

## Giving & Sharing Enters 25<sup>th</sup> Year of Service

In 1978, I was in transition. Having served in leadership roles in the Worldwide Church of God, and Church of God, the Eternal, I was disappointed in the way some Churches of God operated. It seemed to me that too much of the tithes and offerings ended up as ministerial salaries. The Church is supposed to serve others, not its elders. This is a critical doctrine. As a lay person, I wanted to serve the Church as a whole, as well as share the Good News of the Kingdom of God with others.

I was receiving numerous requests for my book, *History of the Seventh Day Church of God*, as well as other Church History material that I had compiled. I purchased a set of the King James Bible on cassette tape, narrated by Alexander Scourby, from a local Christian bookstore at a "special sale" price of \$97. The normal price at that time was about \$150 for the four dozen cassette tape set. I found that if I bought four sets from the distributor, I could buy this excellent Bible study tool for only \$68! The Christian bookstore had made \$29 gross profit on this "special sale" item! This gave me the idea to start a wholesale book service for God's people so they would not have to pay exorbitant prices. I started advertising this service to those who had obtained my books on Church History. Thus began the **Giving & Sharing** service to Sabbath-keepers.

In addition to the books on Church History, which continue to be of interest to Sabbath-keepers, we distribute Bibles, Biblical reference books, and provide articles and books on many Bible topics: the Sabbath, Biblical Holy Days, Tithing, Laws of Health, Marriage, etc. Wholesale arrangements with major jobbers and publishers enable us to deliver almost any Bible or religious book in print at a 30% to 50% discount. *If one cannot afford our suggested donation, we will send an item free, or on free loan.*

Many thousands of dollars worth of books and articles have been distributed throughout the world, all without a bit of personal profit. Our "suggested donation" is intended to represent our "break even" cost of materials, postage and handling.

Giving & Sharing is an activity of Sharing & Giving, Inc., a tax-exempt religious service, not a "church." Donations above the "suggested donation" are USA income tax-deductible. Request our annual financial statement. We are grateful for donations above the "suggested donation," which allow us to send more free material to those who cannot afford to send a donation. More money donated to Giving & Sharing means more WORK for us, which we are most happy to do, because that is the reason for our being, to serve others with the Almighty's Truth. Giving & Sharing pays no salaries.

In 1993, Earl and Wanda Lewis of Missouri, assumed the responsibility of mailing books and articles. Prior to that time, I packaged and mailed all materials, with help from our children. In addition to my full-time job as an accountant for a major coal mining company, I work 20-30 hours a week writing articles and handling correspondence for Giving & Sharing. Steve Kieler, John Guffey, John Crissinger, David Miller, and our international distributors also serve those who request literature, tapes, videos, answers to Bible questions, or help with personal, spiritual, emotional, or financial needs.

We thank the many people who have spread the word about Giving & Sharing so that we can serve more. Most of our new contacts come from word of mouth.

Do you have a Bible question or personal problem? We will do our best to answer all queries for assistance. If we can't help you, perhaps we can refer you to someone who can. It's a tough and wicked society in which we live, and sometimes it helps to have someone with whom we can discuss a problem.

Through the years, I have enjoyed Biblical research and writing, interacting with people about Biblical subjects, and providing good, solid, Biblical material to encourage others around the world. If there has been just *one person* who has been helped by the seeds we have planted in the name of the Eternal, it has all been worth it!

## Church of God News

Giving & Sharing announces a new, free, publication, "Church of God News," which began in January, 2003. Plans are to publish it ten times a year, on the Internet at [www.giveshare.org/news](http://www.giveshare.org/news), and in print. *COG News* will not duplicate the Bible Studies and related material of the Giving & Sharing Newsletter.

We need regular news reporters who will submit news articles every month from many Church of God groups. Please submit news articles of your group's activities. Deadline for each issue is the 15th of the preceding month. E-mail articles to the COG News editor, Steve Kieler, at: [editor@giveshare.org](mailto:editor@giveshare.org).

Subscribe to the Internet notification version, E-mail [info@giveshare.org](mailto:info@giveshare.org). The printed version is available only if you do not have Internet access. Write: **Giving & Sharing, PO Box 100, Neck City, MO 64849.**

"News of the Church of God" contains news of Church events, special meetings, youth camps, youth activities, feast sites, seminars, special speakers, new publications, summary of important articles and noteworthy sermons, new booklets, weddings, births, baptisms, deaths, ordinations, a bit of history, etc.

"COG News" will NOT contain: paid advertisements, doctrinal arguments, personal attacks, or negative articles attacking traditional Church of God doctrines.

Our goal is to discover what the Churches of God are doing *right*, not advertise what they are doing *wrong*. Our purpose for the new publication is to inform and edify, **Ephesians 4:12**, to stimulate and exhort, **Hebrews 10:24-25**, and unify, **Ephesians 4:3**.

Positive news has a way of changing attitudes. There are many good things being done by God's scattered believers. "Church of God News" will support the doctrines commonly taught by the Churches of God.

May we count on your regular news article contributions to "Church of God News"?

## Giving & Sharing Newsletter

Number 68, December, 2002

"Freely ye have received, freely give," Matt. 10:8

Subscription: Free. [info@giveshare.org](mailto:info@giveshare.org)

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Join us for **Telephone Sabbath Services**, the *third Sabbath of every month*. **918-222-7158**. After the recording, press **0566#** to join the conference call. Time: noon Eastern, 11 AM Central, 10 Mountain, 9 Pacific. See [www.giveshare.org](http://www.giveshare.org) for updated schedule.

**Have a personal problem?** Contact **Steve Kieler of Help Lines**, [Steve.Kieler@giveshare.com](mailto:Steve.Kieler@giveshare.com), 2193 Sheker Drive, Fort Dodge, IA 50501-8707, phone, **515-576-5743**.

**Contributions** above our suggested donation are USA income tax deductible. Donors receive an annual financial statement, and are encouraged to ask questions about our finances.

For a catalog of materials available for free loan, write: **Sharing Library, John D. Crissinger, PO Box 581, Granville, OH 43023.**

Visit our website, [www.giveshare.org](http://www.giveshare.org).

## Some Basic Principles

*I am ordinary.* There are people in the Church of God just like me. They have the same wants, needs, and abilities, as I do. I am average. I am not smarter, more good-looking, or richer, than most Church members. I am not more righteous than the ordinary called and chosen sons of God. In fact, many in the Church of God are much more talented than I am. And yet, the Bible says that spiritual gifts are distributed by God to *every* man, as He wills, **I Corinthians 12:7-11**. So, where do I fit in? Where do you fit in?

When I was hired to work in construction of new festival sites for the Worldwide Church of God in 1971, I began on the survey crew at Wisconsin Dells, Wisconsin. One day, I was in the dirt, setting stakes, when Festival Director Raymond C. Cole came by and said, "Richard, I want you to write an article for me for *The Good News* magazine." I exclaimed, "Are you serious?" To my surprise, he was. And so, I obeyed him and did it. Further, he sent me on a fact-finding trip to research the history of the Church of God. He did not tell me how to do it, just do it. Years later, I finished the book. Raymond Cole taught me to be an independent thinker.

Over the years, I wrote many more articles for the ministers, and membership, of the Church. Lawson Briggs, my mentor, taught me how to research and write. Alice and Rodney Pratt, my spiritual godparents in the Church, taught me dedication and faithfulness. Terry Swagerty taught me in Spokesman Club to speak like a man, to organize my thoughts, and drive home my points. I have left out many who have helped me in so many ways.

*My humble gift is to write*, in a simple and straightforward way, to communicate Bible Truths to others. I would probably not make a good Church pastor, or youth camp director, but I try to help others through the written word.

Average ability can be extended through *hard work*. My forte is work. In High School, a friend of mine had an IQ so high, it was off the chart. She could easily have been class Valedictorian. But, I worked to the edge of my limits, and earned the highest grades, while she was forced to settle for Salutatorian.

*Thrift* would not be something you would easily learn by working for the Worldwide Church of God in Wisconsin Dells, Big Sandy, Texas, and Pasadena, California. I saw Church funds wasted and abused by, and lavished on, its top leaders. I was disgusted and revolted at this financial mismanagement. Since leaving the WCG in 1975, I refused jobs offered by two different Church organizations because I believe in volunteerism. Tithes and offerings are holy to God, and must be used economically. I have voluntarily worked hard all these years, with no remuneration whatsoever, out of a labor of love for the Truth of God. Large organizations today could expand their work, and cut expenses by at least 15% or more, by instituting thrifty principles.

Articles I have written to help others don't usually come from this mediocre brain. I am continually amazed how material just comes to my attention, usually from several different sources at the same general time frame, and then suddenly, the light goes on. When I am impatient with others for not "getting" something that is perfectly clear to me, I am humbled when I realize the many times, I was as dumb as a doornail until God revealed something to me. *Truth comes from revelation, not from scholarship.*

In 1999, at the Feast of Tabernacles in Lake Texoma, Oklahoma, Tom Justus and other elders ordained me as an elder in the Church of God. It did not change who I was, but provided another avenue for service. *There are infinite possibilities in the Work of God. Each one of us has a part.* Let us all do our Father's business. After twenty-five years of serving the brethren, these are still my basic principles. Are you doing the job the Almighty has called **you** to do?

— Richard C. Nickels

## Comments From Our Readers

Once in a while, we receive mail that rips into us. That comes with the territory of serving the public. However, positive mail serves to inspire us. Here are a few samples:

“I want to thank you for the good work you are doing without a big fanfare or multi-million budget. I appreciate reading [another man’s] issue of your Newsletter that he receives and passes around.

“I am doing life [in prison] and came to the truth about the Sabbath and Holy Days five years ago. [My friend] explained about the days of Unleavened Bread last year and he obtained matzos for us during those days.

“I have read a lot about the Jesuits and would very much appreciate it if you would consider donating a copy of *The Jesuits* to me.” — prisoner in California

*Answer:* Certainly! Your free copy is on its way.

When we announced our new publication, “Church of God News,” we struck a cord with many of our readers. Here are some representative comments:

“Hooray!! It’s about time somebody set out to publish a Good News paper instead of just a bad news paper! Sign me up!”

“Congratulation on proposing this new publication. It sounds like an excellent way to generate tolerance and understanding among the members of the Church of God.”

“I hope I may be of some help. Your idea of a common newsletter could be the first of many needed steps to promote unity among Gods people, and eventually the Church.”

“Please send the online version of this new publication. Sounds good; especially goal of only including ‘good news’ in this publication instead of doctrinal bickering.”

“I have been informed that you are preparing to publish a Church of God News. . . . I am so disgusted with the [a certain newspaper] and I stopped my subscription several years ago because it was so depressing and negative in its approach.”

### *Bible Home Instructor Converts Idol Maker to Sabbath-Keeper*

“We were in the Philippines a year ago for three weeks, seven people were baptized while we were there. They have Sabbath School and Church every Sabbath at their home. They only use the *Bible Home Instructor* and the Bible. We furnish all of their supplies. It is a wide-open mission field and many can be saved through this work. . . .

“One uncle of the family read one page of *The Bible Home Instructor* (concerning idols) and was so convicted that he never misses a Sabbath service. This man was an idol maker for the Catholic Church for years.” — E. and K. K., Oregon

Note: Giving & Sharing has supplied many hundreds of copies of *The Bible Home Instructor* to these wonderful folks for use in their missionary work.

### Good News From Nigeria

A reader from Nigeria sent this E-mail: “I am writing to express my gratitude and appreciation for your website ([www.giveshare.org](http://www.giveshare.org)). Each new day, I continue to read and am blessed by the spirit-filled articles you posed in your website. It has uplifted me, provided resource and speaking ideas for me, convicted me, and been my resource for personal devotions. I am a woman Bible class leader in our local Sabbath Church and a family prison Ministry Director. I then pass on to men and women in the city jail, where my husband and I have a service with the few there each two weeks. I also share the articles from your website with my co-workers who also appreciate it..the articles have been meat to grow [with] since 2002. Here in prison, it is a blessing to receive the truth of God’s Word. I want to thank you for allowing me this privilege. Your effort is not in

vain. Many of the brothers and sisters here on this unit are growing in God's grace and the knowledge of His Word, because of your website.

"God bless your Ministry. Please add my name to your mailing list and if you are able, send me your free literature and Bibles to share with the inmates! You are in our daily prayers! Please keep in touch!"

### Comments from *Giving & Sharing* Workers

I can't remember how or why I became associated with Giving and Sharing. I do recall discovering a source of "cheap," if you will, books, Bibles, concordances, and Bible study materials which helped me to learn more about the Eternal God, His Son, and His instruction book.

I have since become acquainted with Richard Nickels and Earl Lewis who appear to be the driving forces behind this unique operation. I have found that I think along similar lines as they do and, I want to believe that I have, in a small way, helped unknown others obtain, as I did, a wealth of information about God's way of life and His plans for man.

It must be a huge undertaking to answer inquiries and fill orders from all over the world. It surely takes many hours of unselfish labor to make Giving and Sharing work. It is a wonder that it all gets done. No doubt there are those who take advantage and do not do their share in keeping the operation solvent, but inside I know the aim and purpose are solid and that God is watching over the effort.

Through Giving and Sharing I have made the acquaintance of unnamed others who engage in similar efforts to help those who struggle to understand truth.

I have found that the foundation of Christianity is not necessarily the preachers in churches, but the laborers in the field planting the mustard seeds among the many varieties of soil. May God grant that this bramble-covered bit of rocky ground become fertile from all the nourishment poured upon it by Giving and Sharing. — John Guffey

There are a host of large and small church publications; so what makes the *Giving and Sharing Newsletter* unique, worthwhile and profitable? Can we justify our existence; do we have a purpose?

Sometimes it is good to step back and see where you've been, where you're at, and where you're going, and a 25th anniversary seems the right time. It's been said that you can't know where you're going unless you know where you've been. While most church periodicals have good material and news items, I find much of it is redundant and some even poor attempts at doctrinal persuasion; often wrong. But here's the time to apply **II Corinthians 10:12**, "For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." We need to measure ourselves, as individuals, groups or services, against the better standards of truth, honesty, helpfulness, love, integrity, and righteousness (God's, not ours).

Where have we been? After twenty-five years of the *Giving and Sharing Newsletter*, we've seen highs and lows. Many or most of us have a grand history with the Churches of God: most good, some bad. As the latest saying in vogue goes: cry me a river — build a bridge and get over it.

Where are we? I tried to get an overview of the Newsletter and found not only items to assist you in your daily life and spiritual walk, but many references to good materials or sources of information, assistance, and good works. Yes things change, and change can be positive or negative. There have been major changes in the Church, and divisions. I believe that the Newsletter has been on the plus side of those changes and divisions.

The material printed seems to be largely unique; not generally a duplication of other publishers' articles; that's not a put down of others writings. Most of the feedback I hear on the Newsletter is very positive. That could be because of the emphasis on *doing* rather than *hearing*. **Romans 2:13**, "For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified."

Where are we going? This can best be addressed by rephrasing the question: What are the needs and are we filling them?

I believe our needs lie in persuasion to believe, to do, to keep, and, as Paul says, to provoke and exhort. **Hebrews 10:24-25**, "... let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." May God bless the G&S Newsletter and all the periodicals of the Churches of God that inform and uplift. I am proud to be associated with fellow saints and elders in all the Churches of God who are teaching, leading, serving, and living THE WAY. — Steven J. Kieler, 2193 Sheker Drive, Fort Dodge, IA 50501-8707, 515-576-5743, E-mail: [sskieler@dodgenet.com](mailto:sskieler@dodgenet.com).

### Audio Sermon CD

Giving & Sharing's new Audio Sermon CD has 446mb of RealAudio format files, featuring narrations of the book, *Early Writings of Herbert W. Armstrong*, scores of sermons by Herbert W. Armstrong, eight sermons by Garner Ted Armstrong, three sermons by Richard David Armstrong, and various messages by Richard Nickels and others. CD002 is available for a \$10 donation to **Giving & Sharing, PO Box 100, Neck City, MO 64849**.

Another item, CD001, a CD copy of our website (over 150mb), is also available for a suggested donation of \$10.

### How Vaccines are Made

Besides artificially tampering with the all-important immune system, many vaccines are made from questionable sources. It has been verified that certain common childhood vaccines are made from aborted human babies.

Do you wish to obtain vaccines that are *not* from aborted humans? *You still have a problem*. Polio, hepatitis A, and rabies vaccines are often made from monkey kidneys, rubella vaccines from rabbits, and encephalitis vaccine from mouse tissue. For more information on vaccines, see [www.dgwsoft.co.uk/homepages/vaccines/usvaccines.html](http://www.dgwsoft.co.uk/homepages/vaccines/usvaccines.html). The Bible says not to ingest unclean substances. We can trust our Creator to protect us from disease. Some instead trust putrid, unclean vaccines.

### The Old Paths, the Good Way

"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls. But they said, We will not walk therein," **Jeremiah 6:16**. Which way are you going to walk?

"Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee," **Deuteronomy 32:7**.

"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent," **Revelation 3:3**.

"Ye should contend earnestly for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints," **Jude 3**

# The Little Sabbath-Keeping Red Hen

Study No. 79

**T**he little Sabbath-keeping red hen found a kernel of Bible understanding. She was very excited about this knowledge and went to her fellow believers to tell them.

“Who will accept this truth?” she asked. “Not I,” said the pig, “it would require too much sacrifice.” “Not I,” said the horse, “it would make me the laughingstock of all my friends.” “Not I,” said the cow, “our leading minister hasn’t accepted this teaching and I’d be put out of the church for heresy.”

The Little Red Hen was sorry at the reaction of her friends. “I will accept this Bible truth,” she said. And she did.

The little Sabbath-keeping red hen wanted to share this and other Bible truths with others. “Who will share the good news with the unconverted?” she asked. “Not I,” said the pig, “I pay tithes so the ministers can preach the gospel. You and I are not ministers, so we have no responsibility or authority to preach. Our job is to pay and pray.” “Not I,” said the horse, “there will be controversy and trouble with some that oppose the Truth. We could get ourselves killed.” “Not I,” said the cow, “I’m embarrassed to talk to others about religion. They might think we are crazy.”

Undaunted at the reaction of her friends, the Little Red Hen replied, “Then I will share the good news with the unconverted.” And she did.

A few people responded, which made the Little Red Hen very happy in spite of the fact that her friends didn’t seem to care. “Who will help these little ones grow in the Truth and mature in the Faith?” she asked.

Again the response was the same. “Not I,” said the pig, “I don’t want to get involved with weak people’s problems.” “Not I,” said the horse, “they might bring up some weird ideas.” “Not I,” said the cow, “they’ve had their chance; why didn’t they respond years ago?”

“Well,” said the little Sabbath-keeping red hen, “I’m going to help them along. I’m glad someone spent the time with me when I was new in the faith.” And she did.

Times got very difficult. There were food shortages, religious persecution, wars, disease epidemics, and frightening earthquakes, floods and storms. “Who will help the widows, orphans and poor?” the Little Red Hen asked. “Who will visit those unjustly put

in prison, and who will comfort the sick?”

“Not I,” said the pig, “I’m too poor to help others, and besides, I pay my taxes to finance government welfare programs. Let the government help them.” “Not I,” said the horse, “you can’t trust anybody. I can’t find anyone worthy of helping. There are only undeserving welfare cheats.” “Not I,” said the cow, “I’ll give to the Church and let them help the poor. I know they give no accounting for the poor fund. But that’s their responsibility.”

“Then I will help the widows, orphans and poor. I will visit the sick and unjustly imprisoned and persecuted,” the Little Red Hen said with a tear in her eye. And she did.

The little Sabbath-keeping red hen’s lifestyle was not pleasing to the totalitarian government that recently took over her country. Her friends, the pig, horse and cow, didn’t see anything wrong with taking a “harmless” little mark on their hands and foreheads. “Unless we take the mark, we can’t buy and sell,” they explained, “our families would starve, and God holds us responsible to provide for our families. Little Red Hen, you are too stubborn and Pharisaical!” Nevertheless, the Little Red Hen obstinately refused to submit to the totalitarian state.

Finally, the Little Red Hen was captured and given the ultimate choice: accept the mark and live; reject the mark and die. “You know my answer: I will serve the Almighty no matter what!” she shouted courageously. As she was marched to the guillotine, she cried out, “Who will deliver me?” A voice from Heaven suddenly boomed out: “I am your Heavenly Father! I will deliver you!” And He did.

Then, the conquering Messiah asked a question. “Who will enter into eternal life?” “I will!” chorused the pig, horse and cow. “NO!” the King of Kings said sternly. “You did not accept additional Bible truths. You did nothing to share the Bible truth you had with others. And you did not care for and love the brethren, and refused to help the poor and needy. You loved your life more than me. You’ve had your life. Now it’s at an end!”

“Come, Little Red Hen,” the Savior

smiled, “you did all these things. Come, enjoy the blessings of my kingdom.” “But I’m not worthy,” the Little Red Hen blushed, “I didn’t do enough. Thank you for having mercy unto such a little one as me! Yes, I will come.” And she did.

### Summary and Conclusion

The tale of the Little Red Hen is a children’s story that continues to make a great impression on me. It has a vital spiritual lesson. In the original story, the hen finds a grain of wheat, plants, cultivates, harvests the wheat, grinds it into flour and bakes bread. Her friends won’t do any work along the way. But they certainly want the results of the Little Red Hen’s labor, the end product, the bread.

I have adapted this story because I feel there are many professing believers who won’t do anything, but want the end product, eternal life. Salvation is a gift, but it is not a

gift given to the do-nothing lazy person. The profession (job) to which we have been called is not always “fun.” It is work, **hard work**.

Even the true Sabbath is a day of work! Spiritual, not physical work. What better day than the Sabbath to perform works of righteousness such as those the Little Red Hen did. And yet some often turn the Sabbath into a lazy day of selfish rest for themselves.

Getting up out of bed early in the morning to pray and study, fasting to seek the Almighty’s will, overcoming personal sins and faults, helping spread the good news to others, working with and serving others: this is what every true believer is called to do, continually. Our walk with the Maker is not always, as they say, “a bed of roses.” There is much work to do.

Will we be like the pig, horse or cow? Or will we be like the Little Red Hen?

“Who will be a Little Red Hen?” I WILL!  
How about you? Ω

The “Red Hen” story is my favorite article. It has been published several times by Giving & Sharing and other organizations. I believe I wrote it in the 1980s, during a time when I endured fierce opposition for what I was doing in serving others through Giving & Sharing. One minister lambasted me for having the audacity to write religious articles and distribute them freely to the public, since at the time, I was not an ordained elder. His Church stated publicly that they were not an “information dissemination” organization. To this day, they are not.

On the other hand, one sees a nauseating continuation of the failed philosophy of lay members whose only function is to “pay, pray, stay, and obey.” Attend a large Feast of Tabernacles site, and you will see many hundreds of talented individuals who sit and listen to some speakers who are less than powerful. There are dozens of things these lay persons could be doing for God’s Work. Some of the designated speakers should sit down and be quiet, **I Corinthians 14:27-28**, and let the more gifted ones be the teachers.

If there is one message you can take to the bank, it is that God uses plain, ordinary, people, to do His work. I have been around a lot of evangelists, pastors, and elders, and some, but not all, think they are in a “special” class, above others. This is definitely not so. Perhaps the most shocking statement I ever heard uttered was when the Church’s leading silver-tongued radio evangelist screamed at me, that he was above the law. Not so. Every child of God has a unique role, a job, in the Family of God. We need to discover that job, and do it, with God’s help.

Please order our free 32-page booklet, “*What Should You Be Doing?*”

## The Last Shall Be First

Is another sibling of yours the firstborn? Are you impoverished or handicapped? Nevertheless, God may have a big role for you! Many of the patriarchs were not the firstborn.

“Natural” Firstborn	Received Birthright	Their Birth Order
Cain	Seth	3 <sup>rd</sup> mentioned
Ishmael	Isaac	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Esau	Jacob	2 <sup>nd</sup>
Reuben	Joseph	1 <sup>st</sup> of 2 <sup>nd</sup> wife
Manasseh (“forgetting”)	Ephraim (“fruitful”)	2 <sup>nd</sup>



# Table of Symbolical Words in Scripture

Study No. 213

Symbol	Meaning	Text Example
Adultery	Idolatry	Jer. 3:8-9, 5:7; Ezek. 23:37
Angel	Messenger, hence minister	Rev. 1:20, 2:1
Arm	Power	Psa. 10:15; Ezek. 30:21
Arrows	Affliction or judgment of God	Job 6:4; Psa. 38:2
Babylon	Rome, heathenism, ruling power	Rev. 16:19, 17:3
Beasts	Tyrannical kingdoms, wicked men	Dan. 7:17; I Cor. 15:32
Black	Affliction – anguish	Job 30:30; Joel 2:6
Blindness	Ignorance	Isa. 29:18; Rom. 11:25
Blood	Slaughter – depth	Isa. 34:3; Ezek. 32:6
Brimstone	Desolation – torments	Job 18:15; Rev. 14:10
Bride	Israel	Rev. 21:9
Bridegroom	Christ, wedded to Israel	John 3:29
Bulls	Violent or wicked persons	Psa. 22:12, 68:30
Candlesticks	Churches	Rev. 1:20, 2:1
Chariots	Heavenly hosts	Psa. 68:17; Isa. 66:15
Crown	Victory – reward	James 1:12; Rev. 2:10
Cup	Divine blessings/cursings	Psa. 23:5; Isa. 51:17
Darkness	Misery – adversity – ignorance	Isa. 60:2; Amos 4:13
Day	Indefinite time – prophetic year	Isa 34:8; Rev. 2:10; I Thes. 5:5
Deaf	Lack of regard for divine things	Isa. 29:18, 42:18, 19
Dogs	Heathen or impure persons – Persecutors	Matt. 15:26; Rev. 22:15; Psa. 22:16
Door	Opening or access to something	Acts 14:27; I Cor. 16:9
Dragon	A tyrant – a Satanic force	Ezek. 29:3; Rev. 12:3, 9
Drunkenness	Effects of divine judgments	Isa. 29:9
Eagle	Conquering kings or nations	Ezek. 17:3, 7; Hos. 8:1
Earth	The land – ground	Gen 7:10; Ex. 9:33; Num. 22:5, 11
Earthquake	Calamities – Revolutions	Matt. 24:7; Rev. 6:12
Eyes	Knowledge, understanding	Prov. 15:3; Rom. 11:10
Face of God	Divine favor	Psa. 13:1; Dan. 9:17
Fat	Abundance	Neh. 9:25; Jer. 5:28
Fire	Judgments	Num. 11:1, 3; Isa. 42:25
Forehead	Beliefs – Personal Character	Rev. 7:3, 13:16
Forest	City – kingdom – polity	Isa. 10:18, 19; Ezek. 15:6
Furnace	Affliction	Isa. 48:10; Jer. 11:4
Garments	Outward appearance	Rev. 3:4, etc.
Gates	Security, center of civil concourse	Psa. 147:13; Deut. 16:18
Girdle	Strength	Job 12:18; Isa. 22:21
Goats	Wicked persons	Zech. 10:3; Matt. 25:33
Gog and Magog	God's enemies	Ezek. 38:2, 39:11; Rev. 20:8
Grass	The lower order, opposed to trees, the higher order	Isa. 37:27; Rev. 8:7
Hail	Divine vengeance	Hag. 2:17; Rev. 11:19
Hand, right	Protection – support	Psa. 18:35, 73:23
Hand of the Lord	Divine influence or providence	Psa. 63:8; Ezek. 8:1
Harvest	A time of destruction	Joel 3:13; Matt. 13:30
Head	Rule or ruler	Eph. 1:22, etc.

<b>Symbol</b>	<b>Meaning</b>	<b>Text Example</b>
Heavens	Atmosphere, solar system	Isa. 13:13; Hag. 2:6, 21
Hedge	God's protecting providence	Job 1:10; Ezek. 13:5
Helmet	Salvation of God's people	Isa. 59:17; Eph. 6:17
Horse	War, military might	Zech. 9:10; Jer. 51:21
Hunger and thirst	Spiritual desires	Matt. 5:6; Luke 1:53
Incense	Prayer	Mal. 1:11; Rev. 5:8
Jerusalem	City of God	Heb. 12:22; Rev. 3:12
Keys	Power and authority	Isa. 22:22; Rev. 1:18
Lamp	A successor or offspring	I Kings 15:4; Psa. 132:17
Light	Joy – prosperity	Psa. 97:11; Isa. 58:8
Light	Knowledge by the word of God	Psa. 119:105; Isa. 8:20
Milk	Great abundance	Ezek. 25:4; Joel 3:18
Moon	A sign of coming events	Joel 2:31; Rev. 6:12
Mountains	A state – nation – kingdom	Psa. 30:7; Isa. 2:2
Mystery	Not a thing that is unintelligible, but never before made plain	Rom. 16:25, etc.; Rev. 17:5, 7
Naked	In the sinful state of nature	Gen. 3:10-11; Rev. 3:17
Night	Adversity – affliction – ignorance	Isa. 21:12; Rev. 21:25
Oaks	Men of rank and power	Isa. 2:13; Zech. 11:2
Oil	Abundance – fertility – joy	Psa. 23:5, 92:10
Olive trees	Believers and ministers	Psa. 52:8; Rev. 11:2
Palms	Victory	Psa. 92:12; Rev. 7:9
Paradise	Kingdom of Heaven	Luke 23:43; Rev. 2:7
Pit	Ensnaring devices of crafty men	Psa. 119:85; Ezek. 19:4
Rain	Something refreshing, delightful	Psa. 68:9; Isa. 5:6
Rock	God as a refuge and salvation	Psa. 18:2, 94:22, 95:1
Rod/staff	Authority – correction	Psa. 2:9; Job 9:34, etc.
Salt	Purity – barrenness	Col. 4:6; Deut. 29:23
Sea	Vast multitudes, an army	Jer. 51:42; Ezek. 26:3
Seal/sealed	Security – secrecy	Song of Sol. 4:12; Isa. 29:11; Rev. 5 & 6
Serpent	A cunning and evil being	Gen. 3:1; II Cor. 11:3
Sheep	Christ's disciples, followers	John 10:11, etc.
Shepherds	Rulers, civil or ecclesiastical	Nah. 3:18; Ezek. 34:2
Shield	Defense – protection	Psa. 84:9; Eph. 6:16
Sleep	Death	Dan. 12:2; I Thes. 4:14
Sores	Spiritual maladies	Isa. 1:6; Rev. 16:11
Star	A prince or ruler	Num. 24:17; Dan. 8:10
Sun, moon, and stars	Various state heads or rulers	Gen. 37:9; Joel 2:31
Sword	War and slaughter	Isa. 34:5; Ezek. 21:3
Tail	Subjection – degradation	Deut. 28:13, 44; Isa. 9:15
Teeth	Cruelty	Psa. 3:7; Prov. 30:14
Thorns	Desolation, troubles	Prov. 24:31; Hos. 2:6
Throne	Kingdom – seat of government	Psa. 122:5; Dan. 7:9
Travail	Anguish – anxiety	Jer. 4:31; Gal. 4:19
Trees	The great and noble	Dan. 4:20-22
Vine	God's elect	Psa. 80:8, etc.
Vineyard	The house of Israel	Isa. 5:1-7; Jer. 12:10
Watchman	Prophet – Preacher	Ezek. 3:17; Isa. 62:6
Waters	Afflictions – multitudes – ordinances	Psa. 69:1; Isa. 8:7, 55:1
Week	Seven years	Dan. 9:24-26
Wilderness	Afflicted state	John 1:23; Rev. 12:6

Symbol	Meaning	Text Example
Wind	Judgments – destructive war	Isa. 27:8; Jer. 51:1
Wine	Spiritual blessings – Divine judgments	Isa. 25:6, 55:1; Psa. 60:3, etc.
Winepress	Slaughter	Isa. 63:3; Rev. 14:19
Wings	Protection – assistance	Ex. 19:4; Psa. 17:8
Wolves	Furious, ungodly persons	Isa. 11:6, 65:25
Woman	Jerusalem, the Church	Ezek. 26:2, 3; Rev. 12:1
Yoke	Labor – restraint	Deut. 28:48; Lam. 3:27; Matt. 11:29, 30

— Adapted from: *A Handbook of Bible Law*, by Charles A. Weisman, pp. 142-144. This excellent book is available for a suggested donation of \$8.00 from: **Giving & Sharing, PO Box 100, Neck City, MO 64849**, or, you may view the entire book on our website at [www.giveshare.org/BibleLaw/lawhandbook](http://www.giveshare.org/BibleLaw/lawhandbook). Ω

## Problems with the New King James Version

Many Church of God people are aware of some of the problems with the New International Version (NIV). It is not a literal translation; it leans heavily on corrupt New Testament texts (Vaticanus, Sinaiticus); it introduces a number of heretical teachings (e.g., **Mark 7:19**, where the NIV adds, “In saying this, Jesus declared all foods ‘clean.’”); the NIV leaves out inspired verses (e.g., it leaves out the portion of **Acts 18:21** which says, “I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem”).

However, many believe that the *New King James Version* just updates some of the archaic language of the old KJV, such as getting rid of the “thee’s” and “thou’s.” Such naiveté is dangerous. The revisers of the KJV had to make more than merely a few updates to the 1611 English. Otherwise, Thomas Nelson Publishers could not have copyrighted the NKJV, for copyright law demands a new copyrighted work must contain a *substantial amount* of new material. If Thomas Nelson Publishers had truly been interested in making a more readable KJV, their work would have been in the public domain. As it is, the NKJV is protected by a 95-year copyright, and is reaping vast profits for its owners. They frequently substituted complex Latinized words for the simple one or two syllable Anglo-Saxon words of the original KJV. Consequently, the KJV reads at a fifth-grade level, while the NKJV reads at the sixth-grade level. ***The NKJV is harder to understand than the KJV!***

There are numerous examples, often absurd, which show the devilish proclivity of NKJV translators to defend their copyright, by purposely making their NKJV harder to understand than the KJV. Who does not know the famous parables of the talents (**Matthew 25:14-30**) and the parable of the pounds (**Luke 19:11-27**)? Anyone with a rudimentary education knows that the talent is a Roman measure weight of money, and the pound is a British unit of currency. But in the NKJV, Luke’s version is the “Parable of the Minas.” A “minor” is someone under age 21, but what is a *mina*? Most folks know what “quicksand” is, **Acts 27:17** (KJV), but can you find anyone who knows what “Syrtis Sands” (NKJV) are? If you were going to read **John 18:28** to your child, which would be more understandable, “judgment hall” (KJV), or “Praetorium” (NKJV)?

Most Church of God folks eschew Bibles with pictures of Christ, or crosses on the cover. However, they gullibly swallow the NKJV *triquetra*, an ancient symbol for the Trinity, comprising three interwoven arcs. See the *triquetra* on the front page of some editions of the NKJV. This same ancient symbol can be seen today on satanic rock group albums like Led Zeppelin, as well as New Age bestsellers like *The Aquarian Conspiracy*. Do we want pagan symbols on our Bibles?

While the body of the NKJV does not follow the NIV corrupt text versions, the NT portion of the NKJV center reference constantly cites “NU,” the Nestle-Aland Greek NT United Bible Societies’ third edition. So, for example, on **Acts 18:21**, the NKJV center reference has “NU omits *I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem.*” The NKJV thus casts doubt on

the Majority Text (a.k.a. the Received Text), by including in its center references all the textual deviations of the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus manuscripts.

Sins of omission can be just as bad as sins of commission. The NKJV omits the word "Lord" 66 times, omits "God" 51 times, omits "heaven" 50 times, omits "repent" 44 times, "blood" 23 times, etc. The NKJV ignores the Greek *Textus Receptus* over 1,200 times. The NKJV replaced the better KJV Hebrew (*ben Chayyim* text) with the worse Stuttgart edition (*ben Asher* text) of the Old Testament. The *ben Asher* Old Testament text is a revision of Rudolph Kittle's *Biblia Hebraica* of 1906 and 1912. Kittle was a racist who is considered the father of the Nazi Party.

Do you want to weed out false doctrine? If you use the NKJV, you have your work cut out for you. Take **Matthew 7:14**, for example. The KJV says, "Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." But the NKJV says, "Because narrow is the gate and *difficult is the way* which leads to life, and there are few who find it." If something is *difficult*, you can just work harder, and you will usually succeed. The NKJV teaches works salvation. The way to eternal life is not difficult, it is narrow and constricted (strait and narrow). With the calling and guidance of God and His Son, it is not difficult at all, because it depends on His works, not ours. But, it is not the wide highway most people travel upon.

Gail Riplinger lists scores of harder NKJV words, and many NKJV distortions of Truth in her four-page brochure, "NKJV Death Certificate." Write Giving & Sharing for a free copy. We also recommend Riplinger's book, *The Language of the King James Bible*, 179 pages, \$10, and *New Age Bible Versions*, 690 pages, \$14.95, available from [www.avpublicatons.com](http://www.avpublicatons.com).

I believe that one of the *ill effects* of "modern language" versions such as the NKJV and NIV is to *dampen scripture memorization*. It is difficult to memorize scripture, when your pastor and your Church quote from a mixture of translations. Most Church members today do not memorize scriptures. There are just too many different translations being cited, and people are confused as to just what are the inspired scriptures. Is it the Received Text, the "Nestle-Aland-UBS" text, or something else? Today, your pastor may be using the NKJV, but tomorrow, he might be using the *Revised* NKJV, or some other translation. An analogy in the computer world, would be constantly switching your keyboard layout. You would never be able to be proficient if you constantly switched keyboards.

You can't get more basic than the "Lord's Prayer" of **Matthew 6:9-13**. Most people sing, and memorize, the King James Version, "Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name . . ." However, NKJV has, "Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name." When one has been used to reading "Our Father which art in Heaven," and hears instead, "Our Father in heaven," it creates what psychologists term, "cognitive dissonance," or mental tension. It is like hearing a screeching, twisted, end to a familiar piece of classical music. To relieve this mental disconnect, a person usually *reduces the importance* to that which is causing the dissonance, or *avoids* that which causes the tension.

In the case of discordant Bible verses, a person tends to put less importance on them, reads them less, and/or memorizes them less: *he puts them aside*. In any case, Satan has accomplished his aim. "Yea, hath God said," **Genesis 3:1**, were the first words of the Serpent. He immediately cast doubt on the Word of God, and caused Eve to put aside what God had plainly commanded. Satan lessened the importance of the Word of God. In the Parable of the Sower, Jesus explained the meaning of seed that falls by the wayside, "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side" **Matthew 13:19**. **Proverbs 30:5** says, "Every word of God is pure." Yet man has adulterated the Word of God. Let us not put aside the pure Word of God.

I have a New King James Version Bible. I sometimes use it along with other versions to compare "difficult" verses. However, my main study Bible will remain the *original* King James Version. I realize I will not convince everyone to use the KJV as their main Bible. For those unconvinced, Giving & Sharing provides NKJV Bibles, which we hope will be used as *secondary* Bible resources.

You may order the *New King James Version Wide Margin Bible*, burgundy leather, \$47 delivered, or the *Cambridge King James Version Wide Margin Bible*, leather, \$85 delivered, from Giving & Sharing, PO Box 100, Neck City, MO 64849. Ω

I would like to tell a story. It is one I have told before. This article has been republished several times. It is a true story. As you will see, it is a story with lessons for us all.

## The Vow

It was a hot sunny day in July. Heat waves radiated from the railroad tracks. A boy clad in shorts and sandals scuffled along. He was about ten. Although firecrackers were illegal, he had managed to have an abundant supply of the little explosive toys.

As he walked down the tracks, the boy would light a firecracker and throw it into the dead dry grass along the right of way. Most of his "fun" came not from the sound of the explosions, but from the fact that he was breaking the law, and getting away with it.

This "Sunday school boy" obeyed his parents and seldom missed going to the Baptist church. Yet there were these private times, when nobody was looking, or so he thought, that he could freely "sow wild oats" and do "bad" things.

The boy lit a firecracker and carelessly threw the still burning match off to the side. Instantly the tinder dry grass burst into flame, spreading quickly. Frantically he tried to stamp the fire out with his thongs. The leaping flames burnt his legs and he screamed in pain. It was hopeless. He began to fearfully run home. Hysterically he ran as fast as he could the one or two miles home. He was scared and feeling guilty for what he had done. He knew the fire was quickly spreading close to homes.

"God, help me!" he cried. "Please get me out of this mess I've gotten myself in. If you help me, I'll do whatever you want me to do. Please God, help me!"

He burst into his home crying, "I didn't mean to do it!" His sister was talking on the phone, and hastily hung up and got her little brother to calm down and explain what had happened. The fire department was called, and the brushfire was extinguished before there was any serious damage to property.

The boy trembled in fear, hoping he wouldn't be arrested for arson. No punishment came, and he forgot his vow made out of desperation.

## A Time of Growth

Unknown to this Sunday School boy, the other party to his vow hadn't forgotten. The Eternal was allowing and using circumstances such that the boy would sooner or later fulfill the bargain he had made to be obedient to his Maker. To do this, He had to teach the boy many things.

Here are a few episodes along the way:

The boy enjoyed listening to the adults talk. One time, he and his parents visited his aunt, Ann Wiens. She discussed Bible prophecy with the boy's father. Ezekiel showed that a third of our people will die by war, a third die from famine and pestilence, and the other third would suffer a terrible captivity worse than the Holocaust. There was a man on the radio teaching this, and he published a magazine. These things made a very deep impression on the young man.

A couple of years after the July fire, the boy responded to his parents' wishes and "went forward" at an altar call, joining the Baptist Church. He was "dunked." Returning his wet clothes to the family car, he noticed a beautiful rainbow in the sky. "Could this mean God is watching over me?" he thought.

In 1961, he was fourteen, and his parents decided to move to the Oregon coast. He and his father spent the summer in a little shack as they cleared their lot of trees and built a house. In the evenings they would listen to the radio. A program called "The World Tomorrow" with Herbert W. Armstrong and his son Garner Ted Armstrong, caught their interest. The two carpenters frequently discussed the program and the Bible truths they learned. In order to receive the program at night from Radio Station KGO San Francisco, the boy had to put his hand on the radio to improve the reception.

Although the family still regularly attended the Baptist church, there was a growing realization that Protestant churches were rejecting Bible truths. There were many Baptist doctrines they had to "unlearn." For

the first time in his life, the young teenager read the Bible completely through.

Finally, in his Senior year of high school, the boy's father gave a copy of *The Plain Truth* to their Baptist minister. Next Sunday, in the middle of the sermon (which was on a totally different subject) the minister lambasted the magazine and an article in it which attacked the doctrine of the Trinity.

This was the last straw. Unable to refute the magazine article, the minister ridiculed the magazine's anti-trinitarian stance.

Next week, the young man sent a postcard to the Baptist church withdrawing his membership. This broke his mother's heart. The father agreed with the son but failed to follow his strong action, managing to keep a semblance of family peace in the face of religious dissension within the family.

The college years that followed were times of further growth. Naturally skeptical, the young man disbelieved at first glance many of the teachings of the Worldwide Church of God. He began to prove them, one by one.

There was a time when he just couldn't believe that the early New Testament Church kept the Passover on the fourteenth of Nisan each year. The Baptist church held the "Lord's Supper" on the first Sunday of every month. At the college library, the young man went to the *Ante-Nicean Fathers* to check out the Passover Question. To his astonishment, the dusty volumes said that Philip, Polycarp and Polycrates followed and others followed the Apostle John and the original disciples in always keeping the **Passover on the fourteenth of Nisan**, scrupulously observing the exact day. Incredible! Amazing!

And then the young man came to the point that so many do when he realized that what he knew to be true was more than what he was personally doing. He had proven that Christians are to keep the Sabbath and Holy Days, yet was not keeping them. He asked himself, "Why not?"

For one thing, his father believed in the Holy Days also, but didn't seem to have the spunk to stand up and do something about this knowledge. There was latent opposition from his mother. School and good grades meant a great deal to the young man, and would conflict with Sabbath and Holy Day observance. So, he did nothing.

*But the Bible was clear!* The young man was uneasy about not living up to what he knew to be true, but there was no motivation

to obey. As the years passed, the July vow by the railroad tracks was totally forgotten.

### Deadman's Curve

It was a miracle summer. Jobs were hard to find, but very necessary to pay for college tuition. The young man obtained a high-paying job working for the railroad, installing signal equipment on a construction crew.

There was a day when work was nearly completed on one set of signals. The foreman was having the men pick up their tools to move to another site. He had the young man and another worker move down the tracks to warn the crew if any trains approached from a curve south of the work site. It was the mainline railway, two frequently used tracks between Seattle and Portland. Southbound trains went on the west tracks, while northbound trains used the east tracks.

As the two workers walked south to take up their positions around the curve, the construction crew shouted, "train coming!" There was a speeding freight train moving south. The young man continued walking south and moved between the two sets of tracks. Suddenly, his co-worker further around the curve frantically waved, "train coming!" There was another train, a northbound passenger train coming around the curve!

In what seemed like an eternity, the young man hesitated. He didn't seem to know what to do. He was the only one who could pass the message ahead to the crew that there was a northbound train coming. And yet he failed to act quickly.

Finally, he turned around and saw some of the crew a good distance north. It was too far to shout. He waved half-heartedly, trying to tell them another train was coming. Quickly the southbound train hid his view of the work crew.

He wheeled around and discovered that he was standing in the middle of the northbound tracks. The northbound passenger train was almost upon him! He dived towards the bank. Just as he left the tracks, the northbound passenger train roared past him, barely missing him. The southbound train shot past the other.

Then there was an awful silence. Only the sound of his heart pounding and his heavy breathing. He had a strange feeling of guilt and uneasiness. His co-worker walked up to him and asked, "Why didn't you act more quickly?" He didn't know.

They waited, not knowing that the passenger train had ground to a halt up ahead. Then the young man saw the foreman walking toward them. He rushed up to his superior, who grimly said there had been an accident. "We think Olsen is dead. Another man is hurt."

Like a lightning bolt, the news of the grisly tragedy struck the young man. Olsen had been walking north in the center of the northbound tracks. Because of the noise of the southbound train, he could not hear the warning shouts that there was a northbound train coming up behind him. He was struck full force by the speeding passenger train, mowed down like grass. The other man was more fortunate. He was walking on the edge of the tracks and was knocked off the tracks with only his left arm crushed.

Feeling an immense personal responsibility for the tragedy, the young man dropped to his knees and cried out, "God, forgive me!"

### **My Road to Damascus**

I got up a new man. In less than two years, I was baptized. Yes, I was the young man. I saw clearly now that there was a relationship between this horrible accident and my failure to act upon what I knew to be true. I knew that unless I obeyed the truth, I was a dead man! God didn't kill the man to get my attention. He allowed this terrible accident to happen to impress upon me the seriousness of life, and that failure to heed His Truth results in death.

I felt a personal responsibility for the death of a man and the crippling of another for life. I do not know whether or not if I had acted more quickly that the accident could have been prevented. But I do know that the Eternal delivered me from the railroad track fire when I was a boy. And now He had delivered me from death. **What was I going to do about it?** In the final analysis, I knew I had to submit to Him totally.

There is a great unfathomable gulf between *knowing* the truth, and *doing* the truth. With circumstances allowed or brought about by the Almighty, I had crossed that great chasm. I had come to my personal "Road to Damascus."

### **Paul's Road to Damascus**

Prior to his road to Damascus, Saul of Tarsus, who became the Apostle Paul, was as

stubborn as I was. Viciously fighting the truth, he was traveling from Jerusalem to Damascus in order to destroy the new Christian group there. In his Pharisaical self-righteous attitude, Saul was earnestly doing what he thought was right. He had been a party to the mob who stoned Stephen, **Acts 7:58 to 8:1**, and was out to kill more Christians, all in supposed obedience to God.

On the road to Damascus, Jesus Christ struck Saul blind, and he fell to the ground. The Messiah's voice boomed out, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?" Blind and trembling, Saul cried out "Who are you, Lord?" "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is dangerous and it turns out badly for you to keep kicking against the goad — that is, to offer vain and perilous resistance." "Lord, what do you desire me to do?" "Arise and go into the city and you will be told what you must do" **Acts 9:1-6, Amplified.**

The rest of the marvelous story of the conversion of Saul is given in **Acts 9:7-22**. The scales fell from his eyes, he received again his sight and was baptized. Hardhearted Saul who had a "murderous desire against the disciples of the Lord" **Acts 9:1, Amplified**, was totally changed. He was converted from the greatest *foe* of the faith to the greatest *advocate* of the faith.

Paul must have recounted his story many times. **Acts 22:1-30** records Paul's retelling of the story of his road to Damascus in the temple before the Jews. His "Road to Damascus" meant much to Paul. He never forgot the lesson.

### **Your Road to Damascus**

And so it is, that each true believer has a personal story of his or her conversion, a personal "Road to Damascus."

I never tire of listening to others tell about their personal Road to Damascus. When I become acquainted with believers, I ask them to tell me how they were converted. There is great benefit in doing so, both to the teller and the hearer.

**Malachi 3:16**, "Then they that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before Him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon His name."

Lest we forget how the Eternal called us, we need to talk about our calling again and

again. Never forget your personal Road to Damascus, **Hebrews 2:3, Isaiah 49:15**.

### **Tell It To Your Children**

If there is ever a story I want to tell my children, it is the story of my conversion. Israel was to recount the story of their exodus from Egypt to their children, **Exodus 12:24-27, 13:5-16**.

**Psalms 78:1-8**, "Give ear, O my people, to my law: incline your ears to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in a parable: I will utter dark sayings of old: Which we have heard and known, and our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from their children, shewing to the generation to come the praises of the Lord, and His strength, and His wonderful works that He hath done. For He established a testimony in Jacob, and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers, that they should make them known to their children: That the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children: That they might set their hope in God, and not forget the works of God, but keep His commandments: And might not be as their fathers, a stubborn and rebellious generation; a generation that set not their heart aright, and whose spirit was not stedfast with God."

One minister who dislikes me intensely said that the way to handle a stubborn German like myself is to give them a swift kick in the posterior. I'm sure he would like to do this to me. I'll certainly admit I do tend to be stubborn. It took seven years of personal wrangling with the truth, before the Eternal finally knocked me over the head with a board, so to speak, before I finally had the scales stripped from my eyes and saw the light. Only the Creator knows how to deal with stiff necked, stubborn, rebellious people such as ourselves.

### **Road to Damascus — Past and Future**

I am writing to two groups of people. First, those that have been called, repented, been baptized and had hands laid on them for the receipt of the Holy Spirit, and are living lives yielded to the Spirit. And second, those who are yet to travel the Road to Damascus.

I am convinced beyond a shadow of a doubt that our children will one day travel the

Road to Damascus. They will discover, as I did and Saul did, that resisting the Eternal is like butting one's head against a wall. "It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks [goads]" **Acts 9:5**. A cattle farmer may use a stick or "goad" to direct the herd through a loading chute. What a ridiculous thing for a steer to run against the goad instead of responding to it! Yet how often are we like a stubborn animal!

How do I know our children will travel the Road to Damascus? For one, I know that one of the purposes of marriage is to perpetuate a "godly seed." That is why the Eternal hates divorce, **Malachi 2:11-17**. My wife and I know that we must teach our children the ways of God, to raise up a "godly seed."

One of the things we have taught our children is that they are "special." No, this does not mean better than others. Our children get into the same squabbles and mischief as other kids do. But the Bible says the children of believers are special to God, "holy" (sanctified, set apart for special sacred use).

**I Corinthians 7:14**, "For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy."

This means that in His good time, the Eternal will specially call our children. As it has been truthfully said, the Lord works through families. Church history has shown that the Eternal has often worked through successive generations of the same family.

So I am convinced that each one of our children will one day travel the same road I did. They will have their own personal Road to Damascus. Try as they may to escape what they were taught, the Eternal will call them, and they will respond.

### **Every Knee Shall Bow**

**Philippians 2:10-11**, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

**Romans 14:11**, "For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

**Isaiah 45:22, 23** "Look unto me, and be



ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.”

### **Some Forget Road to Damascus**

Nevertheless, the Bible shows there have been individuals who spurned the calling of God. Or worse, those who responded to the call on their Road to Damascus, yet later through rebellion or neglect, totally forgot their calling and turned again to their own vile ways.

The Eternal never forces anyone to follow Him. As one man said, many people stumble on the truth, and pick themselves up and go on their way as if nothing has happened. May our stubborn hearts be fully and permanently converted unto Him!

### **Responsibility of the Young**

Young children of believers have an awesome responsibility to respond to the call of the Eternal. Their parents have taught them God’s ways. God will draw them. It is up to them to respond to that calling.

“Even a child is known by his doings, whether his work be pure, and whether it be right.” **Proverbs 20:11**. This means that the character traits are evident at even an early age. Several Old Testament statutes prescribe the death penalty to incorrigibly rebellious children who curse and revile their parents. To say that the Creator doesn’t hold children responsible for their actions just isn’t true.

### **The Prodigal Son**

In spite of all good intentions of their parents, sometimes even children of diligent, Bible believing parents, become rebellious. These youth choose to go their own way, contrary to what they have been taught. Let’s look at the example of the “prodigal son” found in **Luke 15:1, 2, 10-32**.

The lesson of the prodigal son is that God is working with the children of believing parents. They may rebel and turn against Him, but sooner or later they will come to their own “Road to Damascus.”

There is the tendency of human nature for a rebellious person to think that God won’t forgive them, and will never accept their

repentance. But that is not so. Like God, the father of the prodigal son was all too ready to accept genuine repentance and take him back. The son finally had sense knocked into him. He “came to himself” (saw the light) and confessed his sin against Heaven and against his earthly father. All the father’s diligent teaching finally bore fruit.

### **Don’t Harden Your Heart**

*Young people, listen!* Don’t harden your hearts against God, as ancient Israel did when they provoked God in the wilderness. In spite of all the teaching, the miracles, the deliverance and blessings from God, they refused to believe God. As a result, after forty years of working with them, He said they would not enter His rest, His kingdom, **Hebrews 3:5-19**.

God is patient. He gave Israel forty years to repent. They had to go through the school of hard knocks along the way. How much easier for them would it have been if they would have responded to His calling. So young people, don’t be like a stubborn mule. Respond favorably to the calling of God.

**Psalms 32:8-9**, “I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee.”

### **Phoney Obedience**

Some young people feign obedience. They listen to their parents. They may go to Church with them, and be “model” children. But inside they may be itching for the time when they will be on their own as adults, so they can break away from the “shackles” of the supposed “restrictions” of their parents’ religion.

God knows their hearts. Dishonesty is the worst form of rebellion, **Matthew 21:28-31**.

I remember the son of a friend who was able to recite the Ten Commandments word for word at a very early age. It’s amazing how obedient the little boy was. He is now over twenty years old and not really interested in God’s truth. What happened? Why did an obedient little boy lose interest in the ways of God? I don’t know. But I am sure the Eternal isn’t through with him. Sooner or later, he will be brought to the Damascus road.

“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands

of the living God," **Hebrews 10:31**. God will work with this young man and I believe one day soften him up.

### Why Not Now?

Why knock your head against the wall? It's hard on you to "kick against the goad"! Youth who have been taught God's truth are going to be held responsible for acting upon it, just as I was.

**Hebrews 10:26-31**, "For if we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, But a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries. He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace? For we know him that hath said, Vengeance belongeth unto me, I will recompense, saith the Lord. And again, The Lord shall judge his people. It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Why learn from the school of hard knocks? Be smarter than I was. Don't be a stubborn, block headed, stiff necked, dumb head like I was. Wise up! Follow God NOW!

**Proverbs 1:7-8**, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction. My son, hear the instruction of thy father, and forsake not the law of thy mother."

**Proverbs 2:1-3**, "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; So that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; Yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding."

**Proverbs 3:1, 11-12**, "My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments . . . My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the Lord loveth He correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."

**Proverbs 4:1, 20**, "Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. My son, attend to my words; incline thine ear unto my sayings."

**Proverbs 13:1**, "A wise son heareth his

father's instruction: but a scorner heareth not rebuke."

**Proverbs 15:20**, "A wise son maketh a glad father: but a foolish man despiseth his mother."

### The Big Cop Out

Ah, the excuses some youth give for not following the Bible truths taught to them by their parents!

No matter how diligent and sincere we as parents may be, we do sometimes make mistakes. We may discipline our children in the wrong way or when they are actually innocent. Or at times we may fail to live up to what we teach. Someone else in the church may be guilty of backbiting or blatant sin.

A rebellious child may seize upon such shortcomings and say "If this is the true church, I want no part of it." Actually, this attitude is what many adults have when they react to sins in the church.

This is the worst "cop out" of all. Regardless of the sins of Moses, David, Paul, John, etc., or modern day believers either, sins do not justify anyone else to do the same sins. Every human instrument of God, except Jesus Christ, has had sins and shortcomings. Never use another person's sins to excuse you from having to obey God.

One minister we know has an adult son who has spurned his parent's religion. Another man said of him, "See, he does not have his children under subjection, he is not fit to be a minister" **II Timothy 3:4**. However, a parent is not responsible for their children's sins after they have grown up and left home, **Ezekiel 18:20, Deuteronomy 24:16**.

### A Father's Advice

As a parent, here is what I advise a young person to do. Here is a seven-point program to make your inevitable "Road to Damascus" and thereafter a little easier.

(1) **Read the Bible for yourself.** Maybe you will want a modern translation, such as the New King James or New International Version. As you read, jot down questions, notes, things you don't understand.

(2) **Ask your parents, your minister, other responsible adults, questions about the Bible** and how to put it into practice.

(3) **Give the advice from grown-ups a chance.** Realize it is possible that they might know more than you do, that they have faced

similar problems that you are facing, and that they want to help you go the right way.

**(4) Learn to control** two powerful forces in human life. Misuse of these two things has resulted in nearly all human misery and unhappiness. These two are **MONEY and SEX**. Money is only a tool, to be used responsibly to provide for your needs and the needs of your loved ones. Sex is good and right — **ONLY** in a right marriage.

**(5) Don't compromise.** When you know something is right, do it. Don't delay. I reaped the penalty for putting off doing what I knew to be right.

**(6) Prepare for baptism.** How will you know when God leads you to repentance? What is the earliest age for baptism? Children mature differently. Usually, the maturity required for baptism isn't acquired until the ages of 18-21, but this is only the average.

**Ecclesiastes 11:9-10**, "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth; and let thy heart cheer thee in the days of thy youth, and walk in the ways of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes: but know thou, that for all these things God will bring thee into judgment. Therefore remove sorrow from thy heart, and put away evil from thy flesh: for childhood and youth are vanity."

**Ecclesiastes 12:1, 13**, "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them. . . . Let us hear the conclusion of the

whole matter: Fear God, and keep His commandments: for this is the whole duty of man."

Repentance and baptism are necessary to begin the road to salvation. As the saying goes, "You won't win if you don't begin."

**(7) Don't be a quitter.** "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" **Luke 9:62**. Count the cost (**Luke 14**). Know that the critical step of repentance and baptism and laying on of hands is the most important decision you will ever make.

**Hebrews 6:4-6**, "For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, And have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come, If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame."

### God's Challenge

You are responsible for your actions, even if you are young.

**Deuteronomy 30:19**, "I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing: therefore choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live."

*Choose life.* Prepare for, remember, *never turn back from your "Road to Damascus."* Ω

## Believers Marques

"The best vitamin for a BELIEVER is B1" "Under same management for over 2000 years" "Tithe if you love YAHWEH! Anyone can honk!" "Don't give up. Moses was once a basket case." "Life has many choices, Eternity has two. What's yours?" "Worry is interest paid on trouble before it is due" "Stand for the gospel at all times. Use words only if necessary" "Prevent truth decay. Brush up on your Bible" "It's hard to stumble when you're down on your knees" "What part of 'THOU SHALT NOT' don't you understand?" "A clear conscience makes a soft pillow" "The wages of sin is death. Repent before payday" "Never give a devil a ride. He (or she) will always want to drive" "Can't sleep? Try counting your blessings" "Forbidden fruit creates many jams" "Believers, keep the faith. . . . But not from others!" "Devils subtract and divide. YAHWEH adds and multiplies" "If you don't want to reap the fruits of sin stay out of a devil's orchard" "To belittle is to be little" "Don't let the littleness in others bring out the littleness in you" "YAHWEH answers knee mail" "Try YAHWEH. If you don't like Him, the devil will always take you back" "Sorrow looks back, Worry looks around, and Faith looks up."

— from the Internet

"Our most merciful Redeemer, Friend and Brother, May we know Thee more clearly, Love Thee more dearly, And follow Thee more nearly. Amen."

— Richard, Bishop of Chichester (1197-1253)

# NIV Bible Quiz

Study No. 214

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Using the now-popular "*New International Version*" of the Bible, answer the following 25 questions. The results may *astound* you!

**Important:** Do not rely on your memory! Because the Bible is the *final authority*, you must take your answer *from the Bible text* (not from footnotes or memory). Copy the words exactly from the NIV. DO it.

1. Fill in the missing words in Matthew 5:44 *from the NIV* "Love your enemies, \_\_\_\_\_ them that curse you, \_\_\_\_\_ to them that hate you, and pray for them that \_\_\_\_\_ and persecute you"
2. According to Matthew 17:21, what two things are required to cast out this type of demon? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
3. According to Matthew 18:11, why did Jesus come to earth? \_\_\_\_\_
4. According to Matthew 27:2, what was Pilate's first name? \_\_\_\_\_
5. In Matthew 27:35, when the wicked soldiers parted His garments, they were fulfilling the words of the prophet. Copy what the prophet said in Matthew 27:35 from the NIV. \_\_\_\_\_
6. In Mark 3:15, Jesus gave the apostles power to cast out demons and to \_\_\_\_\_
7. According to Mark 7:16, what does a man need to be able to hear? \_\_\_\_\_
8. According to Luke 7:28, what was John? (teacher, prophet, carpenter, etc ) What is his title or last name? \_\_\_\_\_
9. In Luke 9:55, what did the disciples not know? \_\_\_\_\_
10. In Luke 9:56, what did the Son of man not come to do? \_\_\_\_\_ And, what did He come to do? \_\_\_\_\_
11. In Luke 22:14, how many apostles were with Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
12. According to Luke 23:38, in what three languages was the superscription written? \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_
13. In Luke 24:42, what did they give Jesus to eat with His fish? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Who will have right to the tree of life, Revelation 22:14? They that \_\_\_\_\_
15. What happened each year as told in John 5:4? \_\_\_\_\_
16. In John 7:50, what time of day did Nicodemus come to Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_
17. In Acts 8:37, what is the one requirement for baptism? \_\_\_\_\_
18. What did Saul ask Jesus in Acts 9:6? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Write the name of the man mentioned in Acts 15:34. \_\_\_\_\_
20. Study Acts 24:6-8. What would the Jews have done with Paul? What did the chief captain command? \_\_\_\_\_
21. Copy Romans 16:24 word for word from the NIV \_\_\_\_\_
22. First Timothy 3:16 is perhaps the greatest verse in the New Testament concerning the deity of Christ. In this verse, who was manifested in the flesh? \_\_\_\_\_
23. In the second part of First Peter 4:14, how do [they] speak of Christ? And, what do Christians do? \_\_\_\_\_
24. In Acts 18:21, Paul said, "I must by all means keep this \_\_\_\_\_ that cometh in Jerusalem."
25. Revelation 1:11 is another very important verse that proves the deity of Christ. In this verse Jesus said, "I am the A \_\_\_\_\_ and O \_\_\_\_\_, the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_."

**Conclusion:** Little space is provided for your answers, but it is much more than needed. IF you followed the instructions above, you not only failed this simple test, you receive a big goose egg. Does this not attest that there is something terribly wrong with this much-touted "accurate, easy-to-understand, up-to-date Bible"? If these 25 questions haven't served to show you that the NIV is a very inferior Bible, based on a very *inferior* and *corrupt* Greek text, another quiz could be made with 25 more questions, or 250, if you prefer; but you will still get an F on the test.

**NOTE:** If you would like to improve your score, and in fact score 100%, take this test *again*, using the "*Authorized (King James) Bible*." — from the Internet Ω

## Seven Essential Bible Study Tools

My father was a carpenter and homebuilder. He built homes completely by himself, from the ground up. He bought the land, drew the architectural plans, obtained the necessary permits, dug the foundation (by hand), poured the foundations, constructed the house, did the plumbing and electrical wiring, did all the painting, designed and built the kitchen cabinets, everything. He had no subcontractors. In Portland, Gresham, Lincoln City, and McMinnville, Oregon, are well-built homes my father built.

One of the things I noticed most about my father was the way he treated his tools. His attitude toward his tools affected everything he did. (1) he had a few simple tools, (2) he knew how to use his tools, and took great care to keep them in good working order, and (3) he took great care in the finished product; he worried about the details, was slow and careful, and incessantly used his level to make sure the job was done right.

I have inherited some of my father's tools, carefully kept in his metal toolbox. My most prized carpentry tool is my grandfather's hand saw, with his signature etched in the metal, dating from about 1900. My father's tools lasted a lifetime and longer. The carpenter's square, tape measure, pliers, shake axe, hammer, several kinds of hand saws, mortar board, trowel, pipe threader, brace and bit, and the ever present level point back to a time when homes were built to last, not slapped together. These were not cheap tools that you use once and then lose or throw away.

Dad didn't work fast. He felt that some of the newer tools and materials, such as electric skill-saws and drywall, were not as good as hand saws and lathe and plaster. He would saw a 2x4 stud with his right hand until he was tired, then switch to his left hand, without missing a beat. My father's definition of ready mix concrete was his son (me) feeding the sputtering electric cement mixer with gravel and cement. Plaster was mixed in a trough and carried on a hod into the house to smear on the thin strips of wood lathe nailed to the walls. Plumbing was the most difficult job, as we used no plastic or copper pipe, but galvanized steel water pipe, and cast iron sewer pipes fastened together with oakum and molten lead.

Although modern contractors laugh at my father's "primitive" construction practices, his simple houses he built with his own hands are still standing. A cement driveway we laid in 1965 is still good, with few if any cracks. In 1962, our home on the Oregon coast withstood the Columbus Day storm which devastated the state. Our neighbor's house lost its roof, but our home stood like a rock.

Well do I remember seeing my father, walking around inside an unfinished house, after working 10-12 hours, worrying about how he did that day, and planning what he would do the next day. If that blessed level showed something was not quite right, he would tear it down and start over! I have never known my father to brag about anything he did, but I did notice the quiet pride and self satisfaction when he finished a house. My father instilled in me the value of using quality tools to produce a quality product.

If we approach our study of the Bible with almost as much care as my father built houses, then perhaps we will produce a quality finished product — a life of godly character. Like a master carpenter, we need to carefully choose a few simple tools, and use them skillfully, taking care in the finished product. Dad bought the best tools he could find. He treasured them, and he learned how to use them as a craftsman. Your attitude toward your tools effects how you work with them.

As my father prized his carpentry tools, so I value highly the **Seven Essential Bible Study Tools**. Giving & Sharing can deliver six of them to you at discount. You need to know how to use them, respect them, keep them for a lifetime, and in some cases, pass them down for generations. The seventh tool, the Almighty's Holy Spirit, is like my father's level. It is the test, the plumb line, the guide for everything you build with the six

other tools. We cannot “sell” the Spirit to you, but you can “buy” it free from the Eternal (see **Matthew 25:1-9** and **Revelation 3:18**).

The first Essential Bible Study Tool is the *Oxford (or Cambridge) Wide Margin King James Version Bible*. Why should your main study Bible be the King James Version? Because other essential Bible Study tools are keyed to the KJV. Further, the KJV is based on the Received Text, while most modern translations rely on the spurious Codex Vaticanus and Codex Sinaiticus. Inferior translations, such as the New International Version, the most popular today, are like cheap tools.

Professor Robert Alter of the University of California, a Bible translator himself, admits, “Modern English versions repeatedly put readers at a grotesque distance from the Hebrew Bible. To this day, the Authorized Version of 1611 (the “King James Bible”), for all its inaccuracies, archaisms, and insistently Jacobean rhythm and tone, *remains the closest we have yet come to the distinctive experience of the original*” (emphasis mine). We recommend the excellent book, *Our Authorized Bible Vindicated* by B.G. Wilkinson (\$6.95 retail, \$6.00 suggested donation from Giving & Sharing), which shows the superiority of the King James Version.

Use the wide margins to enter your own notes and comments. Use a BIC Accountant’s Fine Point Ink Pen, or similar extra fine point, which does not “bleed” through the pages. If you wish to highlight portions in color, we recommend Eagle Prismacolor pencils, which can be obtained from an art supply store. Our article, “King James Version Errors,” helps to identify the few inaccuracies in the KJV, as well as understand the meaning of some out of date words used in the KJV.

When you become skillful using the Oxford Wide Margin KJV as your main study Bible, you will memorize where on the page certain key passages are located. For example, I can “see” the Ten Commandments of Exodus 20, on the right hand side of the page in my Oxford Wide Margin Bible.

The second Essential Bible Study Tool is *Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance*. Every word in the KJV Bible in its textual context is listed, alphabetically, with the corresponding number for the Hebrew or Greek word from which it is translated. This “Strong’s Number” is the key used for other essential Bible Study Tools. Strong’s has two major uses: to look up a passage when you only know one or a few words of that passage, and to look up all related passages covering a specific word or subject.

A third Essential Bible Study Tool, the *Franklin Electronic Bible*, can replace or enhance Strong’s, especially when you are looking up scripture passages. If you are sitting in Sabbath services listening to a fast talking preacher, you will have no trouble turning to every scripture passage he cites, using the Electronic Bible. You only have to type a portion of the scripture reference, and the Electronic Bible knows what you mean. For example, suppose you want to look up I Corinthians 15:50. You can enter your scripture search in several ways: 1Cor 15 50, or I Co 15 50, etc. If you want to it the hard way, you can type the whole thing out, “I Corinthians 15:50.” A second use of the Electronic Bible is to search for passages containing a word or group of words. For example, suppose you want to see all passages where the words “good man” are used in close proximity. Type “good man” and instantly, you are taken to the first occurrence, and you can scroll backwards and forwards to read surrounding verses, and/or jump forward to view additional occurrences where these words are used. The *Franklin Electronic Bible* is an excellent Bible Study Tool. There are three sizes and add-in book modules available. My dad, although skeptical of modern tools, would have loved it.

The fourth and fifth Essential Bible Study Tools are the *Englishman’s Hebrew and Chaldee Concordance*, and the *Englishman’s Greek Concordance*. Why, you may ask, do we need two more concordances? Isn’t Strong’s enough? No. Just as my father used different kinds of saws to cut different materials, so you need more than one kind of

concordance. The KJV Bible, and any translation for that matter, does not always translate a particular Hebrew or Greek word into the same English equivalent word. For example, look up the word “love” in Strong’s Concordance. You will see that in the New Testament, the word “love” is translated from two basic Greek words, *agape*, Strong’s #25 or 26, and *phileo*, Strong’s #5368. These Greek words have very different meanings, yet they are both translated “love” in the KJV.

With the Englishman’s Concordances, you can gather together all instances where *agape* is used, and all references where *phileo* is used, so you can see what the Bible says about different kinds of love. Once you locate the words under study using Strong’s, you can simply move over to the Englishman’s concordances to find all places in the Bible where that word or words are used.

You will find in this instance, that *agape* is translated as either “love,” or “charity,” and that *phileo* is translated “love,” or “loveth,” or “kiss.” Using only Strong’s, you might not have discovered this information.

Finally, the sixth Essential Bible Study Tool is *The Interlinear Bible*. It is the only tool among the others that could be considered advanced. The Hebrew and Greek text of the whole Bible is shown, with the Strong’s numbers above the Hebrew and Greek. With the Interlinear Bible, you can get back to the original language of the Bible, and verify if the translators did their job correctly.

While these six tools can help you understand much Bible truth, without the seventh tool, the **Holy Spirit**, you may build a very shaky house. The Spirit of the Almighty is like my father’s carpenter level. If the result of your Bible Study is not “level,” or “plumb,” it is not right, and you might as well tear it down and start over.

I encourage you to use these Seven Essential Bible Study Tools to be enriched and enlightened by the Word of God. The six tools are not inexpensive, but you can obtain them from us at discount. In addition, we recommend, for advanced Bible students, Hebrew and Greek lexicons (dictionaries), keyed to Strong’s numbers. Please see the current Giving & Sharing Order Form for the suggested donation for these excellent products.  
— from Giving & Sharing Newsletter #40, February, 1997

## More on the Five Commandments

While we cannot know for sure if the first five commandments were on one stone tablet, and the last five were on the second tablet, we do know from Scripture that the Eternal wrote on both sides of two tablets, **Exodus 32:15-16**. It is amazing how commandments one through five relate to commandments six through ten. Truly, God’s commandments are interrelated.

1-6    Murder is dishonoring the true God, for man is made in the image of God.

2-7    Idolatry and adultery in scripture are almost interchangeable. Israel went a whoring after other gods, while she was married to the Eternal.

3-8    Since God owns everything, stealing another’s goods is actually defaming God’s name.

4-9    The Sabbath is a true witness of the Creation and the Creator. Those who believe the lie of evolution, and twist the truth in their actions, are bearing false witness of the Lord of the Sabbath, and denying the Creator.

5-10    You honor your parents when you take care of them, and visit them when they are old. Covetous people neglect their parents, and do not visit them, because they are solely concerned with pursuing gaining wealth. Your parents sacrificed for you when you were young; now is your turn to sacrifice for them when they are old. My mother worked as a Nurse’s Aid in nursing homes for over 30 years, and relates numerous stories of neglect by children of their elderly parents.

## *The Bible Story*, by Arthur S. Maxwell

Reading to our children is one of the most important things that we parents, grandparents, aunts, and uncles can do. I remember vividly my mother reading stories to me when I was child. It was a great pleasure to read stories to our children. Now that they are grown, I look forward to reading to our grandchildren, and other children as well.

Seventh-day Adventist, Arthur S. Maxwell is a storyteller par excellence. Maxwell's ten-volume masterpiece, *The Bible Story* (1953), is the whole Bible in 409 gripping stories tailor-made to explain God's Word to children. A variety of artists contributed paintings of Bible scenes and characters. Other than pictures of Christ, which an adult can censor, there is very little objectionable material in this series. Adults should discuss the stories with the children, and add additional explanations.

Maxwell's *The Bible Story* is the children's Bible story series that all others are measured against. You see them in doctor's offices all the time. Each volume has about 190-200 pages; volumes 1-6 cover the Old Testament, and volumes 7-10 cover the New Testament. Check the 18-page index at the end of Volume 10, and you will be amazed how thorough and complete this work covers the entire Bible.

Until now, the set has been rather expensive. Sets printed in the USA by Review & Herald or Pacific Press, retail for \$399.95. However, a new edition, published in The Philippines (not as high quality paper, but still useful) is now available. The Giving & Sharing Bookstore (PO Box 100, Neck City, MO 64849) offers this less expensive edition of the 10-volume set, for \$79.95 delivered. Those unable to afford the suggested donation, may receive *The Bible Story* free on loan, two volumes at a time, from: Sharing Library, John D. Crissinger, PO Box 581, Granville, OH 43023.

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— written by Richard C. Nickels

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