

Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman

Vol. 3, No. 6

“And ye are complete in him.” Colossians 2:10

Nov./Dec. 2000

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The Gift of Grandmothers

I have been reminded of your sincere faith, which first lived in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice and, I am persuaded, now lives in you also. (2 Timothy 1:5)

How many sights do you know that are lovelier than a fully-grown man tenderly taking his elderly mother's arm and supporting her as she walks from the car to the door or from the waiting room to the doctor's examining room? Have you seen anything warmer than a grandmother reading a story to a child who sits transfixed or lies in peace or giggles like mad on her lap? Young mothers are beautiful, but what is it about a white-haired, elderly mother who still tenderly touches her fifty-year-old son and fixes his hair down as she did all those years ago when he couldn't do it for himself?

B. G. White of Jacksonville, Florida wasn't eavesdropping but was glad she heard what she heard. It was mid October, and the trees along the Blue Ridge Parkway were ablaze with color. At an overlook where all this could be appreciated, she stood next to a woman who was showing the view to her elderly mother.

“Isn't it wonderful of God to take something just before it dies and make it so beautiful?” the daughter said as she gazed at the fallen leaves. “Wouldn't it be nice,” the mother mused, “if He did that with people?” The younger woman looked at the stooped, white-haired figure beside her and said so softly that she thought no one else heard:

“Sometimes He does.”

I know that civilized societies and countries are held together by governments that seek the welfare of the law-abiding majority. I know that and I'm grateful for it. I also know that society is blessed by devoted schoolteachers,

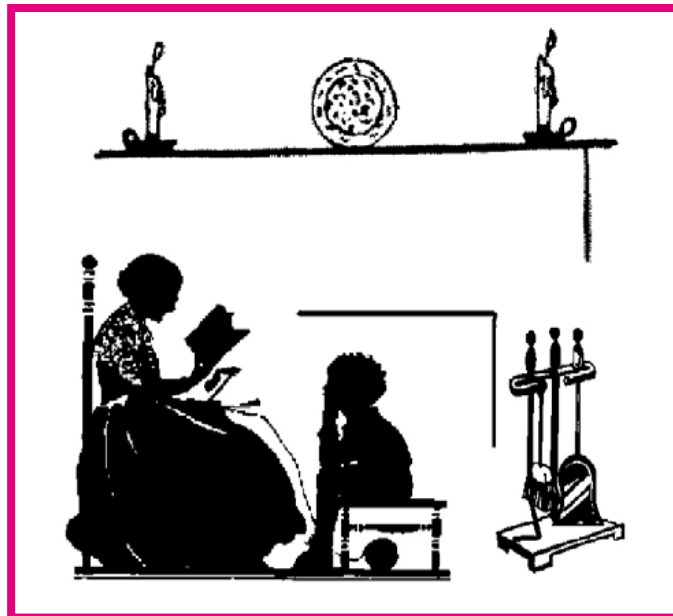
conscientious social workers, just judges, and ethical lawyers. I've seen what passionate men and women can do for societies when they embody noble principles in the centers of power. And only a fool can dismiss as nothing the thousands of community organizations in the cities and towns of the world that cater to the emotional and physical needs of countless unfortunate people. But all these beautiful men and

women had mothers and grandmothers (or those who stood in the place of mothers and grandmothers) who helped to shape their characters. For good or evil, it's people who change people—and there are no people who change people more than mothers and grandmothers!

One little boy put it very well when asked what a grandmother was. He said: “A grandmother is a lady who has no children of her own, so she loves everybody else's. Grandmas don't have anything to do except be there. If they take you for a walk, they slow down past leaves and caterpillars. They never say

‘hurry up.’ Usually they're fat, but not too fat to tie your shoes. They wear glasses, and sometimes they can take their teeth out. They can answer questions like why dogs hate cats and why God isn't married. When they read to you, they don't skip words or mind if it's the same story again.

(Continued on page 3)



Our Mission Statement: Believing that we can find completeness in all areas of our lives only “in him, who is the head of all principality and power” (Colossians 2:10), it is the mission of *Hearth to Hearth* to provide a forum for Christian women to reach out to each other in friendship, with joy and hope; and to encourage each other to find our completeness in Christ as we sojourn here on our way to the kingdom.

Our Golden Years

It seems only yesterday that we were concerned about the Y2K computer glitch and how it might affect our lives. Has it really been a year? It's a cliché, but how true it is that "time flies." As I write, the mornings have turned chilly and there's a sparkle in the air that wasn't there last week. The sky overhead is a much deeper blue, and I notice the hummingbirds being more aggressive around the feeders. Soon they will forsake our yard to wend their way southward in preparation for their long flight across the Gulf to their winter home in Mexico. I wonder if the summer has seemed as brief to them as to me.



My birthday comes toward the end of summer, so the passing of the season and the beginning of fall (which seems to represent the closing of this life) is always a bittersweet time for me. I am reminded how quickly the seasons of my own life are passing. Sometimes I feel panicky because I haven't accomplished the things in life that I should, and could, have—had I only realized at a younger age how short life really is. In my spiritual life, in my personal relationship with God and in giving more and better service to Him, do I especially feel regret for the squandered time and opportunities.



The theme of this issue of *Hearth to Hearth* is "Our Golden Years." It seems appropriate, in this fall-to-winter time of year, near the close of the last official year of the twentieth century, that we focus on the aging process. We are closer than ever to the end of our own lives, but more importantly, we are closer than ever to the end of all time, as we know it, and the beginning of eternity!

Many of us are surprised to find ourselves in our golden years and still waiting for Jesus to come. Who would have thought that Jesus' coming would be so long delayed! I recall in January, 1950, when I was just a girl, hearing our speaker at church say that he never thought that the Lord's return would be delayed this long. He said that he never expected to see 1950 roll around because he thought we would surely be in the kingdom long before then. He has been gone for more than 20 years now, and the girl that heard him say those things is entering her own golden years! And the Lord still has not returned.



What do we say, then? Do we join the scoffers who say, "Where is the promise of his coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation." (2 Peter 3:4) Or do we say with Peter, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, . . . but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

It has been the privilege of all Christians down through the ages to live in expectation of seeing Jesus return in the clouds of heaven. Immediately before His ascension His disciples asked Him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" (Acts 1:6) In the next verse He answered: "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power." And while Paul tells us that "the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night" (1 Thessalonians 5:2), he goes on to say in verses four and five that "Ye are all the children of light, and the children of the day; we are not of the night, nor of darkness. Therefore let us not sleep, as do others; but let us watch and be sober." With the faithful of all ages, it is our privilege to be "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Titus 2:13) Beyond doubt, that day is closer now than ever before!



Grace Cox

MAIL CALL:

[A friend] passed the Jan./Feb. newsletter on to me, and I really enjoyed it. Please place me on your mailing list. In that issue was a letter from a reader in Colorado suggesting an article on the importance of water. [My friend] suggested I submit an article I had written for a newsletter I'm involved with. I'm enclosing the newsletter that had the article. I would be rather pleased if you would like to use it. I would not be offended if you opt not to use it; the Lord will lead. MN

[We appreciate you sending us your article and have filed it for reference as we plan future issues. Ed.]

I enjoyed the last issue that [a friend] sent me. I'd like to be on your list. It sure beats [popular women's magazines] that have gone too far, too permissive—ugh. TN

I really enjoy the newsletter. I always read it front to back as soon as it arrives. I've used some of the items in programs at my TOPS Club. Thank you for sending it to me. VA

The mission of *Hearth to Hearth* is doing God's work just as I feel God would have you do. [You are] touching people in need of a loving, caring family... Please keep promoting the concept of family that so many of us need in these days when the enemy has destroyed the warmth and loving care that is vital to a sound mental and emotional state of being. Thank you so much for what you are doing! TN

In the last issue [Sept./Oct. 2000] the study on redemption and the sanctuary was excellent! I like the poems also. OH

A friend gave me one of your *Hearth to Hearth* booklets. I found it so inspiring and uplifting. I re-read the entire booklet several times. Please add me to your mailing list. If you have any back issues available I would enjoy reading them. Thanks for the uplifting stories to read and think about as I go through my day. TN

I am not a very good writer but I try to share my thoughts and knowledge of the Lord with the readers of *Hearth to Hearth* from time to time. As Christian women, we need to share and learn from each other. I hope many others will be brave and write their thoughts and comments and send them to *Hearth to Hearth*. VA

I believe that, as home schooling is getting more popular, you should deal with it more. I have new home school moms calling for help and advice weekly. I am asked for umbrella programs, accredited programs, state laws and how to find them, etc. I think dealing with that would

be very useful...School in this day is a challenge, and we need all the help we can get; and Christians should be the best informed. AR

I felt I had to tell you how much this issue [Sept./Oct. 2000] means to me, but there are no words to begin. Have kept all the issues, but this is the one I will treasure most. I enjoy all the articles in all the issues, though sometimes I get bogged down in some of the Old Testament ones; a little hard for me to understand at times, but I feel sure many enjoy them most of all. Keep up the good work, but you will never put out a better issue than this. WV

I enjoyed the *Hearth*, the sanctuary article especially! I hope future issues will include deeper study articles! OH

[*Hearth to Hearth* is not meant to be a "deep study" paper. There are many other papers to fill that need. May we recommend *Present Truth*, available from Smyrna Gospel Ministries, HC 64, Box 128-B, Welch, WV 24801. Ed.]

I feel concerned for the one who wrote and said that [the articles in] *Hearth to Hearth* sometimes make her feel that there is something wrong with her. In many ways she is correct for I've come to that conclusion several times. PA

PRAYER REQUESTS:

1) Please pray for my daughter. Her marriage is not good. Please pray that she and her husband will find each other again. Pray also for our grandchildren.

2) Please say some extra prayers for me and my dad. My mom died this week after a long illness. They had been married 49 years. Thank you.

3) I am facing surgery in the near future on my carotid arteries. My doctors tell me the surgery itself could be fatal for me, but without it, I am certain to suffer a major stroke before long. I am placing my trust in God who doeth all things well. Please pray for me.

LETTER OF TESTIMONY:

When and where do we find the time in our hectic everyday lives to spend quality time with our Father? Not our earthly father of course, but our heavenly Father. I can remember my life being so constantly rush here then rush there, and work, work, work. How frustrating it was knowing I should have been spending time developing a relationship with God and not just trying to make it in the world. Then one day it just came over me like a ton of bricks. God spends every bit of His divine, precious time, being ready to listen when I whine and whimper or cry out in distress

due to some difficult situation in my life, but how available have I been to build a relationship of love and growth with Him? I guess it is so easy to say "Oh, if you only knew what I am going through...", but that is just putting the things of the world before our Lord. I have learned to sacrifice time for Him. Believe me, it is worth every minute. I have determined that I will not be a thankless child before our Father. I thank Him for every moment I spend with Him, and somehow things are all working better for my personal life. Praising Him!

Linda Spillan, OH

PEN PAL CORNER:

I would like to be a pen pal with anyone desirous of a new friend. I'm retired, a widow, active in my home, yard and garden. I love people of all ages, especially those who are lonely or hurting—mentally, physically or spiritually. Helen (last name withheld), 199 Murphy Hollow Road, Lawrenceburg, TN 38464

I enjoy writing, and would like to exchange letters with other women. I am middle aged, married, and have a 14-year old daughter at home; in addition, I have cared for over 100 foster children over the years! I enjoy sewing, swimming and Bible study. Patty Osborne 9184 Maple Street NW, Malvern OH 44644.

EDITORS' NOTES:

Moving? Remember to notify us of your change of address as quickly as possible if you don't want to miss any issues.

***Hearth to Hearth* Survey:** First, we want to say how very much we appreciate your participation in the survey! Our thanks to each one who has taken the time to fill out the form and return it to us. It has been exciting to read your comments, which were direct and insightful, and we will put them to good use as we plan the future direction and content of the newsletter. Your responses are inspiring us to work even harder (if that is possible!) to make *Hearth to Hearth* the kind of newsletter that will indeed play a part in helping all of us find completeness in Christ (see the "Mission Statement" in the box on page 1).

We will give you a complete report of the overall results of the survey in the Jan./Feb. issue of *Hearth to Hearth*. (Individual names will not be mentioned, of course.) If you have not yet sent us your survey form, please do so right away; we need them no later than November 20 in order to include them in the report—so hurry!

(Continued from page 1)

Everyone should try to have a grandmother, especially if they don't have television, because grandmas are the only grownups who always have time for you."

Mothers and grandmothers have been praised since the world began. One of the most famous men in history was writing an encouragement to a young man he knew, urging him to gallantly complete a difficult commission he had been given. In the course of it he reminded the young man of the splendor of the lives of his grandmother (Lois) and mother (Eunice), and in this way he urged him to live nobly.

The famous man was Paul, a special messenger of Jesus Christ, and his young friend was Timothy. And did the young man follow in the steps of his mother and grandmother, living his life nobly? Tradition says he became a leading figure for many years in the Christian movement in Ephesus and that he was clubbed to death by a ferocious mob because he publicly denounced the immorality of their worship of the Ephesian goddess, Artemis (Diana).

A grandmother and her daughter took a little boy of nervous temperament and helped shape him into a kind but bold spokesman for societal righteousness and decency. It shouldn't be hard for us to see Timothy giggling and thoughtful, wide-eyed and sleepy, quiet and questioning in the laps of the two most important and influential people in his life as he was being molded to play his part in the changing of the world for the better.

B. G. White's young woman was right: sometimes God takes something before it dies and makes it so beautiful—a white-haired, stooped little mother or grandmother, for example.

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Older Women Teaching the Younger

[The following is “A Letter from Laine,” one of an on-going series available on the Internet. All Scriptural quotes are from the New American Standard Version. Ed.]

Dear Sisters,

“Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and

pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will malign the Word of God.”

Titus 2:3-5

For the second time today I have talked to a young woman who is frustrated and hurting. As we talked I could see the problem. The problem is the “older women” in their lives are not living out the above verse.

Each woman was not complaining about the older woman in her life, but she was frustrated at her inability to figure out what she was doing wrong since her home did not match their well-managed home. Well, the problem was they are not teaching and training these young women in what they know. Rather than coming alongside these young women with important aid to them in their child raising and home management, they come to these younger women’s homes and sit and talk and then get frustrated when the children interrupt. Or when the younger women go to their homes, they feel as though they should have never come (especially with their children), because no one can move for fear the well-manicured home and the well-manicured woman running it will break down if something is mused or broken.

I felt bad for these two women. I do not see this going on in the verse above. In the verse above I see a whole lot of “training” going on. As you know with training children you have to get into the middle of it with them. Well, likewise with the older women training the younger women. They need to get “into the

middle of it” with the younger women. And the “it” results in loving husbands and loving children. How? By a well-managed home run by the kind of woman exemplified in Proverbs 31. This does not just happen naturally. It happens through prayer and training and practice. Training that watches an older woman in action, which causes the younger woman to be encouraged to imitate, and then to consistently practice what she sees. If that were not so, then Titus 2 would not call the older women to train anyone.

Remember the days when an older woman would drop everything to be beside her daughter when she gave birth? And then continue to stay for weeks on end to see her daughter back on her feet again? The daughter would learn so much about the raising of her children watching a seasoned veteran in her home. Now the saying goes for many older women, even in the church, “I raised my children. Now it’s your turn.”

Remember the days when an older woman was up before dawn and pulling pies out of the oven by 6:30 a.m. while readying her fruit for the makings of jam? (Just read about a great grandmother like this.) Now older women say that they’re not cooking anymore. Their kids are raised and they’ve cooked enough to last a lifetime. How the younger woman needs to watch this woman in her kitchen. How the grandchildren need to watch her and know her love that puts hot dishes and warm cookies on a kitchen table.

Remember when going to grandma’s house was as big a treat as going to church? Now older women are quite busy with the many activities of their church leaving the younger women to feel guilty if they want some of their time. It’s not the same world anymore, is it? No, not every older Christian woman is like this. But it is common in our society to see women behaving as such and affecting Christian women more and more likewise.

I had a wonderful thing happen to me this weekend. An older, loving Christian woman, who has raised all four of her children, came to visit us for the weekend. She could only speak Spanish as she lives in Mexico, and it was our first time to meet



each other. She did something wonderful for me. She taught me how to make flour tortillas and corn tortillas the old fashioned way—with only the use of her hands. Watching her was like watching poetry in motion as she carefully kneaded without a measuring tool in sight, then moved the ball of tortilla dough in her hands until it was paper thin and the size of a large pizza pan. We marveled. We oohed. We aahed. We ate the first ones slathered with butter and oohed and aahed some more. And then my children and I put our hands into the dough and began to imitate her work. At first it was very difficult with our tortillas coming out quite holey, for she had made it look so easy. But the more we practiced, the larger and less holey our tortillas turned out. They were even edible! When she left the next day, my children kept talking about the tortillas and how glad they were that she taught us. My husband kept remarking how fortunate I was to learn this treasured skill. She was in my home for only twenty-four hours, yet I was a richer younger woman by the time she left. I learned love to my husband and children in the making of fresh



tortillas, the kind that my husband remembered as a child. How I thanked the LORD for sending her!

Oh, may we learn how important our jobs

are as we become older women of God. For just as Lois and Eunice worked together as a team raising Timothy, so will we with our daughters-in-law, one day when the grandchildren begin to arrive. Just as Ruth and Naomi raised Obed and were part of the raising of King David, his great-grandson, so do we work together with our children in the raising of their children—our precious grandchildren. How I pray for mine even though I am years and years away from seeing them, God willing.

On the flip side, we younger women must be willing to learn from the older women. How do we learn? By asking questions, showing an interest, and being willing to try what they teach. I pray often that I might have the wisdom to ask the right questions. For so often we are with an older woman and might be able to learn something from her, but we fail to ask any questions. (And if there is one thing I have learned, you have to ask

questions to get any wisdom.) They don't just sit there and tell you what they know. Rather, they are like a deep well with which you use a question to draw from. I asked a lot of questions this weekend in broken or translated Spanish.

Most older women are willing to teach the younger women, but often they feel they might make a nuisance of themselves, so they back off. The younger woman can draw her out by asking questions and trying her suggestions.



What does one do if the older women in her life simply do not “believe” the words in Titus 2:3-5 (for if we believe, we act on that belief)? Well, I think the LORD will provide other older women if we ask. “You have not because you ask not.” [James 4:2b] And we know it is His will for the older women to teach the younger women, so we ask that our joy might be full! He has provided many older, wise women for me through books. I have told you before that one of my favorite mentors is Mama Tweten from the book “First We Have Coffee.” She has helped me so in the management of my home. Truly I could not have done it without her. And I will thank her daughter. Oh, I have learned so much from that dear saint. When I get to Heaven I will thank her for encouraging Margaret [her daughter] in writing that book which introduced me to Mama and all her wise counsel.

May God raise up a generation of older women who see the light in the passage of Titus 2—a light that moves us into action. A light that helps lift the load off a younger woman's shoulders while gently training her to love her husband and her children. For when this is done, no one can malign the Word of God. What an incredible calling!—a calling that is willing to learn and to share no matter what her age.

Much love,

Laine

[From Laine's Letters at <http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/creek/8180>. Used with permission.]

Aging in Christ: Doing it His Way

Growing old in this world can be a painful, humiliating experience. Our first parents, Adam and Eve, were created to live eternally but they forfeited that right, for themselves and for the whole human race, when they sinned against God by eating the forbidden fruit of the “tree of the knowledge of good and evil.” Satan had convinced them that the knowledge of evil was something to be desired; that God was unfair to withhold this knowledge from them. God, in His mercy, shortened man’s life that he would not have to endure forever the pain and misery that sin has caused.

Time is speedily marching on into eternity and all things in its train are waxing old. As I contemplate the swiftness of the journey and its ultimate end I am reminded of One who has trod this way before us that He might show us the way.

Our Savior left His glorious home in heaven to come to this dismal, sin-cursed planet. He humbled himself even to the dust of the earth! (For it is dust that humanity is made of.) He laid aside His omnipotence to become a helpless babe, who, even as a young adult would say, “I can of mine own self do *nothing*.” (John 5:30) He laid aside His omnipresent, spiritual body, the “form of God,” and took on the limitations of our human body—flesh and blood. (Philippians 2:5-8) He laid aside His omniscience to increase “in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.” (Luke 2:52) He laid aside His immortality that He might die our death in order to give us His life. Not only did He humble himself to the dust in taking on our humanity but also, as a human child, He “learned... obedience by the things which he suffered” (Hebrews 5:8) to the point where He “became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.” (Philippians 2:8) The ignominious death of a criminal! The apparent

defeat of everything He had come so far to achieve.

Visit the lowly stable on the night of His birth. Witness the glad announcement made by the angels to a few waiting shepherds, “watching their flocks by night.” Attend the shepherds and the wise men as they proceed excitedly in search of the newborn King. Picture Him learning the Scriptures at His mother’s knee and helping Joseph in the carpenter’s shop. Ponder the taunts He endured from his older stepbrothers and others because He was “different”; even “illegitimate.” Contemplate His journey to Jerusalem for His bar mitzvah at

**It would be well
for us to spend a
thoughtful hour each day in
contemplation of the life of
Christ. We should take it
point by point, and let the
imagination grasp each scene,
especially the closing ones.**

L. G. White

the age of twelve and imagine the understanding that must have dawned upon Him as He witnessed the scene taking place in the courtyard of the temple. Recall how He answered His parents when they finally found Him after their anxious three-day search: “Wist ye not that I must be about *my father’s* business?”

Capture the joy He must have felt at His baptism when the Holy Spirit descended upon Him and He heard His heavenly Father’s voice in confirmation of His life and mission. Proceed with Him into the wilderness where He fasted forty days in preparation for His work—where He met Satan’s temptations head-on and received refreshment from holy angels. Follow Him down

the dusty streets of Palestine as He healed the sick, raised the dead and preached spiritual healing to the masses. Watch Him in Gethsemane as He struggled with the cup that He must drink, and see the sorrow mingled with compassion on His face and the hurt in His voice as He said, “Could you not watch with me one hour?” Visualize the scene of His “trial” before the Sanhedrin, Pilate, Herod and Pilate again. Hear the crowd shouting, “Crucify Him! Crucify Him!” and their leaders chiming in, “His blood be on us and on our children.”

Walk with Him the lonely road to Calvary and feel the pain of the nails as they are driven into His hands and feet. But more than that! Feel the burden of the load of the sins of the world that He carries and the grief He bears because so few understand or care. Notice His dear, sorrowing mother standing nearby and witness how tenderly He commits her to the keeping of His beloved disciple, John. Behold with wonder as He pleads, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do.” Gaze upon His tortured brow as He exclaims, “My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?” Taste the bitterness of the vinegar and gall being offered Him and observe the peace that comes over Him as He exclaims, “Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.”

Climactically, rejoice with Him on the resurrection morning as He responds to His Father’s call and comes forth from the grave triumphant! Enter into the glorious songs that burst forth and the joyous shouts of the angelic host. Witness the consternation on the faces of the women, coming to the tomb with their spices, when they are told that He is not there! Bow before Him with Thomas as he exclaims, “My Lord and my God!”

Yes, Jesus was the God/man. Though willingly He laid aside the attributes of Deity that would have prevented Him from fulfilling His mission of salvation to the lost human race, He always retained His divine nature. Just as, when He was born a child in Bethlehem, His divine nature was blended

(Continued on next page.)

Life at Midstream

A yellowed and water-spattered card that heralded my fiftieth birthday is taped to the casement above the sink. It reads: "Life is like a patchwork quilt. Even if it doesn't have a pattern to it, and even if you don't like every square, when you look at it all together it's a work of art." It is surely in middle age that one recognizes the way the grays and the blacks heighten the effect of the whole. The wonder of it all is that you find you can cope with fortune and misfortune alike. You have discovered that there are strengths and appreciations arising from all your life that will sustain you."

Author Unknown

Battling on for God

Said Caleb to Joshua, "So here I am today, eighty-five years old! I am still as strong today as the day Moses sent me out; I'm just as vigorous to go out to battle now as I was then. Now give me this hill country that the LORD promised me that day. You yourself heard then that the Anakites were there and their cities were large and fortified, but, the LORD helping me, I will drive them out just as he said." (Joshua 14:10-12 NIV)

Don't you love it? Eighty-five years of age and Caleb wants to still do "battle for the Lord." Sure, they lived a bit longer back then, but eighty-five would have been retirement age or close to it. Joshua and God honored his request. Moses was 80 when God called him and, although he gave many excuses, he never mentioned his old age.

Socrates gave the world his wisest philosophy at 70, and at an extreme old age learned to play on musical instruments. Plato was only a student at 50. He did his best after reaching 60. Michelangelo was still composing poetry and designing structures in his 89th year. He painted the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel on his back on a scaffold at near 90.

Unless we lose our total health we are never too old to serve the Lord. And even many who have lost their health have become great prayer warriors for those serving on the "battlefield" for the Lord. Suggested prayer: "Dear God, thank you for the wonderful privilege of being able to serve you at most any age. Grant that I can love and serve you all the days of my life and keep being a witness for Jesus for as long as there is breath in

my body. Gratefully in Jesus' name. Amen."

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I Am Somebody

I am an elderly person.
I am a human being, who
Through my contributions to society
During my productive years helped to
Hold a decent place in life for my
Generation and the generations that
Followed me.
I like to be treated with respect
And dignity, just as I have
Always tried to treat others.
I am and have been a "somebody"
Over the years to many people,
Such as: my sweetheart, my wife, my
Husband, my mother, my father, my
Daughter, my son and my many friends.
If the waning years have changed me
Somewhat, please don't blame me if:
I don't see too well,
I don't hear too well,
I spill my food,
I am incontinent,
I need help often,
I am cranky though I don't want to be.
I could be your mother, father,
Grandfather, or grandmother.
Someday you may be me." A little
Kindness, a soft word, a gentle touch,
Some acknowledgment by you that I am
Still a person and not just a "thing" is all
I ask. Is that too much?

Arita Cullison

[Arita wrote this poem during her years of providing nursing care for the elderly. She is now retired and makes her home with her husband in Indianapolis, IN. She is a mother and grandmother who enjoys crochet, embroidery and tole painting as well as in-depth Bible Study.]

Quotes to ponder:

I've learned that the best classroom in the world is at the feet of an elderly person.

Andy Rooney

He who is of a calm and happy nature will hardly feel the pressure of age, but to him who is of an opposite disposition youth and age are equally a burden.

Plato

When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left, and could

say, "I used everything You gave me."

Erma Bombeck

People who don't cherish their elderly have forgotten whence they came and whither they go.

Ramsey Clark

Life is passing; youth goes; strength decays. But duty performed, work done for God—this abides forever, this alone is imperishable.

Richard Fuller

Beautiful young people are accidents of nature, But beautiful old people are works of art.

Author Unknown

The little boy crawled into his grandpa's lap and asked, "Grandpa, were you on Noah's Ark?"

"No, of course not," his grandpa replied.

"Then how come you didn't drown?"

(Continued from previous page.)
with our human nature, so, when *we* are born again of His Spirit, our human nature is blended with His divine nature.

In response to Jesus' pointed statement that a man must be born again in order to see the kingdom of God, "Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" (John 3:4) Jesus patiently assured him that the rebirth of which He spoke was not of the flesh but of the Spirit. The in-depth lesson He then presented to Nicodemus seems to make it clear that Yes, a person can, indeed, be "born again" at any stage in life.

Our Heavenly Father is known as "the Ancient of Days," whose hair is "like the pure [white] wool." He holds out to us the gift of eternal life. It matters not if this earthly body grows old and decays. God has promised me a new body; "in a twinkling of an eye, at the last trump"—a body "fashioned like unto his glorious body." (1 Corinthians 15:52; Philippians 3:21) When I perceive the extent to which my Lord and Savior humbled Himself in order to secure my salvation, surely it will enable me to cheerfully endure the humbling experience of the natural aging process of this body of clay, that I might bring glory to Him who has done so much for me.

Esther McDaniel

Rocking Alone

Sitting alone in an old rocking chair
I saw an old Mother with silvery hair.
She seemed so neglected by those who should care,
Rocking alone in the old rocking chair.

Her hands were callused and wrinkled and old,
A life of hard work was the story she told,
And I thought of the angels as I saw her there
Rocking alone in the old rocking chair.

Bless her old heart, do you think she'd complain?
Though life had been bitter she'd live it again
And carry the cross that was more than her share.
Rocking alone in the old rocking chair.

It wouldn't take much to gladden her heart,
Just a small remembrance on somebody's part.

A letter would cheer her empty life there,
Rocking alone in the old rocking chair.

I know some orphans in an orphans' home
Who'd think they owned heaven if she was their own.
They'd never be willing to let her sit there
Rocking alone in the old rocking chair.

I look at her and think what a shame.
The ones who forgot her she loves just the same,
And I think of the angels as I see her there
Rocking alone in the old rocking chair.

Author Unknown

Life's Way

No matter how pleasant the visit—
No matter how long the stay—
There comes a time to say goodbye,
As we travel along life's way.

We sometimes travel with strangers.
We often walk with our friends.
Still there comes a day to say goodbye
As the path we travel together ends.

We cherish happy moments together—
Rejoice in the joys that come—
Share in the sorrows of others,
Remembering where our help comes from.

When you have enjoyed the pleasant visit
And you cherish the long, long stay,
It is hard to say that last goodbye
As you travel along life's way.

But we shouldn't be disheartened
Or let our courage fall,
For there will come that one glad day
When there will be no goodbyes at all.

Charles E. Seltzer

Young at Heart

My body grows old and weary
Yet my heart is young and gay.
Old age reaches out to claim me
But I'll fight him all the way.
Nay, I'll not give in to pity,
My laughter will keep me free.
I'll not grow old just yet,
There's too much I want to see.
Pain and suffering I'll push to aft,
I'll keep smiles upon my face.
Old age and I run neck and neck
But I plan to win the race.
Whatever God has in store for me
And whatever old age imparts,
There's one thing that I pray for
And that's to remain young at heart.

Shirley Hile Powell

[Submitted by Anita Mills of Herrin, Illinois. Reprinted from "Praise and Glory," ©33055-A Copyright 1995, Salesian Missions, New Rochelle, NY 10801. Used with permission.]

Five O'Clock

Like fine white sugar the blowing white sand,
Like a thin wedge of lemon the moon,
High over the green-tea marshland,
The steaming pewter lagoon,
On the water's curved edge, quiet dune, sounding ledge,
Stand the pelicans, plovers and loons,
The snipes and the storks with their long-handled forks,
And the ducks with their brown plastic spoons.

Betty Weston Ogden

I'm Fine!

There's nothing whatever the matter with me
I'm just as healthy as I can be.
I have arthritis in my knees
And when I talk, I talk with a wheeze.
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin
But I'm awfully good for the shape I'm in.

Arch supports I have for my feet
Or I wouldn't be able to be on the street.
Sleep is denied me night after night
And every morning I look a sight.
My memory's failing, my head's in a spin
I'm practically living on Aspirin.
But I'm awfully good for the shape I'm in.

The moral is, as this tale we unfold
That for you and me who are growing old
It's better to say, "I'm fine" with a grin
Than to let them know the shape we're in!

Author Unknown

Dreams in Storage

Her dreams are wrapped in cellophane
And neatly tied with bows.
She stores them high upon a shelf,
Arranged in pretty rows.
On dreary days when she's alone
With nothing else to do
She takes them down and dusts them off
And sheds a tear or two
For all the things that might have been,
For many things that are;
For the child still living deep inside
Who sometimes wishes on a star;
For the girl who once dared hope and plan
But never understood
That time was such a passing thing—
And wait, it never would;
For the woman grown and old too soon
Whose dreams did not come true,
But how they shine when, all alone
On dreary days with nothing else to do,
She takes them down and dusts them off
And dreams them all anew!

Grace Pennington

An Old Lady's Prayer

Dear Lord, I know You're busy—
As busy as can be,
But I wonder if this morning
You'd come and chat with me.

It gets so very lonely,
Just looking at the wall,
Listening for the phone to ring
And friends that never call.

My folks are awfully busy
With all their jobs to do.
Well then, I guess, Lord,
That leaves just me and You.

I thought perhaps we would walk
If You've the time today
To take my hand and listen
To what I have to say.

But there'll be someone coming,
Now just You wait and see.
Until then, dear Lord,
Guess it's just You and me!

Martha J. Nissen

Crabbit Old Woman

What do you see, nurses, what do you see,
What are you thinking when you look at me?
A crabbit old woman, not very wise
Uncertain of habit, with far-away eyes,
Who dribbles her food and makes not reply
When you said in a loud voice, "I do wish you'd try."
Who seems not to notice the things that you do
And forever is losing a stocking or shoe.
Who, unresisting or not, lets you do as you will
With bathing and feeding, the long day to fill.
Is that what you're thinking, is that what you see?
Then open your eyes, you're not looking at me.
I'll tell you who I am as I sit here so still
As I move at your bidding, as I eat at your will.
I'm a small child of ten with a father and mother
Brothers and sisters who love one another.
A young girl at sixteen with wings on her feet,
Dreaming that soon now a lover she'll meet.
A bride soon at twenty—my heart gives a leap,
Remembering the vows that I promised to keep.
At twenty-five now I have young of my own
Who need me to build a secure happy home.
A woman of thirty my young now grow fast
Bound to each other with ties that should last.
At forty my young now will soon be gone,
But my man stays beside me to see I don't mourn.
At fifty once more babies play 'round my knee,
Again we know children, my loved one and me.
Dark days are upon me, my husband is dead,
I look at the future, I shudder with dread.
For my young are all busy rearing young of their own
And I think of the years and the love I have known.
I'm an old woman now and nature is cruel.
'Tis her jest to make old age look like a fool.
The body it crumbles, grace and vigour depart
And now there's a stone where I once had a heart.
But inside this old carcass a young girl still dwells
And now and again my battered heart swells.
I remember the joys, I remember the pain
And I'm loving and living life over again.
I think of the years all too few—gone so fast
And accept the stark fact that nothing can last.
So open your eyes, Nurses, open and see
Not a crabbit old woman, look closer—see me.

Author Unknown

From time to time throughout the year we have asked you to send us your insights regarding the aging process, and how growing older affects your thinking. We have heard from at least one person in every age group, from age 6 years to eighty-plus. We appreciate your willingness to share your views with us. Here are your responses. **The Editors.**

My "golden years" are not exactly what I thought they would be. I looked forward to retirement and expected that my health and strength would not diminish nearly as quickly as they did. I have been a widow for a number of years, and I have some health problems, but all in all I am satisfied with where I am in life. I wouldn't go back and do it all again for anything.

Evelyn Peevyhouse (Age 83)

I have seen hard times and good times. I endured the loss of a daughter in a car wreck when she was six years old, and a son who was killed in an industrial accident several years ago. All I could do was lean on my Lord, and He saw me through those worst of times. I feel thankful and happy every morning that God allows me to wake up and open my eyes!

Willie Mae Needham (Age 82)

Though I have some problems and can't get around as well as I used to, I am so thankful that I am still able to take care of myself.

Reba Simmons (Age 79)

I am so thankful that I have kept my right mind. I do not want to become senile and maybe not even know to bathe and put on a clean dress. So far so good!

Helen McCaslin (Age 73)

It feels good to still be active, to still be physically able to walk, and I walk a lot. I'm thankful that I can do that.

Peggy Samples (Age 71)

I would not want to go back and relive all those years when I didn't know the Lord. I couldn't live without Him now! Jesus becomes sweeter to me every day.

Jean Patton (Age 70)

[All of the above ladies are neighbors in a lovely apartment house for senior citizens in Trenton, Tennessee. Without exception, they enjoy their retirement community and are extremely happy with their living arrangements. Each one just glows with a quiet, happy, trusting attitude, and they love to come together twice a week for fellowship and Bible study. Most of them participate in a once-monthly music and devotional program at a nearby nursing home. They bless my life in many ways, and it gives me joy to count them among my friends!]

Grace Cox]

Thirty years ago I cried when, on my thirty-second birthday, I found my first gray hair. I cried again several months ago when I woke one morning with a tinge of pain in my right thumb joint and, rubbing it, discovered a small bony protrusion that hadn't been there the day before. It disturbs me greatly that I tire out long before I accomplish what I had planned for the day. I feel as if my world is spinning out of control because the days pass so quickly; when it ought to be only Tuesday, I realize it's Thursday and another week of my life will soon be gone. On the other hand, as loony as it may sound, I still feel 18 on the inside, and it seems such a short time ago that I was.

Sometimes I wish I could impress upon those in their youth and young adulthood just how very, very quickly time passes, how very soon they will find themselves middle aged, and how suddenly old age will overtake them. When I hear those who are in their thirties tell me how "old" they are getting, I just smile. They ain't seen nothin' yet! And I know that the same could be said to me by someone who is 20 or more years my senior!

Grace Cox (Age 62)

When I stop to think about my age, I feel old. Usually life just continues and I don't really give age much thought. Having a teenage son helps keep me young, at least I like to think so. The one thing that I have tried to do lately is have more peace and calm in my life. My sister, Anita, has been a great help in that respect. She makes me laugh at myself and not take myself so seriously. Also, I am trying to have more contact with my family and that seems to bring about peace. I appreciate my family more as I get older. I have learned that though I cannot change things around

me, I can change how I react to them and even limit the affect they have on me. I now enjoy using nice things that I used to "put up and save." I now think I deserve nice things and nice times. Only age has shown me this lesson in life. I look forward with hope and a happy heart, knowing God has kept me thus far and will stay with me to the end.

Linda Welch (Age 53)

The older I grow, the more I seem to feel like I just really haven't aged. I don't quite feel like I'm still in my twenties, but when I look at people in their thirties or forties I don't really feel any older than they are. I have decided that age is all a matter of perspective. When I was a child, people in their fifties were in the first stages of old age. Those in their sixties were definitely old and those in their seventies or older were really ancient. But now, being in my fifties myself, most of those I formerly considered old look like they are in, or just slightly past, their prime. I am thankful I can have this perspective on life and aging, no matter how distorted it may seem to some, as it keeps me from feeling old. I think it prepares my thinking for an eternity in which we will never grow old.

Miletus McKee (Age 51)

Time is going by so rapidly for all of us. It seems like just yesterday that I was but a child, when my parents did everything for me. Where is that young girl that used to stare back at me in the mirror? The face that now stares back is sometimes a stranger to me. The once youthful complexion that was once smooth now has small wrinkles around my eyes, and lines around my mouth. Where has the time gone? Yesterday I was skipping a rope, riding my bicycle speedily down hills, roller-skating with old fashioned roller skates, and running at top speed. Now walking is even getting a bit difficult, with all my aches and pains that seem to overtake me as each year goes by.

There has been some good in the aging process, though. I have become more educated in life. What once was so important doesn't seem to matter anymore. Things that once couldn't wait until tomorrow now are placed at the bottom of my agenda. God has been good to me all these years of my life. I have outlived my parents, two sisters, two nephews, one niece, and a former husband. God has answered so many prayers in my lifetime. He has given me a wonderful helpmeet, who believes like I do, and we get along most of the time. The best thing about getting older is that God has become so much more important to me. He is everything in my life; everything else seems trivial.

Getting older isn't as bad as I thought it would be. Maybe I will never in this life have the youthful looks and vitality that I once possessed, but someday, God willing, I will be youthful forever. I am looking forward to Christ's coming! So when I feel down (as most of us do sometimes) I try to just remember that someday Christ will return and I will be ageless as I spend all eternity with Him. That in itself is worth everything to me. Getting older just doesn't seem to matter anymore.

Anita Mills (Age 49)

I think when you get into your forties, it begins to dawn on you that the other end of the spectrum is coming up. An awareness, so to speak, that you are headed "down hill." I think we sometimes try to push it out of our minds and not think about it. But when I finally do sit down and face it, a lot of things come to my mind. Each day is one day closer to seeing my Lord and Savior and I believe, as I hold on to Him, that these days can be less painful and more rewarding, in spite of the added aches and pains and the slowing down process. I believe they will be just exactly what I make them. I will either look to my Savior and find strength or I will look at my circumstances and become discouraged. With God's help, I plan to continue looking to my Savior!

Milli Lewis (Age 46)

I have worked in a nursing home for 16 years. Though there are some younger residents there, most are elderly, so I think about aging a lot. Illness and disability overtake us in spite of all we try to do to prevent it from happening because, after all, we do live in a world that is blighted by sin, and as a result all of us are subject to death. However, I think we should take better care of ourselves, exercising and eating healthier. In

on Aging

addition, a positive attitude is extremely important. These things will help us to live longer, healthier, happier lives, and enjoy more independence

in our golden years.

I talk to a lot of people, both in my line of work and away from work. Most people I talk with seem to enjoy telling me about all their aches and pains, and how many medications they have to take for all their problems. I try to share with them about the importance of a happy, positive attitude, how exercising and healthy eating habits can greatly improve their quality of life. It seems that most don't want to hear any of that. I pray for them, that God will open their hearts and minds to ways that they can help themselves to feel better.

I learn a lot from people. I hope that I can learn not to complain all the time and that I will be able to stay in charge of my life and be as independent as possible as I grow older. I know that most people do have that desire, and many develop illness and disability through no fault of their own. But if we will do our very best, starting as soon as possible, to lead healthy Christian lives, I believe God will truly bless us to live independently and healthy as we grow older.

I would like to mention that my father has a health problem that is not curable. However, he is constantly active, working and maintaining his home, doing things for himself and others even though I know there are times he doesn't feel well. I never hear him complain; he just keeps pushing on. He really inspires me. I know God has blessed him even though he has an illness, and I know that he is aware of that too.

As a nursing home employee, I might add that I see a lot of shut-ins and nursing home residents whose families and friends don't visit them. They get very lonely, and it would brighten their day to have someone to talk with even for just a few minutes. We, as God's church family on this earth, need to take an interest in these people, visiting them and helping them in any way we can. Christ said that if we do kind deeds for the least of these, we have done it for Him. I find that I am blessed beyond measure as I share the love of Jesus in this way. I learn interesting things about times past, and at times have been surprised by the wisdom these folk impart through their wealth of experiences. I try to remember that, if God spares my life, I too will be elderly someday.
Teresa Manis (Age 37)

Every person alive in the world today has to deal with aging. Whether toddler or elderly, as long as a person is alive for another day they are getting older. The very young and the very old most certainly have different opinions about this process. The very young usually cannot wait to get older; the very old long to be young again. Everybody, in one way or another, seems to be trying helplessly to defeat the process of aging. Aging is inevitable! There is no stop to it. It only ends when we enter the grave or when Christ returns. From there it is either eternal life or eternal death.

From my viewpoint, aging has its good and bad points. I believe that the quality of one's aging experience depends upon the individual's outlook and state of mind. Aging is a much better experience if we know the One who holds the future. If we know the One who has led us in the past. True peace only comes from knowing the God of the universe. No matter what age I am or what physical state I am in, only the God of Heaven can give me peace through the aging process. Only He can help me understand how to have life more abundantly. Our God is truly wonderful, and because He lives, life is worth the living. Personally, I believe that, as long as God and Christ are the center of my life, my aging process will be a wonderful experience.
Tim Kritzel (Age 30)

As a young person I could hardly wait until I was 18. I wanted to be independent, out from under my parent's roof and rules. Today, at 28, it's hard to believe how the years have flown. When I was a child things moved so slowly; as an adult they move so quickly.

As a youth I was always being told that I acted and looked older than my years. Now, people tell me I need to grow up some and act my age. I guess I have a hard time acting any older than 18 because in my heart I

am not ready to grow old. Or act old. No, I am not saying 30 is an old woman. But how are 30-year-olds supposed to act? I have heard that the way I wear my hair makes me look like a child, and I say praise the Lord, I still have youth.

I have not met very many 80-plus-year-olds that are like my husband's Grandma Lazara. She teaches aerobics, goes golfing, and does everything she is capable of doing. Then there are Tim's parents, whom I admire. His father runs and exercises. They are almost 60; but they look no more than early 40's.

In my golden years I don't want to be stuffy, judgmental, sick, or aching; I don't want to sit around vegetating, wearing clothes in clashing colors! I feel that a person grows old the way they want to; that you are as old as you feel. If I keep fit and healthy today, I am less apt to let my age keep me from doing the things I will want to accomplish as I grow older. Even if I should have some of the disabilities that often come with aging, I don't want to let that stop me either. Yes, I want the grace, the poise, and the wisdom that comes from experience as an older person while retaining the youth and spirit of a younger person.
Alicia Kritzel (Age 28)

Sometimes I think the hardest thing about aging would be that life appears to be one big insecurity. As your body loses its strength you face the prospect of loneliness, possibly being shuffled from one family member to the next, all of whom don't understand your feelings because they've never been where you are. Or maybe you'll even face being placed in a nursing home. At such a time in your life it would be easy to focus on all the uncertainties and forget what a blessing your aging could be to a twenty-one year old such as myself. You have already been where I am. Your family is grown, whereas mine has just begun to sprout. Your mind is a storehouse of information I need to know, and I wish you would open those doors and prayerfully teach me what you have learned. Show me how to keep my home a place where God would like to dwell; show me how best to raise my son for God's glory and, most of all, show me by your example how to give my own process of aging to the oldest One in the universe, and how to trust Him to take care of all those insecurities.
Kendra Beachy (Age 21)

At 19 years old, what could I possibly know about being older? As a child I thought I knew everything. Maybe that was because I had to grow up faster than normal children do—at least, I thought I had to. But I do understand now that I didn't know everything. That was childish thinking and behavior. Even more childish is the fact that in a time when I needed people in my life, when my parents divorced, I thought I didn't need anyone. I rejected and tried to turn away the people I most loved at a time when I needed them most. All I can have from that experience is regret.

As I get older and look back at the decisions and mistakes I have made, as well as my achievements, I will see that those are the things that have made me who I am. There are so many things I might want to go back and change, but to change those experiences would be to alter who I am.

We set out on the path of life, and God allows us to make choices and decisions as we walk that path. God has allowed me to decide who and what I am going to be. All of my accomplishments, decisions, and errors in judgment are what have made me the person I am today. I can honestly say that I am who I am today because of God allowing me freedom of choice and letting me decide what I want to be. I wouldn't change that for my weight in gold.

The two things I have learned as I have matured is that I need to learn from the errors I have made in judgment, and I need to love who I am: a child of God, bought with a price.
Jennifer Priddy (Age 19)

The best part of growing old will be getting to retire and being free to do the things I will want to do then. The worst part will be when I can no longer be independent and have to depend on someone else.
Tim Cash (Age 19)

Old people have wrinkled necks and arms, and when people get old their feet and backs hurt.
James Garner (Age 6)

Praise in Adversity

It was July 1999, and though my 83rd birthday had passed, everything was going well. My daughter, Verna, and her husband were visiting for a week from their mission home in New Guinea and we had spent a couple of pleasant days together when, after getting out of bed in the middle of the night, my foot slipped on a small rug in my bathroom. My feet went out from under me, throwing me first against the lavatory counter and then to the floor with a tremendous jar, lighting on my buttocks. The pain was excruciating!—so intense it was impossible to get up. Somehow, I managed to crawl to my bed and pull myself in. I decided not to awaken the family

until morning but, lying there, the thought came, “Suppose I have broken something and need to be in the hospital.”

Fearing the worst, I took the telephone on the bedside stand and called my daughter, Esther.

Arriving at the hospital by ambulance, I was wheeled to the emergency room and x-rays were taken revealing compression fractures of two vertebrae. I was given some pain pills, sent home, and told to see my doctor in five days. The severe pain did not let up during that time, nor could I lift my head from the pillow without becoming nauseous. Verna spent a lot of time by my bedside reading to me

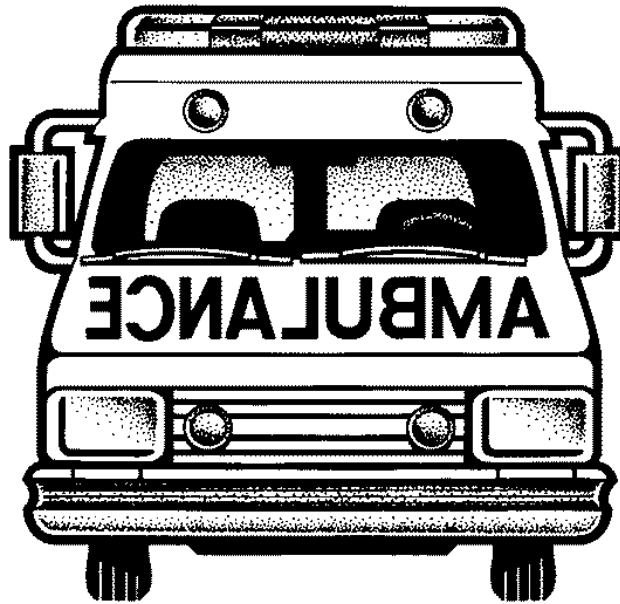
and visiting with me but I was very disappointed that their visit had to end in this way. After they had gone, by taking two of the pain pills ahead of time, the pain was dulled enough that my family managed to get me into the car and to the doctor’s office. I was terribly sick when I arrived so my doctor arranged for me to be admitted to the rehab hospital where they could get my nausea under control and try to get me back on my feet.

From all appearances my overall progress was rapid. I had very little pain anymore, and no longer was the wheelchair my conveyance. The doctor kept saying, “You’re a good patient. I can’t believe how rapidly you are responding to treatment.” I gained strength by walking the halls, then aides took me outside for walking exercise.

Three weeks from admittance I was on my way home. Some of my exercises could be done as I lay outside in the lawn chaise in the early mornings before the sun got hot,

and I walked daily with Esther and George. Feeling quite well, it was believed that I was on the road to recovery. Praising God was easy when everything seemed to be going well, but alas! I evidently had a few lessons still to learn and needed time to learn them.

Esther became a grandmother once again and was planning to fly to California to see the new baby and do what she could to help her daughter for a few weeks. The question was what to do with Mother? Once she was gone, I would be alone afternoons and evenings while George was at work. “Here I am again, making problems for my daughter,” thought I. “I’m always causing problems for her, it seems.”



Then Esther got an idea. “How would you like to stay with George’s mother while I’m gone? She’s alone all day and gets lonesome. I’ll bet she’d love to have you come. I’ll call her right away.” Thus it was that Goldie and I greeted each other at her door a few weeks hence. We were both pleased and happy. I was to be there about a month.

One morning as I awoke, I was gripped by intense pain in my back. Upon trying to stand, the pain became so intense that I cried out and groaned. After several days of suffering I finally decided to visit a Christian chiropractor that Goldie’s

daughter, Ruth, had recommended. Then I began to worry again about interrupting other people’s lives, because now the question was how to get me there. An appointment was arranged, however; phone calls were made and schedules adjusted. Ruth called Esther in California to let her know of my condition and I knew she would begin to worry also. This intensified my concern about causing difficulties for everybody.

Yet I knew that “all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.” (Romans 8:28) This must mean that things would “work together for good” for my caregivers as well as for myself, I reasoned. Were I to fuss and complain about being a burden I might rob them of a blessing; of some of the joy and satisfaction they might feel as they remember these words of Jesus: “Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my

brethren, ye have done it unto me.” (Matthew 25:40) Would I deprive my friends of that blessing? I decided that I would try to gratefully accept their help, so willingly offered, without giving in to the temptation to complain about all the trouble I was causing everyone.

At the doctor’s office, x-rays were taken revealing several problems. After treating me, the doctor’s orders were for me to avoid sitting, which would throw all my weight on my spine. I could walk a bit indoors, just enough to keep the joints from getting stiff, but otherwise I had to be in a reclining position. My thoughts wandered back to my stay in the hospital. How short-lived my “recovery” was—a quick “heal,” but of no lasting duration. That reminded me of what Jesus said about some who hear the Word of God: “And it came to pass, as he sowed . . . some fell on stony ground, where it had not much earth; and immediately it sprang up, because it had no depth of earth: But when the sun was up, it was scorched; and because it had no root, it withered away. (Mark 4:4-6)

I realized that because of pain and inactivity, I needed a double portion of God’s Spirit to keep the spiritual flame in my heart glowing bright and cheery. I did not want the flame to dim and go out, and I realized that it could be doused by my wallowing in worry, self-pity and discouragement. I determined to not let that happen, so in addition to searching the Scriptures for many wonderful promises of God’s love and presence, I began to recount the many blessings of my life. This was a pleasant occupation for my thoughts, and I soon realized that the list was almost endless!

I continued to visit the chiropractor every few days, and soon my spine was in much better shape and I was more comfortable. Finally Esther arrived to take me back home, which was a trip of about five hours. I managed to endure it with no small degree of discomfort. Upon arriving home and getting myself inside and to bed, it was evident that the awful pain was back, accompanying my every movement.

We were able to find a good chiropractor within driving distance, yet after several adjustments, it seems that my recovery is not going well. I have had plenty of time to ponder my situation, and a lot of different thoughts and questions have come to my mind. It has occurred to me that maybe God doesn’t intend to heal me. Haven’t I always prayed, “May Your will be done?” Maybe this trial is to prepare me for the fulfilling of His will in my life. Am I ready to die? It’s already been two months since I was sent

to bed and there has been no real improvement. 1 Corinthians 10:13 comes to mind: “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.” What a promise! God is so good to give us strength and courage; He holds us up through many sorrowful experiences of life and helps us keep our sanity.

“And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined and I will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them: I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.” (Zechariah 13:9) Perhaps this is my refining fire. I hope it does a good job, because I’m anxious for my heavenly home.

I cannot know the mind of God or His purpose for my life. Dare I question when calamities arise and trials beset me? My trials may be to awaken me to a need of a closer relationship with God, or they may be for a witness of my faith that others may recognize their needs.

It is not for me to question, but to trust. He knows the end from the beginning. He is with me always and will see me through. Christ came into this world “...to save his people from their sins” (Matthew 1:21) and He will use every means possible to accomplish His purpose. Whatever my experience may be, God has a reason, a purpose for it all and someday, if faithful, I will understand.

Being confined to the bed has been a very enlightening experi-

ence. I’ve not yet graduated from my bed as I write. I’m thankful for my bedroom window where I have a glimpse of nature. The little birds are pure delight, and I’m sure there are plenty of lessons they could teach me. I like to think that when their little throats are full of song, they are praising their Creator for His blessings. How much longer shall I be in bed? I don’t know. Getting my strength and activity back may be a long slow process, but I’m on my way, for I am learning, “in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content.” (Philippians 4:11) God has been so good to me; may His Name be praised!

Mattie Laurell

[Editor’s Note: It has been several months, and Mattie has experienced a good recovery. She has “graduated” from her bed, and is able to be much more active now. Mattie is a regular contributor of articles and stories to *Hearth to Hearth*.]



Understanding God's Plan of Redemption

God's Timetable

It is the tenth day of the seventh month; the Jewish month of Tishri—the Day of Atonement, known today as Yom Kipper—the climactic fulfillment of every ritual carried out throughout the entire year, and its most solemn day. In Hebrews 10:1-4 we are told that since it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sin, a “remembrance again” of sins needed to be made every year. That remembrance is made on the Day of Atonement. Nearly all Israel is gathered before the sanctuary to witness the work of the high priest; the only officiant. From the blowing of the trumpets ten days earlier to the present time, all have been doing an earnest work of repentance, making sure that everything in their lives is right with God and that no sin remains unconfessed, “for whatsoever soul it be that shall not be afflicted in that same day, he shall be cut off from among his people.” (Leviticus 23:29) It is in its very essence, a day of judgment.

Since early morning the people have been gathered before the sanctuary and all eyes have been focused on the high priest as he goes about his duties. The morning burnt offering is already smoldering upon the altar and the animals to be used in the sacred ceremonies have been examined one more time to assure that no blemish has escaped detection. No blemished animal could be offered as a representation of the perfect Messiah to come. Wicks have been trimmed, oil has been replenished, and the lamps are flickering brightly on the golden lampstand. Fresh incense is burning on the golden altar, permeating the air with its fragrance. The time has come for the special ceremonies of the day to begin.

Getting a larger picture

The sixteenth chapter of Leviticus delineates the ritual that the high priest follows on this day, but before we can begin to even dimly comprehend its significance, we need to step back and get a view of the larger picture. Let's start by taking a closer look at what happened when God brought Israel out of Egypt. At that time He established a whole new beginning for them. (Exodus 12:1, 2) In order to understand the significance of the services carried out by the high priest in the

most holy place of the sanctuary on the Day of Atonement, we need to understand a little bit about the special calendar that God instituted at that time, as these things served as “shadows” of heavenly things. (Hebrews 8:5) A shadow ceases when it reaches the body that casts it. If we follow the shadow of a tree to its body, that is where the shadow ends. Since these things are “shadows,” we need to determine the “body” of each one.

In Exodus 12:1, 2 we read, “And the Lord spake unto Moses and Aaron in the land of Egypt, saying, This month *shall be* unto you the beginning of months: it *shall be* the first month of the year to you.” This new beginning that God gave to Israel has been referred to as the beginning of a “spiritual year.” The beginning of their “civil year” was offset by six months.

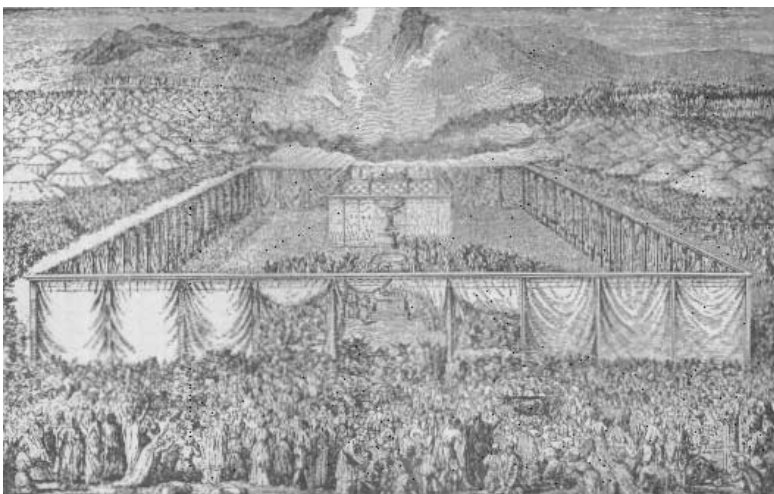
The harvest festivals

During the time that Israel was encamped around the sanctuary in the wilderness, God gave directions that three times during the year all Israelite men were to appear before Him for what might be referred to as the three “harvest festivals.” (Exodus 23:14-17; Deuteronomy 16:16) The

first was the seven-day Feast of Unleavened Bread, immediately following the Passover meal of the night before, on the 15th day of the first month, at the beginning of the barley harvest. (Leviticus 23:5-14) (A wave sheaf of the first fruits of barley was offered.) The second, the Feast of Weeks, also known as Pentecost, followed fifty days later, celebrating the firstfruits of the wheat harvest (hence two loaves of leavened wheaten bread—typifying Christ, the Bread that came down from Heaven and was “made sin for us”—were “waved” before the Lord). (Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 23:15-21) The third, referred to as the Feast of Ingathering or the Feast of Tabernacles (or Booths), was a seven-day feast beginning on the 15th day of the 7th month, and commemorating the close of the fruit harvest as well as the end of the harvest season. (Leviticus 23:34-44; Deuteronomy 16:13) Interspersed throughout these feasts, God ordained several festival “sabbaths,” sometimes referred to as “ceremonial” sabbaths, which were to be celebrated in addition to “the Sabbaths of the Lord” (Leviticus 23:38) The three annual festivals were to memorialize three important events in the life of Christ. Passover celebrated His office as our kinsman-redeemer (see Leviticus 25:49), Pentecost celebrated His anointing as our High Priest and commemorated the giving of the ten commandments, and Tabernacles celebrated His inauguration as our King who has made every provision for His subjects.

Additional occasions for worship

In addition to these three yearly feasts, God ordained several other occasions for Israel to pause in recognition and worship of their Creator throughout the year. The seventh-day Sabbath, dating back to creation and signifying the worship of the one true Creator God, was to be observed at the end of each week, while the feast of the New Moon consecrated each month to the glory of God. If a ceremonial sabbath fell on the seventh-day Sabbath, it was referred to as a “high Sabbath.” Additional yearly festivals included the Passover, the Feast of Trumpets (Rosh Hashanah) and the Day of Atonement (Yom Kipper). To these festivals others were added later. Please refer



to the table below to get an overview of the Jewish year.

I must not fail to mention also the periodic festivals: the sabbatical years, celebrated every seven years, in which the fields and orchards were left untended, debts were canceled and people and animals feasted off of everything that grew of its own accord. Also, the Jubilee year, celebrated at the end of seven sabbatical-year cycles (every fiftieth year), in which all sowing and harvesting were forbidden, all land returned to its original owner, every debt was canceled and every slave set free. (Leviticus 25) Through these events God designed to teach His people of His loving care for them and that all things belong to Him, are only loaned to us, and are to be shared by us for the use of all His creatures.

Christ fulfills the types

For the purposes of this study, I want to call attention to the fact that it is widely understood in the Christian world that when Christ came to earth and lived and died among men He fulfilled the type of the spring festivals (He was the antitype) as portrayed in the Jewish calendar. He was the Passover Lamb, slain for the sins of the world. He was the Wave Sheaf

offered to God as the “firstfruits of them that slept.” (1 Corinthians 15:20) He was the Unleavened Bread that “came down from heaven” (John 6:41) to become “leavened” with the sins of God’s people. It was His Spirit that descended upon the waiting disciples on the Day of Pentecost, fifty days after the offering of the Wave Sheaf. This being the case, it stands to reason that the fall festivals are to be fulfilled in like manner, in their order, at the time appointed by God.

Pastor David Clayton has written: “The book of Revelation is God’s last message to the world. In the very words of a heavenly messenger it focuses on, ‘things which must be hereafter.’ (Revelation 4:1) In other words, it focuses on things which were future to the time of John. Let us take careful notice of the fact that at the time when John received this vision the antitype of the Passover, the Wave Sheaf and also Pentecost were already long gone; had already been fulfilled decades before. What then is the reason for the sanctuary focus in the book of Revelation? Was there any event involving the service of the sanctuary which was still then unfulfilled at the time when John received this vision?...

“You see, the feasts of Israel occurred at basically two points during the year. The first three occurred during the spring, or at the beginning of the year. These, of course, corresponded to the period of the beginning of the Christian Church. The other three mentioned in Leviticus 23 all occurred in the seventh month of the year, during the fall, or the harvest time. The significance of this should be inescapable. Seven is a symbol of

perfection or completeness. The seventh month signifies the time when God is completing His work on behalf of the Church during the time of the harvest. During this period there is to be the (antitypical) blowing of trumpets, the Day of Atonement, and finally when they have ‘gathered in the fruit of the land’ (Leviticus 23:39), the Feast of Tabernacles.

“The focus of the book of Revelation is the time of the harvest. It deals with events on earth and in heaven during the closing work of God on behalf of humanity...” (*Open Face*, February 2000)

Measuring the temple

In the book of Revelation, chapter 11 and verse 1, we find an interesting directive. Here John is told to “Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.” Centuries earlier Ezekiel, also, had been given a vision of the “measuring” of the temple. (Ezekiel 40:1-47:12) In order to “measure” something, attention needs to be given to every feature of the item being measured. In the case of measuring the temple, the details of the structure itself, its furnishings, its ministers, its sacrifices, feasts and all other rituals must be thoroughly investigated, and every symbol, in every detail (every type), must be carefully compared with the *reality* (or antitype; what it symbolized)—the organization and work of the heavenly sanctuary; the sanctuary pitched by God, and not man. (Hebrews 8:2) The purpose of such an investigation is

LUNAR MONTH*	DAY(S)	FESTIVALS	SEASON
Nisan (Abib) Exodus 23:15	1st 10th 14th 15th 16th 21st	<i>New Moon.</i> Beginning of the religious year. Passover lamb selected. Exodus 12:3 Lamb killed in the evening; eaten that night (beginning of 15th). Exodus 12:6-8 Ceremonial sabbath. Feast of Unleavened Bread begins. Leviticus 23:6,7 Wave sheaf offered. Leviticus 23:10-14 Ceremonial sabbath. Last day of Feast of Unleavened Bread. Leviticus 23:8	Latter rains. (Joel 2:23) Barley harvest. Dry season begins.
Iyyar (Zif) 1 Kings 6:1	1st 14th	<i>New Moon.</i> Passover for those unclean in the first month. Numbers 9:10,11	Wheat ripe in lowlands.
Sivan Esther 8:9	1st 6th	<i>New Moon.</i> Ceremonial sabbath. Pentecost or Feast of Weeks. Wave loaves offered. Leviticus 23:15-21	Early figs. General wheat harvest.
Tammuz	1st	<i>New Moon.</i>	Mountain wheat harvest.
Ab	1st	<i>New Moon.</i>	Olives ripe in lowlands.
Elul Nehemiah 6:15	1st	<i>New Moon.</i>	Dates, Figs, grapes.
Tishri (Ethaniam) Kings 8:2	1st 10th 15th 15th-21st 22nd	<i>New Moon.</i> Beginning of the civil year. Ceremonial sabbath. Blowing of Trumpets. Leviticus 23:24,25 Ceremonial sabbath. Day of Atonement. Leviticus 16; 23:27-32 Ceremonial sabbath. Feast of Tabernacles (or Ingathering). Leviticus 23:34-43 Ceremonial sabbath. Holy convocation. Leviticus 23:36, 39; Numbers 29:12, 35	End of harvest. Former (or early) rains. Plowing begins.
Heshvan (Bul) 1 Kings 6:38	1st	<i>New Moon.</i>	Barley and wheat sown.
Chislev Nehemiah 1:1	1st 25th	<i>New Moon.</i> Feast of Dedication. John 10:22	Winter rains. Occasional snow.
Tebeth Esther 2:16	1st	<i>New Moon.</i>	Lowlands green.
Shebat Zechariah 1:7	1st	<i>New Moon.</i>	
Adar Esther 3:7	1st 14th-15th	<i>New Moon.</i> Feast of Purim. Esther 9:21-28	Oranges ripe in lowlands. Barley ripe at Jericho.

*The months are here named according to the common usage after the exodus. The pre-exodus names (those used in the Bible) are in parenthesis.

that the truths learned may be applied to the life, bringing a transformation to the glory of God.

We are told in Amos 3:7 that, "Surely the Lord GOD will do nothing, but he revealeth his secret unto his servants the prophets." God does not want us to be ignorant regarding the time in which we live! He has revealed it to His servants the prophets. Besides revealing to John the Revelator "things which must shortly come to pass" (Revelation 1:1), God also gave visions to His prophet, Daniel, which outline the history of the world from Daniel's time until the kingdoms of this world are overthrown and Christ sets up His kingdom here. One very special prophecy, which extends down to our time, is recorded in Daniel, chapters 8 and 9. While the scope of this study does not allow us to go into detail regarding this prophecy, I would like to point out that it is a time prophecy concerning God's sanctuary, and it reaches down the stream of time to our own day. It speaks of the sanctuary being "trodden under foot," and it gives a time when the sanctuary will be "cleansed." The timing revealed in this prophecy indicates that these events are taking place right now! God's *true* sanctuary is being cleansed. (For those interested in a deeper study of the prophecy, please write and request our studies on prophecy.)

The spilled and sprinkled blood

When Christ spilled His blood at Calvary, the one-time sacrifice for the sins of the world—the one to which all previous animal sacrifices pointed—was made. Christ's blood had been spilled. Yet according to the type, the "spilled blood" was not enough! It was necessary also for it to become the "sprinkled blood." As the earthly priests daily sprinkled the sacrificial blood, on the altar in the court, the altar of incense and/or on the veil leading to the most holy place, Christ, the *true Sacrifice* left a trail of sprinkled blood leading all the way from Calvary into the true tabernacle in Heaven. He took a record of the forgiven sins of His people with Him to register that they had been confessed and forgiven on the altar and before the veil of that sacred edifice! In eating a portion of the flesh of the sin

offering and carrying that flesh, in his body, into the sanctuary/tent, the earthly priest also typified Christ taking on the sinful flesh of humanity, though never partaking of our sin, and carrying that flesh with Him into heaven itself—to be one with the human race forever—a reminder throughout eternity of the enormous price of sin and the inestimable value of the human soul!

While it was necessary to keep a record of these confessed and forgiven sins as evidence to silence "the accuser of our brethren," (Revelation 12:10) that very record is considered by God to be a defilement of His sanctuary. The special work of the Day of Atonement was the removal of that blood-record. God tells us that He will remember our sins no more. (Jeremiah 31:34) What a wonderful promise! When the Day of Atonement ends in the heavenly sanctuary the sins of God's people, which have been "covered" until that time, will be "remembered no more"! Yet the scars will remain in the body of our dear Savior—a reminder that will assure that "affliction shall not rise up the second time." (Nahum 1:9)

As we stand with Israel, observing the high priest as he ministers in the wilderness sanctuary on the Day of Atonement, we must contemplate the movements of our Heavenly High Priest as He ministers His blood in the *true tabernacle*, which the Lord pitched and not man. This solemn and awe-inspiring ceremony, the one that will forever remove the horrible cancer of sin from God's universe, will be the subject of our next study.

Esther McDaniel

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