



# Greatest Questions in the Old Testament

**A SIX MONTHS' COURSE OF STUDIES  
FOR MEN, WOMEN, AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

**By**

*LEROY BROWNLOW*

**BROWNLOW PUBLISHING COMPANY  
P. O. Box 3141  
FORT WORTH, TEXAS 76105**

**Copyright, 1961**  
**By Leroy Brownlow**  
**All rights reserved**

# CONTENTS

## OLD TESTAMENT QUESTIONS

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Page</b>
1. "HATH GOD SAID, YE SHALL NOT EAT OF EVERY TREE OF THE GARDEN?" _____	9
2. "WHERE ART THOU?" _____	16
3. "IF THOU DOEST WELL, SHALT THOU NOT BE ACCEPTED?" _____	21
4. "AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?" _____	26
5. "WHAT HAST THOU DONE?" _____	31
6. "SHALL NOT THE JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH DO RIGHT?" _____	86
7. "WILT THOU GO WITH THIS MAN?" _____	42
8. "WHAT PROFIT SHALL THIS BIRTHRIGHT DO TO ME?" _____	47
9. "WHAT IS THY NAME?" _____	62
10. "WHY DO YE LOOK ONE UPON ANOTHER?" _____	68
11. "WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?" _____	64
12. "HOW OLD ART THOU?" _____	69
13. "AM I IN THE PLACE OF GOD?" _____	76
14. "WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?" _____	80
16. "WHO IS THE LORD THAT I SHOULD OBEY HIS VOICE?" _____	86
16. "WHAT MEAN YE BY THIS SERVICE?" _____	92
17. "WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?" _____	97
18. "HOW SHALL WE KNOW THE WORD WHICH THE LORD HATH NOT SPOKEN?" _____	103

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Page</b>
19. "IF THE LORD BE WITH US, WHY THEN IS ALL THIS BEFALLEN US?" _____	108
20. "IS THE YOUNG MAN . . . SAFE?" _____	113
21. "IF THE PROPHET HAD BID THEE DO SOME GREAT THING, WOULDST THOU NOT HAVE DONE IT?" _____	118
22. "WHAT HAVE THEY SEEN IN THINE HOUSE?"	123
23. "WHY IS THY COUNTENANCE SAD?" _____	128
24. "WHAT DO THESE FEEBLE JEWS?" _____	183
25. "WHAT IS MAN?" _____	138
26. "IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?" _____	143

## FOREWORD

This book, **GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**, is what the name indicates. The Old Testament contains many questions. We have picked the ones we considered to be the greatest, most thought-provoking, and most practical for a six months' course in Bible classes. They are not questions about the Bible, but questions which are actually in the Bible, put there by the authority of God. These questions deal with problems just as acute today as they were back then.

These lessons first appeared in the author's book, **THE GREATEST QUESTIONS OF THE AGES**. That book contained fifty-two lessons, twenty-six from the Old Testament and twenty-six from the New Testament, but it contained no review exercises at the end of the chapters. To include such would have made the volume too large for class work. So it has been thought wise to write a review exercise for each chapter and to publish the former in two volumes rather than one — **GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT** and its companionate book, **GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT**. The review exercises increase the book's practicality for class usage and add greater incentive for more personal study of the lessons; however, the use of them is left to the option of the teacher and students.

Jesus often used the question method in his teaching. Questions arouse attention and provoke thought. This accounts for the unusual interest of the American people in questions. Aware of this interest in questions, we have felt it very timely to present to the Bible-studying public this series of lessons.

The lessons have been organized and written in simple, outline form. They were designed to have depth — but at the same time, simplicity. We believe that the most profound lessons can be simplified by employing organization of material, simple words, and a direct approach. This we have tried to do.

We have given the lessons a sermonic treatment, because we have aimed at results. We have labored to make practical applications of ancient truths. The ultimate aim of teaching is not realized, if the pupils come only to know the Bible, but rather when the pupils come to know and to live as God directs. Our true test as a teacher will come at the judgment. If our pupils are saved, we have been a success; if they are lost, we have been a failure.

We believe these lessons are practical for all Bible classes of men, women, and young people beginning with high school; for a guide in midweek services; and for an aid in home studies. The author has tried them in both the classroom and pulpit of the Polytechnic Church of Christ, Fort Worth, Texas, where at this writing, 1961, he is presently engaged in his eighteenth year of work.

A word to teachers: It is impossible to write a series of lessons that will fit the time limitations of every class and the individual pace of study of every teacher. But the author does think it wise to keep the lesson moving rather than let it bog down. If you get too tedious, your pupils will lose interest. So in order to cover a lesson in one period, you may not be able to refer to and discuss all Scripture citations given. But the large number has been included to be used as the teacher sees fit, if time permits; if not, they may be studied with great profit by the individual student in his home studies.

It may be that the teacher will prefer to spend nearly the whole class period studying and discussing the review exercise. This is very effective if the students have studied their lesson sufficiently at home and have filled in the exercise.

All Scripture quotations are from the King James Version of the Bible, unless otherwise indicated, because it is used more by the masses than any other translation.

The hope is now entertained that this volume may be

enlightening, inspiring, and interesting to those who study these pages; and that after completing this series, you will consider studying, if you have not already done so, the companionate volume GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, or one of the author's other popular study courses such as WHY I AM A MEMBER OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST or SOME "DO'S" AND "DONT'S" FOR THE CHRISTIAN.

LEROY BROWNLOW

Fort Worth, Texas, U.S.A.





# 1

## "HATH GOD SAID, YE SHALL NOT EAT OF EVERY TREE OF THE GARDEN?"—Gen. 3:1

**1. In this question which was asked by Satan, we are given our first introduction to the adversary of man.**

(1) From this time in Genesis until the Bible is read through in Revelation, man is constantly warned of the strategy, trickery, and deceit of Satan. Paul warned the Corinthians: "Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices" (II Cor. 2:11). The Ephesians were admonished: "Put on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). He has his snares or lures and enticements (I Tim. 3:7).

(2) In Satan's first appearance he plays the role of a preacher or religious advisor. This is surely shocking to some people today. They are surprised to find Satan in such a beautiful place as the Garden of Eden engaged in the work of discussing God's commandment. But he is often found in unlikely places, even churches; for he has his churches. The Bible speaks repeatedly of the "synagogue of Satan" (Rev. 2:9; 3:9). He also has his ministers which are "trans-formed as the ministers of righteousness" (II Cor. 11:15). They are pious and lovely in many respects, but are servants of the wrong master. It would be unbelievable, if the Bible did not tell us. Also, the devil has his doctrines (I Tim. 4:1) which render worship to God in vain (Matt. 15:9). This is the only way we can account for the many contradictory religions. We know that they did not originate with God; for God never opposes himself. He is not the author of confusion (I Cor. 14:33).

(3) Satan has a notorious reputation for perverting Scripture. On this occasion he flatly denied God's word (Gen. 3:3-5). In quoting Scripture to Jesus, he mutilated the passage and thus twisted its meaning (Matt. 4:6; Psa. 91:11).

## 10      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

(4) Man needs to learn that Satan uses every conceivable means to fight the work of God and damn souls. He is no ignoramus. We should acquaint ourselves with his varied methods so that we can say in the language of Paul, "For we are not ignorant of his devices."

### **2. Here we have a question asked from an ulterior motive.**

(1) Satan did not ask the question to get information, but for the purpose of discrediting God's commandment.

(2) Jesus, while living in the flesh on earth, faced many questions which originated in deceit. For an example see Mk. 12:13-17.

(3) Questions are sometimes motivated by a desire to try the person to whom it is addressed to see if he knows the answer, to give the querist an opportunity to answer the question himself, or to provide a good chance to argue. We should guard ourselves against impure motives lest we be like Satan.

### **3. For the first time in the history of man, the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy was preached on this occasion.**

(1) Satan preached it. In substance, he said, "Go on and eat; you will not die" (Gen. 3:4, 5). But a million marble shafts in the silent cities of the dead stand as monuments to his error. Even though they were erected in the fond memory of those who were loved, they also stand as monuments to the error Satan preached in the garden of Eden.

(2) The doctrine is still taught, even though there are many Scriptures which teach otherwise. The child of God can quit believing (Heb. 3:12); he can be spewed out of the Lord (Rev. 3:15,16); and he is warned against falling (I Cor. 10:12), because he can fall (Gal. 5:4). It is contended, however, that if one falls he was never saved to begin with. But Christ refutes this by stating that a branch in him—"in me"—may be severed and burned (Jno. 15:2, 6). The two little words "in me" prove that the condemned person was once in Christ.

**4. The devil worked through the serpent, because there was in that early day no person through whom he might work.**

(1) He could not work through Adam and Eve, because they were sinless at that time. Satan cannot work through a sinless person.

(2) Since the fall of man, however, there have been plenty of people through whom Satan could work. "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Rom. 3:23). Even the most righteous must be on the alert lest Satan make tools of them to accomplish his evil purposes. Jesus once said to Peter, "Get thee behind me, Satan" (Matt. 16:23) because even Peter was being used by Satan.

**5. In this question and context, man is first pictured as a perfect and sinless creature.**

(1) He came from the creative hand of God as a perfect being. Man was created in the image of God (Gen. 1:26, 27); so man, at first, was not sinful unless God was sinful. "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. 7:29). Man comes into the world today sinless rather than sinful. Psa. 51:5 has been misinterpreted to teach that David was born a sinner: "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." Sin is mentioned in the verse, but it was committed before David existed. David did not exist when he was conceived. Hence, the iniquity and the sin spoken of existed before David had an existence. Man's heart becomes evil in youth (Gen. 8:21); therefore, man's heart is not evil at birth. This surely testifies to the justice and fairness of God.

(2) After leaving Gen. 3, we find that the rest of the Bible is devoted to God's eternal purpose to redeem man (Eph. 1:7), to restore him to his lofty state before the fall, and to transport him safely home to another glorious realm which is heaven itself (Jno. 14:1-4). The whole story running from Genesis to Revelation is one of

## 12      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

continuity of thought and reads like a novel—a story of man's creation, fall, redemption, and eternal salvation or eternal condemnation.

**6. We see man in this setting as a free moral agent**  
(Gen. 3:1-6).

(1) He was created as an intellectual being who could obey or disobey. The ability to freely obey also carries with it the ability to wilfully disobey. Man could listen either to the voice of God or to the voice of Satan. The choice was his.

(2) That choice has ever been man's (Josh. 24:15; Jno. 5:40). Hence, Jesus pleads with man to make the right decision (Matt. 11:28-30).

**7. Here in the early dawn of time man is pictured between God and Satan.**

(1) Man has ever lived between the call of One and the temptation of the other. By getting closer to one, we get farther from the other. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you" (Jas. 4:7, 8).

(2) In resisting the devil, man should follow these three rules: A. Prove the spirits whether they be of God (I Jno. 4:1). This will guard him against false doctrine. B. Put on the whole armor of God. This will protect us against the wiles of the devil. Paul admonished Christian soldiers: "Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil" (Eph. 6:11). C. Be watchful. Peter said, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (I Pet. 5:8). This will keep the Christian from being taken unawares.

## Review Exercise

1. What role did Satan play in his first appearance to man? .....  
.....
2. What was the admonition given the Ephesians relative to Satan?.....  
.....
3. When was the doctrine of the impossibility of apostasy first preached?.....  
..... By whom?.....
4. How may you disprove the contention that if one falls he never was in Christ to begin with ?.....
  
5. Why did Peter tell us to "be sober, be vigilant"? ....  
.....  
.....
6. What two things can we do that will cause us to get farther from the devil and closer to God? (1) .....  
.....  
(2) .....
7. Why did the devil work through the serpent?.....  
.....
8. Quote Matt. 15:9 .....  
.....

**14      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

9. Give a Scripture which shows that a child of God can quit believing.....; can be spewed out of the Lord.....; can fall.....
10. Give three rules man should follow in resisting the devil. (1) .....  
..... (2) .....  
.....(3).....
11. Give the verse which states that Satan has his ministers who are transformed as the ministers of righteousness. ....
12. Jesus once said to Peter: "Get thee behind me ..... " Scripture:.....
13. Man's heart becomes evil in .....  
Scripture: .....
14. In I Tim. 3:7 we read of the " reproach and snare of the..... "
15. (T or F) The Bible speaks of the "synagogue of Satan."
16. (T or F) On the occasion in which the text was given Satan never denied God's word.
17. (T or F) Satan asked the question of the text from an ulterior motive.
18. (T or F) God made man upright. Scripture:.....
19. (T or F) The setting in which we find the text pictures man as a free moral being.
20. Thought for comment: From the very beginning man has ever been between Satan and God and can follow either.

## 2

### "WHERE ART THOU?"—Gen. 3:9

#### 1. One of man's greatest needs is to realize where he is.

(1) One of the basic troubles in the world today is that man, generally speaking, does not know where he is or where he is headed. He could know, for the entire Bible is devoted to acquainting man with where he came from, where he now is, where he is going, and how to get to the better place (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

(2) Self-improvement can only come where there is self-knowledge. The prodigal son did not return home to his father until "he came to himself" (Lk. 15:17), until he realized where he was, what he had done, and how far he had fallen. The long journey back home first began by his coming to himself. Many persons today occupy dangerous states unawares.

(3) In studying the states in which others have lived, it will help us to better know where we now are and which way to go. So we proceed on that basis.

#### 2. Adam was in hiding.

(1) Adam, conscious of his guilt, attempted to hide. It is true that he knew the difference between good and evil; but he could not enjoy this knowledge, for he found himself aligned with sin. So he sneaked away into hiding and tried to devise a covering for his shame. God said, "Where art thou?"

(2) He answered, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself" (Gen. 3:10). Adam's fundamental error was his thinking that God is like a man. He could hide from Eve, so he thought he could hide from God. This disposition on the part of man has been the basic sin of many, and God has charged them with this fault — "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself" (Psa. 50:21).

(3) It is impossible for man to hide from God. "The



## 16      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good" (Prov. 15:3). "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do" (Heb. 4:13). There never has been a midnight too dark for God to see (Psa. 139:11, 12) nor a stone wall thick enough to obstruct his vision. Every effort to deceive God is nothing more than puny self-deception.

### **3. Jonah was trying to flee from God** (Jonah 1:1-3).

(1) God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh and cry against that wicked city (Jonah 1:2). It did not please Jonah; so he rose up to flee from the presence of the Lord. At Joppa he boarded a ship to Tarshish. Why did he not say where he was? Because those words, "Arise, go to Nineveh," rang in his ears. That disobeyed command made him restless and unhappy. Evil always seeks to flee from the Lord's presence. That is why some people dislike going to church.

(2) But Jonah was soon to learn that God also goes to sea (Jonah 1:4). No man can flee from God any more than he can run away from his shadow. God is omnipresent (Psa. 139:7-10).

(3) It took some hair-raising experiences for Jonah to learn that he could not run away from God and his orders (Jonah 1:15-3:4). So when he was really converted, he was able to convert others (Jonah 3:5-10). Christ singled out the preaching of Jonah as the most powerful on record (Lk. 11:32). But Jonah had to learn first the folly of thinking he could flee from God.

### **4. Aaron was in idolatry** (Ex. 32:1-6).

(1) Aaron made a golden calf and said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." He knew the golden calf did not bring them out of Egypt, for it says in the fifth verse that they made a "feast to the Lord." It was only a symbol of deity, but Paul calls the creation of this symbol an act of idolatry (I Cor. 10:7). Man makes images to have a concrete manifestation of the prototype. He thinks it difficult to remain close to a being he cannot see; therefore, he creates some symbol to represent the being. However, the

Christian religion is one of faith instead of sight (II Cor. 5:7).

(2) One of the ten commandments forbade man's having any other gods (Ex. 20:3). Jesus also spoke out against idolatry (Matt. 4:10).

(3) One may be guilty of idolatry today by image-making, by making self god (II Tim. 3:2; Phil. 3:19), by making pleasure his god (II Tim. 3:4), and by making material things his god (Col. 3:5).

**5. The rich young ruler was in disobedience and sorrow (Matt. 19:16-22).**

(1) Not wanting to do what Jesus had commanded him, he went away sorrowful. Sin and sorrow go together. David mentioned that the sinful, even though they manifest some signs of peace and happiness, "are utterly consumed with terrors" (Psa. 73:19). As the young man walked away in disobedience, terror marched by his side. On the other hand, obedience brings joy and contentment. It did for the eunuch (Acts 8:39); it did for the jailer (Acts 16:34); and it will for us.

(2) This young man thought he wanted to know what to do to be saved, but he really did not want to know. He wanted to know, if it agreed with his preconceived idea. How true of so many today! They are not praying, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Matt. 6:10).

**6. The Laodiceans were in lukewarmness (Rev. 3:15, 16).**

(1) They were religious, but not overmuch. Their religious thermometer registered normal, not too cold and not too hot, just comfortable. They were a little bit for the Lord and a little bit for the devil, all mixed together and not much for either.

(2) Jesus preferred the extreme to the mediocre. "I would thou wert hot or cold." It nauseated Christ and he threatened to spew them out of his mouth. They thought they had need of nothing when they actually had need of everything (Rev. 3:17). Man's appraisal of self often varies greatly from his true status. If we

## 18      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

believe what we profess, then our religious temperature should be boiling hot; if we do not believe it, then we should be as cold as an iceberg. The very nature of the Christian profession excludes a middle-ground position (Matt. 12:30). The greatest argument for infidelity is a lukewarm Christian. Do not be that argument!

### **7. Simon was in delinquency (Acts 8:13-24).**

(1) He was saved, because he had complied with the conditions of salvation as specified by Christ (Mk. 16:16; Acts 8:13).

(2) Now, as a Christian he fell into the bond of iniquity. He attempted to buy the gift of God. In this realm, his money could not talk. God cannot be bribed.

(3) He was told to repent and pray that he might be forgiven. This is God's law of pardon to erring Christians.

### **8. Paul was in the "one body" (I Cor. 12:13), magnifying Christ (Phil. 1:20).**

(1) He had counted all things loss to gain Christ (Phil. 3:7).

(2) His philosophy of life is a solution to the greatest problems that have ever confronted the human race: the problems of life and death. "To live is Christ" solves the problem of life. "To die is gain" would, under that circumstance, naturally follow. Take care of life's problem, and death will take care of itself.

### **9. Where we are now will determine where we shall go later.**

(1) This is seen in the story of the rich man and Lazarus (Lk. 16:19-24). Rev. 14:13.

(2) There are only four states in which persons in this life may live: innocent or unaccountable state, alien, faithful in Christ, and backslidden state. Now in conclusion we ask this personal question, "Where art thou?"

Review Exercise

1. How can man know where he is ?.....  
.....
2. Where was Adam when he was asked the question in the text?.....
3. What was Adam's fundamental error?.....  
.....
4. Why did Jonah try to flee from God? .....  
.....
5. Prove that creating a symbol of deity is idolatry.  
.....  
.....
6. Why did the rich young ruler go away sorrowful!  
.....  
.....
7. In what state were the Laodiceans?.....  
.....
8. What are the four states in which persons in this life may live? (1)..... (2).....  
(3) ..... (4) .....
9. Give three Scriptures which teach that it is impossible for man to hide from God. (1) .....  
(2) .....- (3).....

**20      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

10. Give four ways a person can become guilty of idolatry today. (1) ..... (2) .....  
..... (3) ..... (4) .....
11. The story of..... proves that where we are in this life will determine where we shall go later.
12. Paul solved the problem of life by saying, "....."; and the problem of death by saying, "....." (Phil. 1:21).
13. Simon who had slipped into delinquency had been saved, because he had.....  
..... Scripture: .....
- 14..... stated that the sinful "are utterly consumed with terrors." Scripture: .....
15. (T or F) Adam was afraid because he was naked.
16. (T or F) The ten commandments never forbade man's having other gods.
17. (T or F) Jesus preferred coldness to lukewarmness.
18. (T or F) Paul had counted all things loss to gain Christ.
19. (T or F) Simon, an erring Christian, was told to repent and pray to be forgiven.
20. Thought question: Where are you? Where do you plan to be? Can we move people to change without first getting them to know where they are?

### 3

#### **"IF THOU DOEST WELL, SHALT THOU NOT BE ACCEPTED?"—Gen. 4:7**

##### **1. God asked Cain this question in an effort to reason with this angry and downcast man.**

(1) It concerns the first recorded sacrifices ever made to God, Cain sacrificed of the fruit of the ground while Abel presented the firstlings of his flock (Gen. 4:3, 4), Abel's offering was accepted, but Cain's was rejected (Gen. 4:4, 5).

(2) In a logical discussion of the matter, God first asked Cain this question: "Why art thou wroth? and why is thy countenance fallen?" (Gen. 4:6, 7). This was a divine warning and a calculated preventive of a meditated crime. If he should analyze the "why" of his anger, he would realize that it was caused by God's acceptance of one offering and his rejection of the other. This should have made Cain feel that the one who was really justified in becoming angry was God rather than himself. It is foolish for one to be angry at another because of his own sins. But, alas! how often it occurs.

##### **2. The question and its setting impress upon our minds that God holds the right to accept or reject any offering made to him (Gen. 4:3-5).**

No doubt, this is revealing to some who **have made** their gifts under the impression that God would accept anything. But God is not a starving beggar who **pleads** for the paltry crumbs that drop from our table. **This** should stimulate us today to reconsider our giving to ascertain whether it is acceptable to Him who is the object of our worship

##### **3. The question and context also teach that what pleases man may not necessarily please God.**

(1) This strikes at a very common error. Through

the ages men have labored under the false assumption that God's feelings are geared to their feelings. This was Cain's first mistake. Because he was pleased with his sacrifice, he thought it would please God. Man's feeling a certain way is no proof that God feels that way at all. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord" (Isa. 55:8). May we never forget: "The foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (I Cor. 1:25).

(2) May we learn on this side of eternity's shore that "there is a way which seemeth right unto a man; but the end thereof are the ways of death" (Prov. 14:12).

#### **4. This question suggests the rulership of God.**

(1) He is the only universal and everlasting potentate. Nebuchadnezzar recognized this and thus "praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation: and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. 4:34, 35).

(2) It is in the good interest of man to be under the rule of God (Jer. 10:23); for he that sins against God wrongs his own soul (Prov. 8:36).

(3) He who accepted Abel and rejected Cain is the God who either accepts or rejects every man. Before him we stand or fall (Rev. 20:12).

#### **5. The question further proves that God's acceptance of man is wholly dependent upon man's doing well.**

(1) This fair and impartial principle, "If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted?" has characterized God's dealings with man in every age. As long as you do

right you are acceptable to God. You forfeit your acceptability by doing evil. It is sin that separates man from God and that hides his face from us (Isa. 59:2). God's acceptance of Abel and rejection of Cain was not due to any partiality or favoritism. It was the result of Abel's obedience and Cain's disobedience.

(2) It is man's whole duty to "fear God and keep his commandments" (Eccl. 12:13). "What doth the Lord require of thee, [He evidently requires something] but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" (Micah 6:8). Walking with God is walking in his will (Lk. 1:6). Man must obey the will of God to be saved. Just being religious—Cain was religious—is not enough. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. . . ." (Matt. 7:21-23).

#### **6. God said, "If thou doest not well, sin lieth at the door" (Gen. 4:7).**

(1) That is what sin is—not doing well, rebellion toward God's will by either commission (I Jno. 3:4) or omission (Jas. 4:17).

(2) For the first time "sin," a word which means "missing the mark," is mentioned in the Bible. It has become a real threat to man. It is likened to a wild beast crouching at the door ready to strike and destroy. What a warning!

(3) However, Cain failed to profit from this counsel. Instead, he added sin to sin by murdering Abel (Gen. 4:8). Sin is a progressive thing. If not curbed, it will grow and grow. It is never satisfied. It is a malignancy that spreads and spreads.



Review Exercise

1. Why did God ask the question in the text!.....  
.....
2. What did Jeremiah say about man's need for God's rulership! (Jer. 10:23) .....  
.....
3. What does the person who sins against God do to his own soul?.....  
Scripture:.....
4. What does the Bible say in Rev. 20:12 about God's accepting or rejecting all men?.....  
.....
5. What is it that separates man from God and hides his face from us?.....  
Scripture : .....
6. When and under what circumstances is sin first mentioned in the Bible! .....  
.....
7. Prove from Cain's life that sin is a progressive thing.  
.....
8. The question in the text concerns the first recorded ..... ever made to God.
9. The question and its setting teach that .....  
holds the right to ..... or.....  
any offering made to him.

10. " There is a way which..... right unto a man;  
but the end thereof are the ways of ..... "  
Scripture: .....
11. Man's whole duty is to "fear God and keep his.....  
..... " Scripture: .....
12. Sin is rebellion toward God's will by either.....  
..... or .....
13. "The..... of God is wiser than men; and  
the.....of God is stronger than men."  
Scripture:.....
14. (T or F) Cain's offering was accepted, but Abel's  
was rejected.
15. (T or F) The question and context prove that man's  
feeling a certain way is no proof that God feels that  
way.
16. (T or F) God's dealings with man have always been  
characterized by the principle laid down in the text.
17. (T or F) Man's being religious is enough to be  
saved.
18. (T or F) Cain should have been angry with himself  
instead of God and his brother.
19. (T or F) God said, "My thoughts are your thoughts  
and your ways are my ways."
20. Thought question: . What practical lesson does man  
get from this question and study?

## 4

### "AM I MY BROTHER'S KEEPER?"—Gen. 4:9

**1. This question was Cain's reply to the question God had just previously asked: "Where is Abel thy brother?" (Gen. 4:9).**

(1) God knew. He merely asked this pedagogic question to remind Cain of where Abel was.

(2) This is the second cross-examination found in the Bible. The first concerned Adam and Eve and their sin (Gen. 3:8-13). It was asked after man's struggle with Satan. The second one was asked after man's struggle with man. Adam and Eve were evasive but humble. Cain was hardened and cynical. This is evidenced in his reply: "Am I my brother's keeper?"

#### **2. Of course, the answer is "yes."**

(1) However, Cain intended for the question to convey the meaning that he was not his brother's keeper, that his brother's state was no concern of his; because he prefaced the question with these words, "I know not." He did know, for he had just killed him. The question was asked in deception and contempt. "The question gains a slightly different force in the Hebrew, where the predicate stands first for emphasis: 'Am keeper of my brother I?' like: 'Am I supposed to watch him all the while?'"—*Barnes Notes*.

(2) This same merciless indifference toward the welfare of others was manifested by the priest and Levite who passed by on the other side of the needy man (Lk. 10:29-37). Jesus condemned their behavior as unneighborly.

#### **3. Envy kept Cain from being his brother's keeper.**

(1) His uncontrollable and spiteful envy had just roused him to murder his brother. (Gen. 4:8). Centuries later, his cold-blooded and malicious deed, excited by envy, was held up as an awful warning to man. John said, "For this is the message that we heard from the beginning, that we should love one another. Not as Cain,

who was of that wicked one, and slew his brother. And wherefore slew he him? Because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous" (I Jno. 3:11, 12). Envy caused it. The spirit of Cain will incite a murderous hand to be raised against a brother. It raised the bloody hand of hate against Jesus (Matt. 27:18).

(2) Envy is a sin of disposition that weakens and shrivels the soul. It is the sign of a little person. It makes him little because it steals from him bigness of character, nobility, and brotherhood, and gives him in return only the littleness of malice, infamy, and baseness. Envy is a despicable trait; it is putrid and cheap, low-down and mean; it is "the rottenness of the bones" (Prov. 14:30). A tree may be strong, healthy, and pretty from outward appearances. A wind blows it down and you see, to your amazement, that it was rotten and eaten up on the inside. That is what envy will do to a person. It will cause him to rot and decay on the inside. It did that to Cain. Envy is distinguished from jealousy in that one may be envious of that which belongs to another, while he may be jealous of that which belongs to himself.

#### **4. Selfishness restrained Cain from being his brother's keeper.**

(1) He was too self-centered to be concerned over his brother's welfare. His spirit is thus expressed: "The whole world must center around me, and nobody or nothing must get in my way." He loved himself too much to love anybody else.

(2) The Bible: "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth" (I Cor. 10:24). "Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (Phil. 2:4).

(3) Others: "As frost to the bud, and blight to the blossom, even is self-interest to friendship; for confidence cannot dwell where selfishness is porter at the gate."—Tupper. "Sordid selfishness doth contract and narrow our benevolence, and cause us, like serpents, to infold ourselves within ourselves, and to turn our stings to all the world besides."—Walter Scott.

**5. Cain's spirit was a renunciation of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.**

(1) Inasmuch as God is the Father of us all, then it naturally follows that we are all brothers (Isa. 64:8; Eph. 4:6).

(2) As brothers in the human family, we have duties and obligations to each other. "Have we not all one father? hath not one God created us? Why do we deal treacherously every man against his brother, by profaning the covenant of our fathers?" (Mal. 2:10).

**6. The brotherhood of man demands that we be our brother's keeper, as seen in Mal. 2:10.** This is the link that holds mankind together. In watching for a brother's good we must do the following:

- (1) Love neighbor as self (Lev. 19:18; Matt. 22:39).
- (2) Restore the sinful (Gal. 6:1).
- (3) Bear one another's burdens (Gal. 6:2).
- (4) "Do good unto all men" (Gal. 6:10).
- (5) "Give to him that needeth" (Eph. 4:28).
- (6) "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep" (Rom. 12:15).
- (7) Treat others as we wish to be treated (Matt. T:12).

Review Exercise

- 1. What question did Cain ask in reply to the question God asked him, "Where is Abel thy brother?".....  
.....
- 2. What is the first cross-examination found in the Bible?.....  
.....

3. What meaning did Cain intend to convey by asking, "Am I my brother's keeper?" .....  
.....
4. Why did Cain slay Abel?.....  
.....Scripture: .....
5. According to Walter Scott, how will selfishness make one behave ?.....  
.....  
.....
6. What are the three questions in Mal. 2:10 which demand that we be our brother's keeper? (1) .....  
..... (2) .....  
.....(3).....  
.....
7. What did John say is the message we have heard from the beginning concerning love?.....  
.....
8. What is the distinction between envy and jealousy?  
.....  
.....
9. The hardness and cynicism of Cain is evident by his asking, ".....  
..... ?"

**30      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

10. Indifference toward the welfare of others was manifested by the..... and..... who passed by on the other side of a needy man.
- 11.....raised the bloody hand of hate against Jesus (Matt. 27:18).
12. Envy is the "rotteness of the..... " Scripture:.....
13. The Bible says, "Look not every man on his..... , but every man also on the things of..... " Scripture:.....
- 14..... will cause one to rot and decay on the inside. Scripture: .....
15. (T or F) Cain was too self-centered to be concerned over his brother's welfare.
16. (T or F) Cain's spirit was a renunciation of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man.
17. (T or F) The second great commandment of the law is, Thou shalt love thyself first of all (Matt. 22:39).
18. (T or F) Being your brother's keeper does not require you to bear his burdens.
19. ( T or F) Jesus gave a rule which so regulates our conduct that it becomes easy — when followed — to be our brother's keeper.
20. Thought question: What would be the results if men everywhere should practice the lesson learned from this question?

## 5

### "WHAT HAST THOU DONE?"—Gen. 4:10.

#### 1. God is the author of this query.

(1) He asked the question to arouse in Cain a realization of the sacredness of human life and the enormity of the sin of murder. Cain had murdered Ahel (Gen. 4:8).

(2) God's asking the question proves that he is concerned over man's deeds. This is a natural and fatherly interest, because man is his offspring (Acts 17:29). He has that same interest in all men today (II Pet. 3:9).

(3) In a sober consideration of the murderous deed and in the spirit of penitence, Cain should have asked himself this question (Jer. 8:6). Then God would not have had to ask it. But Cain did not!

2. It is significant that the first murder was the result of a religious dispute (Gen. 4:3-5).

(1) The same cause has slain millions since, including Jesus Christ. The early story of Christianity is a heroic story of martyrdom. Many died the objects of a misguided religion. The story of the Reformation is likewise a story of a seething, religious majority shedding the blood of a conscientious minority who dared to speak their faith. Why did it happen? Because there is no madness so mad, and no hatred so hateful, and no malice so malicious, and no bloodthirstiness so bloodthirsty, as that of a theologian who has no Scripture to prove his doctrine. It is the person who does not have a sound argument that usually becomes angry in religious discussion. The situation of his opponent is much happier.

(2) In ten thousand instances men have been guilty of the sin of Cain, even though they never shed a drop of blood; for "whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer" (I Jno. 3:15). God teaches brotherly love, not brotherly hatred.



### **3. Cain's outrageous deed cried out against him in an unmistakable voice.**

(1) That flagrant deed had a persistent voice that shouted in the ear of God. Hence, God said, "The voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground" (Gen! 4:10). What did it say? It said, "You are not a brother's keeper. You are a brother's destroyer. You are foolhardy and self-willed. You have no regard for God nor for others nor for yourself. You are vile and sinful." "Our sins testify against us" (Isa. 59:12). An indicting voice! Certain and unequivocal!

(2) What a man does talks for or against him, depending upon the deed. This is further seen in the following Biblical examples: A. The sacrifices of Cain and Abel witnessed concerning their faith. "By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. 11:14). Death could not silence this testimony. B. Abraham's plans to offer his son on the altar did some talking. His works said, "Thou fearest God" (Gen. 22:12). C. Paul's former life as a persecutor (Acts 7:58; 8:1; 9:1, 2) cried out against him and caused the disciples in Jerusalem to fear him (Acts 9:26). What Paul once did thundered so loudly in the disciples' ears that it was hard for them to hear his present speech. D. King Saul's sin of sparing the best of the Amalekites' herds testified against him, and could be heard in the howling of the cattle (I Sam. 15:13, 14). B. The works of Jesus spoke in his behalf. They said, "No man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him" (Jno. 3:2).

### **4. Man's works have a voice, because:**

(1) Faith shows itself by works (Jas. 2:18). You can tell what a man believes by observing what he does.

(2) Love manifests itself by obedience (Jno. 14:15).

You can tell what a man loves by noticing what he serves.

(3) Words reveal the heart (Matt. 12:34). You can tell what is in a man's heart by listening to his speech, for out of the heart are the issues of life (Prov. 4:23).

**5. God cursed Cain because of his sin** (Gen. 4:11,12.)

(1) Previously the serpent had been cursed (Gen. 3:14) and the ground had been cursed (Gen. 3:17), but not mankind. Now for the first time a divine curse was placed upon a man. Man must be taught that human life is too precious to be regarded so lightly (Ex. 20:13). Man must further learn that God will not condone sin. This has been a difficult lesson for man to learn, because he lives so close to sin that sin does not seem very bad to him. But to God, sin is an atrocious slaveholder whose only wages are death (Rom. 6:23), no matter who pays the pew **rent**.

(2) Man must learn the universal law of sowing and reaping, that "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7, 8). Cain sowed sin and reaped sorrow (Gen. 4:13).

**6. This study emphasizes that we should perform our works with prayerful and conscientious care.**

(1) What we do cries out to help or hurt others (I Cor. 5:6).

(2) Our works will speak after death has silenced our tongues (Rev. 14:13).

(3) The voice of our deeds will ring forth to bless us or curse us at the day of judgment (II Cor. 5:10; Rev. 20:12).

**Review Exercise**

1. Why did God ask Cain the question, "What hast thou done?" .....  
.....
2. What question do we learn from Jeremiah which shows that Cain should have questioned himself concerning his deeds (Jer. 8:6):.....  
.....
3. What kind of dispute was involved in the first murder?.....
4. How can one be guilty of murder without shedding another's blood?.....  
.....
5. What cried to God against Cain? .....
6. What testifies in the behalf of Abel, even though he is dead ?.....  
.....
7. What did the works of Jesus testify? .....
8. Prom whence come the issues of life?.....  
..... Quote the verse.....  
.....
9. Man is the offspring of.....      Scripture:

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT 35**

10. "Our sins.....against us." Scripture:  
.....
11. Faith shows itself by.....  
Scripture:.....
12. Jesus taught in Matt. 12:34 that words reveal the  
.....
13. Love manifests itself by..... Scripture:  
.....
14. The wages of sin is....., no matter who pays  
the pew rent. Scripture: .....
15. Paul teaches in..... that our reaping is  
dependent upon our sowing.
16. (T or F) Abraham's plans to offer his son on the  
altar testified against him.
17. (T or F) Paul's former life as a persecutor cried out  
against him later and caused the disciples in Jerusa-  
lem to fear him.
18. (T or F) Abel was the first person to be cursed by  
the Lord.
19. (T or F) We learn from the text and its setting that  
God will not condone sin.
20. Practical application: Give three thoughts that this  
study emphasizes relative to our own works.
  - (1) .....
  - (2) .....
  - (3) .....

## 6

### "SHALL NOT THE JUDGE OF ALL THE EARTH DO RIGHT?"—Gen. 18:25

#### 1. Abraham is the author of this question.

(1) He had just entertained angels unawares (Gen. 18:1-8). Centuries later this primitive hospitality was held up as an example for the emulation of Christians (Heb. 13:2).

(2) The Lord revealed to Abraham the precarious state of Sodom and its probable destruction (Gen. 18:16-21). In Abraham's intervention, he asked the question which is a basis for this study.

(3) God, in his answer, offered to spare the city for the sake of ten righteous souls (Gen. 18:32). It causes us to wonder how many righteous persons are needed today to save our own city, for "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump" (I Cor. 5:6).

(4) This question carried its own answer and implied the faith Abraham had in God's doing right. We, too, need Abrahamic faith to serve as a shield against "the fiery darts of the wicked" (Jas. 2:21-23; Eph. 6:16).

(5) This question with its implied answer has its application today in many topics of current interest.

#### 2. Some have questioned the goodness of God in appointing death (Heb. 9:27).

(1) God made this appointment for man that man might be freed from a land of sin and sorrow and transferred to an abode of sinless perfection (Eccl. 12:7). Death is an exit to this world and an entrance into another world. After man sinned in Eden (Gen. 3:3), death became necessary to the welfare of the human family. God did not want man to live forever in a state of sin and rebellion. Sin had defiled man and had destroyed the beauty of his habitation. God wanted something better for man; so he appointed for him a transition, a passing into a land free from sin and sorrow. It is there that "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor

crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away" (Rev. 21:4). There man may eat of the tree of life and live forever (Rev. 2:7). So He who appointed death also appointed eternal life for man, if he will qualify himself for it.

(2) Death is essential because these bodies of flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God (I Cor. 15:50). They are not adapted to heaven. So in death we shed these earthly tabernacles that we may be clothed with spiritual bodies "like unto his glorious body" (Phil. 3:21; I Cor. 15:51-54).

(3) In this world we must have death to have life. Suppose that no animal, plant, nor human being should ever die. If all life should multiply and continue to multiply without ever knowing death, then life would become unbearable.

(4) God has intended for death to be one of our kindest and sweetest blessings (Phil. 1:21). It is a precious thing in the sight of our God (Psa. 116:15), and corroborates his goodness rather than refutes it.

**3. Others have doubted the righteousness of God in his ordaining eternal punishment** (Matt. 25:41, 46; II Thess. 1:9). This, however, proves rather than disproves the justice of God, as we shall see.

(1) It would not be right to let sinners go to heaven. That would rob heaven of a celestial quality. Sinners have troubled earth enough without letting them trouble heaven. So heaven, among other things, is a place where "the wicked cease from troubling" (Job. 3:17). "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth" (Rev. 21:27).

(2) The inventor of a gasoline engine is glorified, if it is properly governed and made useful. Likewise, God's glory and man's happiness demand that God govern man in a manner adapted to his capacities. This includes the power of choice (Josh. 24:15). If man could not voluntarily sin, then he could not voluntarily obey God, and thus God would not be glorified by the superior abilities of man. The best means by which God may se-

cure obedience is to make the rewards large and the penalties certain and severe—hence, heaven and hell.

(3) God's providing torment is in keeping with right and is to his glory. This is illustrated in civil affairs. A nation is glorified by its honest citizens, but the same nation is also reproached by permitting its criminals to run at large.

(4) The criminal in our nation brings punishment upon himself by disobeying the laws. In like manner, the disobedient to God "judge themselves unworthy of everlasting life" (Acts 13:46) and thus bring eternal punishment upon themselves. "For whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. 6:7).

**4. Others have questioned the righteousness of God because of his chastisement.**

(1) But this, too, is done because of His love for us: "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. 12:6). Even a human parent has to correct his offspring. Love prompts it.

(2) In the parable of the vine and branches, Jesus portrays the Father as the husbandman or vinedresser (Jno. 15:1). The vinedresser carefully prunes the productive branches "that they may bring forth more fruit" (Jno. 15:2). Even though the pruning may be momentarily painful, it is strictly for our good. "It is good for me that I have been afflicted" (Psa. 119:71). Out of disappointments and afflictions come real character. It is the opposing winds that lift the kite.

Then, welcome each rebuff  
 That turns earth's smoothness rough;  
 Each sting that bites, nor sit, nor stand, but go!  
 Be our joys three-part pain!  
 Strive and hold cheap the strain;  
 Learn, nor account the pang; dare,  
 Never grudge the three.

**5. Men question the righteousness of God relative to one church and one faith.**

(1) Some think it is unjust of God to condemn religious people who do not hold to the true faith. But it

is evident that God gave only one faith (Matt. 16:18; Eph. 2:16; 4:4-6; Jno. 17:20, 21). If man had not departed from God's way, there would be no religious division today. So man rather than God is responsible for all the human churches and human creeds with their characteristic self-interest, bigotry, and opposition to each other. Now, man wishes to change the Bible to fit the present state, rather than change the state to fit the Bible. Surely everyone is anxious for the world and the Bible to be in harmony; but inasmuch as God's word is unchangeable (Mk. 13:31), then there is no alternative but to change the world to fit it.

(2) This can only be done by a complete return to the Bible; for divisions have come because of additions to the Bible, subtractions from it, and changes in it. And all such perversions of the Bible stand condemned (Rev. 22:18, 19; I Cor. 4:6). Unity encourages faith (Jno. 17:20, 21), peace (I Cor. 1:10), and many other pleasantries (Psa. 133:1). Surely these attributes are to be preferred to infidelity, strife, and heartache.

(3) If it would be hypocritical for one man to preach contradictory faiths, then it would be hypocritical for God to subscribe to contradictory faiths. So the idea of one faith is just as reasonable as the idea of one Lord. Both are taught in the same verse (Eph. 4:5).

### **6. When a man decides that God is wrong about something, he has decided that he is more capable of judging, more just, and more righteous than God.**

(1) But as the heavens are higher than the earth so are God's ways higher than our ways (Isa. 55:8, 9). "And all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isa. 64:6).

(2) If a matter comes up we cannot fathom with our finite minds, we should be content to leave it in the hands of the infinite God and accept by faith the glorious fact that the Judge of all the earth will do right (II Cor. 5:7).



**Review Exercise**

1. Study the setting in which the question is asked and tell us why Abraham asked it.....  
.....  
.....
2. Give three reasons why God's appointing death is in keeping with his goodness.  
(1) .....  
(2) .....  
(3) .....
3. Give two reasons why God's ordaining eternal punishment proves his justice rather than disproves it.  
(1) .....  
(2) .....
4. What did Paul say in Phil. 1:21 about death?  
.....
5. What kind of bodies are we to have in heaven? (Phil. 3:21; I Cor. 15:51-54).....  
.....
6. Prove that God's establishing one church is in keeping with justice.....  
.....  
.....
7. Why are there religious divisions in the world? .....  
.....  
.....

8. God offered to spare Sodom for the sake of.....  
righteous souls.
9. "For whatsoever a man ....., that shall he  
also ..... " proves that man determines his  
own destiny. Scripture: .....
10. The Bible says in.....that death is a  
precious thing for the saints of God.
11. Jesus taught in Mk 13:31 that God's word is.....
12. Jesus prayed for..... in Jno. 17:20,21.
13. Quote a Scripture which proves that perversions of  
the Bible are condemned.....  
.....  
.....
14. (T or F) Abraham's question in the text implies his  
faith in God's doing right.
15. (T or F) The sinner does not judge himself unwor-  
thy of everlasting life.
16. (T or F) God's condemning the sinner and blessing  
the righteous is in keeping with man's idea of civil  
government.
17. (T or F) Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom  
of God.
18. (T or F) The Bible teaches in Eph. 4:5 that the idea  
of one faith is as reasonable as the idea of one Lord.
19. Thought question: What should we do if we are un-  
able to fathom a work or a teaching of God?
20. Thought for comment: Our chief concern should  
center around our doing right rather than God's  
doing right.

**"WILT THOU GO WITH THIS MAN?"—Gen. 24:58**

**1. This is a romantic question.** It concerns the uniting of two hearts, that of Rebekah and that of Isaac, in holy wedlock. It is a topic that sweeps the vibrating strings of the human heart and makes a melody that enraptures our souls.

(1) The reason: All peoples in every land are acquainted with the satisfactions and joys derived from marriage, a relationship where each is a complement to the life of the other. It takes the two to make the highest and most satisfying unit. The Creator recognized in the beginning that one without the other is incomplete (Gen. 2:18).

(2) Hence, "Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing" (Prov. 18:22)—provided, of course, he finds a good wife. This is surely implied, because no one would say that Jezebel was a good "find" for her husband (I Kings 21:1-15). A wife's being a blessing or a detriment to her husband depends on whether she lives up to the purpose for which she was created in the beginning: to be a help meet (suitable) for man. "A good wife is heaven's last best gift to man; his angel of mercy; minister of graces innumerable; his gem of many virtues; his casket of jewels; her voice, his sweetest music; her smiles, his brightest day; her kiss, the guardian of innocence; her arms, the pale of his safety, the balm of his health, the balsam of his life; her industry, his surest wealth; her economy, his safest steward; her lips, his faithful counselors; and her prayers, the ablest advocates of heaven's blessing on his head."—Jeremy Taylor. She is a worthy woman described by Solomon (Prov. 31:10-31).

**2. Rebekah said, "I will go" (Gen. 24:58).**

(1) Her decision meant leaving her family and friends, a long journey by camel over a scorched desert,

and going to a foreign land to dwell among strangers. But she must go to be with her husband. In marriage ceremonies, the author frequently has the woman to repeat these words after him: "I, \_\_\_\_\_, take thee, \_\_\_\_\_, to be my lawful wedded husband, and "whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God," forever until death do us part." So often in life we must lose one thing to gain something else. Especially is this true in marriage. We leave our father's home to have a home of our own (Gen. 2:24).

(2) Rebekah's answer has never died away. It has been repeated by thousands despite many trials and tribulations, by the women of Europe who came to the New World, by women who braved Indian raids and traveled by prairie schooner to frontier states, by women who left behind refinements and luxuries to live in a wilderness. But the rewards and joys outweighed the sacrifices and privations a thousand times. Such brave and heroic women have been the backbone of every strong civilization; for "the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." — John Gray.

**3. Abraham was deeply interested in his son's securing the right kind of wife** (Gen. 24:1-9). This choice cannot be made by the parents today, but it definitely should be a concern of theirs.

**4. Abraham was opposed to Isaac's marrying a woman of Canaan, an idolatress** (Gen. 24:3, 4, 37, 38).

(1) Esau's Hittite wives "were a grief of mind unto Isaac and to Rebekah" (Gen. 26:35). So we next find Rebekah expressing herself very bitterly against the possibility of another mixed marriage in the family (Gen. 27:46).

(2) God commanded the children of Israel not to enter into mixed marriages (Ex. 34:12-16; Deut. 7:3, 4).

(3) Solomon's disbelieving "wives turned away his

## 44      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

heart after other gods" (I Kings 11:4). Solomon's tragic experience has been the galling marital failure of many.

(4) For a further study read II Cor. 6:14; I Cor. 7:39.

### 5. A woman should not say, "I will go" unless she:

(1) Really wishes to go. One should not reluctantly marry. Rebekah was so willing that she did not need ten days for preparation (Gen. 24:55-59). A marriage can be endured "but never enjoyed unless it is founded on mutual love (I Cor. 13:4-8).

(2) Is willing to be a help meet to her husband (Gen. 2:18).

(3) Plans to be in subjection to her husband. This, too, is God's law ((Jen. 3:16; Eph. 5:22, 23). A bridegroom said shortly after the wedding, "I'm going to be president of this new firm." "That's all right with me," said the bride, "and I'll be treasurer." So the battle was on. Marital strife can be solved correctly only by God's word.

(4) Is willing to work; for she must work to do her part. The worthy woman "eateth not the bread of idleness" (Prov. 31:27). Her numerous and varied tasks have given rise to the statement, "Man works from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done."

(5) Desires to be a keeper at home (Tit. 2:5). She must function in this role lest God's word be blasphemed.

(6) Wishes to be a mother (I Tim. 5:14). In this sphere womanhood glorifies God, and perpetuates his creation. The responsibilities are tremendous, but the brave hearts pulse on and victory rewards faith and diligence. Consequently, there is no name enshrined in humanity's affection like the name of mother.

**Review Exercise**

1. What two persons are concerned with the question in the text ?.....  
.....
2. Who recognized in the early dawn of time that man without woman is incomplete? .....
3. What did Solomon say about man's finding a woman? .....
4. What was Rebekah's answer to the question in the text? .....
5. What do we leave to establish a home of our own? (Gen. 2:24).....
6. What was Rebekah's expression against the possibility of another mixed marriage in the family? (Gen. 27:46) .....
7. What does Paul teach in II Cor. 6:14?.....  
.....
8. Esau's Hittite wives "were a grief of mind unto ..... and ....."
9. Solomon's disbelieving "wives turned his heart after other ....."

46      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

10. God's command to the children of Israel and his explanation for it, as found in Deut. 7:3, 4, was.....  
.....  
.....
11. Gen. 3:16 teaches that the husband should rule .....
12. Eph. 5:24 teaches that "as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the ..... be to their own ..... in....."
13. The same rulership exercised by Christ over the church should be exercised by the ..... over the.....(Eph. 5:22, 23).
14. According to Tit. 2:5, a wife must do the following lest she blaspheme: .....
15. (T or F) Abraham was deeply interested in his son's securing the right wife.
16. (T or F) Marriage should be founded on mutual love.
17. (T or F) Rebekah was willing to go, but she insisted on ten days for preparation.
18. (T or F) The worthy woman eats not the bread of idleness.
19. Thought question: What should be the determining factors in deciding whom you will marry?
20. Thought question: Why do so many marriages break up?

## 8

### "WHAT PROFIT SHALL THIS BIRTHRIGHT DO TO ME?"—Gen. 25:32

**1. This question is related to strife, struggle, cheat, and villainy within a family that had twins, Esau and Jacob.**

(1) Esau as the first-born had the most noble and honorable rights, as was customary in patriarchal times (Deut. 21:17; Gen. 27:29, 37; 49:3).

(2) Jacob, a calculating and tricky swindler, refused to give his hungry brother food until he agreed to relinquish all rights belonging to the first-born in the family (Gen. 25:29-34).

(3) In the context of this question we are presented a picture of a divided family. Isaac loved Esau, but Rebekah loved Jacob (Gen. 25:28). Psychologists teach that a divided family so pulls at the heartstrings of children that it may warp their sense of values and greatly influence the development of character. Here is one son who so treasured the birthright that he was willing to stoop to enticement and villainy to obtain it. He has our contempt. Here is the elder brother who regarded his birthright so little that he impulsively sold it for the immediate gratification of his hunger. Alas! how much a person can sell for so little! He has our sympathies. We do not know that these divided affections in this home were responsible for these two sons' extreme views of life, but we do know that such could have entered into the molding of their characters. Parents will do well to show no favoritism among their children.

**2. Esau's gnawing hunger influenced him to sell his birthright.** He reasoned: "I am at the point to die," so what value is this birthright to me? (Gen. 25:32).

(1) Hunger has forced many into compromise and



submission. It turned the hearts of the children of Israel in the wilderness and incited them to murmur and denounce Moses and Aaron (Ex. 16:1-3). Hunger, however, did not affect the loyalty of Christ who is our example (Matt. 4:1-3).

(2) Esau was governed by the grasshopper philosophy of life—live for the moment, have and do what you wish now regardless of what evils and hardships it may produce in the future. This "let-us-eat-and-drink-for-tomorrow-we-die" thinking has fastened itself to the majority of the people. This attitude is causing many to sell not their birthrights but their souls for a new version of a mess of pottage (Mk. 8:36, 37). They are selling their precious souls for the paltry pleasures of sin which only last for a season (Heb. 11:25). What poor traders!

(3) Esau should have realized that some things—honor, right, loyalty, God's respect, man's respect, and self-respect—are dearer than life. This view of life sustained Paul in the hour of death (II Tim. 4:6-8). This was his view of gains and losses in life: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ" (Phil. 3:7). Thus, facing severe hardships, he could say, "But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy" (Acts 20:24). Unsung heroes by the thousands have died for causes more precious than life. It is not how long we live, but how we live that really counts.

(4) Esau surely would not have traded, if Jacob had approached him under different circumstances; but he did yield and consequently was called centuries later a profane person (Heb. 12:16). Let us be wary for we, too, must make many decisions under unfavorable conditions and in times of weakness (Matt. 26:41).

**3. Esau later was sorry for this trade, and sought with tears to change its effects (Gen. 27:34; Heb. 12:17).**

(1) Unfortunately, he was sorry too late. He should

have thought about the consequences of his rash decision before he made it. "Think before you leap" is a good policy. Too many people leap and then think, but an ocean of tears cannot recall the leap.

(2) Judas was also sorry, but it was too late (Matt. 27:3-5). The trade had been made, and it could not be revoked. The betrayer's hanging at the end of a rope could not change it. The deed was irrevocable.

**4. Esau could not have the pottage and the birth-right both.**

(1) A lesson for us today is that man cannot have everything. We cannot have heaven and the pleasures of sin both. An exchange is made in either the salvation or the loss of the soul (Mk. 8:36, 37). We can have sin in this life, but at the price of losing heaven. Or we can have heaven in the life to come, but at the price of giving up sin in this life. We just cannot have everything.

(2) The wise trader is he who gives up everything for the kingdom. "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchantman, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matt. 13:45, 46). The kingdom of God must have priority over everything else (Matt. 6:33). The impulsive Indian who sells a thousand acres of oil land for a string of beads is a much better trader than he who sells his soul for the world. We shall be wise merchantmen if we heed this advice: "Buy the truth, and sell it not" (Prov. 23:23).

**Review Exercise**

1. To what does the question in the text relate?.....  
.....
2. Why did Esau have the most noble and honorable rights as a child in the family?.....
3. How did Jacob take advantage of his brother's hunger? .....  
.....
4. To what extent was the family of Isaac and Rebekah divided? .....  
.....
5. What philosophy of life governed Esau in his decision?
6. What did Paul count loss to gain Christ?.....  
..... Scripture:.....
7. What did Solomon advise man to buy and never sell?..... Scripture:.....
8. Esau reasoned: "I am at the point to....., so what.....is the birthright to me?"
9. Give the two questions Jesus asked in Mk. 8:36, 37.  
(1) .....  
(2) .....
10. Many are selling their souls for the pleasures of sin which last only for a.....

11. Jesus spoke of a wise merchantman who.....  
.....
12. Jesus taught in Matt. 6:33 that the.....  
of.....should come first.
13. Paul's determination to be faithful to the Lord was  
so great that he could say, "Neither count I my.....  
..... dear unto ....., so that I  
might.....my course with joy." Scrip-  
ture : .....
14. In making our decisions we need to.....  
and ..... that we enter not into temp-  
tation ; because the spirit is....., but  
the flesh is..... (Matt. 26:41).
15. (T or F) It was hunger that incited the children of  
Israel to murmur against Moses and Aaron.
16. (T or F) Esau was never called a profane person.
17. (T or F) Esau later was sorry that he sold his birth-  
right and sought with tears to change its effects.
18. (T or F) Judas was never sorry that he sold Christ.
19. Thought question: Who is the world's worst trader?
20. Thought question: Have you ever known anyone  
who at the close of life regretted giving up the world  
for Christ?

**"WHAT IS THY NAME?"—Gen. 32:27****1. The question was asked by the Lord with whom Jacob struggled (Gen. 32:24-30).**

(1) In Jacob we behold the age-long struggle between good and evil for the ruler ship of a man's soul. In Jacob you see both the shame and the glory of the universe. He is first seen as a deceiver, liar, and cheater; but now we see him as a man who wrestled with God. Jacob, struggling frantically, said to the angel, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me" (Gen. 32:26). The angel blessed him. So if there is one lesson which the life of Jacob teaches above all others, it is that a man's struggles are essential to blessings.

(2) All of us have our conflicts and struggles in life; and as we encounter them, let us hold on to God, and say in the language of Jacob, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me" (Gen. 32:26). Blessings come only to those who struggle and persevere. Even Jesus had to struggle before Satan left him and before "angels came and ministered unto him" (Matt. 4:1-11). Our refusal to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:12) and to "strive to enter in at the strait gate" (Lk. 13:24) is but to forfeit our opportunity to be saved.

**2. Here is evidence that a man can change his name by putting forth a struggle.**

(1) At first, Jacob's life was such that these names were a true description of him: swindler, deceiver, cheater, supplanter. Up to this time he was Jacob, the supplanter. Now the angel gives him a new name, Israel, "for as a prince has thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed" (Gen. 32:28)—henceforth, the name of God's chosen people, Israelites. So a man's name which was despicable was changed to a name that is glorious and renowned.

(2) Matthew as a publican, collector of Roman revenue, had a name that was in ill favor because it was

the basest of livelihoods (Matt. 9:9). Publicans were very much in disrepute (Matt. 9:11). But he became an apostle of Christ and his name now adorns the pages of the Bible as one of the great men of all ages. He changed his name by changing his calling.

(3) Paul once had such a hateful name as a persecutor that, immediately after his conversion, he was still a fright to the disciples (Acts 9:26; I Tim. 1:13). In time, however, his name was reversed and he became a fear to the world (Acts 17:6). He changed his name by changing his faith.

(4) We have seen the names or reputations of many persons changed by the transforming power of God's word. "A good name is rather to be chosen than great riches" (Prov. 22:1). A good name is too valuable to sell; it should be guarded as a precious thing.

**3. God's changing Jacob'; name is evidence that there is something in a name.**

(1) Popular contention is to the contrary. But if there is nothing in a name, God did a nonsensical thing in making the change.

(2) There is so much in a name that: A. God named Adam and Eve (Gen. 5:2). B. Jehovah changed the names of Abram and Sarai (Gen. 17:5, 15). C. Paul condemned human and divisive names (I Cor. 1:10-13). D. The name of Christ is the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

**4. Another significant lesson to be learned from this incident is that names convey thoughts and ideas.** Jacob has been described as the worst and best man of the Bible. With a new heart and a new character, he needed a new name to convey a new and better thought.

(1) The meaning of some Biblical names are as follows: Adam, earthy; Noah, repose; Abraham, father of a great multitude; Isaac, laughter; David, dear; Samuel, asked of God; and Jesus, Saviour.

(2) All the names applied to God's people impart expressive ideas, for instance; A. "Saints" (I Cor. 1:2), sanctified or set apart by the gospel. B. "Beloved of

God" (Rom. 1:7), the dearly loved of God. C. "Disciples" (Acts 20:7), learners or followers. D. "Brethren" (I Cor. 15:6), a relationship to each other. E. "Children of God" (I Jno. 3:1), a relationship to God. F. "Heirs of God" (Rom. 8:17), indicates that they are to inherit from God. G. "Christians" (Acts 11:26), a relationship to Christ. Since this is a new name that was given after the Gentiles saw the righteousness of God (Acts 10), it must have come from the mouth of God (Isa. 62:2).

(3) It has been contended that a rose by any other name would smell just as sweet. That is true because names do not change the state, but they are expressive of thoughts and ideas. Calling a rose a cockle-bur and a cockle-bur a rose does not change the state of either, but it does express a thought. Calling a Christian a liar or a liar a Christian does not make one either, but it does convey ideas. God wants us to have a good name that is expressive of good thoughts. As a religious name, we should wear the name that honors Christ rather than some human name. Charles Spurgeon, the most recognized and talented Baptist preacher that ever lived, said, "I say of the Baptist name, let it perish, but let Christ's name last forever. I look forward with pleasure, to the day when there will not be a Baptist living. I hope they will soon be gone. I hope the Baptist name will soon perish; but let Christ's name endure forever."—*Spurgeon Memorial Library*, Vol. 1, p. 168.

**5. Jacob's new name came as a result of his struggle.** When our struggles in life are over, if we have triumphed, we shall be given a new name in heaven (Rev. 2:17). No man now knows what that name will be, but surely it will indicate a new thought and relationship.

Review Exercise

1. What is the agelong struggle we behold in the life of Jacob! .....  
.....
2. What is the new name and its meaning given to Jacob? .....  
.....  
.....
3. Which apostle followed an occupation that was much in disrepute ! .....  
.....
4. What is "rather to be chosen than great riches!".....  
.....
5. What is the only "name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved?" .....  
.....
6. What is the meaning of the name, "Saint!".....  
.....
7. What name shows our relationship to Christ!.....  
.....
8. Prove that the statement, "A rose by any other name would smell just as sweet," is no evidence there is nothing in a name.....  
.....  
.....



**56      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

9. What did a famous Baptist preacher say about the name "Baptist?" .....  
.....  
.....
10. God promised to give his people a new name after ..... (Isa. 62:2).
11. The Gentiles were converted in Acts 10, and following this we read of the new name which is.....  
in Acts 11:26.
12. There is so much in a name that: (1) God named ..... and Eve (Gen. 5:2).  
(2) Jehovah changed the names of .....  
and ..... (Gen. 17:5, 15).  
(3) Paul condemned ..... names  
(I Cor. 1:10-13).
13. After becoming a Christian Paul's name and reputation became so reversed that it was said of him:.....  
.....  
..... (Acts 17:6).
14. Give the meaning of these names: (1) Adam, .....  
..... (2) Noah,..... (3) Abraham,  
..... (4) Isaac,..... (5) David,  
..... (6) Samuel,..... (7) Jesus,  
.....

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT      57**

15. Concerning the new name in heaven John said: .....  
.....  
..... (Rev. 2:17).
16. (T or F) Paul's name as a persecutor was so feared that after his conversion he was still a fright to the disciples.
- 17'. (T or F) Jacob was given a new name without struggling.
18. (T or F) Four names are mentioned in I Cor. 1:10-13 and three of them are wrong.
19. (T or F) Names convey thoughts and ideas.
20. Thought for comment: No matter how bad a man's name or reputation is, with God's help he can change it.

# 10

## "WHY DO YE LOOK ONE UPON ANOTHER?"—

### Gen. 42:1

**1. Jacob asked his sons this question in a time of bitter famine (Gen. 41).**

(1) Before the great advancements in agriculture and in the preservation of foods, famines were frequent. There was one in the time of Abraham ((Jen. 12:10), another in the time of Isaac (Gen. 26:1), and now a third in the days of Jacob.

(2) Man has always needed food; so naturally that problem is given much attention in the Bible: A. In Eden (Gen. 3:6). B. When man was driven from Eden (Gen. 3:19). C. In Esau's selling his birthright (Gen. 25:29-34). D. During one of the temptations of Christ (Matt. 4:1-4). E. In Christ's model prayer (Matt. 6:11). F. To the multitudes when Jesus fed them (Matt. 14:15-21).

**2. The question and context stress the value of leadership.**

(1) The sons of Jacob lacked leadership and initiative. There was a need for food, but the sons of Jacob only looked at one another. Doing nothing has never produced anything. Each was waiting for the other to lead the way. It provoked the father, Jacob, to say, "Why do ye look one upon another? . . . I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get you down thither and buy for us" (Gen. 42:1, 2). For the church to go forward, we must have leadership. The elders are commanded to shepherd the flock (I Pet. 5:1-4). It is a shepherd's duty to lead the flock. It is unfortunate when sheep feel compelled to push the shepherds. If leadership is important, so is "fellowship" (Heb. 13:17). You cannot have one without the other.

**3. This incident also emphasizes the importance of vision.**

(1) Every accomplishment must begin with a vision. Man cannot do a thing he cannot visualize. Jacob was able to see what could and should be done (Gen.

42:1), while apparently the sons could not visualise their going all the way from Canaan to Egypt to get food.

(2) Vision is essential to life. "Where there is no vision, the people perish" (Prov. 29:18). Poor vision has slowly weakened and killed the Lord's church in many communities. The world owes an enormous debt to its dreamers. Really, those who dream dreams and make them come true have not been asleep.

**4. We see in this story the value of activity.**

(1) After man visualizes what needs to be done, then he should get busy and do it. Jacob was a man of vision and action (Gen. 42:1, 2), but the boys were not. Some men can see what needs to be done, but the majority cannot.

(2) Joseph was also a man of vision and action (Gen. 41), and he became great, too. Greatness demands both of a man. No one has ever been able to invent a substitute for work. It takes work to tread the road that leads to heaven (Phil. 2:12; Jas. 2:14-26).

**5. "Why do ye look one upon another" when the following needs are ever pressing?**

(1) Evangelize the world (Mk. 16:15, 16). We need to learn that the command to go preach the gospel applies to all Christians. Jesus said, "Go... preach the gospel"; and Paul said, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel" (I Cor. 9:16). So we stand between "go" and "woe," and we can make up our own minds as to which it will be. There is a statement in Heb. 5:12 that should awaken and arouse every member of the church: "Ye ought to be teachers." This will put the whole church to preaching. The false notion of a "professional clergy" carrying out this duty for the members by proxy has bogged down the Great Commission in its onward march and has interfered with the salvation of souls. Christ died for sinners, and he has commanded every Christian to go preach the gospel that sinners may be saved. If we do, we are in partnership with him; and no partnership with Christ has ever gone bankrupt. His word will not return unto him void (Isa. 55:11).

## 60      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

(2) Encourage and teach new converts. They must be taught all things that Jesus taught the apostles (Matt. 28:19, 20). Babies are not born full grown, and neither are Christians. God's plan in both the natural and spiritual spheres call for individual growth (I Pet. 2:1, 2).

(3) Preserve the faith. We must "keep that which is committed to" our trust (I Tim. 6:20); and "the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also" (II Tim. 2:2).

(4) Stand firmly for the truth. We are commanded to "earnestly contend for the faith" (Jude 3). A man cannot stand for something without standing against something. By observing how much a man hates error, you are able to determine how much he loves truth. The Psalmist said, "I hate every false way" (Psa. 119:104). Why? Because "ye that love the Lord hate evil" (Psa. 97:10). It just works that way.

(5) Contribute financially (I Cor. 16:2; II Cor. 9:7). The Lord put the pocketbook in Christianity. Let us not pervert his word by attempting to take it out.

(6) Visit strangers. This will come up at the judgment (Matt. 25:35, 43).

(7) Restore the fallen. The brotherly quality requires it. "Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such a one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (Gal. 6:1).

(8) Care for the sick. This, too, will come up at the judgment (Matt. 25:36, 43).

(9) Provide an adequate place for worship (Acts 20:7-9). A church building is not Christ, but it is a place where you may meet him (Matt. 18:20). A church building is never an end within itself, but it is definitely a means to an end.

You should do what you can, whether the other person does or not. If you do right, he may follow your good example (I Cor. 5:6). Even if he does not, you will have to answer only for yourself (Rom. 14:12). So do not sit around looking at each other as duties stare you in the face.

**Review Exercise**

1. What were the prevailing circumstances when Jacob asked the question in the text? .....  
.....  
.....
  
2. What was in Egypt that Jacob and his family needed? .....
  
3. What is the duty of the elders of the flock?.....  
.....
  
4. What are the instructions to leadership and "fellowship" in Heb. 13:17? .....  
.....
  
5. What did Paul say about work in Phil. 2:12?.....  
.....
  
6. What statement did Paul make which should awaken and arouse every member of the church to teach? .....  
.....  
.....
  
7. What did Isaiah say will not return unto the Lord void? .....
  
8. Give five Bible examples which show that man's need for food is given much attention in the Bible: (1) .....  
..... (2) .....  
(3) ..... (4) .....  
..... (5) .....

**62      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

9. "Where there is no vision, the people..... "
- Scripture: .....
10. The deadness of faith without works is likened in Jas. 2:26 to .....
- .....
11. Concerning spiritual growth, Peter said: .....
- ..... (I Pet. 2:2).
12. Paul commanded Timothy to do two things in preserving the purity of the faith: (1) .....
- ..... (2) .....
- .....
13. Answer these from I Cor. 16:2 concerning our giving:
- (1) When?..... (2) Who?.....
- (3) What?..... (4) How much?
- ..... (5) Why?.....
- .....
14. We are commanded to restore the fallen "in the spirit of..... ; considering..... ; lest thou also be..... "
15. (T or F) The question in the text and its setting stress the value of leadership.
16. (T or F) The question and the incident connected with it emphasize the importance of vision.

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT 63**

17. (T or F) Paul said, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."
18. Statement for comment: Every accomplishment begins with a vision.
19. Statement for comment: After man visualizes what needs to be done, then he should get busy and do it.
20. Thought question: Can you think of anything you ought to be doing rather than just sitting back and staring at others?



# 11

## "WHAT IS YOUR OCCUPATION?"—Gen. 47:3

### 1. Pharaoh put this question to Joseph's brethren.

(1) They were shepherds. Since they were shepherds, Joseph thought it would be wise for them to live in Goshen. This would prevent their being resented by the Egyptians, for every shepherd was an abomination unto the Egyptians (Gen. 46:34).

(2) The occupation of a shepherd is most ancient, dating back to the early dawn of time. Abel, one of the sons of Adam, was a keeper of sheep (Gen. 4:2).

### 2. This same question relative to an occupation was directed to Jonah by some anxious sailors in the midst of a great storm (Jonah 1:8).

(1) It was a very natural question, because the mariners were probing for information about this passenger they considered responsible for their danger.

(2) Even though it was a natural question, it must have pierced the heart of Jonah. It was especially appropriate for the prophet at that time. He should have been traveling the road to Nineveh. God ordered him to go there to preach against that wicked city, but, instead, he was fleeing from the Lord (Jonah 1:1-3). What unbecoming behaviour for a messenger of God! So it is an apt question for every preacher and teacher of God's word. It should prompt self-examination. Is my life in harmony with my occupation?

### 3. Everyone should have an occupation or job, for God created and adapted man to work.

(1) Through the ages God has issued to man the command to work. In the very beginning man was told to dress and keep the garden of Eden (Gen. 2:15). Later, as he was driven from the garden, God said, "In the

sweat of thy face shalt thou eat "bread" (Gen. 3:19). Paul commanded the Thessalonians to work with their own hands (I Thess. 4:11). He further emphasized the necessity of work by saying, "If any would not work, neither should he eat" (II Thess. 3:10). It is God's law that man **work** or starve, if he is able to work.

(2) Employment is essential to happiness. The most miserable people are those who have nothing to do but to have a good time. There is the unhappiness of both the idle rich and the idle poor. Idleness exposes a person to all kinds of worries and fears, and permits the imagination to run riot.

(3) An occupation is much more enjoyable if one can see in it that which ministers to the needs of others, rather than just bread and butter. Our Lord "came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give **his** life a ransom for many" (Matt. 20:28).

**4. Occupations affect associations.** A trade or profession is often the common tie which binds people together. A like occupation was the means of bringing together Paul, Aquila, and Priscilla (Acts 18:1-3).

#### **5. Occupations influence conduct.**

(1) Pilate was a politician, and it undoubtedly influenced him to deliver Christ (Matt. 27:13-24). People in various occupations often compromise their faith in an effort to advance in their profession or increase their business. It is wrong!

(2) Demetrius was a silversmith who made heathen gods, and it led him to fight the truth which would destroy his business (Acts 19:23-25). He preferred business to truth. It is commendable for a man to climb to the top in business, but never at the sacrifice of convictions. Peter's statement to the newly converted sorcerer is still true, "Thy money perish with thee" (Acts 8:20). Any job or business which interferes with living the Christian life should never be considered.

**6. Occupations are so important and essential that a person should consider several vital questions in deciding which he should follow.**

(1) Will it hinder me in the Lord's work? This must come first (Eccl. 12:13; Matt. 6:33). Abraham Lincoln once wrote: "If in your judgment you cannot be an honest lawyer, resolve to be honest without being a lawyer." An occupation must not interfere with living a life, for a man needs to live a life as well as make a living. A cobbler once said, "I cobble shoes for a living, but my real occupation is serving the Lord."

Let me but live from year to year,  
With forward face and unreluctant soul.  
Not hastening to, nor turning from the goal;  
Not mourning for the things that disappear  
In the dim past, nor holding back in fear  
From what the future veils.

—Henry Van Dyke

(2) Will it be in the good interest of my family? A man must provide for his own (I Tim. 5:8).

(3) Will it hinder my health? The human body is the temple of God (I Cor. 3:16, 17).

(4) Is the work in keeping with my talents and abilities? Different people have been given different talents (Matt. 25:14-30). Each should follow a work that demands his best.

(5) Can I be happy in this employment? Money is nothing without happiness (I Tim. 6:7). The main thing is to be happy in this life and prepared for the next one. He who lives this way is a glorious and eternal success.

**Review Exercise**

1. What was the occupation of Joseph's brethren? .....  
.....
2. How did the Egyptians feel toward shepherds? .....  
.....
3. How was Jonah's behavior unbecoming to his occupation? .....  
.....
4. What is the first proof from the Bible that man should work or have an occupation?.....  
.....
5. Which Scripture proves that it is God's law that man either work or starve, if he is able to work?  
.....
6. How did Demetrius' occupation influence his conduct? .....  
.....
7. How did Pilate's occupation influence his decision concerning Christ ? .....  
.....
8. .... asked the question in the text.
9. ....was the first shepherd of whom we read in the Bible.
10. In driving Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden, God said, "In the .....of thy ..... shalt thou eat bread."

**68      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

11. Jesus "came not to be.....unto but to ..... and to give his life a ransom for many."
12. A like occupation was the means of bringing together ..... , ..... , and.....  
Scripture: .....
13. List five questions that should be considered in deciding which occupation to follow.
  - (1) .....
  - (2) .....
  - (3) .....
  - (4) .....
  - (5) .....
14. Solomon stated in Eccl. 12:13 that man's whole duty is .....
15. (T or F) The mariners questioned Jonah concerning his occupation.
16. (T or F) The happiest people are those who do not have to work.
17. (T or F) It is God's law that man provide for his own house or family.
18. (T or F) Money should have priority over happiness in deciding an occupation.
19. (T or F) Different people have been given different talents.
20. Thought question:    How important is it that youth be guided into an occupation best suited for him?

## 12

### "HOW OLD ART THOU?"—Gen. 47:8

**1. You may be surprised at finding this question in the Bible**, even though it has been a very popular one through the ages. When introduced to Jacob, Pharaoh asked him, "How old art thou?" In Jacob's reply (Gen. 47:9), we note:

(1) He recognized life as a pilgrimage. Men of faith in ages past "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth" (Heb. 11:13). Peter besought God's scattered children "as strangers and pilgrims" (I Pet. 2:11). This earth is not man's home. He just passes through this land on his way to his permanent abode (Gen. 49:33; Eccl. 12:5, 7).

(2) Jacob stated that his years had been few and evil. He was a hundred and thirty years old, and died at a hundred and forty-seven (Gen. 47:28). Life has always been considered fleeting (Job 14:1, 2; Jas. 4:14). If life got away so quickly for those who lived in that slow age, then think how much faster it flees from us who live in this atomic and jet age!

**2. You are not too old to render a service to God and man.** It is tragic for the advanced in years to assume that the only thing left for them to do is die. There are some who through fear die a thousand deaths before death actually comes.

Cowards die many times before their deaths;  
The valiant never taste of death but once.

—Shakespeare

(1) It is interesting to recall that aged people have contributed to some of the world's most marvelous accomplishments. A. Moses was eighty years of age when God called him to the leadership of Israel, and although Moses asked for exemption on the basis of a vocal de-

feet, it is noteworthy that he did not ask to be excused on account of his age (Ex. 4:10). B. Commodore Vanderbilt, between the age of seventy and eighty-three, added one hundred millions to his fortune. C. Cato at eighty began the study of Greek. When asked why he began the study of this difficult language at such an advanced age, he stated it was because he had waited too long to start any younger. D. Tennyson at eighty-three wrote "Crossing the Bar." E. Verdi wrote "Ave Maria" at eighty-five. They and countless others have found usefulness in old age.

(2) Age is a quality of mind reflected by one's dreams, hopes, and ambitions. If these qualities have died, man is old in spite of his few years. On the other hand, if man's dreams, hopes, and ambitions are alive, he is young even though the many years have crowned his head with whiteness, plowed deep furrows in his face, and rendered his steps tottery. Age is a quality of mind.

If you have left your dreams behind,  
                                   If hope is cold,  
 If you no longer look ahead,  
 If your ambition's fires are dead,  
                                   Then you are old.

(3) Most of us, regardless of age, have already wasted too many years; therefore, we need to redeem the time or buy it back (Eph. 5:16). Age can be fruitful, beautiful, and blessed.

An age so blest that, by its side,  
 Youth seems the waste instead.

—Robert Browning

For what is age but youth's full bloom,  
 A riper, more transcendent youth?  
 A weight of gold is never old.

3. Man should have a special regard and consideration for the aged. The Bible teaches it.

- (1) "Honor the face of the old man" (Lev. 19:32).
- (2) "Rebuke not an elder" (I Tim. 5:1).

**4. The aged should guard themselves against a number of dangers; for instance:**

(1) The false notion that years alone bring wisdom. "Days should speak, and multitude of years should teach wisdom" (Job 32:7). But years do not always teach; for some people are unable to profit from their experiences. Gray matter has solved more problems than gray hair.

(2) Unbelief. Caleb at eighty-five requested the difficult task of driving the giants out of a portion of Canaan (Josh. 14:6-12). Why? He had faith in himself. He believed, "As yet I am as strong this day as I was in the day that Moses sent me" (ver. 11). Faith in self is one of the prerequisites of success. Next, he had faith in God. He believed, "The Lord hath kept me alive" (ver. 10). Caleb further believed that God could do things through him. He said, "If so be the Lord will be with me, then I shall be able to drive them out" (ver. 12). As we grow older, may our faith in self and God grow bigger.

(3) Futility. Here we look to Caleb for another inspiring example. At his age he could have rendered himself useless by living in the past instead of the present and the future. He could have patted himself on the back for past accomplishments, and then begged to be excused from the present struggle because of his age. Certainly the time comes for the aged to retire from their livelihood if they wish, but this gives them more time to work for God and man. There is never a time to withdraw from the struggles of life.

(4) The erroneous idea that there is honor in longevity. Honor comes from service instead of longevity (Matt. 23:11). Methuselah lived 969 years (Gen. 5:27); but, so far as we know, he never accomplished a thing, just had a lot of birthdays. Science has been able to add a number of years to the span of life; but the great question is not how to add years to life, but how to add



life to years. It is not how long we live, but how we live that really counts.

We live in deeds, not years; in thoughts, not breaths;  
 In feelings, not figures on a dial.  
 We should count time by heart throbs;  
     He most lives  
 Who thinks most, feels the noblest, acts the best.

—Philip James Bailey

(5) Unhappiness, a sour and fussy disposition. A life consecrated and devoted to God will guard you against such a danger. As the physical man weakens, the spiritual man will become stronger (II Cor. 4:16). But, the person who forgets God will see the evil days come and the years draw nigh when he shall say, "I have no pleasure in them" (Eccl. 12:1). Hence, it has been said, "The devil has no happy old people." If you allow the disappointments, heartaches, and obstacles of life to transform you into a cynical critic and a grouchy grumbler, then you may be assured that the devil is camping hot on your trail. Beware!

(6) Unfaithfulness to God. As you face the setting sun of life, you should say with great faith, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed" (Rom. 13:11). There is no greater tragedy than an old person's denying the faith by word or deed. Faithful so many years and then overcome by Satan! So near home and yet lost! It is not how we start the race, but how we finish it that really counts.

Let no one till his death  
 Be called unhappy. Measure not the work  
 Until the day's out and the labor done;  
 Then bring your gauges.

—Elizabeth Barrett Browning

As the evening shadows lengthen, we press; onward with this faith and philosophy: We know not the future, but we know the God who does.

**Review Exercise**

1. What question did Pharaoh ask Jacob at the time Jacob was introduced to him?.....  
.....
2. What did Solomon say in Eccl. 12:5 about man's long home ? .....  
.....
3. What two examples did Job give to show that life is fleeting? (Job 14:1, 2).  
(1) .....  
(2) .....
4. What are Christians taught in Eph. 5:16 concerning time? .....  
.....
5. What difficult task did Caleb at eighty-five request? .....  
.....
6. What is the only thing the Bible tells about Methu-selah's life? .....
7. Give Jacob's answer (Gen. 47:9) to the question in the text.....  
.....  
.....  
.....
8. In Jas. 4:14 we see life compared to a.....
9. Moses' excuse for not wanting to accept the leader-ship of Israel was.....and not old age.

74      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

10. Give two Scriptures which teach man to have a special regard for the aged. (1) .....  
..... (2) .....
11. List six dangers the aged should guard themselves against. (1) .....  
(2) ..... (3) .....  
(4) ..... (5) .....  
..... (6) .....
12. Give three reasons why Caleb at eighty-five thought he could drive out the giants. (1) .....  
..... (2) .....  
(3) .....
13. Prove from Matt. 23:11 and from the one who said it that honor comes from service instead of longevity .....  
.....
14. (T or F) Jacob recognized life as a pilgrimage.
15. (T or F) Paul said, "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."
16. (T or F) Eccl. 12:1 teaches that people will have pleasure in this life no matter how they live.
17. (T or F) We learn from II Cor. 4:16 that as the outward man weakens the inward man should get stronger.
18. Thought for comment: Age is a quality of mind reflected by one's dreams, hopes, and ambitions.
19. Thought for comment: Gray matter has solved more problems than gray hair.
20. Thought for comment: The greatest question is not how to add years to life, but how to add life to years.

# 13

## "AM I IN THE PLACE OF GOD?"—Gen. 50:19

1. When Jacob died, his sons who had sold Joseph into slavery (Gen. 37) feared that Joseph would now take vengeance upon them (Gen. 49:33—50:18). And if their places had been reversed, perhaps they would have recompensed evil for evil, for they had already demonstrated a vengeful spirit. Now, the brothers judge Joseph by themselves. Many make this mistake. Furthermore, the guilt in their conscience had made cowards of them.

He that commits a fault shall quickly find  
The pressing guilt lie heavy on his mind.  
Though bribes, or favour shall assert his cause,  
Pronounce him guiltless, and elude the laws,  
None quits himself; his own impartial thought  
Will damn, and conscience will record the fault.  
This, first, the wicked feels.

### 2. Joseph, in replying, asked, "Am I in the place of God?"

(1) Joseph's answer proves that he recognized the providence of God in what had happened. He could now see that the cruel hardships he suffered were actually disguised blessings of God (Gen. 45:5-8; 50:20). Let us, too, remember that our difficulties are often blessings in disguise. Paul had seen troubles prove to be blessings; for he wrote, "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Phil. 1:12). We have this blessed assurance: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God" (Rom. 8:28).

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform;  
His purposes will ripen fast, unfolding every hour;  
The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower.  
—William Cowper

(2) Joseph knew that his brothers meant to do him harm (Gen. 50:20); but he held no grudge and had no desire to seek vengeance. Instead, he promised to care for them (Gen. 50:21), to return good for evil. Only

a big person can do this. The best way to get even with one who has wronged you is to pull him up to your level rather than stoop down to his. Paul said, "Recompense to no man evil for evil" (Rom. 12:17). Jesus taught us to pray for those who mistreat us (Matt. 5:44), and our Lord exemplified the lesson by praying for those who crucified him (Lk. 23:34). Only persons with great faith can do it. Those who seek vengeance attempt to take the place of God, for it is his business to make the proper adjustments in due time (Rom. 12:19-21). Joseph understood that he was not in the place of God. A vengeful attitude could have wrecked his life; but, instead, Joseph's course brought him peace of mind and happiness.

**3. Joseph's attitude, "Am I in the place of God?" is helpful in many matters other than wrongs we have suffered; for instance:**

(1) Creed writing. God has given the Bible as our creed (II Tim. 3:16, 17). Creed writers attempt to supplant God as lawgiver by binding their theology upon the conscience of others. All of us can profit from a study of God's word in both oral and written form; thus we listen to sermons and read books. But pledging allegiance to a human creed is an entirely different proposition. We are commanded to teach God's word (Matt. 28:19, 20), but we are not commanded to write church creeds. We are taught to confess Christ (Matt. 10:32), but we are not taught to confess loyalty to church manuals. Writing a creed was a prerogative that belonged only to the Lord. We must never attempt to take His place!

(2) Voting people into a church. Only God has this right, for only God has the vision to look into a human heart and see if it is penitent. It is man's business to baptize (Matt. 28:19, 20) and God's business to add to the church (Acts 2:47). Voting on people for church membership is an attempt to replace God. Philip did not do it (Acts 8:36-38).

(3) Tampering with the Bible. It was God's place to give the Bible (II Tim. 3:16, 17), and it is man's duty

to accept it. Man's adding to or taking from the Bible is a futile effort to take over God's work. God is jealous of his word and will condemn those who trifle with it (Rev. 22:18, 19).

(4) Building churches. Founding a church is a right that belongs exclusively to the Lord (Matt. 16:18). He originated only: one (Eph. 4:4, 5). Man does not have the privilege to start a church in competition with Christ's church (Matt. 15:13, 14).

(5) Deciding the destiny of the dead. The Lord, rather than man, will decide this (Rom. 2:6; Rev. 20:12; Matt. 25:31-33). No preacher can assign a man to either heaven or hell. This is a right that belongs to the Perfect One. We who preach the plan of salvation to the alien—faith, repentance, confession, and baptism—are sometimes accused of judging. But this is not judging the dead who did not do it; it is simply preaching to the living what God has commanded. To refuse to preach God's conditions of salvation is judging—not judging man, but judging God's word, judging a portion of it null and void and unessential. This is the most unthinkable judging a man can do.

Many of our ills today are the results of man's getting out of his place and attempting to occupy the role of God. Happy is the person who knows his place and stays in it.

**Review Exercise**

1. Under what circumstances was the question in the text asked ? .....  
 .....  
 .....
  
2. What did Joseph promise to do for those who had wronged him? (Gen. 50:21) .....  
 .....

**78      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

3. What did Paul teach relative to returning evil for evil! (Rom. 12:17) .....  
.....
4. What treatment did Jesus teach us to render to our enemies? (Matt. 5:44) .....  
.....
5. Whose business is it to take vengeance? (Rom. 12: 19-21).....
6. Whose business is it to baptize? .....  
Whose business is it to add to the church!.....
7. Why would man's founding a church put him in competition with Christ! .....  
.....
8. Paul said, "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the .....of the ..... " Scripture: .....
9. Quote Gen. 50:20 to show Joseph's attitude toward the wrong he had suffered.....  
.....  
.....
10. In Lk. 23:34 Jesus prayed for.....
11. List five ways in which man may seek to take the place of God. (1) ..... (2).....  
..... (3) ..... (4).....  
..... (5) .....

- 12. Prove from II Tim. 3:16, 17 that the Scriptures are sufficient as our creed .....  
.....  
.....
- 13. Prove from Rev. 22:18, 19 that it is not man's business to tamper with the Scriptures .....  
.....  
.....
- 14. Give the two things mentioned in Rev. 20:12 upon which the judgment will be based. (1) .....  
..... (2).....
- 15. (T or F) Joseph's question proves that he recognized the providence of God in what had happened to him.
- 16. (T or F) The Bible does not say that all things work together for good to them that love God.
- 17. (T or F) Hardships can be blessings of God in disguise.
- 18. (T or F) Philip asked for a vote on the eunuch before baptizing him (Acts 8:36-38).
- 19. (T or F) Man does not have the right to take God's place in founding churches and giving religions; because there is only one body, one Lord, one faith, and one baptism (Eph. 4:4, 5).
- 20. Thought question: Am I seeking to supplant God in taking vengeance or in any other work of God?



**"WHAT IS THAT IN THINE HAND?"—Ex. 4:2****1. God asked this question.**

(1) It was asked in an effort to get Moses to see that God had unlimited power to strengthen a little man for a mighty, history-making job. God's people, the Israelites, were slaves in Egypt, trodden beneath the oppressor's heel. It was God's will that they be delivered, and that Moses be the deliverer (Ex. 3:9, 10). Moses, feeling his inability for such a task, said, "They will not believe me" (Ex. 4:1). This prompted the Lord to ask him, "What is that in thine hand!"

(2) The answer: a rod, perhaps just a stick cut from the thicket, used to turn the sheep. But the Lord transformed the lifeless rod into a live serpent and from a serpent back to a rod. This was proof that the people would believe (Ex. 4:5), for the almighty God who had that power also had the power to accomplish his purpose through Moses. How often we fail because we doubt His power to work through us! A Christian has tremendous power if he has the faith of Paul who said, "I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me" (Phil. 3:13). Christ gives us strength. Never doubt it!

**2. That rod invested with God's power would enable Moses to do signs** (Ex.4:17). It would serve as a credential to prove that Moses represented God.

(1) This was very necessary because there have always been false prophets to mislead the people (II Pet. 2:1-3). Christ warned against them in his day (Matt. 7:15).

Thus God has never sent out his servants without giving them evidence to prove their relationship to him. Too much is involved for the proof to be lacking. There must be unmistakable evidence. Moses had the rod. The apostles had miraculous powers (Acts 1:4, 5; 2:1-4) and consequently performed miracles to confirm the word

they spoke (Mk. 16:20; Heb. 2:3, 14). Today we have the Scriptures, the voice of God, to prove what we say (II Tim. 3:16, 17).

3. God has the strength to take the things of little value in our hands and make them powerful and priceless. This was true of the little insignificant rod.

(1) Other examples are many: A. "What is that in thine hand," Shamgar? An ox-goad, but when dedicated to the service of God, it became an invincible weapon with which Shamgar slew six-hundred Philistines (Judges 3:31). B. "What is that in thine hand," David? A sling, but when given to the service of God it became famous. David used it to kill the giant, Goliath, and thus saved the army of God (I Sam. 17). C. "What is that in thine hand," Jacob? Tools with which to dig a well, Jacob's well (Jno. 4:6). Years later Jesus, a tired, weary, thirsty traveler, sat upon the curb of that well and had his thirst quenched. Jacob never realized that some day his Lord would drink of that well. We never know who will benefit from our good deeds, because they will bear fruit forever. D. "What is that in thine hand," boy? A lunch, but the Lord multiplied and used it to feed thousands (Jno. 6:9-13). E. "What is that in thine hand," poor widow? Two mites, but when given to the Lord it constituted such a gift that Jesus regarded it as the greatest sacrifice of all who had cast into the treasury (Mk. 12:41-44). She did all that she could. No one can do better than that. This little verse preaches a sermon:

It's not what you'd do with a million,  
If riches should e'er be your lot,  
But what are you doing at present  
With the dollar and a quarter you've got?

(2) The Lord can also take the little things in our hands and make them big, if we will consecrate them to his service. Greatness in God's sight does not depend upon the value nor the enormity of the thing in our hands, but our willingness to use it to his glory. Read Lk. 16:10.

4. "What is that in thine hand," friend?

(1) Your life. None but you can live it, and only you can account for it (Rom. 14:12; 2:6). Both our present and future lives are what we make them, the reapings of what we have sown (Gal. 6:7).

The tissue of the life to be  
 We weave with colors all our own,  
 And in the field of destiny  
 We reap as we have sown.

—John Greenleaf Whittier

(2) Time. Time is a precious commodity that is given us. It comes free. It cannot be bought. No amount of money will buy one hour of time. It is too priceless to waste. To waste time is to waste life, for that is what life is made of. Time is man's greatest friend or foe, depending upon the use he makes of it. May we, therefore, "number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom" (Psa. 90:12).

(3) Your influence. Influence, good or bad, is something every person has within his own hand. It will bless or harm (I Pet. 3:1, 2; Gal. 5:7-9), depending upon its nature. It is all the more sobering to note that influence lives after we are dead (Rev. 14:13).

(4) Your talents. If we use our talents, they will be increased; if we neglect them, they will be taken from us (Matt. 25:24-30). Fish in Mammoth Cave, Kentucky, have gone blind because of their long existence in total darkness, although the same species of fish in streams on the outside have good eyesight. It is a law of God—if you fail to use your talents, they will be taken from you. God will hold each accountable for what has been given him: "For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required" (Lk. 12:48).

(5) Your soul. Its salvation is in your hand. Peter admonished the people on Pentecost, "Save yourselves" (Acts 2:40). It is too precious to lose (Mk. 8:36, 37). You decide your destiny.

**Review Exercise**

1. Why did God ask Moses the question in the text?  
.....  
.....
  
2. How did God prove to Moses that the people would believe? .....  
.....
  
3. What credential did God give Moses that would prove Moses represented God? .....  
.....
  
4. What were the apostles given to prove that they represented God ? .....  
.....
  
5. What was Christ's warning against false prophets? (Matt. 7:15) .....  
.....
  
6. How did Jesus benefit from tools used by Jacob?  
.....
  
7. What made the widow's small gift so liberal and famous? .....
  
8. Paul said, "I ..... do all things through .....  
..... which strengthened me."

**84      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

9. Name five small things made great when used in God's service. (1) .....  
(2) ..... (3) .....  
(4) ..... (5) .....
10. Name six valuable things in the hand of each today.  
(1) ..... (2) ..... (3) .....  
(4) ..... (5) ..... (6) .....
11. The Bible says: "But there were..... prophets also among the people, even as there shall he..... among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies" (II Pet. 2:1).
12. Since man's life is in his own hand, cite two Scriptures which prove that man must account for it.  
.....
13. We must account for our talents; because "for unto whomsoever much is given, of him.....  
.....?"
14. Quote from Rev. 14:13 to prove that influence lives after one is dead.....  
.....  
.....
15. (T or F) Today we have the Scriptures to prove that we represent God.
16. (T or F) The Lord multiplied a poor widow's lunch to feed the multitudes.

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT      85**

17. (T or F) The Bible teaches us to number our days.
18. (T or F) The Bible does not teach man to save himself.
19. Statement for comment: It is a law of God that unused talents are taken from us, but that used talents will increase.
20. Thought question: Do you see any small thing in your hand which can be used to accomplish something great in God's service?

## 15

### "WHO IS THE LORD THAT I SHOULD OBEY HIS VOICE?"—Ex. 5:2

**1. This question was Pharaoh's answer to Moses'** request to let Israel go into the wilderness to hold a feast (Ex. 5:1, 2). In substance, he said: "What claim has Jehovah on me? I am not indebted to him. He means nothing to me. Why should I obey him?"

**2. Pharaoh soon learned of the Lord the hard way.** He came face to face with the works of the true God who could not be mocked with broken promises (Ex. 8:8-15). Pharaoh was not dealing with a powerless, heathen God, but with the only true and almighty God. He saw the Egyptian idolatry confounded and rendered helpless by the power of the Lord who brought on the ten plagues (Ex. 7-11). No man can mock God, and he who tries it only deceives himself (Gal. 6:7).

**3. Men in every age have asked and will ask this question.** So it is good for us to study the Scriptures to get the true answer. We learn that Jehovah is:

(1) The Great First Cause. The Bible introduces itself with a scientific preface: "In the beginning God" (Gen. 1:1). He existed in the beginning as a self-existent Being. He is "from everlasting to everlasting" (Psa. 90:2). We have to start with something. The evolutionist commences with a tiny, lifeless speck. It is more reasonable to start with the powerful, self-existent God.

(2) Creator. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth" (Gen. 1:1; He also created man, animal life, and vegetation. This is the only reasonable way to account for the existence of things. The evolutionist says that we have creation as the result of evolution. A young skeptic said to an elderly lady, "I once believed in God, but since studying science I am convinced that God is but an empty word." The lady

replied, "Well, I have not studied science, but since you here maybe you can tell me from whence came this egg." "Why, of course, from the hen," was the reply. "And where did the hen come from?" "Why, the egg." "And perhaps," said the lady, "you can tell me which existed first." "The hen, of course," rejoined the young man. "You mean that a hen existed without having come from an egg?" "Oh, no," said the young man, "I should have said the egg was first." "Then you mean that an egg existed without having come from a hen?" The young man exclaimed, "You've got me all mixed up." She drove home her point: "Young man, since you cannot explain the existence of even a hen or an egg without God, you cannot expect me to believe that you can explain the existence of the whole world without him."

(3) "God is a Spirit" (Jno. 4:24). Finite minds cannot fully comprehend the infinite. It is so easy for us to think of God in terms and limitations of man. This erroneous thinking is no new thing. The Psalmist said, "Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself" (Psa. 50:21). But God cannot be understood by presuming to judge him by human standards. He is a Spirit, and "a spirit hath not flesh and bones" (Lk. 24:39). Being a Spirit, there is nothing unreasonable about God's being omniscient (Psa. 139:1-6), omnipresent (Psa. 139:7-10, 18), omnivisual (Psa. 139:11, 12, 15, 16), omnific (Psa. 139:14), and omnipotent (Psa. 139:14).

(4) God is one. "One God and Father of all" (Eph. 4:4). Every voice of nature attests this fact. One universe which is a complete unit One universal mind. One universal law. One universal force. There is no division or separation in nature. There is room for only one God in the universe. But this One is all we need. He is big enough to handle everything. One reason some people do not find God is that they are looking for one too little. God is too big to be put in the scientist's test tube for examination. God is not on trial. Man is!

(5) The Master Designer. He fashioned the universe



(Gen. 1), and keeps it in operation by the power of His word (II Pet. 3:7). He designed man. "Thine hands have made me and fashioned me" (Job 10:8). Design is written on the sun, the moon, and the stars, on every branch, bud, blossom, flower, rose, lily, and leaf. The foot, what design! The hand, what a masterpiece! The ear, what evidence of skill! The eye, what perfection! All nature follows a progressive plan. "The soil lives for the tree. The tree lives for the animal. The animal lives for the man." The man lives to the glory of God (Matt. 5:16). "The plant dies that the animal may live. The animal dies that man may live." The man dies that the spirit may return to God (Eccl. 12:7). Design is evident everywhere. And it is axiomatic that there can be no design without a designer. In the Reader's Digest, April, 1956, there is the following which was quoted from Cincinnati Times-Star: "Professor Edwin Conklin, the great Princeton University biologist: 'The probability of life originating from accident is comparable to the probability of the Unabridged Dictionary resulting from an explosion in a printing factory.' "

(6) Fair and impartial. God is equal and fair in all his dealings. He gave his Son to die for every man (Jno. 3:16; Heb. 2:9). Nature testifies to his impartiality. Neither the rain nor the sunshine is an exclusive product (Matt. 5:45). It comes alike upon the king's garden, the toiler's sod, the rich man's field, and the beggar's dust. There is no "pull" in nature.

(7) Good and severe. "Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God" (Rom. 11:22). His gentleness is seen in the mellow sunlight, refreshing breezes, and April showers. But a sterner side in his character is seen in Heb. 10:31.

(8) Supreme Ruler. God does not have to answer to anyone (Dan. 4:35). But man has to answer to Him. It is right that God govern man whom he created. Man is not capable of directing his own steps (Jer. 10:23). Man must look to his Creator for guidance.

(9) "God is love" (I Jno. 4:8). This is a lovely characterization of God, for love is lovely. God is everything that love is.

Could we with ink the ocean fill,  
Were every blade of grass a quill,  
Were the world of parchment made,  
And every man a scribe by trade,  
To write the love of God above  
Would drain the ocean dry;  
Nor would the scroll contain the whole,  
Though stretched from sky to sky!

—Neharai Meir Ben Isaac

(10) Father. Jesus emphasized this view of God. Christ refers to God as Father—not counting repetitions in parallel passages—about 161 instances. In the gem of all stories, the Prodigal Son, you see one of the most beautiful and distinct portrayals of God as Father (Lk. 15). The father rather than the son is the real hero of that story. A ship at sea was being tossed mercilessly by the winds and waves. The passengers were scared—that is, all but one little girl. "Why are you not afraid?" asked one frightened passenger. She replied, "Because my father is captain of this ship." How glad I am that God is my Father. As the storms of life rage, I can assuredly say, "I am not afraid, for my Father is captain of the ship."

**Review Exercise**

1. What prompted Pharaoh to ask the question in the text? .....
2. What does the person who attempts to mock God actually do? (Gal. 6:7).....

**90      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

3. How many plagues did the Egyptians suffer in learning the lesson that God cannot be mocked? (Ex. 7-11) .....
4. How does the Bible introduce God to man?.....  
.....
5. What is man's common error in thinking of God? (Ps. 50:21).....  
.....
6. How is the universe kept in operation? (II Pet. 3:7)  
.....
7. God is "from everlasting to....." Scripture : .....
8. Give five characteristics of God taught in Psa. 139.  
(1) ..... (2) ..... (3) .....  
(4) ..... (5) .....
9. Quote a Scripture which tells us who fashioned the universe.....  
.....
10. Prove that all nature follows a progressive plan.....  
.....
11. Professor Conklin stated that "the probability of life originating from accident is comparable to the probability of the....."  
.....

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT      91**

12. We learn from Dan. 4:35 that no one has the right to ask God: "..... ?"
13. (T or F) God is a Spirit.
14. (T or F) A spirit has flesh and bones.
15. (T or F) Matt. 5:45 testifies to the impartiality of God.
16. (T or F) God is too good to be severe.
17. (T or F) Jesus emphasized the Fatherhood of God.
18. Statement for comment: Discuss reasons why you know that God cannot be confined to a test tube.
19. Thought question: When you think of God, which characteristic is most outstanding to you?
20. Thought question: What do you think of the elderly lady's illustration of the hen and egg?

## 16

### "WHAT MEAN YE BY THIS SERVICE?"—Ex. 12:26

**1. The passover.** God foresaw that this question would be asked in years to come by the children of Israel relative to the keeping of the passover (Ex. 12:21-28).

(1) It would be a memorial to the Lord's passing "over the houses of the children of Israel when he smote the Egyptians" (Ex. 12:12-14, 27-30). The purpose of a memorial is to preserve and keep alive remembrance. The passover was a silent witness to what God had done for Israel. It would perpetuate and keep fresh in human memory an act of divine mercy. Just as long as they kept the passover, just that long future generations would look backward to God's passing over the Israelites when he visited death upon the Egyptians. This memorial would not let them forget it.

(2) A memory of great events is so important that God provided other memorials.

**2. Rainbow.** Children may look at the rainbow in the heavens and say, "What meaning is there to this bow in the clouds?" They are told: It is a memorial to the covenant God made with all flesh that there would never be another flood to destroy the earth (Gen. 9:8-17). It is a beautiful memorial to an assuring promise. It calls our minds back to what occurred and to God's promise not to repeat it.

(2) It is true that the world will be destroyed again—not by water, but by fire; not in part, but completely, so much so that it will pass away: not in time, but at the end of time (II Pet. 3:10-12). "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be" (Matt. 24:36, 37).

### 3. Omer of manna.

(1) What mean ye by this omer full of manna? The answer: The Lord commanded this to be kept in memory of his feeding Israel in the wilderness (Ex. 16:32-34). Such a host of traveling people in that age and place surely could not have fed themselves. It would be absurd to think that such large numbers could have lived off the land. It had to be providential.

(2) It is encouraging to remember that the same God has promised to care for us. He who clothes the fields and feeds the birds has promised to clothe and feed us (Matt. 6:25-30, 33). A remembrance of God's care makes everything all right.

God's in his heaven,  
All's right with the world.

—Robert Browning

**4. The Lord's supper.** What mean ye by eating this bread and drinking this fruit of the vine? The answer:

(1) It is a sweet and simple memorial to Christ. Our Lord said, "This do in remembrance of me" (I Cor. 11:24, 25). He does not want us to forget him. But many have forgotten the Lord in the very thing he commanded us to do in his remembrance. Many groups do not set the Lord's table as often as he wishes. They forget the Saviour. Many other people absent themselves from the supper even though it is set weekly. They, too, forget the Lord. There are many memorials: statues, buildings, faded flowers, locks of hair, etc.; but the most effective one is the Lord's supper. The passing of time cannot pull down this monument. Only unfaithfulness can.

(2) It shows the Lord's death. "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come" (I Cor. 11:26). It testifies to the greatest sacrifice of all ages. Just as the tomb of the Unknown Soldier bears witness to the death of an unknown man for his country, so the Lord's supper testifies to the Lord's death for man.

(3) It is a memorial which preaches the new covenant. "This cup is) the new covenant in my blood" (I Cor. 11:25). The cup, the symbol of Christ's blood, is the sign of a new covenant between God and man.

(4) The church at Troas observed this commemoration on the first day of the week (Acts 20:7). One asks, "Which first day of the week?" Here is a parallel thought: "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8). It was not necessary to specify which one or to say all Sabbaths; because every week has one and only one Sabbath, and as often as it came around the Jews were under command to keep it Likewise, every week has one and only one first day. That is the day the early disciples met to take the Lord's supper; and we shall do the same, if we follow their approved example.

(5) The church in Jerusalem continued steadfastly in the observance of this memorial (Acts 2:42). The fact that they continued steadfastly in it indicates a regularity and frequency rather than an occasional custom. If that regularity were not "the first day of the week," then what was it? Name the passage. It cannot be found! On the other hand, if the Bible teaches no regularity at all for the Lord's supper, then the person who takes it only once in a lifetime has obeyed the command and is just as scriptural as the person who takes it weekly. So surely the Bible teaches more on the regularity of the Lord's supper than many people have learned, and that regularity was "the first day of the week."

(6) It is easy to forget the Lord. "Can a maid forget her ornaments, or a bride her attire ? yet my people have forgotten me days without number" (Jer. 2:32). It is easy to see the Lord's wisdom in providing the Lord's supper. Surely we can see the benefits derived from keeping this memorial. Memory rekindles the fires of love. A weekly period of remembrance is a weekly period of growth. We need it! "What mean ye by this service?" It means much!

Review Exercise

1. What are the four memorials mentioned in the lesson?  
(1) ..... (2) .....  
(3) ..... (4) .....
2. What did the passover commemorate? .....  
.....
3. What meaning is there to the rainbow?.....
4. What meaning was there to the omer full of manna?  
.....
5. What meaning is there to the Lord's supper?.....  
.....
6. How often did the church at Troas take the Lord's  
supper? .....
7. How can the command, "Remember the sabbath day,  
to keep it holy" (Ex. 20:8) illustrate the regularity  
of the Lord's supper? .....  
.....
8. Name three things that will occur at the end of the  
world, as mentioned in II Pet. 3:10. (1) .....  
(2) ..... (3) .....
9. "But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming  
of the ..... of ....." "
10. Jesus used the example of God's caring for the birds  
to teach .....  
(Matt. 6:25-30).



**96      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

11. Relative to the Lord's supper, Jesus said, "This do in ..... of ....."
12. Jesus said, "For as often as ye eat this....., and drink this....., ye do..... the Lord's death till he come."
13. The Jerusalem church continued..... in observing the memorial of.....
14. The..... testifies to the greatest sacrifice of all ages (I Cor. 11:26).
15. (T or F) Not even the angels in heaven know when the world will end.
16. (T or F) The Lord's supper has no relationship to a new covenant.
17. (T or F) Jeremiah said that God's people will not forget God.
18. (T or F) The only regularity taught in the Bible for the Lord's supper is " the first day of the week."
19. (T or F) The steadfastness with which the Jerusalem church continued in the Lord's supper indicated a regularity and frequency rather than an occasional custom.
20. Thought question: What does the Lord's supper mean to you each week?

**"WHO IS ON THE LORD'S SIDE?"—Ex. 32:26**

1. Pacts leading to this challenging and soul-searching question:

(1) When Moses delayed to come down from the mount, the people asked Aaron to make them gods to go before them (Ex. 32:1). They made a golden calf and offered burnt offerings, etc. (Ex. 32:2-6, 17, 18). This was a direct violation of the first two commandments: "Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image" (Ex. 20:3, 4).

(2) God's wrath waxed hot against them because of their sin (Ex. 32:9, 10). It was a religious sin. Religious sins have always quickly kindled God's anger, perhaps more so than moral sins. Many religionists can conceive of sin in terms of only the immoral. Hence, any religious act or belief meets their approval.

(3) "Moses' anger waxed hot" also against those people, and he made them drink of their own sin (Ex. 32:19, 20). They needed to learn that setting up other gods was no small thing. God is a jealous God and he will not tolerate such behavior.

(4) Aaron, in defense of his blasphemous actions, offered two puny and hypocritical excuses for his misconduct: First, he tried to blame the people. "And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my Lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief" (Ex. 32:22). But he did not have to grant their request. He was responsible only for his own deeds. Second, he tried to blame the fire. "And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf" (Ex. 32:24). If this conception of human behaviour should become generalized, then no one would accept any responsibility for any wrong. The murderer would say, "Don't blame me; the gun did it." The arsonist would contend, "It is not my fault; the match did it." Aaron's excuses sound about as silly as some we hear today!

**2. Negative answer.** "Who is on the Lord's side?" Not all who think they are; for instance:

(1) Men of faith only. King Agrippa believed, but he was not a Christian (Acts 26:27, 28). The rulers believed on the Lord, but they still denied him and thus were lost (Jno. 12:42, 43; Matt. 10:33). Faith without works is dead (Jas. 2:24) The faith that avails blessings is one which works through love (Gal. 5:6).

(2) Moralists. Living a moral life is a commendable thing, as far as it goes. But morality alone is not sufficient to save. Cornelius was a moral man, but was lost (Acts 10:2; 11:14). If morality would save, then Christ would not be needed as man's Saviour.

(3) Many religious people. Cornelius was devoutly religious, but he was not saved (Acts 10:2; 11:14). Religion is a blessing or a curse, depending upon whether it be true or false. Religion links man to the Lord or places him against the Lord, depending upon whether it be the Lord's religion or the Devil's deceitful snare. Let us not forget that the Devil works in the realm of religion. The Bible speaks of false prophets (II Pet. 2:1-3), other plants and blind guides (Matt. 15:13, 14), vain worship (Matt. 15:9). Satan's synagogues (Rev. 2:9; 3:9), and Satan's ministers (II Cor. 11:14, 15). This means that there are many unconscious enemies of Christ. At one time Paul was such (I Tim. 1:13).

(4) Some whose names are on the rolls of churches of Christ. Just being baptized is not enough to keep one on the Lord's side. Some who have been baptized are now worse off than they were before, because they have gone back to their sins. It is like a dog turning to his vomit and a sow to her mire (II Pet. 2:20-22). Others hurt the church with their unsoundness in the faith, worldly influences, and discord. While they hurt the church, a disbelieving world stands off and cheers and applauds. Satan uses them to weaken the church from within.

**3. The positive answer.** "Who is on the Lord's side?"

(1) From the context we learn that the sons of Levi

were, because they were free from that idolatrous transgression (Ex. 32:2). They had obeyed God; the others had disobeyed. Thus, the factor that determines whether we are on the Lord's side is obedience or disobedience to his commands. Many who have said, "Lord, Lord" will be disappointed at the judgment to find that the Lord never knew them. Why? Because they did not obey the Father's will (Matt. 7:21-23). They professed that they knew the Lord, but their works denied him (Tit. 1:16).

(2) Jesus said, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you" (Jno. 15:14). Now, are we His friends? Yes, "if"—and that is a big "if."

(3) There is nothing to be gained from calling Him "Lord" unless we do what He says. "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk. 6:46).

#### **4. There can be no neutrality in this fight.**

(1) There is no middle ground. We have to be "for" or "against." Christ said, "He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad" (Matt. 12:30). This is a fearful passage.

(2) So in this struggle we can tell what a man is for by what he is against and what he is against by what he is for. There can be no compromise. If he is for righteousness, he is against sin. If he is for truth, he is against error. If he does not have much love for the truth, then he does not have much hatred for error. Because the Psalmist loved the truth he could say "I hate every false way" (Psa. 119:104). "Ye that love the Lord, hate evil" (Psa. 96:10). It just works that way.

(3) Now this personal question: Am I on the Lord's side?

**Review Exercise**

1. Which two commandments had the children of Israel broken in Moses' absence?.....  
.....  
.....

Scripture:.....

2. What kind of sin had the children of Israel committed? .....

3. What was the attitude of Moses when he came near the camp and saw their idolatry? .....

..... Was his attitude different from God's? .....

4. How did Moses make the children of Israel drink of their sins? .....

.....

5. What was the first excuse Aaron gave for his misconduct? .....

Scripture: .....

6. What was Aaron's second alibi for the idolatry? .....

7. If Aaron's second excuse should become generalized, then what would the murderer blame?.....  
..... What would the arsonist blame?

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT 101**

8. Name four classes of people who think they are on the Lord's side but are not. (1).....  
(2) ..... (3) ..... (4) .....
9. Give the name of a king who believed but did not become a Christian.....  
Scripture:.....
10. Use Jno. 12:42, 43 in connection with Matt. 10:33 to prove that one can believe and still be lost.....  
.....
11. Prove from Acts 10:2 and 11:14 that Cornelius was a moral and religious man but still lost .....  
.....  
.....
12. Match the Scriptures to the following thoughts:  
false prophets .....; other plants and blind guides .....; vain worship.....  
.....; Satan's synagogues .....; Satan's ministers. (Matt. 15:13, 14; II Pet. 2:1-3; Matt. 15:9; II Cor. 11:14, 15; Rev. 2:9).
13. A Christian's going back into sin is compared to .....  
(II Pet. 2:20-22).
14. The sons of Levi were on the Lord's side, because .....

## 102    GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

15. (T or F) Many who have said, "Lord, Lord," will be disappointed at the judgment to find that the Lord never knew them.
16. (T or F) One may profess to know God but deny God with his works.
- IT. (T or F) Our friendship with Jesus does not depend upon our obedience.
18. (T or F) One can be neutral in the fight which rages between Christianity and the world.
19. (T or F) One's love of the truth is exemplified by his hatred of error.
20. Thought question: What percentage of the people do you think blame their wrong-doing on someone else?

## 18

### "HOW SHALL WE KNOW THE WORD WHICH THE LORD HATH NOT SPOKEN?"—Deut. 18:21

**1. In this question and context we have a discussion of prophets.** The question is very timely today.

(1) In ages past men were told that God would raise up a prophet like unto Moses (Deut. 18:15). That prophet for whom the world waited was Jesus, and every word he spoke was an infallible oracle from God (Deut. 18:18, 19; Acts 3:22, 23; Heb. 1:1, 2).

(2) The prophet who presumed to speak a word in Jehovah's name which he had not commanded was to die (Deut. 18:20). Perverting God's word is a greater crime than most people have ever realized. The offense is so great that the penalty must be severe. Through the ages, however, false prophets have continued to arise and lead souls astray. The people have continued to serve as merchandise for false teachers even though the Scriptures are very pointed in their warnings against them (Matt. 7:15; 24:11, 24; II Pet. 2:1-3).

(3) In view of the foregoing, it is very evident that man needs to know how to recognize a false prophet. Otherwise he may land in the ditch (Matt. 15:14).

2. This is God's infallible rule: "When a prophet speaketh in the name of the Lord, if the thing follow not, nor come to pass, that is the thing which the Lord hath not spoken" (Deut. 18:22). This is a simple and fair test. Let us apply the rule.

(1) William Miller, the real founder of Seventh Day Adventism, predicted that Christ would return in 1843. Disappointed, he revised his figures and set the time, October 22, 1844. When this prophecy failed, too, he himself could see that he was a false prophet. But he it said to Miller's honor, he withdrew from the field of religious leadership. He even wrote: "We expected the second coming of Christ at that time, and now to contend that we were not mistaken is dishonest. I have no confidence in any new theories that grew out of the



movement."—Quoted from *Seventh-Day Adventism Renounced*, Canright, p. 77. Unfortunately, others have not been that honest.

(2) Joseph Smith, the founder of the Mormon Church, prophesied: "The coming of the Lord which was nigh—even fifty-six years—should wind up the scenes."—*Millennial Star*, Vol. 15, p. 205. "I prophesied by virtue of the holy priesthood vested in me and in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that if Congress will not hear our petition and grant us protection, they shall be broken up as a government, and God shall damn them and there shall be nothing left—not even a grease spot."—*Millennial Star*, Vol. 22, p. 455. Smith prophesied that the temple was to be built at Independence, Missouri, not far from the court house (*Doctrine and Covenant* 57:1-3), and at no other place (*Ibid*, 101:20), and that it was to be built in that generation (*Ibid*, 84:4, 5, 31). Father time, the tester of all prophecies, marched right on and refuted his predictions. These false prophecies and many others prove that he was not inspired.

(3) Charles T. Russell, the founder of Jehovah's Witness sect, prophesied, "That the Lord must be present and set up his kingdom and exercise his power so as to dash the nations to pieces as a potter's vessel before A. D. 1914 is then clearly fixed."—*Millennial Dawn*, Vol. 2, p. 170. When his prophecy failed, he tried to justify it by saying that Christ came, but the world did not see him. But this effort at face-saving was futile, for when Christ comes every eye will see him (*Rev.* 1:7). Christ's kingdom is not of this world (*Jno.* 18:36), and it was established long before the world ever heard of Russell (*Mk.* 9:1; *Col.* 1:13; *Heb.* 12:28).

(4) Isaiah prophesied that Christ would be born of a virgin (*Isa.* 7:13, 14). Its fulfillment (*Lk.* 1:26-35) proves that he was inspired.

(5) Micah prophesied that Christ would be born in Bethlehem (*Mic.* 5:2), and it came to pass (*Matt.* 2:11). Thus, he was a true prophet.

(6) Zechariah prophesied that the price of Christ's betrayal would be thirty pieces of silver (*Zech.* 11:12,

13). He was a true prophet, because it came to pass.

(7) Paul prophesied of the apostasy of the church (I Tim. 4:1-3; II Thess. 2:3, 4). We are living witnesses to the fulfillment of those prophecies; therefore, Paul was inspired.

**3. Try the spirits.** This is another rule to follow in determining the authenticity and scripturalness of the words of a teacher or prophet: "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world" (I Jno. 4:1). Today we have the Bible with which we may try, prove, or test a teacher. A teacher's words merit acceptance only if they are in complete harmony with the Bible.

(1) The Bereans followed this rule (Acts 17:11).

(2) The young prophet was deceived by the old prophet and led to doom, because he did not follow this principle (I Ki. 13).

(3) We should not believe even an angel from heaven, if his words should be contrary to God's word (Gal. 1:8).

**4. Another helpful passage** for us today in answering this question is Jude 3, American Standard Version: "Contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered unto the saints." The faith has been delivered once for all time to come. This rebukes the modern-day revelator who says: "I have something which has not hitherto been revealed." If so, it is not the faith. He is a false teacher.

**5. Personal warning and admonition.** "Take heed that no man deceive you" (Matt. 24:4). "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men, and cunning craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive" (Eph. 4:14). Do not permit sheep's clothing and fair speeches to deceive you (Matt. 7:15; Rom. 16:18). Any addition to or subtraction from the Bible is wrong no matter how sugar-coated the plea may be (Rev. 22:18,19).

**Review Exercise**

1. What prophecy did the Lord give in Deut. 18:15 and to whom does it refer! .....  
.....  
.....
2. What was to be the fate of a prophet who presumed to speak a word in Jehovah's name which Jehovah had not commanded? (Deut. 18:20) .....
3. What rule did God give to enable man to know if a prophet is true or false? (Deut. 18:22) .....  
.....  
.....
4. What is another rule given by John to determine the scripturalness of a teacher's words? .....
5. How do we know Isaiah was a true prophet?.....  
.....
6. What did Micah prophesy that proves he was a true prophet? .....
7. How do we know Zechariah was a true prophet? .....  
.....
8. List three specific prophecies given by Paul in II Thess. 2:3, 4 and I Tim. 4 :1-3 that we are seeing fulfilled today. (1) ..... (2) .....  
(3) .....

9. Acts 3:22 teaches that Jesus was a prophet like unto..... and that every soul which will not hear him shall .....
10. We learn from Heb. 1:1, 2 that in times past God spoke unto the fathers by the..... , but has in these last days spoken unto us by.....
11. Jesus taught that one may land in the ditch by ..... (Matt. 15:14).
12. William Miller proved himself a false prophet by prophesying .....
13. Joseph Smith proved himself a false prophet by prophesying .....
14. Charles T. Russell proved himself a false prophet by prophesying .....
15. (T or F) The Bereans followed the rule of testing that which they heard by the Scriptures.
16. (T or F) It is safe to believe an angel even though his message is contrary to God's word.
17. (T or F) Peter taught that false teachers would use souls for merchandise.
18. (T or F) The Bible teaches that we should not permit sheep's clothing and fair speeches to deceive us.
19. (T or F) Any addition to or subtraction from the Bible is wrong no matter how sugar-coated it is.
20. Thought question: How can we get humanity to become aware of the truthfulness of this lesson?

## 19

### **"IF THE LORD BE WITH US, WHY THEN IS ALL THIS BEFALLEN US?—Judg. 6:13**

1. This is the context: God's people were overcome by the Midianites and forced to live like wild beasts in caves and dens (Judg. 6:1, 2). The land was ravaged in times of harvest, and the Israelites were deprived of the necessities of life (Judg. 6:3-6). God's people were trodden under the iron heel of an idolatrous oppressor. As Gideon secretly threshed wheat, an angel appeared to him and said, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor" (Judg. 6:11, 12). Gideon ironically replied by asking the above-stated question.

2. Why? Why?

(1) Job asked it: "Why died I not from the womb?" (Job 3:11).

(2) Jesus uttered it from the cross: "Why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46).

(3) Its cry is still heard from a thousand voices. From the sick room—why this illness? From the hallowed burying ground—why this death? From blood-soaked battlefields—why this brutal slaughter? From the weak lips of the conquered—why this ignominious defeat? From the burden-bearer—why this outrageous hardship? Why? Why? Why?

### **3. Our sins may be the cause of our distresses.**

(1) This was true of the Israelites at the time Gideon asked the question of study (Judg. 6:1, 10). Furthermore, it was true many times during the period of the judges, as seen in the oft-repeated thought, "The children of Israel did evil again" and "the Lord delivered them into the hand" of their enemies (Judg. 13:1). Sin will distress and destroy a nation. The Bible says, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God" (Psa. 9:17).

(2) The hardships that came upon Adam and Eve,

and consequently upon their posterity, are the result of their transgression (Gen. 3:1-3, 16-24).

(3) It was not hard luck but sin that caused Saul to lose the kingship (I Sam. 15:23-28).

**4. On the other hand, our adversities may not be caused by our sins**, as in the case of Job (Job 1:6-12; 2:1-6). In his agony, Job asked, "Why did I not from the womb?" (Job 3:11). Poor Job was confused (Job 10:15), but he found some consolation in the thought that he was being tried (Job 23:10). God's answer to Job's calamities is found in God's giving him twice as much as he previously had (Job 42:10-17).

**5. The sins of the guilty may bring hardships upon the innocent.**

(1) Read Ex. 34:7. A child does not inherit the guilt of sin (Ezek. 18:20), but does inherit the consequences of it.

(2) A drunken driver hits and maims for life an innocent person. The innocent does not bear the guilt of the drunkard's sin, but must bear the consequences of it. The innocent have to suffer for the guilty. Even Christ was no exception. He suffered the holy for the unholy; and died, the sinless for the sinful (I Pet. 2:22-24).

**6. Furthermore, our sufferings may later prove to be blessings in disguise** for ourselves or for the cause of Christ.

(1) This was true of Joseph's calamities (Gen. 45:4-8; 50:20). Chastisement does not prove that the Lord is not with us. It rather proves that he is. "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth" (Heb. 12:6). At times he may whip us hard, but it is for our good.

(2) The beastly persecutions of the first century resulted in the spreading of the Word. "Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word" (Acts 8:4). "The things which happened unto me have fallen out rather unto the furtherance of the gospel" (Phil. 1:12).

**7. Poor health does not signify that the Lord is not with one.**

(1) It rather proves that the laws of nature have been broken. When nature's law is violated, only miraculous prevention could avert poor health. Many who do not believe in miraculous healing actually expect miraculous prevention.

(2) Epaphroditus was very ill, but neither he nor Paul blamed the Lord with it (Phil. 2:25-27).

**8. Why do we have death?** See Chapter 6.

9. **War.** "If the Lord be with us, why does he permit this devastating war?"

(1) Well, who started it anyway? Cain slew Abel (Gen. 4:8). Multiply that a million times and you have a world war. But if God had not permitted Cain to kill, then he would have denied Cain the volition that man is capable of exercising. Now, who wants to be deprived the rational qualities of man and be made to function like the heavens and the earth (II Pet. 3:7)? Man's freedom to choose good necessitates his freedom to choose evil, even though it provokes a world war.

(2) But we rejoice in God's power to use sinful man to accomplish his own holy purposes, as in the case of Joseph's brethren (Gen. 45:4-8; 50:20). God can bring good out of man's evil, even though it is a world war.

**10.** Another consideration to help us is: **If man knew everything, he would know as much as God himself.** Let us remember: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever" (Deut. 29:29). In the midst of our troubles may we behave as did the afflicted Job of whom it was said, "In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly" (Job 1:22).

**Review Exercise**

1. Under what circumstances did Gideon ask the question in the text? .....
2. What was the cause of Israel's distresses in Gideon's day? .....
3. Why did hardships come upon Adam and Eve and their posterity?.....
4. What question of distress did Job ask? .....
5. Who is the greatest example of distress coming upon one because of the sins of another? .....
6. What does Ezek. 18:20 say about one's bearing the iniquity of another?.....
7. Whom does Paul mention that was very ill? .....
8. God's answers to Job's calamities is found in God's giving Job .....
9. "The wicked shall be turned into ..... and all the..... that forget..... " Scripture:.....
10. Quote a Scripture which proves that chastisement is a sign of God's love .....



11. God permits man to wage war because .....  
.....
12. We know from the experiences of.....  
that God can use sinful man to accomplish his purposes.
13. In Job's troubles he said, "I am full.....  
..... " (Job 10:15).
14. Job found consolation in his sufferings by saying:  
.....  
..... (Job 23:10).
15. (T or F) Saul lost the kingship because of hard luck.
16. (T or F) Paul said that the things which happened unto him had hindered the gospel.
17. (T or F) The beastly persecutions of the first century resulted in the spreading of the Word.
18. (T or F) Jesus never asked the "why" of the sufferings on the cross.
19. (T or F) We should not expect to understand everything, because we are not God.
20. Thought question: What thought in this lesson is most consoling to you in your distress?

**"IS THE YOUNG MAN. . . SAFE?"—II Sam. 18:32****1. The question is found in this setting:**

(1) Absalom, wanting to be king, stole the hearts of the people (II Sam. 15:6), rebelled, and waged war against his father, David, who was king (II Sam. 17, 18).

(2) David specifically commanded his generals to "deal gently" with his dishonorable and rebellious son (II Sam. 18:5).

(3) When a messenger brought news of the battle, David's first concern was, "Is the young man Absalom safe?" (II Sam. 18:29).

(4) Joab, contrary to David's orders, deliberately killed the rebel, Absalom (II Sam. 18:14).

(5) David's lament for his perverse and unruly son is one of the world's classics, and expresses in tender and dramatic language the deep feelings of parents for wayward children in every age: "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (II Sam. 18:33).

**2. This question is one of the greatest,** for it has to do with our children. Youth is the world of tomorrow. As goes the youth, so goes the world. Youth has fallen heir to a chaotic, troubled, and sinful world. He has not had the experience to cope with a thousand problems he must face. His safety from the slings and arrows of many an unfavorable circumstance is conditional, as we shall see.

**3. The young man's safety is dependent upon his teaching.**

(1) Man is the product of his teaching, whether it be by word or example; hence, Christianity is a teaching religion (Matt. 28:19, 20).

(2) The mind of youth is pliable and must be taught the right way (Eph. 6:4; Prov. 22:6).

(3) Jesus' training was four-fold: intellectual, physical, religious, and social. "And Jesus increased in

wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man" (Lk. 2:52).

(4) The safety of youth is undermined in some schools by modernists and infidels.

**4. Youth is more apt to be safe if he honors his parents.** Absalom's downfall was brought about by his perverse attitude toward his father.

(1) Read Eph. 6:1-3; Prov. 13:1; 19:26. The same thing which causes a child to disrespect parents will cause him to disrespect others. Such a spirit can only lead to ruin.

(2) Jesus was subject to his parents (Lk. 2:51). Many parents have marred their children for life and maybe for eternity by failing to teach them obedience.

**5. Industry is another safeguard for youth.**

(1) The busy youth can say to the tempter, "I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down" (Neh. 6:3).

(2) Idleness leads to hunger (Prov. 19:15), rags (Prov. 23:21), and to gossip and talebearing (I Tim. 5:13). Read Prov. 10:5. Thousands of parents have done their children a lifetime injustice by not teaching them to work. Winston Churchill said, "Without work there is no play."—*My Early Life, A Roving Commission*.

**6. Another peril for the young man is his associates.**

(1) Evil associations corrupt good morals (I Cor. 15:33; I Cor. 5:6).

(2) Evil associates influenced Herod to murder John the Baptist (Matt. 14:6-10).

(3) A few years ago, the author conducted funeral services for a young man who was electrocuted in the penitentiary at Huntsville, Texas. He was the victim of wicked associations.

(4) Napoleon, a young cadet in military school, said to a companion who had formed degrading associations: "I have succeeded in keeping your morals pure. Your new friends will destroy you. Choose between them and me. There is no middle course." After the third warn-

ing, he said, "You have despised my warnings and renounced my friendship. Never speak to me again."

7. Fleshly entertainment and unclean recreation have imperiled the safety of youth.

(1) Some things are helpful while others are hurtful. What some people call recreation is nothing more than dissipation.

(2) For entertainment to be helpful to man and acceptable to God, it must not be a work of the flesh (Gal. 5:19-21), nor arouse the impure within one (Phil. 4:8), nor hinder the gospel (I Cor. 9:12), nor exceed one's financial ability (Rom. 13:8), nor injure one's health (I Cor. 3:16, 17).

8. Another protection for our children is their ability to quote Scriptures in times of temptation.

(1) Jesus used this to a good advantage (Matt. 4:1-11).

(2) "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (Jas. 4:7).

9. Watchfulness and prayer will also give youth power to overcome. Read Matt. 26:41. This will guard youth against the impulse of the moment. Many a weighty problem has been solved in prayer.

10. A spiritual and worthy wife is a safeguarding influence for the young man.

(1) Woman was created for such. God made her to be a help meet for man (Gen. 2:18).

(2) An evil woman may pull her husband down to the depths of sin, as Herodias did (Matt. 14:8). Outlandish women caused Solomon to sin (Neh. 13:26).

(3) A good woman is a leavening influence over her husband. She may win him to the Lord by her manner of living (I Pet. 3:1, 2). Some women marry Christians and make sinners of them, while other women marry sinners and make Christians of them.

**Review Exercise**

1. What caused David to ask the question in the text?  
.....
2. What was David's lament for his perverse son?.....  
.....  
.....
3. Why is this question one of the greatest? .....  
.....
4. Why does a young man's safety depend upon his teaching? .....  
.....
5. What attitude brought about Absalom's downfall!  
.....
6. What effect can associations have upon youth!.....  
.....
- T. What command did Jesus give in Matt. 26:41 that especially should guard youth against the impulse of the moment! .....  
.....
8. In Matt. 4:1-11 we learn that.....quoted Scripture in times of.....
9. Give the four-fold education Jesus received:  
    (1) ..... (2) .....  
    (3) ..... (4) .....
10. Eph. 6:4 teaches that fathers should .....

11. .... was subject to his parents (Lk. 2:51).
12. Idleness leads to..... (Prov. 19:15),  
..... (Prov. 23:21), and.....  
(I Tim. 5:13).
13. A wise son..... ; but a shameful son  
..... (Prov. 10:5).
14. For entertainment to be helpful to man and acceptable to God it must pass five tests: (1) .....  
..... (2) .....  
(3) ..... (4) .....  
..... (5) .....
15. (T or F) Resist the devil, and he will flee from you.
16. (T or F) Man was created to help woman.
17. (T or F) Herodias interfered with her husband's well-being.
18. (T or F) Peter teaches that a Christian wife may add to her husband's safety by influencing him to become a Christian.
19. (T or F) Solomon's heathen wives never weakened him in his religion.
20. Thought question: What are you personally doing to help youth to be safe?

**"IF THE PROPHET HAD BID THEE DO SOME  
GREAT THING, WOULDST THOU NOT HAVE  
DONE IT?"—II Ki. 5:13**

**1. This question concerns a leper.**

(1) Leprosy is a disease which eats holes in the eye-lids and lips, bleaches the hair snow-white, covers the body with a mass of ash colored scales, eats the nails away, swells the fingers with knots that are crusted with red secretion. Slowly, steadily, but surely the disease brings death. Everywhere the sufferer goes they yell, "Unclean, unclean!"

(2) Lessons from the context: A. Naaman was a great and honorable man, but he was a leper (ver. 1). Today there is the moral man, but he is a sinner. Morality alone will not save. The gospel saves (Rom. 1:16; II Thess. 1:8, 9). Man is saved in the church (Eph. 5:23; 2:16). B. Naaman went away angry (ver. 11). But this did not alter the facts. Your smashing the scales will not change your weight. You can break the mirror, but you will still look the same. An angry mob stoned Stephen (Acts 7:54-60), but it did not alter the truth for which he died. C. Naaman said, "I thought" (ver. 11). But man's thinking he is right does not make him right. Man is to live by faith rather than opinion (II Cor. 5:7). Faith in a religious practice is founded upon God's authority for it (Rom. 10:17); otherwise, it is a human opinion. D. Naaman expected his leprosy to be prayed away (ver. 11). Alien sins cannot be prayed away today, because God has a law of pardon to aliens (Heb. 11:6; Acts 8:37; Acts 2:38); and he who turns away from it and asks God to save him independent of the law is guilty of abomination (Prov. 28:9). E. Naaman thought Abana and Pharpar could be substituted for the Jordan (ver. 12). But he was mistaken! His leprosy was not cured until he obeyed (ver. 14). God will not condone such loose handling of his word (Deut. 4:2; Rev. 22:18, 19).

**2. The captain's servants reasoned with him by asking,** "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? how much rather then when he saith" something simple? This is a tragic commentary on millions. They think the simple and unpretentious acts avail little, while the difficult, ostentatious and ceremonious deeds avail much.

(1) This is seen in the suffering and torture to which the prophets of Baal subjected themselves (I Ki. 18:17-29).

(2) The Pharisees were good at doing the deeds which attracted public attention (Matt. 6:1-7, 16-18), but miserably failed in such simple things as humility and sincerity (Lk. 18:9-14).

(3) There are members of the church who are willing to serve in the capacities that put them before the people: lead prayer or singing, speak, serve the Lord's supper, head a drive, give of their money if there is enough fanfare; but are unwilling to do the simple duties which cannot be paraded. They are quick to spread a feast, but slow to give a cup of cold water (Matt. 10:42).

(4) There are millions today who pass by the simple commands of the Lord which profit much to obey the great and difficult commands of men which avail nothing. But let us remember: "(Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using;) after the commandments and doctrines of men? Which things have indeed a show of wisdom in will-worship" (Col. 3:21-23).

3. When Bibles were hard to procure at any price, people underwent galling hardships to own a precious copy and would read it daily and reverently. A copy can be bought now for a small sum, and many have lost sight of its true value. But how much rather should we study it! Read I Tim. 4:13; II Tim. 2:15.

4. To some, the plan of salvation for aliens is too easy: faith, repentance, confession, and baptism. They prefer to make remission of sins an agonizing ordeal in



which the sinner wrestles, pleads, and begs God to obtain it. Read Jno. 9:31; I Tim. 2:3, 4; Acts 2:37, 38.

**5. Just living right, dying in the Lord, and going to heaven some day seemed too easy for many people;** so they invented purgatory, a place to stop on the way to heaven to have sin burned out. In Lk. 16:19-31 we read of two men who died. One went to a place of bliss without going to purgatory. The other went directly to a place of torment where it was impossible to pass to the blissful state. So neither the saved man nor the lost man went to purgatory, because there is no such place.

**6. It sounds too simple to some of our religious neighbors to go directly to God in prayer** (Matt. 6:9), in the name of Christ (Jno. 14:13, 14), our high priest (Heb. 4:15). Consequently, they have established a theological system with a multiplicity of intercessors. However, there is only one mediator (I Tim. 2:5).

**7. The world needs to learn that whatever God has ordained is effectual and great even though it is simple,** and that whatever man has originated which is different from God's order is ineffectual and puny even though it is humanly great and ostentatious. May we profit from these inspired words: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts" (Isa. 55:8, 9). This is a much needed lesson. Paul taught the same thing (I Cor. 1:25).

### Review Exercise

1. How is the beginning question and its context a tragic commentary on millions? .....
2. What was the attitude of Baal's prophets toward the difficult in contrast with the simple in religion? .....

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT 121**

3. What was the attitude of the Pharisees toward the ostentations in contrast with the unpretentious in religion? .....
4. Rather than obey the simple plan of salvation, what do some people want to dot .....
5. What was man's attitude toward Bibles when they were very hard to procure at any price?.....
6. What lesson should man learn from Isa. 55:8, 9?.....
7. What lesson should we learn from I Cor. 1:25?.....
8. Naaman was a great and honorable man, but he was a .....
9. Prove from Naaman's life that man's becoming angry at facts does not alter them.....
10. Prove from Naaman's statement: "I thought," that thinking you are right does not make you right.  
.....  
.....
11. Prove from Naaman's experience that there can be no substitute for God's command.....  
.....

**122 GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

12. Comment: Some members of the church are quick to spread a feast, but slow to give a cup of cold water.....
13. Prove from Lk. 16:19-31 that there is no such place as purgatory.....  
.....  
.....
14. I Tim. 2:5 states that there is only.....  
.....between God and man.
15. (T or F) The Bible warns against the doctrines of men which have a show of wisdom in will-worship.
16. (T or F) Eph. 2:16 teaches that man is reconciled to God in the religious body of his choice.
17. (T or F) Anyone who prays contrary to God's law is guilty of abomination (Prov. 28:9).
18. (T or F) A human being may serve today as another man's high priest.
19. (T or F) Naaman's leprosy was not cured until he obeyed the simple command of God.
20. Thought question: Is there danger of our being influenced to give up the simplicity of ancient Christianity for the pretentious and ceremonious acts of man-made religion?

**"WHAT HAVE THEY SEEN IN THINE HOUSE?"—  
II Ki. 20:15**

**1. Isaiah addressed this question to Hezekiah, a truly great king (II Ki. 18:5).** For the context, read II Ki. 20:12-18. The question is a practical one for every family in every age.

**2. Have they seen a recognition of the scriptural status of each one in the family?** Read Col. 3:18-21.

(1) God appointed man the head of the family (Eph. 5:23; I Cor. 11:3). As such, he is commanded to make a living (I Tim. 5:8), love the wife (Col. 3:19; Eph. 5:25), and teach the children (Eph. 6:4). The strain and stress of man's responsibilities as the head of the family are tremendous and life-ebbing. Man's years are now four less than woman's.

(2) The wife, in recognition of God's law, is to be submissive to her husband (Col. 3:18). A refusal to do so is blasphemy (Tit. 2:5). This does not argue that woman's intellect is inferior to man's; but she, with her feminine traits, is not as well prepared for rulership as man. Those feminine traits better equip her to be the keeper of the home (Tit. 2:5), guide the house and be a mother (I Tim. 5:14), and be a companion and help to her husband (Gen. 2:18). The loveliness of her soul, the prayers in her heart, the radiance of her charm, and the work of her hands can transform a hovel into a palace. A young bride who did not wish to keep house was shocked by an elderly woman who said, "Maybe your husband will hire someone to keep house for you, if you will hire someone to make a living for him." Marriage is a partnership, and each must work and assume responsibilities.

(3) Children should have respect for parental authority. Read Col. 3:20; Eph. 6:1-3; Prov. 1:8, 9.

(4) Parents have an obligation to train their children (Col. 3:21; Eph. 6:4; Deut. 6:6, 7). At a state **fair, a**

spindling, hollow-shouldered, consumptive-looking, cigarette-puffing boy led a champion hog into the show-grounds to win first place. That hog was everything you could want in a hog. He had enjoyed good care. Now the irony of it is that the hog and the boy belonged to the same man. That man was a national success as a hog raiser, but a miserable failure as a boy "raiser." A man may succeed in making a living, but fail in rearing his son to live a life.

### **3. Have they seen good influence in thine house?**

We have a Biblical example of the mother's influence affecting the child and later the grandchild (II Tim. 1:5). Hence, the best time to start training a child is with his grandparents. The church is a kingdom of influence (Matt. 13:33).

(1) A bald-headed merchant was standing at his shop door. A Scotchman stopped, and inquired if he had any hair-restorer. "Yes, sir; step inside. Here's an article I can recommend. Testimonials are many from men who have used it. It makes the hair grow in twenty-four hours." "Aweel," said the Scotchman, "ye can gie the top o' your own head a bit rub wi't; and I'll look round the morn, and see if ye 're telling the truth." This homely story illustrates a vastly recognized fact. Example is more convincing than precept.

(2) A sixteen year old boy quit attending church services. His explanation was: "My parents have attended church for forty years, and it has not done much for them; so why should I continue?" This might be your son!

**4. Have they seen prayer?** Read Phil. 4:6; I Thess. 5:17. One must pray to be Christ-like, because Christ prayed much (Lk. 6:12; Matt. 14:23; 26:36-44). Too many children have never heard their parents pray.

**5. Have they seen Bible study** and the reading of other good literature? Or do you spend your time reading unclean and vulgar magazines and use the Bible as only an ornament in your home? As a person thinks, so is he (Prov. 23:7), and as he reads, he thinks; so one's

reading will help make him what he is. The power of literature is lasting. "If I might control the literature of the household, I would guarantee 'the well-being' of the church and the state."—Francis Bacon. "No man can be called friendless when he has God and the companionship of good books."—Mrs. Browning. He who spends for his body, but refuses to spend for his mind, places a greater value upon his body than he **does** upon his mind.

**6. Have they seen hospitality?** This is a characteristic of a Christian home (Rom. 12:13; I Pet. 4:9). The hospitality of the Shunammite and his wife is an inspiring example (II Ki. 4:8-10).

**7. Have they seen gambling?**

(1) Man should work for his living rather than gamble for it (Gen. 3:19).

(2) It is inconsistent for a mother to play cards for a \$5.00 gift in front of the big picture window, and later whip her little boy for rolling dice for pennies in the back alley.

**8. Have they seen social drinking and drunkenness?**

(1) Prov. 23:29, 32; Psa. 107:27; I Cor. 6:10.

(2) A son said to a father, "I see no harm in taking a drink." The father held out an acorn and asked, "What do you see?" The son replied, "Only an acorn." The wise father continued, "Where you see only an acorn I can see an oak; and where you can see only a drink I can see a drunkard."

**9. What have they heard? Ex. 20:7; Jas. 3:10-13: Col. 4:6.**

(1) Man's speech reveals his heart (Matt. 12:34).

(2) A young college graduate was cursing in a home where he was visiting. A Christian lady said, "Young man, since you do not know enough English to express yourself without cursing, I am suggesting that you use another language; and if you must curse, you can curse in it, and we shall be spared the annoyance." Cursing indicates that man has not the ability to express himself without being irreverent.

**Review Exercise**

1. What is the scriptural status of the husband?.....  
.....
2. What is the scriptural status of the wife? .....  
.....
3. What is the obligation of children to parents?.....  
..... Of parents to children?  
.....
4. How can a wife become guilty of blasphemy? (Tit. 2:5) .....  
.....
5. What is the teaching in Deut. 6:6, 7?.....  
.....
6. What outstanding example of hospitality is given in the Old Testament? .....  
.....
7. What did Solomon say in Prov. 23:29-32 that wine would do to man? .....  
.....  
.....
8. Man as the head of the family is commanded to ..... (I Tim. 5:8),.....  
(Col. 3:19), and .....(Eph. 6.4).
9. Tit. 2:5 requires the wife to .....  
.....

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT 127**

10. A man can be worse than an infidel by .....  
..... (I Tim. 5:8).
11. Prove from the Bible that a good time to start training a child is with his grandparents .....  
.....
12. Prayer should be seen in the house, because Phil. 4:6 teaches .....  
.....
13. Bible study should be seen in the house, because.....  
.....
14. Hospitality should be seen in the home, because Rom. 12:13 teaches .....  
.....
15. (T or F) Drunkenness will not keep one out of heaven (I Cor. 6:10).
16. (T or F) One of the ten commandments forbade the taking of God's name in vain (Ex. 20:?).
17. (T or F) Hearing the instruction of father and mother will be an ornament of grace unto a child (Prov. 1:8, 9).
18. (T or F) Man's speech does not reveal the heart.
19. (T or F) Man should work for his living rather than gamble for it.
20. Thought question: Are there any improvements you can make in your hornet Can this be effected by beginning with self!



**"WHY IS THY COUNTENANCE BAD?"—Neh. 2:2**

**1. There is so much sadness in the world today.** It is surely profitable for us to study what caused some Biblical characters to be sad and what they did to overcome it.

2. In our beginning Scriptures, we find that **Nehemiah was sad because Jerusalem, the city of his fathers, was in desolation and disrepute** (Neh. 1:1-4; 2:1-3). This was enough to stir the emotions of any consecrated Jew. He overcame this sorrow by ambition, prayer, and hard work, by restoring the pillaged city to its former state (Neh. 1:4-11; 2:4-6). Nehemiah did more than weep; he arose to remove the cause. A challenge, prayer, sacrifice, and hard work can turn our sorrows into sources of satisfaction and happiness. Try it!

**3. Elijah's sadness was caused by discouragement** (I Ki. 19:1-10). He thought the odds were too great to battle life any longer, and wished to die (I Ki. 19:4). But there was not as much cause for discouragement and loneliness as Elijah had imagined. There were still seven thousand who had not bowed the knee to Baal (I Ki. 19:18). He was the victim of his own imagination and fear, as countless numbers of people are today.

(1) It is good to note that Elijah found joy in a new mission (I Ki. 19:15, 16). New missions in life have salvaged many sad lives.

(2) Discouragement is one of the devil's choice weapons. With this, he often succeeds when everything else fails. Optimism is necessary for success. We should learn to say "I can" (Phil. 4:13). Success comes in "cans," while failure comes in "can'ts."

**4. David once vexed himself and fasted for days because his child was ill** (II Sam. 12:15-18). Anxious parents through the ages have spent sleepless and prayerful days and nights for the same reason. After the child died, David had to adjust himself to living without him.

This he did with the dramatic and immortal statement: "Wherefore should I fast? can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me" (II Sam. 12:23). David's view is the only effectual and consoling way to look at life and death. This hope will dry our tears and heal our aching hearts. Read I Thess. 4:13; Phil. 1:21; I Cor. 15:19.

**5. Hannah had a sad countenance, because she had no children** (I Sam. 1:8-17). This is understandable.

(1) She found joy in beseeching God to give her a child and in the assurance that he would.

(2) If a couple cannot have children born to them, perhaps they can adopt some. Read Jas. 1:27. If this is not feasible, they can still find happiness in substituting other persons, things, or causes to receive the same care and affection that otherwise would have been given to a child. They will experience that which Cowper calls "the generous pleasure of a kindly deed." It will be as Shakespeare says, "Twice blessed; it bleaseth him that gives and him that takes."

**6. Lying tongues have caused a world of sadness and strife:** "Because with lies ye have made the heart of the righteous sad" (Ezek. 13:22). It has been said that there is no protection against liars, but this is not exactly so. A good name is a bulwark against liars (Prov. 22:1).

**7. Jonathan grieved because of the ugly and sinful way his father treated David** (I Sam. 20:34).

(1) Saul's envy of David led him to do much mischief (I Sam. 18-27).

(2) There are few families today who are not at times saddened by the conduct of some member of the family.

(3) Jonathan conquered this grief by being a true friend to David (I Sam. 20:11-17). He stood for the right rather than blindly defend his father. A righteous person can follow no other course (Psa. 101:3).

## 130 GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

8. Ahab was unhappy because he wanted Naboth's vineyard (I Ki. 21:5, 6).

(1) The same desire for material things is robbing many people of happiness today. They cannot enjoy what they have for the discontent produced by the endless wishing for something else. They are unhappy because they are living life on the wrong basis. Read Matt. 4:4; I

(2) Earthly riches are not satisfying (Eccl. 5:10). Contentment has a way of fleeing from the rich (Eccl. 5:12). Solomon was extremely wealthy (I Ki. 10:13), but he exclaimed, "All is vanity and vexation of spirit." Riches push open almost every gate except heaven's.

(3) Happiness is found from within, not from without. Read Phil. 4:11; Psa. 144:15.

9. A rich young man once turned from Jesus in sorrow (Mk. 10:17-22). He had enough religion to obey in part, but not enough to rid himself of the idol in his heart. There are many today who have enough faith to make them miserable, but not enough to make them happy. As a result, they are torn between Christ and the world. They should choose whom they are going to serve (Josh. 24:15; Matt. 6:24). They remind us of a man with the headache. He does not want to get rid of his head, but it hurts him to keep it.

10. Peter's bitter tears flowed from a sense of guilt. For fear, he denied the Master (Matt. 26:69-74).

(1) Peter, however, removed the cause. Those were penitent tears. He became so faithful and courageous that he later died for the Lord (Jno. 21:18, 19).

(2) Sin is the greatest source of sadness; hence, salvation is the greatest source of joy (Matt. 11:28-30; Acts 8:39; 16:34). Joy is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). God's kingdom is the greatest and most satisfying cause for which a person can live; thus it is a kingdom of joy (Rom. 14:17).

**Review Exercise**

1. What caused Nehemiah's sadness?.....
2. What caused Elijah's sadness?.....
3. What caused David to vex himself and fast? .....  
.....
4. Is there any bulwark against liars? .....\_
5. What grieved Jonathan? .....
6. What made Ahab unhappy?.....
7. What made the rich young man sorrowful? .....  
.....
8. Nehemiah overcame his sadness by .....  
.....
9. Elijah triumphed over his sadness by .....  
.....
10. David obtained strength in his sorrow from the following philosophy of life: .....  
.....
11. Ezekiel stated that..... have made the heart of the righteous sad. Scripture:.....
12. Jonathan conquered his grief by.....  
.....
13. Paul had learned to be..... in whatsoever ..... he was (Phil. 4:11).
14. Peter's tears flowed from .....

**132     GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

15. (T or F) Peter overcame his tears by being faithful and courageous in God's service.
16. (T or F) Joy is the fruit of the Spirit.
17. (T or F) Solomon found happiness in his wealth.
18. (T or F) Paul in Phil. 1:21 solved the problem of life so that there will be no problem to death.
19. Statement for comment: Some people follow enough Christianity to make them miserable, but not enough to make them happy.
20. Thought questions: Is there any sadness in your life which cannot be overcome with the Lord's help? Have you analyzed the cause of your unhappiness? Have you sought a way to conquer it?

**"WHAT DO THESE FEEBLE JEWS?"—Neh. 4:2****1. Introductory thoughts:**

(1) This is a question of insult and ridicule. Mockery was used to hinder the construction work in Jerusalem. Many who stand well against a score of other attacks go down before a barrage of mockery. They cannot endure ridicule. Modernists realize this and have used this weapon effectively in attempting to destroy the faith of our young people.

(2) Nehemiah went to Jerusalem about 444 B. C. to rebuild the wall and restore Jerusalem as a fortified city. Old-time enemies of the Jews bitterly and cunningly opposed his work. But in spite of all obstacles the wall was completed in fifty-two days (Neh. 6:15). They did not delay. Speedy work. Too many people are chained to the post of postponement. Some others are so slow that we wonder if they have a high gear.

(3) Portions of the wall remain: "'The stairs that go down from the city of David,' (3:26); 'the bend in the wall,' (3:25); 'the tower that stands out,' (3:26): the remains of these may now be clearly detected."—*Pocket Bible Handbook*, Halley, p. 216. Archaeology has always confirmed the Bible rather than denied it.

(4) So those Jews were not as feeble as their enemies had imagined. God's enemies have always underestimated the strength of his people. They do not know that man's alliance to God gives him indomitable power (Neh. 4:15). It will be very helpful to note what those poor Jews did to rise from the dust of feebleness and contempt to the peak of invincibility and glory.

**2. They had leadership.**

(1) Nehemiah was a powerful leader (Neh. 2:17-20). No business or work can rise above its leadership.

(2) A few years ago a motorist was flagged to a stop by a man who said, "Mister, have you seen a group of people down the road?" And when the gentleman

in the car replied, "Yes," the inquirer said, "I'd better hurry on down there, because I am their leader." They had already gone off and left their leader. Here is a lesson for us. Leaders ought to lead. The strength of the church demands it.

**3. They gave individual cooperation.**

(1) The people said, "Let us rise up and build" (Neh. 2:18). "The people had a mind to work" (Neh. 4:6); and they did work (Neh. 4:16-18), rather than say, "Let someone else do it."

(2) If leadership is essential to success, then so is "followship." You cannot have one without the other.

(3) The human body is used to illustrate the necessity of cooperation in church work (Eph. 4:16).

**4. Their work was facilitated by organization.**

(1) Chapter three tells of the special work performed by many different individuals. When war seemed imminent, Nehemiah organized the workers so that some guarded while others worked (Neh. 4:16). This made their work slower, but safer.

(2) The need for organized and systematic labors in the church led to the appointment of the seven (Acts 6 :1-6). What is everybody's business comes nearer being nobody's business.

**5. Their faith was a tremendous motivating power.**

(1) They believed that God would bless them. It is refreshing to read of it, Neh. 2:20; 4:14. Their battle cry was, "Our God shall fight for us" (Neh. 4:20).

(2) Such a faith as "I know whom I have believed" (II Tim. 1:12) gave Paul an unconquerable spirit in life and in death (II Tim. 4:6-8). We can be no stronger than our faith (Psa. 27:13; Heb. 3:12).

**6. Another source of strength that raised them up was prayer.**

(1) Nehemiah's first impulse was always to pray (Neh. 1:4; 2:4; 4:4, 9; 6:9,14).

(2) Prayer was one of the steadfast qualities of the

Jerusalem church (Acts 2:42). Prayer multiplies the strength of a Christian. Read I Pet. 3:12.

**7. Hard work and sacrifice gave strength to a people that was called feeble.**

(1) Read of their work in Neh. 2:18; 4:6, 17, 23.

(2) Faith, prayer and organization were not enough. Work had to be done. There is no substitute for it. It is an essential in all the affairs of life. Faith without works has never built a wall, a city, a congregation, or saved a soul. Faith with works will build and will save; but faith without works is no stronger than a corpse (Jas. 2:14-26).

**8. Their persistent and uncompromising attitude gave them a resistance and a sturdiness that could not be overcome.**

(1) Note the efforts made by their enemies to subdue them: A. Mockery (4:1-3). B. The threat of open warfare (4:7-9). C. Flattery and recognition (6:1-3). D. Misrepresentation (6:5-13).

(2) The same strategy has been used by the enemies of the church. First, they ridiculed our faith. Second, they fought us openly in debates. Third, they flattered us by inviting us to counsel with them. Fourth, they misrepresented us. Generally speaking, however, we did not succumb. Consequently, we have rebuilt the spiritual **walls of** Jerusalem and are today a strong people.

(3) May we ever be aware of the danger of compromise. Read II Jno. 9-11.

**Review Exercise**

1. Who in modern times use questions of ridicule to destroy the faith of our young people? .....



**136      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

2. How long did it take Nehemiah and others to re-build the walls of Jerusalem? .....
3. Are there today any standing portions of the walls? .....
4. What power brought to nought the counsel of the enemies? (Neh. 4:15) .....
5. What was Nehemiah's answer to the insult of the enemies? (Neh. 2:20) .....  
.....  
.....
6. What was done in an organizational way to facilitate the completion of the work? (Neh. 4:16).....  
.....
7. What was the battle cry of the Jews in rebuilding the Jerusalem walls? .....
8. The question in the text is one of.....  
and.....
9. Comment upon Nehemiah's leadership.....  
.....
10. Quote the statement of the Jews which shows their spirit of cooperation (Neh. 2:18).....  
.....

**GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT 137**

11. In an effort to organize and systematize the work in the Jerusalem church they appointed .....  
.....
12. Nehemiah's first impulse was always to.....  
.....
13. Faith, prayer and organization were not enough.  
.....had to be done.
14. The enemies made the following efforts to subdue Nehemiah and his brethren: (1) .....  
(Neh. 4:1-3). (2) .....(Neh. 4:7-9).  
(3) ..... (Neh. 6:1-3). (4) .....  
..... (Neh. 6:5-13).
15. (T or F) A great contributing factor to the success of the project was, "The people had a mind to work."
16. (T or F) The human body is not mentioned in the Bible to illustrate cooperation in church work.
17. (T or F) Nehemiah and his brethren were so persistent in their work that they did not put off their clothes except for washing (Neh. 4:23).
18. (T or F) Faith was no motivating power in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem.
19. (T or F) Compromise is one of the dangers we face today.
20. Thought question: If we follow the same general principles followed by the Jews in rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, will it lead us to success in church work?

"WHAT IS MAN?"—Job 7:17

**1. Introductory thoughts:**

(1) This question was asked by Job (Job 7:17), by the Psalmist (Psa. 8:4), and by every thoughtful man.

(2) Some misconceptions: To the ambitious war-monger, man is only cannon-fodder. To the evolutionist, man is the product of some lower form of life. Some men get more joy out of trying to prove that they are descendants of a baboon than they get from the thought that they are the children of God, created in his image. To many schools of religionists, man is by nature a child of Satan, "positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse."—*Baptist Church Manual*, J. M. Pendleton, p. 46. *To sectarians in general, man is a law unto himself whereby he makes a thing right by thinking it is right. This would make a god of every man.*

(3) From one viewpoint, man is very insignificant. In size, he does not compare favorably with the whale. In age, he cannot compete with the California redwoods. In physical strength, he is no match for the elephant.

(4) But let's look at man as God sees him and view him as he really is.

**2. Man was made a dual being, flesh and spirit.**

(1) His terrestrial nature is seen in that "God formed man out of the dust of the ground" (Gen. 2:7). This portion of man, decomposable and perishable, will return to the dust (Eccl. 12:7).

(2) His celestial nature is seen in that, after man was formed, "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Gen. 2:7). Thus, God first gave man a body and then gave him a living soul. The body serves as the house or tabernacle for the soul (Gen. 35:18; II Cor. 5:1).

3. In a world filled with living beings, **man is the only one created in the image of God** (Gen. 1:26, 27; 2:7).

(1) This refers to the spiritual image of God; for "God is a spirit" (Jno. 4:24) and "a spirit hath not flesh and bones" (Lk. 24:39). So man is akin to God. He was given spiritual intelligence and a divine life. He was made to know and to enjoy his Creator (Psa. 95:6, 7; 100) and to commune or walk with him (Gen. 5:24).

(2) Man has been given an intellect with which he thinks (Matt. 9:4), reasons (Mk. 2:8), understands (Matt. 13:15), and believes (Rom. 10:10). Man is the only one of God's creations endowed with the intellectual and volitional powers of self-cultivation. The bee made as good honey a thousand years ago as today. Centuries have passed, but the monkey has not improved his standard of living. Man alone can improve his conditions in life.

(3) Man was endowed with an attribute called emotion with which he despises (II Sam. 6:16), desires (Rom. 10:1), loves (Matt. 22:37), and trusts (Prov. 3:5).

(4) Man was given a quality called will with which he determines (I Cor. 7:37), intends (Heb. 4:12), purposes (Acts 11:23), and obeys (Rom. 6:17).

(5) Man was given another faculty called conscience which condemns or condemns not (I Jno. 3:20, 21). So man was "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psa. 139:14), an intellectual and moral being, capable of companionship with his Creator. God has magnified him.

#### **4. Man's position in God's creation is that of a tenant or steward.**

(1) "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof" (Psa. 24:1; I Cor. 10:26). But he gave it to man for his use, giving him dominion over every other thing created (Gen. 1:26, 27). God expects us to use his world to our comfort and happiness, and then leave it behind. "For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out" (I Tim. 6:7).

(2) Hence, man should not put his trust in these earthly blessings, but in the God who provided them (I Tim. 6:17). This is where the rich fool got his conception of life mixed up (Lk. 12:15-21).

## 140 GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

### 5. Man is a sinner.

(1) God did not create man as a sinner (Gen. 1:26, 27), but he became such through his own volition (Gen. 3:1-6). "God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions" (Eccl. 7:29).

(2) Man is not a sinner by heredity (Ezek. 18:20). An infant can inherit the fruits of sin but not the guilt of it; for sin is not an inherent quality. Sin is either a transgression of law (I Jno. 3:4) or an omission of law (Jas. 4:17); and neither can be inherited.

**6. Man is a creature upon whom God has set his heart** (Job 7:17). A glorious distinction! What consolation!

(1) Man sinned, but God still loved him (Rom. 5:8). What wonderful love!

(2) God gave his Son as a sacrifice for man's sins (Jno. 3:16). What marvelous giving!

(3) Man was given the gospel, the power to save his soul (Rom. 1:16). What redeeming power!

(4) God desires man's salvation (I Tim. 2:3, 4), and pleads for it (Matt. 11:28-30). What beseeching interest!

### 7. Man is a servant.

(1) He is a servant of sin or a servant of righteousness (Rom. 6:16-18). He is a being through whom God or the devil can work (II Cor. 6:1; Matt. 16:23). Hence, man has his temptations (Matt. 26:41); even Christ did, but he did not sin (Matt. 4:1-11).

(2) Man's happiness here and hereafter is dependent upon whom he serves (Rom. 6:23).

**Review Exercise**

1. What is man to the war-monger? .....  
To the evolutionist?..... To the advocates of hereditary depravity? .....  
To sectarians in general? .....
2. What part of man did God first create?.....
3. What did God do next in creating man? .....  
.....
4. What is man's position in God's creation? .....  
.....
5. How did God create man? .....
6. Upon what does man's happiness here and hereafter depend? .....
7. What must man do to be changed from a servant of sin to a servant of righteousness? .....  
.....  
Scripture: .....
8. Man's body serves as a..... for man's soul (Gen. 35:18; II Cor. 5:1).
9. Prove that God's creating man in his own image refers to the spiritual image of God.....  
.....

**142**      GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

10. Man has been given an intellect with which he ..... (Matt. 9:4), ..... (Mk. 2:8),..... (Matt. 13:15), and ..... (Rom. 10:10).
11. Man was endowed with an attribute called emotion with which he ..... (II Sam. 6:16), ..... (Rom. 10:1), ..... (Matt. 22:37), and..... (Prov. 3:5).
12. Man was given a faculty called conscience which ..... or..... (I Jno. 3: 20, 21).
13. Prove that God expects man to use God's world and then leave it behind.....
14. Prove that man is not a sinner by heredity.....
15. (T or F) Man is a creature upon whom God has set his heart.
16. (T or F) Man is one of several beings created in the image of God.
17. (T or F) The rich fool made the mistake of getting his conception of life mixed up.
18. (T or F) Man is the only one of God's creations endowed with the intellectual and volitional powers of self-cultivation.
19. (T or F) Man is a being through whom God or the devil can work.
20. Thought question: What can man do to improve himself?

**"If A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?"--Job 14:14****1. Job pondered this question.**

Note his state: A. He was a perfect and upright man (Job 1:8). B. Satan's trial had brought him much grief and pain (Job 1, 2). C. He longed even for the grave (Job 14:13; 3:11, 20-22). D. But there was in Job's bosom the hope of life (Job 14:14; 19:25-27). Even though remote, hope of life after death has been instinctive and characteristic of man in every age. A typical example is the American Indian, who knew not God, but believed in the "happy hunting ground."

**2. If man does not live again, nature labors in vain.**

All of earth's inhabitants exist for the comfort of man (Gen. 1:26-30). "If he be lost--forever lost, all is lost. Crops of vegetables annually spring out of the earth, and return to it again. Races of animals feed upon them, and die. They, like their food, but enrich the earth. . . man himself and his food alike perish for ever. . . Now what is gained by the whole operation? If man lives not again. . . nature labors in vain: and if there be a Creator, he works without a plan, and toils for no purpose."—*Christian Baptism*, Campbell. Hence, common sense suggests a life after death.

One of the most impressive things ever said on the need of man's immortality was what Hortense, daughter of Napoleon's Josephine and mother of Napoleon III, wrote to her son who lay ill for a brief time in America. She did not expect to see him again in this life. Thus she wrote: "Believe that certainly we shall meet again. Have faith in this consoling idea. It is too necessary not to be true."

**3. If man does not live again, then surely there is no God, no Creator, no First Cause.** No one can imagine a Creator, a supremely Good One permitting man, the crowning glory of his work, to live to no avail and for nature, the creation of his own plan, to end in failure.



Such a hypothesis is at war with every principle of logic and with every oracle of common sense. It cannot be. There is a God; hence, there must be life after death.

**4. The resurrection is a visible occurrence year after year.**

(1) In the fall, the cold and wintry winds sweep down from the north bringing death. The beautiful green grass fades into the color of death. The leaves on the trees die and drop to the ground. But with the coming of spring, vegetation is resurrected to a more beautiful and fragrant life. The grass is green and inviting. The foliage is alive with indescribable beauty.

(2) If God has the power to resurrect the dead things of nature, then we should not doubt his power to resurrect man (I Cor. 15:51-55) and to clothe his spirit with a new body (I Cor. 15:35-44; Phil. 3:21) suited and adapted to a heavenly habitation (Jno. 14:1-4; Rev. 21:1-7).

**5. Man without hope lives not as a being created in the lofty image of God** (Gen. 1:26, 27), but as the animal of the forest or the beast of the field.

(1) Years ago Alexander Campbell debated Robert Dale Owen, the famous infidel of Scotland. One day as they walked across the countryside together, Mr. Owen said, "Mr. Campbell, we infidels have an advantage over you Christians; we have no fear of death." Mr. Campbell replied, "Mr. Owen, you see yonder ox that is content to chew his cud and whisk away the flies; he, too, has no fear of death; neither does he have any hope of life. Mr. Owen, in all due respect, you live on the same level; you have neither fear of death nor hope of life." Read I Cor 15:19.

(2) The hope of life beyond the grave, is an anchor for the soul (Heb. 6:19) in a stormy sea and a source of comfort in a world of death (I Thess. 4:13-18).

**6. Man has an eternal nature.**

(1) Man consists of flesh and spirit, the outward portion and the inward portion (II Cor. 4:16; Eccl. 12:7).

(2) Death is a departure of the spirit from the body

(Eccl. 12:7; II Cor. 5:1). Therefore, death is not the end of man.

Why should you be forlorn? Death only husks the corn.  
Why should you fear to meet the thresher of the wheat?

—Maltbie D. Babcock

7. The Bible tells of some who died and lived again.

(1) Jesus was the "firstfruits of them that slept" (I Cor. 15:20). Read Matt. 28:1-10. He was seen alive by many witnesses (I Cor. 15:1-8). The testimony of these witnesses is trustworthy. No witness ever gave stronger proof of sincerity than they. Their testimony meant persecution and death to them. It is absurd to say that they would die for something they knew to be a lie. If they cannot be believed, no historian can.

(2) Moses and Elias who had been dead for centuries appeared alive (Matt. 17:1-4).

(3) The rich man and Lazarus did not cease to exist when they died. Each passed into another world to live (Lk. 16:19-31). Where we live after death is dependent upon how we live here (Jno. 5:28, 29; Matt. 25:46).

8. David's hope inspires us (II Sam. 12:15-23). His inspiring 23rd Psalm is the world's most beautiful piece of literature. Humanity has been inspired in life and consoled in death by it. Henry W. Longfellow wrote: "There is no death! What seems so is transition: This life of mortal breath is but a suburb of the life elysian, whose portal we call death."

E'en for the dead I will not find  
My soul to grieve—death cannot long divide :  
For is it not as if the rose that climbed  
My garden wall had blossomed on the other side?  
Death doth hide but not divide;  
Beloved, thou art on Christ's other side.

**146    GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

**Review Exercise**

1. Why was Job pondering the question in the text?  
.....
2. Why is it that nature labors in vain, if man does not live again? .....  
.....
3. What proof is there of the resurrection in nature?  
.....
4. What kind of bodies are Christians to have in the next world? (Phil. 3:21) .....  
.....
5. What are the two natures of man? .....  
.....
6. What became of the rich man and Lazarus after they died? .....  
.....
7. What was David's hope that inspires us? (II Sam. 12:15-23).....  
.....
8. Comment: If man does not live again, the Creator's work would end in failure.....  
.....  
.....

9. Answer the question in I Cor. 15:35 from the teachings which follow in that chapter.....  
.....  
.....
10. Comment: Man without hope of another life lives on the level of the beast or animal.....  
.....
11. Give the names of two men who had been dead for centuries but appeared alive.....  
..... Surely this proves there is life after death.
12. Prove that the testimony Jesus came forth from the dead was given by trustworthy witnesses. ....  
.....
13. At death "the dust .....  
and the spirit shall ..... "  
(Eccl. 12:7).
14. When Jesus comes the dead .....  
and living persons .....  
(I Thess. 4:16-18).
15. (T or F) Death is a departure of the spirit from the body.
16. (T or F) Jesus was never seen after the resurrection.

**148    GREATEST QUESTIONS IN THE OLD TESTAMENT**

17. (T or F) Paul spoke of the perishing of an inward man and the renewing of an outward man (II Cor. 4:16).
18. (T or F) Some shall be resurrected unto life, and others unto damnation (Jno. 5:28, 29).
19. (T or F) David said, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life; and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever" (Psa. 23).
20. Thought question: Do we have the faith in another life that we should have?

