

Hearth to Hearth

Woman to Woman

Vol. 4, No. 2

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

Mar. /Apr. 2001

The Paralysis of Perfectionism

Dear Sisters,

We live in a world that is anything but perfect; yet everywhere we go “perfectionism” is thrust upon us. What do I mean? Well, just open up a decorating magazine. You will find their view of perfectionism. You won’t find a home that is normal looking, one that you’re familiar with because so many of your friends have one like it; rather you will see a house or apartment that is finished to perfection from top to bottom. Otherwise it wouldn’t be in their magazine.

Likewise with food magazines. Colorful pictures of elegant meals from start to finish. Sometimes the recipes are as long as our arms, and if so, you’ve probably never eaten anything like it before at your mother-in-law’s house.

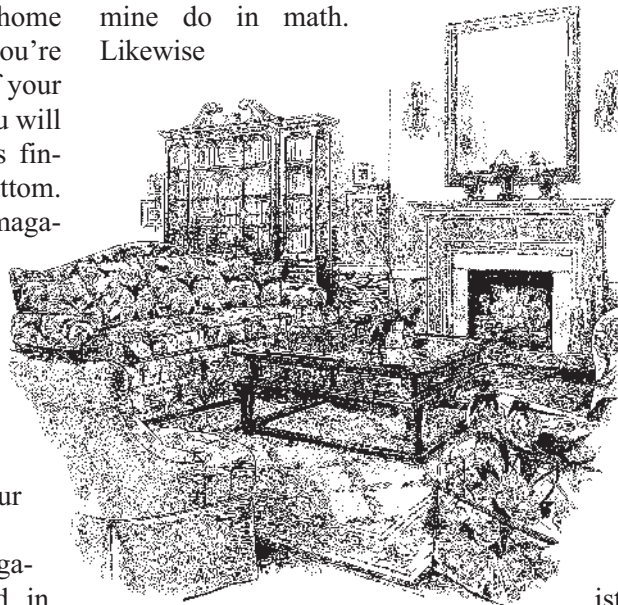
How about gardening magazines? Everything is green and in bloom, bloom, bloom. Even in the winter! There are painted birdhouses in the garden with special benches that look matched to perfection. Perfectly incredible, isn’t it?

Now we don’t even want to go into the fashion magazines. Their idea of perfectionism changes with the wind, while most of their models could blow away with it as well. Trying to be perfectly in fashion is a useless chasing after the wind, a trap that so many of our young teenagers fall into, as their mothers did before them.

Then there’s homeschooling. The covers of those magazines always

make me feel like I must be doing something wrong. The “cover families” seem to have it all together with nary a flaw to be seen. Surely their children never struggle like mine do in math.

Likewise



the crocheting and knitting magazines. Oh, the beautiful garments displayed month after month! I keep looking for one that says “beginner,” but even those directions elude me.

Why am I bringing this all up? Well, I think that perfectionism really paralyzes a woman. Let me explain.

You’ve got your perfectionists who do everything “by the book.” Their meals are

perfect. Their homes are perfect. Their gardens are perfect. Their grooming is perfect. Their crafting is perfect. But have you ever lived for a time with a perfectionist? The rest of the people in the house are paralyzed by this woman. Why? For fear that they will do something to mar what she has so painstakingly put together so perfectly well. It is meant to be viewed from afar with a red velvet chain decorating “the door” so that you might glance in and nod approvingly.

Their children, unfortunately, suffer the most because they can never live up to what the perfectionist demands. They often fall painstakingly short of her ideal.

They feel paralyzed and wish only for a little mud and love.

Not only that. But the perfectionist herself is paralyzed too. Why? Because if it’s not going to be perfect, she’s not going to do it. And if she is going to do it, then it’s got to be perfect. By the book. So everyone around her has to toe the line and do it right or there’s going to be a price to pay. The price is a heavy one often heard quite

(Continued on page 8)

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.

Guest Editorial

Our Elderly Treasures

Dorothy Manning

My husband and I are directly involved as caregivers to both of our aging mothers. We ourselves are part of the “baby boomer” generation that is not all that far from retirement.

As I’ve thought on this subject lately, I can see that Christians, who want to be obedient to the command to “honor thy father and thy mother,” need to approach the challenge from a Biblical, spiritual perspective.

In this season when winter is slowly giving way to the newness of another spring, I find myself pondering life and what it is all about. Is life to be spent selfishly, doing only what we wish to do, providing only for our own temporal needs and desires? In Ecclesiastes the wise man tells us over and over that all such is vanity. Jesus’ counsel is, “...lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matthew 6:20, 21) “Treasure” does not have to be only money. Our treasure can be our kind deeds, thoughtfulness, the “cups of cold water” that we give to any of God’s “little ones,” (Matthew 10:42) including our elders. Our parents are, themselves, “treasures”!

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was not given over to the local nursing home. Even as He hung, dying, on the cross, Jesus was concerned about Mary’s welfare. “When Jesus therefore saw his mother, and the disciple standing by, whom he loved, he saith unto his mother, Woman, behold thy son! Then saith he to the disciple, Behold thy mother. And from that hour that disciple took her unto his own home.” (John 19:26, 27) As His last act before He died, our Lord gave His mother to John for care and sustenance. Evidently John was willing to accept this responsibility, and so should we, who are witnesses to our own parents’ aging process, be willing.

Women, by and large, do the “caring giving,” and no doubt there are those among the readers of *Hearth to Hearth* who would benefit from the encouragement of others who have accepted this awesome responsibility. Those whose parents are still living may be faced with such a challenge in the future, and it is never too early to be thinking of it and planning to be ready when it comes.

I have learned that, along with the hard work and, yes, frustration, there is great joy and satisfaction in watching over our parents in their final years. What happiness it brings to provide for the comfort and joy of those who gave us birth, changed our diapers and guided our footsteps when we were children! What an opportunity to say “I love you” and “Thank you for all you have done for me!”

In an effort to share with and encourage others, I am planning to write an article for a future issue of *Hearth to Hearth* in which I will share some of the insights I have gleaned and some of the joys (and even some of the frustrations) from my personal experience. I am inviting you who are also serving as caregivers to your aging parents to write and share your views as well. In this way, let’s give support and encouragement to one another!

[Dorothy writes from Blue Lake, California.]



MAIL CALL:

We picked up a copy of your paper at a home schooling convention and would like to read more. Please send to the address below. Thanks so much! TN

I liked the newsletter you sent, and would like to receive it. I will send it to my sister, she will enjoy it too. Thank you so very much. To whom [does one] send a donation? OH

[*Hearth to Hearth* is sent free of charge to anyone who would like to receive it. Voluntary donations to help with the costs of printing and mailing can be sent to the address in the box on Page 3. Editor]

Thanks so much for sending these papers. They are wonderful. I’ll be 77 years old and don’t go anywhere too often, only to the doctor. I walk with a big wheel mobilator. I’ve had five back surgeries, but can walk OK with my mobilator, so you see I read and study a lot, because Jesus is coming soon and I want to be ready. Yes, please put me on your mailing list and all of these names I’m sending in. KY

I have loved the *Hearth* magazine that I receive. I’ve read and reread it. It’s a great magazine. AR

I’m thankful I receive *Hearth to Hearth*. I enjoy it and pray it grows and many more women can enjoy it... I’d like to mention a few books. Maybe you could make mention of them in *Hearth to Hearth*. The first one is an excellent book for women on marriage: *The Power of a Praying Wife* by Stormie Omartian. Also, this same author has a book called *The Power of a Praying Parent*. Another good book is on child training called *What the Bible Says About Child Training*, by J. Richard Fugate. OH

We really appreciated the new look of *Hearth to Hearth*. Keep up the good work. AZ

I enjoy the newsletter whenever I can find a few minutes. MI

The *Hearth to Hearth* is really good. I especially like [Mattie Laurell's] articles. Takes me back in time. TN

Would you please put me on your mailing list. I really did enjoy the sample copy that [a friend] sent me. If you have any back issues I would appreciate getting them. TN

Thanks for sending me a copy of *Hearth to Hearth*. I really enjoyed it. Please go ahead and put my name on the mailing list. I'll pass them along to others that will enjoy them also. OH

I wanted to tell you that *Hearth to Hearth* was very good this time, could be the best one yet. I thought it was more spiritual and I like that. AR

A friend has shared a copy of *Hearth to Hearth* with me and I enjoyed it very much. I also shared it with a friend and the both of us would like to start receiving them. It is so uplifting and enlightening. Thank you and God bless. TN

I always read and enjoy *Hearth to Hearth*. They are geared towards my kind of people and the lifestyle that I enjoy living. My mother always enjoyed [my copies] too, so they have touched more than one life. WV

PRAYER CALL:

1) Please pray for a family in Arkansas who recently lost a loved one to death in a very tragic way. It just makes us yearn more intensely for the time when "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. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new." (Revelation 21:4, 5)

2) Our Glenn and Julia arrived home safely, praise God. They are

now installed in their small apartment at the Bible college, ready to start training on the 6th of February. Please thank your readers for their prayers for us. It is wonderful to know that we have such a worldwide sisterhood willing to pray for those who are strangers. We will never know the results of some of our prayers till we see each other in Heaven.

[Please see this reader's prayer request in the Nov./Dec. 2000 issue of *Hearth to Hearth*, and her "preliminary" answered prayer report in the Jan./Feb. 2001 issue. Editor]

LETTER OF TESTIMONY:

May I share with you a way that a friend and I have found to encourage one another? We have started meeting for a few minutes once a week to share a "gratitude" and a "question." We write on cards what it is that we are especially thankful for at this particular time, and also a question that has occurred to us or that has been asked of us regarding Scripture or some facet of Christian life. We exchange cards, and we keep them in a special file. We plan to occasionally get together for a special study time devoted to one or more of the questions that we have raised. We are trying in this way to support and

encourage one another's spiritual growth and maturity—our "completeness in Christ." TN

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.

» **Reminder:** We have moved. The correct address for all correspondence is *Hearth to Hearth*, P.O. Box 247, Pineville, WV 24874. The return address shown on the back page is strictly for postal purposes and should not be used for correspondence.

» **A Page From My Experience:** Do you have one that you would be willing to share with others? We would like to accumulate a file of personal experience stories for use in future issues of *Hearth to Heath*. For examples, see Judy Baker's article on Page 4 in this issue and Linda Spillan's in the Jan./Feb. 2001 issue. We appreciate Judy's and Linda's willingness to share their experiences which touch our hearts and nourish our faith.

» **Questions Please:** Teens and parents of teens, you are invited to submit your questions for "Father and Daughter." In this issue they respond to a question that is on the minds of many parents these days. See Page 10. If several questions are received, perhaps this feature can be expanded to deal with more than one in each issue.

NOTE OF APPRECIATION:

It has been a while since we have publicly expressed our appreciation to Smyrna Gospel Ministries for their tireless efforts on behalf of *Hearth to Hearth*. Their moral support and their financial and technical assistance have made it possible for the newsletter to continue, and we are grateful.

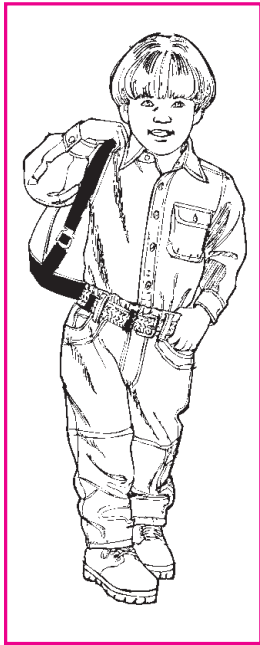
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A Page from My Experience

“Keep Your Eyes On Jesus, Mommy”

Judy Q. Baker

“Keep your eyes on Jesus, Mommy.” Those thought-provoking words were coming from my four-year-old son, Jacob.



The day had been very disturbing. Jacob’s paternal grandmother, my beloved mother-in-law, was near death from cancer. Mary had been living with us for over a year. She had fought lymphoma with high doses of chemotherapy and radiation, but the disease had now taken over without mercy. Now, she lay in bed barely able to move. I didn’t know it, but today was to be the last day of her life.

It was a rainy day in August. I had gotten up and gone to check on Mary in response to her weak call for me. She had fallen getting out of bed to use the bathroom. Something was terribly wrong;

she could not get up. I picked her up as best I could and put her back in the bed.

After cleaning Mary, I called the home care nurse to come. Salina, an angel sent to us from Hospice, arrived quickly. She took Mary’s vital signs and showed me how to use the pain medication the doctor had prescribed. We also had oxygen for her, and the hospital bed that had been ordered was to arrive later that day. We had no idea that this was Mary’s last day to be with us. My precious Mary.

My husband, Carl, was a truck driver and would not be home until late that afternoon. I was alone with our two young children and a very ill lady. The children (Jacob, age four and Julie, almost two) had been rowdy since waking that morning, and had been getting into so much. We had installed a gate to keep them from going in and disturbing their granny. After the rain ceased and the sun came out, they had gone outside to play. They had turned on the outside water spigot and had a fine time playing in the mud. Needless to say, they were covered, head to toe, and had to be bathed. Now I was emotionally drained from caring for Mary and the chil-

dren. Around noon I went into the kitchen to prepare lunch for my children and to take a break.

Out of the midst of the turmoil, my small, rambunctious son walked into the kitchen. He was holding his “daddy towel,” a red handkerchief that he had taken from his daddy years before; he slept with it and carried it with him all the time. Jacob looked up at me and simply said, “Keep your eyes on Jesus, Mommy.” Taken aback, I replied, “What did you say, Jacob?” He repeated those precious words, “Just keep your eyes on Jesus, Mommy.” He then turned and walked out of the room. I was stunned. I had never heard Jacob say that before, nor has he said it since.

I would like to say that I sat down and prayed, but I did not. I continued caring for everyone and went on. But the words my little boy said stayed with me throughout that challenging day. Later, when my husband came home, I relayed the message that Jacob had given me. I asked Carl, “What made Jacob say that to me in one of my most troubling moments? Where did the message come from?” Carl told me he believed an angel gave Jacob the message.

All I know is the words will be forever with me. Now when I am upset or feel all is lost, I remember those words my little boy said six years ago, “Keep your eyes on Jesus, Mommy.” Thank you, Lord, for sending a little messenger, for Your Word says, “A little child shall lead them.” I praise God for His grace and mercy, for saving my soul, and for being there in my times of trouble and despair.



[Judy writes from Pulaski, Virginia.]

Look Upward to Jesus!

Are you walking through valleys of gloom and despair?
Look upward to Jesus! He always is there.
Have you faltered and stumbled under burdens you bear?
Look upward to Jesus! He knows and cares.
Do shadows loom tall and darker than fear?
Look upward to Jesus! Breathe words of prayer.
Pray without ceasing, sing songs in the night.
Look upward to Jesus! And fight the good fight.

Grace Cox

Come, Sit at the Feet of Jesus!

ALL THINGS NEW

Amanda Mallory

March is here, spreading a green carpet over the land for April's dainty feet, and songbirds are filling the morning air with their happy melodies. I feel as if I am emerging from winter's cocoon, ready to try my wings and join in the tumult of nature going on around me. It's as if the sap is rising in my bones even as in the trees; as if new life is surging through my veins!

My hands are eager to go to work throwing open the draperies and windows and doors, and letting the sunshine chase out the gloom of winter. It is time to launch a search and destroy mission into the nooks and crannies of my home to annihilate all clutter, dust and grime; I am eager to dig in the garden dirt, and plant seeds to grow food and to turn empty flower beds into spots of beauty that will feed the souls of all who see them.

My home might not be the only thing that needs a thorough cleaning and refurbishing. Spring is the perfect time to throw open the doors and windows of my life, too, and invite Jesus to come in and breathe new spiritual life into my being. At my invitation, He will launch a "search and destroy mission" into any cluttered, dusty, grimy corners of my mind, and will eradicate all such that He finds. He will clean, polish and beautify all that is within me if I allow Him to, and I will be "transformed by the renewing of [my] mind." (Romans 12:2) He has promised, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh." (Ezekiel 36:25,26)

Marvelous springtime! It is impossible for me to breathe the air, hear the sounds, see the awakening going on in nature all around me and not think of the Creator; of His awesome power, and His wondrous lov-

ing care for all that He has made. It is impossible to observe the newness of life so visible and audible at this time of year and not think of the grand morning of the first resurrection (Revelation 20:6) when the faithful ones who have been resting in death will awake in response to the voice of Jesus calling them to come forth. "For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." (1 Thessalonians 4:16)

While the cold grip of winter, which seems to correlate so well to death itself, is melting into the sweet, life-giving warmth of spring, my thoughts naturally turn to God's eternal springtime when sin and death have been forever eliminated from the universe. "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind." (Isaiah 65:17) "And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea... And 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. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful." (Revelation 21:1-5)

What a God! If He says there will be no more tears and death, no more sorrow, crying and pain, we can depend on it. If He says, "I make all things new," we know that He will do it. He will keep His promises because He is faithful to His Word. What a springtime that will be! I can hardly wait; how about you?



[Amanda Mallory is the pen name of one who frequently writes for *Hearth to Hearth*.]

Mary's Memoir

Onycha Holt

Summer 59 AD

Dear Fellow Believers in Christ,

You asked me to share some thoughts about my life. As I sit here and quietly muse, my mind wanders back to a certain spring morning... I was on my way home...

The rattle of the cart should have awakened me from my reverie, but instead all I thought of was the blue of the sky, the smell of the fresh air, and the satisfying peace of the everyday sounds around me of friends and family traveling home. Items jangled against donkeys and their carts, children scampered noisily in and out of the stream of travel, and songs of gratitude wafted lightly within hearing as gentle breezes do through leaves on a tree.

We were in no hurry to arrive home. It might take several days of slow travel, but we savored every minute of it. Not only were we among new friends and old loved ones, but heaven seemed alive in the very air we

breathed. The blessing was walking with us, as it were, enhancing every molecule of sound and sight, and even of smell itself. My heart was light with a sense of forgiveness and cleanness. Now, I know my feet touched the ground as I walked, but I declare if it didn't seem I was walking a little closer to heaven and a little less attached to earth.

Now, I know my feet touched the ground as I walked, but I declare if it didn't seem I was walking a little closer to heaven and a little less attached to earth.

Maybe that's why I forgot about Him. The Feast of Passover could do that to you. It was a huge undertaking, and everybody was participating at once, and it was spring. New life was blooming all around, and inside one bloomed the hope of freedom from the slavery of sin, just as our ancestors were freed from the bonds of slavery in Egypt.

Have you ever looked at your child and been mystified? All along you thought you knew him, but somehow this day he is different. That's how I felt when I finally found Jesus. But that first night on the homeward trip was frightening. Even though I hadn't seen Him during the day, I wasn't worried. He had always been considerate of us in the past, and I knew He would surface at eventide to help us set up camp. When He didn't, Joseph and I became frantic, and we searched for Him desperately in the large crowd of family and friends. No one had seen Him.

Since then I have learned the spiritual lesson that Jesus is not found in a noisy crowd, but in the quiet where the still, small voice of His sweet Spirit can be heard. I think that is one of the lessons He wanted me to learn that spring day of his twelfth year. You see, even though He was my son, He was also to be my Savior, and I had to learn the painful distinction between the two.

At daybreak the next morning, we began the return trip to Jerusalem, arriving in the evening of the second day apart from our son. We couldn't find Him that evening, and we spent another dark, lonely night without



Him. I'm afraid I had taken Him for granted and didn't maintain a watchful eye on Him. I've regretted that ever since. I remembered the angel telling me I had been

Since then I have learned the spiritual lesson that Jesus is not found in a noisy crowd, but in the quiet where the still, small voice of His sweet Spirit can be heard.

chosen for a special job, and that Jesus was the Messiah. Thoughts of Herod destroying the baby boys in an attempt to kill Jesus weighed heavily on my mind. I had become so adsorbed in conversation and fellowship that first day, that I lost sight of Him, my most precious possession, and I was dreadfully afraid that, due to my neglect, Satan had finally succeeded in destroying Jesus.

Early in the morning of the third day we renewed our search with vigor and, eventually, made our way to the temple, where we had last seen Him. Soon I heard His unmistakable voice, so pleasant and innocent, yet earnest and intense. He was conversing with the temple teachers, even asking them profound questions. It didn't matter though. I rushed in, full of emotion and grief, asking Him—no, demanding of Him—how He could treat me so. His answer—“Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?”—was also profound, and I realized that a change had taken place in Him. I didn't

I write these words to earnestly plead with you—don't lose sight of Him.

understand the change, but I looked at Him with new eyes.

It has taken me many long years to understand what His Father's business is, and I still don't comprehend its entirety, but I do know He has moved from being my son to being my Savior. So, I write these words to earnestly plead with you—don't lose sight of Him. I still keenly feel those discouraging days without Him, how I went from lightness of spirit to deepest regret and agony, all because I had taken Jesus for granted and had gone through a day, one careless day, without a sense of His presence.

I am on guard now, and even though He is truly about His Father's business, I maintain a close connection to Him through my heart and spirit by prayer and



daily study of the Scriptures. By His grace I will continue to do so as long as I live. I pray that reading of my painful experience will encourage you to maintain this closeness also.

Mary



[Author's Note: There are a total of 39 texts referring to Mary, the mother of Jesus, in the New Testament. A study guide referencing a major portion of these texts is available free upon request. Also available in conjunction with this story, is a study on the need to maintain our connection with Jesus.

Two study guides regarding my last story on faith are in the process of being prepared, and will be available free upon request. One will be a simple study on the complex issue of faith, and another on counterfeit healings, all based on Bible references alone with no comments by me. Just send a postcard with your name and address, and which guides you would like, to Onycha Holt, HC 77, Box 15, Camden-on-Gauley, WV 26208, and we will mail them off to you as soon as possible. I am looking forward to studying with you!]

(Continued from page 1)

audibly. But here's the interesting thing. "Wanna-be Perfectionists" are also paralyzed. They're the ones who look longingly at the perfectionists and say things like, "Oh, I'm not creative like she is," and "We don't have the money to spend like they do," and "She doesn't have small children like me." So unlike the perfectionist, they do the opposite. They do nothing and procrastinate their life away. So many things they want to learn and try, but instead they "armchair quarterback" the perfect women in their life which gives them their needed excuses for not budging an inch.

You see... perfectionism paralyzes.

I came to realize this some time ago. I fell into the "Wanna-be Perfectionist" class. I can't tell you how much time I wasted by saying things like, "I'm just not good at that," or "My gift isn't in that area," and, of course, the infamous, "I'm just not very creative."

Well, as I studied the Proverbs 31 woman over the years, I began to realize that this passage does not describe a Perfectionist nor a Wanna-be Perfectionist. Rather this passage describes a woman who is willing to learn. But not only that, she is also a woman willing to put into practice what she has learned. She is found in the middle of both extremes. Not so perfect that you can't reach out to her for "she speaks with wisdom and on her lips is the law of kindness," (verse 36) and not so



much of a Wanna-be that she procrastinates to the point of "domestic poverty." "In all labor there is profit, but idle chatter leads only to poverty." Proverbs 14:23

So many things that I have wanted to try over the years, yet I found myself not doing them because I was so sure of failure. Take gardening, for example. I was so sure I did not have a green thumb, so what was the use. "I couldn't even keep a houseplant alive," I was often stating. Then the LORD sent a friend over. She had some herb plants from her garden for me. We went out to the barren dirt outside my kitchen window. She dug a hole. She put the plant in and tapped it with her foot. The plant was lying kind of flat and droopy. I asked her if this was normal. She nodded. Then she said I could water it if I wanted to. "That's it?" I asked. She nodded. Oh, and she mentioned that if it died I wouldn't want it in my garden anyway. I did water that plant every now and then, and it grew into a beautiful curry plant which still resides in my herb garden some seven years later. I also still water it a little every now and then.

Another thing she told me. If you work fifteen minutes in your garden, "You've worked in your garden." I nodded. "Some areas take only a quick fifteen minutes to weed and keep up. Just give yourself fifteen minutes a day and you'll see a difference in your garden." I nodded again. She was right. I also learned to do this "fifteen minute" upkeep in so many other areas in my home.

I can't tell you how much I love my garden. It might not look like much to some, but to me it is one of the most peaceful spots on earth. It will never be photographed for a gardening magazine, but I know the LORD started this special place for me with the help of my friend. And my friend was not a perfectionist. Nor a Wanna-be. She was a woman who was willing to learn and willing to practice what she learned. I am so glad she taught me,

too, for if it was not for her, I would not have the garden that I have now.

Here's what I've been learning over the years. Don't worry about being perfect. It's a useless chasing after the wind. For perfectionism in decorating (notice that we don't have too many orange carpets in waiting rooms these days), preparing of food (notice that we don't have too many fondue pots going these days), gardening, fashion (notice that we don't have men wearing sus-



penders on their socks these days), homeschooling and creative arts is time consuming, can be very expensive to the point of going into deep debt, and leaves one never satisfied.

On the other hand, wanting to be like the perfectionist is also a useless chasing after the wind. For procrastination is a "folding of the hands which leads to poverty"—a poverty many of us realize especially in our domestic roles.

So here's what I've been learning to do. I pray for godly balance in my life. I'm not trying to be perfect anymore. And I'm not procrastinating anymore either. I realize that I've got to dig in and try. Yes, I will fail. So many things take time to learn and you have to fail along the way in order to learn. But God will show me the way. Some things only take fifteen minutes a day, yet something is being created which would have otherwise been only a



wishful thought. It might have "holes" in it, and it might not come out quite right. But each time I try, it gets a little bit better and a little bit easier.

Here are some of the things I've been learning to practice over the years:

Cooking—Art doesn't throw up anymore and I've even given cooking lessons. (Smile)

Sewing—I've made Abbie two dresses that she actually wore to church.

Gardening—My garden even has a small path in it now with a little "welcome" sign.

Speaking—I can speak now without feeling like I am going to be sick.

Knitting—I made two baby sweaters that didn't fall apart until after the baby pictures!

Crocheting—I am still making that blanket for my mother-in-law and my kids like it.

Homeschooling—My kids can read and write! Especially God's Word. I'm so thankful.

Haircutting—Art told me last night that my haircuts are getting better! Yes!

Photography—It was slow going at first, but I think I can shoot Quincy's senior pictures.

Writing—It is a true blessing to share with you all that God has so graciously given me.

Cake Decorating—My kids can recognize a little better what the cake is supposed to be.

Fashion—Not much emphasis here now. More on godly elegance on a budget.

Home Decor—I got a lot of comments on my purple hallway, but the stenciling tied it in.

Health—A fascinating study that is so profitable for my family. I continue to learn and do.

Home Management—Organization saves a lot of time and frustration. I want to change.

Finances—This is an area I keep learning, which includes frugality in many of the above.

"She watches over the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness." (Proverbs 31:27)

Idleness is procrastination to the point of domestic poverty.

"It is better to live on the corner of a roof, than with an angry and contentious woman." (Proverbs 21:9) Perfectionism can drive everyone to the corner of the roof.

So what is the answer? Godly priorities. Godly balance. Godly pace. It's not being afraid to try. It's delighting in



learning what He has to teach you. It's asking Him to bless your hands and make them skillful for His glory and for your husband's strength. It won't happen overnight. That's what a lifetime is for.

It's not about not being a Martha. I feel so sorry for her. She has sure taken a lot of rebuke down through the years. Her priorities were a little out of whack, which affected her balance, which in turn affected her pace. (One can always tell when that happens because that's when we complain about those closest to us and are worried to the point of panic about everything we just have to do! Right now!) Much like me time and time again. But I'm learning. Oh, now I am learning. And I have the greatest Teacher. How thankful I am to my Savior, the LORD Jesus Christ. I want to be perfect as He is. And that is definitely a woman totally in love with God her Father, and a woman who realizes His great love flowing through her to others. Especially those closest to her. All His for His purposes and His glory. She's called "His Maidservant," "His Daughter," "His Glorious Bride."

Now that is true perfectionism.

May God do His miracle work through even me. Even me.

Love,
Laine



[“Laine’s Letters” may be found at <http://www.geocities.com/laines.letter> on the Internet.]



Teens and Parents Ask



Father and Daughter Answer

Dear Father and Daughter,

How do I get my son off of the Internet? He spends every spare minute playing some kind of game. He locks himself in his room for hours. He is not getting enough sleep because of the Internet. I have tried to tell him he needs to spend less time on the computer and more time doing more constructive activities, but he won't listen.

Concerned Parent

Dear CP,

This is a problem that our parents never had to worry about when raising us. The computer along with the Internet has impacted our lives greater than the invention of the automobile. With every invention there comes the good and the bad. However, I don't think that the computer or Internet is the problem. Our children need boundaries. It is our responsibility as parents to provide these boundaries for the safety and positive development of our children. For example, if our child wanted to play in the middle of a busy highway we would have no problem in "grabbing them by the ear" and dragging them to safety, even if the child was kicking and screaming. When something is a detriment to our child's safety and development we need to get involved and be the parent.

Here are a few suggestions: 1) Move the computer out of your son's room. 2) Establish a curfew, or a time limit that your son can spend on the Internet, outside of schoolwork. 3) Know what activities your son is participating in while on the Internet.

Don't expect your son to be happy with your decision to provide him with some boundaries. Just be assured that some day he will thank you for being his parent.

Father

Dear CP,

Okay, who's in charge of this house? Nobody likes being told that they can't do what they want to do, but if playing computer games is interfering with your son's schoolwork or other stuff (chores, sleep, etc.) then it's your responsibility as the parent to put an end to his compulsive computer playing craze. If you don't let your kid know what's up, then things are just going to get worse! Drugs, sex, rock n' roll, next thing you know your kid's a bum on the street.

Anyway, your son probably won't be too happy when you tell him that he has got to step away from the monitor. In fact, there are going to be many times when you and your child don't agree, and during those times

your child is not going to like you very much. But you're the parent, he's the child and he'll get over it. You don't need to be mean about it though. Ask your son if he can come up with some kind of compromise on his own, like maybe an hour or two of computer games a day after his other responsibilities are taken care of. If your son feels like he has some say in the matter, then he won't feel so defensive and it should be easier to work things out somewhat peacefully. Good luck!

Daughter

A PLACE FOR BOYS

What can a boy do, and where can a boy stay
If he always is told to get out of the way?
He can not sit here, and he must not stand there,
The cushions that cover that fine rocking-chair
Were put there, of course, to be seen and admired;
And a boy has no business to ever be tired.
The beautiful roses and flowers that bloom
On the floor of the darkened and delicate room
Are not made to walk on, at least not for boys;
The house is no place, anyway, for their noise.

Yet boys must walk somewhere, and what if their feet,
Sent out of our house, sent into the street,
Should step 'round the corner and pause at the door,
Where other boys' feet have paused often before,
Should pass through the gateway of glittering light,
Where jokes that are merry, and songs that are bright,
Ring out a warm welcome with flattering voice,
And temptingly say, "Here's a place for the boys?"
Ah! what if they should? What if your boy or mine
Should cross o'er the threshold that marks out the line
'Twixt virtue and vice, 'Twixt pureness and sin,
And leave all his innocent boyhood within?
O, what if they should, because you and I,
While the days and the months and the years hurry by,
Are too busy with cares and with life's fleeting joys
To make 'round our hearthstones a place for the boys?

There's a place for the boys. They will find it somewhere;
And if our own homes are too daintily fair
For the touch of their fingers, the tread of their feet,
They'll find it, and find it, alas! In the street,
'Mid the gildings of sin and the glitter of vice;
And with heartaches and longings we pay a dear price,
For the getting of gain that our lifetime employs,
If we fail in providing a place for the boys.

A place for the boys—dear mothers, I pray,
As cares settle down 'round our short earthly way,
Don't let us forget, by our kind, loving deeds,
To show we remember their pleasures and needs,
Though our souls may be vexed with the problems of life,
And worn with besetments and toiling and strife,
Our hearts will keep younger—your tired heart and mine—
If we give them a place in their innermost shrine;
And to life's latest hour 'twill be one of our joys
That we keep a small corner, a place for the boys.

Selected

A Picture of "Peace"

Two artists were engaged to portray on canvas their idea of peace. One painted a beautiful lake, calm and clear as a mirror. Around it trees, shrubbery, and flowers grew in rich profusion; and there was not a breath to stir the leaves or to cause a ripple. The other artist pictured a foaming cataract, deafening in its roar as it plunged over the cliff and broke on the crags and rocks below. And in a recess under the foaming falls, on a slender twig a bird had built its nest. There it sat in perfect quietness and confidence, almost within reach of the restless waters, yet undisturbed by their wild tumult. That was peace. The other picture was stagnation.

Peace is not secured by silencing the world's din or calming its angry spirit; it is not secured by subduing its warring elements or hushing its clamorings.

[By Robert Hare, *Signs of the Times*, May 28, 1940. Used with permission.]

Take Time

Take time to live;
it is one secret of success.
Take time to think;
it is the source of power.
Take time to play;
it is the secret of youth.
Take time to read;
it is the foundation of knowledge.
Take time for friendship;
it is the source of happiness.
Take time to laugh;
it helps lift life's load.
Take time to dream;
it hitches the soul to the stars.
Take time to worship;
it is the highway of renewal.
Take time to pray;
it helps bring Christ near and washes the dust of earth from our eyes.

Selected

Jesus, Lover of My Soul

"Jesus, Lover of My Soul," was written by Charles Wesley in a spring-house where he had taken refuge from a mob. He, with his brother, John Wesley, and Richard Dilmore, were holding one of their evening meetings on the common, when a mob attacked them, and they were compelled to flee for their lives. They at last found a season of shelter from the stones with which they were severely pelted, behind a hedge. After lying there for some time, the darkness deepened upon them, and they found their way to a deserted spring-house, where they struck a light with a flint-stone, washed their faces in the clear, cold water, brushed the dirt from their clothes, and felt at least a moment's security from the missiles which had pelted them.

Charles Wesley had with him a piece of lead hammered out into a pencil, which he pulled from his pocket, and with his soul fixed with the terror of the hour and turned toward Jesus, he composed the world-renowned hymn:

"Jesus, lover of my soul, Let me to thy bosom fly; While the nearer waters roll, While the tempest still is high!"

That the flight from the mob and the cooling waters of the spring helped him to form this hymn, no one could doubt. "Let the healing streams abound," and the last stanza—

"Thou of life the fountain art, Freely let me take of Thee; Spring Thou up within my heart, Rise to all eternity," are creations of the mind as it felt the presence of the material fountain. But how wondrously the writer, that night of flight from a mob to a protecting shelter, penned the words which have helped thousands to fly to the bosom of Jesus.

Selected

[*Signs of the Times*, December 18, 1884.
Used with permission.]

Understanding God's Plan of Redemption

His Judgment Seat

In our series thus far, we have seen how the symbols and rituals embodied in the Hebrew economy with its feast days and its sanctuary services encompass the whole plan of salvation, and how all of the day-by-day rites throughout the year reach their climax in the special rituals of the Day of Atonement. The last few segments of our series have focused on this climactic work—a work taking place in the smaller of the two apartments of the wilderness sanctuary and its counterpart taking place in heaven itself, of which that apartment is a symbol.

Before we go back to the camp of Israel and view the remainder of the scene transpiring on Israel's annual judgment day, let's briefly examine some other Biblical examples of the way in which God deals with individuals and nations when they pass before His judgment bar.

Biblical examples of judgment

» In Genesis chapter 3 we find that the very first time God passed judgment on any human being was regarding the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the Garden of Eden. You will find the story recorded in Genesis chapter 3. On that occasion, God came down to walk in the garden and discovered that Adam and Eve were not joyously anticipating His visit; they were hiding. It was obvious that something was wrong. God asked four specific questions (not that He didn't already know): "Where art thou?" "Who told thee that thou wast naked?" "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee

that thou shouldest not eat?" and "What is this that thou hast done?" After He had conducted His investigation, He immediately sentenced Adam, Eve and the serpent for their misdeeds and their sentence was speedily executed in that they were immediately sent out of the garden, the way to the tree of life was guarded and they were bound to a life which led to the grave.

» In Genesis 4 verses 3-15 is recorded the story of Cain and Abel. In this case, the implication was that Abel was found innocent while Cain was judged guilty and sentence was pronounced against him and immediately carried out.

» The history of the whole antediluvian world, of somewhat over 1600 years (according to Biblical reckoning), is recorded in the first ten chapters of Genesis! Chapters 6-10 record the story of Noah and the flood. The record states that "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually, And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth." Yet there was at least one man that God knew to be righteous and He used him to save a remnant out of the doomed race.

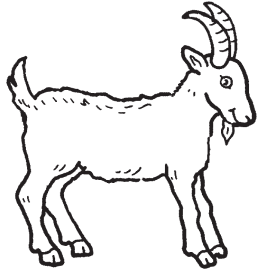
» Some time later, there were those who defied God's command to replenish the earth (Genesis 9:1) and decided to congregate in one place and "build a city and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven; and let us make a name, lest we be scattered abroad upon the face of

the whole earth." (Genesis 11:4) To my mind, either they were disbelieving God's word that He would never again destroy the earth by a flood, and were hoping to get above any flood waters, or else they thought they could storm heaven itself with their demands. That's speculation, of course, but whatever their reasoning, God was not pleased. The record declares that "the Lord came down to see the city and the tower, which the children of men builded." And when He came down, He passed judgment on their work and His sentence was carried out without delay.

There are many other examples of God's dealings with the people He had created for the purpose of bringing glory to Himself, but these four examples should suffice for



our purposes here. However, it would be a very rich study for you to look into God's methods in the many other examples. Here is a sampling to get you started: Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis chapters 18, 19; Luke 17:28-32—note that the wicked were “taken” and Lot



and his family were “left.”); Egypt (Exodus chapters 6 through 12); the incident of the golden calf

(Exodus 32); the judgment of Achan (Joshua 7—note that the process involved a tribe by tribe, person by person investigation which resulted in some being “cleansed” while others were “cut off”); Nadab and Abihu (Leviticus 10); Korah, Dathan, Abiram and 250 princes (Numbers 16); Moses (Numbers 20:8-12; Deuteronomy 32:48 through chapter 34); Babylon (Daniel 5); Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10).

When God made His investigation in the above-mentioned cases, did He ask questions because *He* needed information? Certainly not! He is all-knowing. He was asking questions to clarify the issues for the people involved and bring them to the point where they actually passed judgment on themselves.

Judgment for us

The Bible makes it plain that we will all appear before the judgment seat of Christ to answer for the works that we have done during our allotted time on the earth. (See 2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10; Matthew 12:36 and chapter 25; Revelation 20:12, 13) The prophet Daniel foretold the *timing* of the

judgment and both he and John the Revelator revealed that we are to be judged out of “the books.” (Daniel chapters 7 and 8; Revelation 20:12) The “Book of Life” is mentioned several times in Scripture; Philippians 4:3; Revelation 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 21:27 are a few of them. The Bible also refers to a “Book of Remembrance.” (Malachi 3:16)

There may be other books as well, but of one thing we can be certain: we will be judged out of the recordings made in heavenly books, and these recordings constitute a record of our deeds. And the same Apostle Paul who said, “Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin,” (Romans 3:20), said also, “But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds.” (Romans 2:5, 6)

John 12:47 and Acts 13:46 are two verses that indicate that God's final judgment will be conducted in the same way as were the previous examples of judgment that we examined, in that each person will pronounce judgment upon himself by the record of the life he has lived.

As we continue with our view of the scene in the wilderness on the great annual Day of Atonement—Israel's judgment day—let's keep in mind that God is revealing to us, through types and symbols, the way in which He has been, is, and will be dealing with the sin problem from the time of its inception in heaven until it has been fully eradicated and the saints can inherit a new earth that is totally free from the blight of sin.

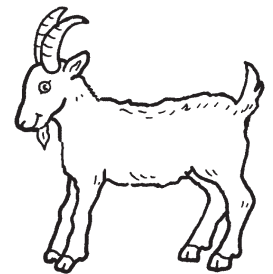
Back to the camp of Israel

Under the subheading, “Entering the most holy place,” in the last article, Aaron had made application of the blood of the bullock in the most holy place, thus procuring an atonement for himself and his house and validating his position as Israel's mediator. He is now ready to proceed with the cleansing of the sanctuary and the sealing of the people.

Taking the “Lord's goat,” Aaron makes his way to the place of slaughter. Expertly he hobbles the animal and slits its throat. As the blood flows into the basin I am reminded that no hand has been laid on its head in confession of sin. The time for that is past—the purpose of this Day is to cleanse the sanctuary and the hearts of the people from the blood record of Israel's already-confessed and -forgiven sins. (Just as God's universe will one day be cleansed from that record as well.) Until this time, the record has remained as a witness to the fact that these sins are covered, or atoned for.

(The Hebrew word Kippur, translated “atonement” simply means “to cover.”)

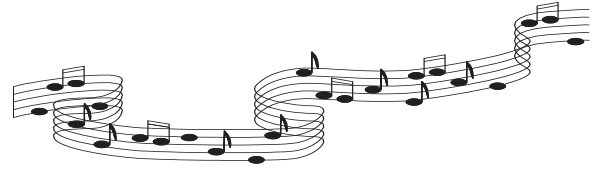
When Satan, the accuser of the brethren, taunts God with how sinful His people are (see Revelation 12:10), God has only to point to the record to show that those sins have been confessed and covered by the blood. The time will come, however, when they will be entirely blotted out. We are told to “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing



(Continued on page 15)

Alison's Song

Jennifer Jill Schwirzer



Alison is my oldest, fourteen to be exact. The age of rage, as in hormones, and to some degree the inevitable assertion of independence/rejection of authority as the body turns adult and tells the heart, "You will be on your own in a short time. Better get ready now." Not always a pleasing phenomenon. But save the details of that for another time.

My mother's heart dreamed of performing and recording music with my children, which was a reality when they were young and pliable. If I said we were going to sing, that's what we did, and thus these innocent years were immortalized in projects such as "Hey Everybody, Good News!" which features both Alison and Kimmy singing for Jesus with all their little hearts.

As selfhood set in, however, they began to regard mommy's music as, well, let's just say in the same category with mommy's clothes—fine... for her. But oh, it was frustrating in that they are both musically and vocally gifted. Alison vocalizes constantly and with such range and intensity that I fear for the crystal goblets Michael's mom gave us. I would think, How can I channel this talent for God when its possessor won't learn from me? Finally I let go, hoping that our musical souls, which couldn't work in sync on ground level, would perhaps crash somewhere in the stratosphere as we sailed on our separate journeys. And that's exactly what happened with this song.

Alison walked over to the piano one morning and began tapping out

a tune. "Mommy, listen to this tune I'm writing... it's nice isn't it?" "Yes, yes, that's pretty, oh very pretty! I think I will use it, can I?" Now the iron was hot—she who thought my songs were passé would have to reform her opinion of this one because she would be the co-writer. It only took a quick strike and the song was complete:

"Where Was I?"

by Alison and Jennifer Schwirzer

Where was I when you rose up from Gethsemane's prayer?
And you searched for your disciples to find them sleeping there
Some sympathy in suffering, some tenderness in grief
The Source of all deliverance, you longed for some relief
I have moon upon my pillow, you had blood upon your stone
Did I make this Son of Love suffer all alone?

Where was I?

Sleeping as you suffered and now I ask "Why?"
You were there for me Friend, but where was I?

Where was I when you rose up between the earth and sky?
And you turned your face to heaven to ask your Father "Why?"
All-knowingness bewildered, All-sufficiency in need
And so few of your friends there to even watch you bleed.
I have sunshine in my window, you had dark night of the soul
I forsook and fled away when I heard the thunder roll.

Where was I?

Sleeping as you suffered, and now I ask "Why?"
You were there for me, Friend, but where was I?

Where am I since you rose up, my heavenly High Priest?
It's two thousand years and counting, still you have not been released
You feel with hungry babies, you're lonely as old men
You die with battered women, again and still again
I have stars of hope to cheer me, you have darkness and delay
I'm your great disappointment, you love me anyway

Where am I?

Though they bring me sorrow, these questions won't die
This is my confession, my penitent sigh
I was sleeping as you suffered, and now I ask "Why?"
You were there for me, Friend, but where was I?

I know; a heavy song. It's in the works for a project called "The Closing Songs," that I hope to release sometime before convalescence. Stay tuned.

But back to the story. Last Friday I was informed that South Lancaster Academy Alumni Association would be sponsoring a talent show in which

\$1000 worth of prizes would be given away (toward school bills, of course). “I want to sing something, Mommy, where are your music tracks?” Alison said, then spent the next hour attempting to hit a high G in “How Great Thou Art” and croon through “People Need the Lord.” Finally I casually suggested that she do the song we co-wrote with the following plug; “You are much more likely to win if you had something to do with the creation of the song. Judges are always impressed with originality.” She bit.

Two days of sporadic practice later we were in Machlan Auditorium with her academy friends and a slew of gray-haired alumni. Alison was toward the end of the program, directly after a trio of girls called “Tres Mas Uno” who sang, “I Will Be Right Here Waiting” by Richard Marx. They were three very talented and lovely young ladies who, I assure you, were a hard act to follow. My brave girl got up, introduced her song and began to sing with her clear, strong, but untrained voice. The applause was moderate in comparison to the manic responses to some of the more upbeat pop music that was done. But we were on a mission, and the mission was complete, so applause or not, we were satisfied.

To make a long story sweet, we won second prize—\$300 toward Alison’s school bill. First prize went to a group of seniors who were truly outstanding in every way. The judges graded on four things; originality, content, creativity and presentation. They wanted to make a statement endorsing kids who used their talents for the Lord.

It was a triumph for several things: Christianity in that hers was one of the few Christian songs performed; originality in that it was the only original song; and last but not least it was a triumph of the concept of working with your mom. I am still walking on air.

God did it. He rewarded my teenager for standing up for Jesus. Pray that she will so love Him that she will be willing to stand up for Him when there is no reward.

And so we end the story of a song. In mid-stream, to be fair. You can see how, for me anyway, a song is not just a commodity to be manufactured, performed, recorded and sold, but it is a tool I use to intersect with lives that are otherwise difficult of access. They say life imitates art, but I say art imitates life, and sometimes lives. The song is like Alison herself. It is roughly the same age as she in song-years—that teen-age of thrilling uncertainty. It holds fantastic potential that may or may not be realized. It is sweet and sad at the same time. It could lead many to the cross of Jesus, or it could fail to do so. I am waiting for both my song-child and my child to become what they will become.

[Jennifer Jill Schwirzer writes frequently for various publications. She has written *Testimony of a Seeker*, a book published by Pacific Press. She also runs “Michael Ministries,” a non-profit music and seminar ministry. You may read an excerpt from the book on her Web page at www.jenniferjill.org or write to her at Michael Ministries, 145 Thompson Ave., Putnam, CT 06260. Email: jennifer.schwirzer@snet.net]

(Continued from page 13)

shall come from the presence of the Lord.” (Acts 3:19)

Even though no hand has been laid on the head of the Lord’s goat, the waiting worshipers, who are fasting and “afflicting their souls” on this solemn Day, are well aware that the daily whole burnt offering is still smoldering on the altar; a comforting reminder that even on this Day of days, God’s forgiveness is still available to all. This continually simmering offering is a constant reminder of the heavenly High Priest who “ever liveth to make intercession” for us—until the end of the antitypical Day of Atonement. (More about that next time.)

Now Aaron is making his way back into the most holy place to sprinkle the blood of the goat in the same manner as the blood of the bullock had been sprinkled—“on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat.” Each time he enters this sacred chamber he is awed by the beauty that he alone can witness. What a privilege to stand, on behalf of Israel, before the dazzling splendor of the ark with its golden cherubim enthroned beneath the cherubim studded tapestry! What an honor to stand in the very presence of Jehovah as His mediator with the people; a type of the true Mediator, the Son of God!

Emerging from the room, Aaron takes up the basin that contains the remainder of the blood from the bullock and sprinkles it, along with the blood of the goat, in the holy place before the veil leading into the most holy place. Next he carefully mingles the blood of the two animals, showing plainly that the blood of the two sacrifices represent the one sacrifice of Christ on the corners of the altar of incense, and



sprinkled seven times on the altar itself. After this, Aaron takes the rest of the blood out to the courtyard where he smears blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offerings and sprinkles its four sides seven times. Any blood that remains he pours out at the base of the altar.

The purpose of these procedures is to leave no record of confessed sins in the sanctuary. Every place that such a record has been made is “covered” by the mingled blood of the bull and the goat. Since the record of these sins has “defiled” the sanctuary, Aaron’s task of smearing and sprinkling the blood “cleanses” the sanctuary and symbolically “removes” or “blots out” the record of all the confessed and forgiven sins from the year just past. This act of “covering” provides an “atonement” for the sanctuary and for the people. Yet, only those whose previously-confessed sins have been “covered” by the blood of the daily sin offerings (or have “gone before” into judgment), and who are spending this Day in the prescribed manner of solemnly and sincerely “afflicting their souls,” (making sure that no unconfessed sin has escaped their notice) are now pronounced “cleansed.” All others are “cut off.”

There remains yet one solemn ceremony to be carried out before the rituals of the Day are completed and the regular daily evening oblation is placed upon the altar, signaling the beginning of another year for Israel. The scapegoat is still tethered, waiting for its part to play in the enfolding drama. This enactment and its aftermath will be the focus of our next segment.

As we contemplate Israel’s judgment day and the close of the allotted probationary time for all those who slighted God’s mercy and disregarded His commands, let’s consider also the fact that *we* are fast approaching the end of the time allotted to Lucifer (now Satan) to prove his claim that his methods of government are better than those of the most high God. When his allotted time is up, our probationary time will be up as well.

In the meantime, God is asking *us*, in essence, the same four basic questions He put to Adam and Eve: “Where art thou?” “Who told thee that thou wast naked?” “Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?” and “What is this that thou hast done?” What must our answer be? Are *our* sins covered by the blood? Will they be blotted out?

Esther McDaniel

Hearth to Hearth

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