) to create a wholesome, family oriented, and educational facility where Christians can come to be encouraged and reinforced in their faith, 2) to create a "total immersion" experi-

ence that offers historical proof of the Bible and dynamically demonstrates that the Bible is God's Word to man and 3) to lovingly share the message of the grace of God for sinful men, as demonstrated in the death, burial, and resurrection of His Son.

The Holy Land Experience combines themed costumes, dramatic enactments, special music written exclusively for the project, theatrical events, high-tech, multimedia presentations and a film, *The Seed of Promise* shot on location in Israel.

Guests enter the park through a replica on one of Jerusalem's city gates. Major areas inside include:

1. **First century A.D. Jerusalem street market—**It has Middle Eastern music, village craftsmen, themed shops—including The Old Scroll Shop, which offers genuine biblical artifacts, Bibles, books and gifts.
2. **The Wilderness Tabernacle**—a replica for the one built by Moses and the Israelites around 1450 BC. A 20-minute high-tech presentation explains some of the activities of the Old Testament Priests
3. **The Qumran Caves**—500,000 pounds of concrete went into this detailed scale recreation of the caves where the Dead Sea Scrolls were hidden by the Essenes—an ancient Jewish religious sect—during the first century A.D. and not discovered until 1947 on the western side of the Dead Sea.
4. **Calvary's Garden Tomb**—a replication of the present day "Garden Tomb" in Jerusalem, thought to be the burial place of Jesus by some Bible scholars.
5. **The Temple of the Great King**—a one-half-scale representation of the "second temple", built by king Herod—the one in which Jesus and the Apostles met.
6. **Model of Jerusalem**—45-foot-long by 25-foot-wide model of the city circa A.D. 66, as it was under Roman rule. A live 30-minute presentation detailing the history of the city and the movements of Jesus during the last week of his life, leading up to Calvary, are presented daily around the model.
7. **The Oasis Palms Café**—the 120-seat facility offers a wide variety of American and Middle Eastern food items. (An Arabian-themed restaurant and other "eating places" are located throughout the park).

The park was the creation of Marvin J. Rosenthal, president and chief executive officer of Zion's Hope Inc., a not-for-profit evangelical Christian ministry. Rosenthal has a Jewish background, but is himself a Christian and has been involved in ministries to the Jews for over 16 years. The park's existence has caused some stir among Jewish leaders who are concerned that it will be too effective of a tool in converting Jews to Christianity.

The Jewish fears are well grounded. The Jewish religion is primarily one of genetic descent—there is no great effort to make new converts, most people who are Jews were born that way. For most of history, Jews have been forbidden to intermix with other ethnic groups. They lived together, they learned Jewish customs, and they married other Jews. Today, over half of Jews marry non-Jews. Most of them, especially their children, know little of Jewish customs and ways of life. The vast majority only set foot in a synagogue twice a year, and many never do. For these, the dramatic presentation of The Holy Land Experience may rather quickly dislodge them from their light attachment to Judaism.

Hopefully, everyone will recognize this as simply a matter of freedom of religion. The nearby Disneyland promotes magic and fairy tails, the nearby Universal studios promotes sex and violence for entertainment. People who do not like any of these things do not have to go. Preachers can preach against them and try to prevent people from going. But religions and non-religions should be free to make theme parks around their ideas.

This writer thinks it is great that someone decided to use theme park technology to tell some of the story of the Bible. While I, and probably most other Bible students, have a few disagreements with the way The Holy Land Experience portrays some details of the Bible, I am overjoyed to see the first of this type of park. Initial park attendance was well more than expected—on some days the management has to stop accepting visitors because the park reaches its capacity.

If this park is successful, others will probably follow. It would be wonderful if this represents the beginning of a change in the American's approach to a vacation—to require an interesting and meaningful experience, not just a trendy spending of money on technically superb silliness, suspense and sex.

Park admission is $17 (adult); $12 (child 4-12). Groups of 20 may arrange *in advance* for $14 for adults and $10 for children. Every Thursday night The Holy Land Experience hosts a non-denominational, free-to-the-public Bible study at 7:30 P.M. You may contact The Holy Land Experience, P.O. Box 690909, Orlando, Florida 32869; toll free: 866-USA-HOLYLAND (866-872-4659) or call: 407-367-2065; e-mail info@zionshope.org. Much more information is on their website: www.theholylandexperience.com. — NSE 🕮

Many Names for False Shepherds

Do you think you know all there is to know about false shepherds? Read on and see if there isn't something that maybe you did not realize.

I believe the Father directed me into a specific church organization some 27 years ago when He called me. He knew I needed to learn certain lessons that this organization would teach me. What I didn't realize at the time was that this teaching was a mixture of truth and error. It took a long time for me to truly understand the importance of sorting out truth from error, not just blindly trust in our leaders. One subject our Father knew I needed to learn was that of false shepherds.

How many of us have let others who are in leading positions come between us and our Creator? Many of us in times past placed unquestioning trust in our teachers. We believed that **our** leaders in **our** group were being led by the Holy Spirit. We were told that Government was "from the top down". We were told that we were not to question our leaders and pastors, but to trust them, even to the point that if they gave us wrong counsel, it would be backed up from Heaven. We studied the Scriptures that supposedly taught this concept. We thought we had proved all things and that we knew all about biblical Government.

It is only in the last few years I have come to a fuller understanding of the subject of false shepherds; an area that is quite important if one goes by the amount of space given to it in the Scriptures. I learned that they were not just the ones in "other pagan organizations or religions", but that they are in many of the current congregations of our fellowships. This should not surprise us. They were prevalent in the Apostle's time shortly after our Savior's death; why not now?

In doing a study of false shepherds, I was surprised to see a variety of quite graphic descriptions that I believe applies to them. It is quite a warning for us and for those who may be false shepherds!

There are lessons to understand in these descriptions if we will search them out. In alphabetical order they are called:

1. **Beasts.** of the field and the forest. Isa 56:9-11
2. **Briers and Thorns.** Ezk 2:6; Isa 9:13-18; Micah 7:1-4
3. **Clouds Without Water.** Jude 12
4. **Dogs**. Isa 56:10
5. **Goats.** Zech 10:3
6. **Idols.** Zech 10:2-3
7. **Merchants.** 2 Pet. 2:1-3; Zech 14:21 (Canaanite means "merchant", see Strong's #3669)
8. **Raging Waves.** Jude 13
9. **Scorpions.** Ezk 2:6; Isa 9:15-18;
10. **Trees Without Fruit.** Jude 12; Matt 7:17-20
11. **Wandering Stars.** Jude 1:13
12. **Watchmen that are Blind and Ignorant.** Isa 56:10
13. **Wolves.** Ezk 22:26-28; Zeph 3:1-4; Matt 7:15; Acts 20:29-30
14. **Young Lions.** Zech 11:3-5

Let us take a closer look at Isaiah 56:9 where the description "beast" is found. In verse 10 we see beast is associated with "watchmen" and in verse 11 they are called "shepherds". In verse 9 they are called "beasts of the field." In Matthew 13:38 it says the field is the world. Isaiah 56:9 also calls them "beasts of the forest." A forest consists of individual trees grouped together, which could be analogous to religious organizations. In Isaiah 61:3 we find the concept of individual saints being called "trees of righteousness".

The second description of false shepherds was "briers and thorns". There is a strong warning in Isaiah 10:17-19 which may be applicable:

> Isa 10:17 The Light of Israel will become a fire, their Holy One a flame; in a single day **it will burn and consume his thorns and his briers.**

18 The splendor of his forests and fertile fields it will completely destroy, as when a sick man wastes away.

19 And the remaining trees of his forests will be so few that a child could write them down.

Taking another example, let us look at what it says about "Idols". In Zechariah 10:2 it says, "For the idols have spoken vanity." Verse 2-3 shows it is talking about shepherds being set up, or setting themselves up, as idols. Doesn't this fit in with those shepherds that say we must have them ruling over us in order to enter into the Kingdom of God? **We need to be sure that we do not set up the ministry or any church leaders as "idols" between us and our Creator.** If we do, there are indications our fate may also fall in with the "briers and thorns".

Ezekiel 34 and Isaiah 56 say a lot about false shepherds. The words "**no** shepherd", "there is **none**", "**all**", "**every one**", in talking about those shepherds who are supposed to be helping their fellow brethren, but are sadly lacking in real outgoing love, concern and humility. We need to be watchful of **any** shepherd and to try the spirits. Is what they are teaching, and doing, in line with what the scriptures truly say?

Detecting False Shepherds

How can we determine a false shepherd from a good shepherd? Scripture says "By their fruits you shall know them" (Matt 7:16) and "...do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1Jn 4:1). We need to study so as to be able to rightly divide the word of truth and follow the voice of our True Shepherd (2Tim. 2:15). On the other hand, when we hear the voice of a stranger, we are to flee from him (John 10:1-5). In my life's experience, I have seen many stay when they should flee

Before we read the scriptures about false shepherds, it is important to realize that we are not to judge anyone's eternal life: "Do not judge, or you too will be judged" (Matt 7:1). It is our responsibility to determine whether or not we will **listen** to a shepherd; it is not for us to judge his heart and motives. The following scriptures should help us decide:

Deut 18:22 If what a prophet **proclaims in the name of the LORD does not take place or come true**, that is a message the LORD has not spoken. That prophet has spoken presumptuously. Do not be afraid of him.

1Tim 6:4 ...He has an unhealthy interest in controversies and quarrels about words that result in envy, strife, malicious talk, evil suspicions

5 and constant friction between men of corrupt mind, who have been robbed of the truth and **who think that godliness is a means to financial gain**.

Titus 1:11 They must be silenced, because they are ruining whole households by teaching things they ought not to teach--and that **for the sake of dishonest gain**.

2Jn 1:9 I wrote to the church, but Diotrephes, who **loves to have the preeminence** among them, does not receive us.

10 Therefore, if I come, I will call to mind his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words. And not content with that, **he himself does not receive the brethren, and forbids those who wish to**, putting *them* out of the church.

Rev 2:2 I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and **have found them liars** (NKJV).

2Cor 11:14 And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light.

15 It is not surprising, then, if **his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness.** Their end will be what their actions deserve.

From these scriptures, we can see that some signs of false shepherds are that they may: **1)** falsely prophesy in God's name, **2)** attempt to become wealthy by teaching or preaching, **3)** love to be recognized as preeminent over others, **4)** try to stop brethren from associating with other brethren or **5)** be liars. They will all probably **(6)** claim to be righteous servants of God. Characteristics of **good servants of God** can be found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

May we all understand how important the instruction of the Apostle Paul to the Thessalonians: "prove all things; hold fast to that which is good" (1Thes. 5:21).

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Emotionalism Dethrones Reason

by Tommy Willis

We need to be careful **not** to allow our emotions to dictate our actions. If we do, it can make havoc in our lives; it shipwrecks our thinking.

The Bible tells us that God will give us a sound mind (2Tim 1:7). As we seek out God as we should, He will give us the mind of Christ—which will make decisions based on sound thinking.

Few people think as they should; few believers do. And what we need to understand is that there is no growth without thinking.

Whether it is Church organizations or secular institutions we are a part of—we cannot let them do our thinking for us. All matters must be checked out thoroughly as God tells us to do:

> 1Thes 5:21 Test everything. Hold on to the good.

I never saw a more neglected scripture than the above one. Nothing is more striking among brethren than the lack of intellectual independence. They think they are making their own decisions, when much of the time they are merely following the crowd. Many surrender their reasoning, and simply follow the herd.

The exercise of the mind is how we grow spiritually and mentally. The way God set the whole process up is that only with the exercise of the mind can we have the proper growth:

> Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongs to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil (NKJV).

All too often we allow our emotions to make the decision for us. If you are in a situation where your emotions are out of balance—then take some time to back off to take a better look at what you are doing. This may take a few minutes, or a few hours. And if it is a real chaotic situation it may take weeks. Back off and pray about it, do not be in a hurry to make a decision. There can be bad decisions made that can cause a lifetime of pain. So it's best to go slow and "Wait on the Lord" as He tells us to do (Pslm 27:14).

It takes maturity **not** to let your emotions dethrone your reasoning. After we become mature there will be a calm brow in the midst of turmoil around us. God will teach us to be at peace amid the chaos of the world. He is our peace—Eph 2:14. And if we allow God to create the mind of Christ within, He will see to it that we are at peace as we go about our daily task.

Emotionalism can sway whole nations. Large parts of the population of a nation have been destroyed because of the fanatical idea of a leader. But the seekers and explorers of the mind will see many things the complacent mind won't. Those who continue to search will reach levels the institutionalized mentality cannot grasp.

Much of our news reporting, advertising and entertainment appeals to our emotions, not to our reason. We need to recognize these things for what they are so that they do not have too great of an influence on our minds.

God made us so that we will be tremendously blessed with the proper use of the mind. Don't allow your emotions to dictate your actions. Think of Matthew 24:10-13, where God says that many believers begin to betray one another, and hate one another. And think how much they will be allowing their emotions to dethrone sound reasoning here. They surely are not keeping the big picture in mind by putting their salvation on the line by hating those who have wronged them.

I share this with you as one who was in trouble for years because I held an unforgiving heart against those brethren who I felt wronged me. And my growth didn't go forward until God got my mind straightened out. I was allowing my emotions to dethrone sound thinking.

Let God teach you to control your emotions. Emotional maturity is a wonderful thing; God will keep you at peace amid the chaos of the times. The more we allow Him to put the mind of Christ within—the more we will handle the turmoil around us with the Peace of mind God has in store for us. 🕮

The Trials of Life

by Tommy Willis

We often complain about the trials of life. If we feel that we are functioning in a fair and just manner—then we feel we deserve fair treatment from others. If we don't receive it we often rebel, complaining that life is not fair—as if the trials we are presently going through are not written into the contract of life.

People didn't ask to be born, and this is one reason why we may rebel at the trials of life. **People relate to this subconsciously:** "I didn't ask for this life and these problems, so why do I have to face them?" This attitude often brings about depression in people.

We learn to depress at an early age. A three-year-old may want candy, but when his mother won't give it to him he throws a temper tantrum. When his mother still won't give in and punishes him for his anger—he may learn to depress. In his family structure depression may be a more acceptable behavior than anger—for sometimes his mother gives in to the sad child as he sits there depressed. This is a lesson driven home in the child's mind that he will use into adulthood. He has found that to depress gets him more control than his anger does. Anger and depression are often closely connected.

As we grow into adulthood we are often not aware of what we are still doing to control our environment. By understanding what we are doing it can lead to steps to overcome the problems. But we pay a price for our depression; it is demoralizing, and it cripples people—they draw inward and get into a self-pity party and everything looks worse. People around them may be suffering more than they are but they will never see it because they have drawn so inside themselves.

Often times, people go into depression being overly worried about a real problem. But sometimes it is the depression that actually ruins their life, not the real problem.

Simplistic answers don't always work—we can't tell people, "Don't worry, be happy" like the old song. People need to take positive steps to come out of their problems.

Some Christians tell the suffering brother or sister things like: "Cheer up", you're a Christian, you are supposed to rejoice in trials." But we need to understand that "simplistic answers do not solve the sticky problems of everyday life." And if we are not careful we can wind up sounding like Job's friends.

But there are positive principles in God's Word that will help us deal with those problems if we will learn to apply them. The best thing you can do is **take it to God in prayer.** You may also need to seek counsel about your problems. God tells us to seek wise counsel (Prov 11:14, 24:6). Talk to some brothers and sisters about your problems. This can help greatly. This is why the 1 Corinthians 14:31 open-format meeting is so helpful; brethren get to share their problems each week. One week you may be down and will need help, and the next week you may be up to help someone who is down. I've watched this open type of format be a blessing to people for many years.

If your problems are deep enough they may require the help of a professional. But you are more likely to learn important spiritual lessons if you can find a mature Christian with which to counsel.

Time for Professional Help?

How does one balance the Biblical instructions to seek God for healing with the use of medical professionals? This box should help you know. If one suffers a cut, he should not only pray, but also try to stop the bleeding. If one suffers a broken bone, one should not only pray, but also have a professional set the bone. We do these things because we understand them and we know that they usually bring good results.

But if one is suffering from depression, should one accept shock treatments, mind-altering drugs or complex psychiatric counseling? We are probably **not as sure** that these procedures will work. That is where we draw the line. If you concede to do whatever a doctor says, it is letting him be a god in place of the true God. However, if you accept a procedure that your own research (or that or trusted friends) has shown to usually be beneficial, you are maintaining control of your life, not giving it up to another man.

While many doctors do not like patients to continually ask, "why?" and to frequently seek "second opinions", they will readily admit that the medical profession is imperfect. Just ask a doctor if he knows of **other doctors** who have made big mistakes. Medical professionals should be viewed as people with good, but imperfect technical skill and knowledge—**not** as ones who stand in God's place to "heal us". —NSE

The trials of life are not easy; God never told us it would be easy. But we can take positive steps to overcome the problems instead of letting them overcome us.

Many times we will need to get busy with something if we are too idle. We will need to get back to work or a hobby. God tended that our minds stay busy. And sometimes we will need a break if we are too busy with work. Balance is the key; we talk about balancing our checkbook, and balancing this or that, and there's no place it's more important that in spiritual and emotional matters.

Taking positive action will aid us not to complain about the problems. It's important to keep in mind that the complainers never went into the promise land. We can start to complain and it can cause us to lose our salvation. God never told us it would be easy, but He has promised us that He won't allow us to go through more than we can handle.

> 1Cor 10:10 And **do not grumble,** as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel.
>
> 11 These things happened to them **as examples** and were written down as warnings for us, on whom the fulfillment of the ages has come.
>
> 12 So, if you think you are standing firm, **be careful that you don't fall!**
>
> 13 No temptation has seized you except what is common to man. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can stand up under it.

It is important to stay with Him so that we will receive the help needed. Take the positive steps to do something about the problems. Don't let them eat away at you without taking action.

> Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace in time of need (NKJV).

If we stay with it then after each trial God will teach us the lessons we need to learn from each trial. And they will add up until we learn to trust Him as we should.

> 1Pet 5:10 But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, perfect, establish, strengthen, and settle *you.*

These verses will help you establish your foundation to where you are learning to trust in God and His provision for your life.

And don't forget the benefits of counsel. There is a reason that God tells us to seek counsel in the book of Proverbs. And there is a reason why He tells us to confess our faults to one another (Jms 5:16). We will know better what to pray for, and this can lead to healing of those problems among one another. By having others pray for our problem we will be in a better position to be helped all the way around.

But one of the dangers is we don't want people to see our faults, and we try to create an image when we are around others. But God says not to create images; this is not the way to overcome the problems. To overcome them we must learn the humility to face the problem—this is the first step to overcoming them.

As we learn to take some of these positive steps that God says to take, we are better able to have His strength to deal with the trials of life. This does not mean that everything will happen perfectly, but things go so much better with God there to guide us through the problems. His peace will carry us through. 🕮

Share Your Shelter

Our Savior never argued or tried to force someone to believe in Him. We should not do that either. But if *Shelter in the Word* has helped you, you can share it with others who might be interested in it or helped by it. One of these methods might work for you.

1. Talk to them about what you have learned and encourage them to study the Bible themselves.
2. Copy your *Shelter* and give it to them (almost any office or copy store will do this for $1 to $2).
3. Give them your *Shelter* (we will send you a replacement issue if you write or call).
4. Copy just this page or write down the address or phone so they can request their own subscription.

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