

Present Truth

2 Peter 1:12

Dear Readers,

February 2013

“Grace, mercy, and peace, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour” (Titus 1:4). I pray that God’s grace will be abundantly poured upon you.

Kendra’s Sidenotes: My wife has printed her first issue of *Sidenotes*. If you would like to receive it, either by e-mail or postal mail, please let us know. You can write Kendra at: sidenotes@gmx.com.

New Books Available: *Understanding the Personality of God* and its companion book, *Answering Objections*, are now available on our website in pdf and html formats. Let us know if you would like a printed copy.

The First Angel’s Message – Part 1

by Lynnford Beachy

Revelation chapter 13 tells us about the mark of the beast and warns us against its reception, and worshipping the beast or his image. It is a terrible crisis that is soon to come upon this earth. Those who are faithful to God will not bow down to the image of the beast, nor receive his mark in their foreheads or hands. Right after we are given this warning, Revelation chapter 14 portrays three angels who give three messages as the remedy for the mark of the beast crisis. I would like to focus on the message of the first angel. There is something about this message that is different from the rest, but I want us to read all of the messages so we get the context.

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and

kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice,

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If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus” (Revelation 14:6-12).

This passage is known as the three angels’ messages. Notice that only the first angel gives instructions. The second and third angels give warnings about what will happen if we do this or that, but the first angel tells us something that we should do. We are to fear God, give glory to Him and worship Him. Those are positive instructions; things that we can do to help us avoid receiving the mark of the beast.

Notice the three messages talk about angels. This may appear to give the idea that we should just wait for some angelic being to come along and preach the gospel. The word angel means messenger. A messenger comes with these messages. Did you know that you and I can be messengers? We are actually the mouthpiece for these angels to preach the gospel to the world. You’re not going to see a big bright angel come and start preaching. No! Instead, the angels are going to unite with us to give us the strength and the power that we need to

share the message. Don’t just wait for someone else to come along and preach it for you. Christ expects you to partake in the preaching of these messages.

The Everlasting Gospel

The first angel comes and has the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue and people. Gospel means good news, so this angel comes with the everlasting good news. In other words this is good news that has always been good news; it is good news now and will be good news forever. This angel comes with the everlasting gospel, good news that outshines every other news that you could possibly hear.

Jesus says to you and me, “Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature” (Mark 16:15). Jesus’ words are just as true for us today as they were back then. He says to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. Isn’t this the same thing the first angel was doing? The first angel has the everlasting gospel to preach to every nation, kindred, tongue and people—to all the world. Here Jesus says that you are to go and preach the gospel to every creature.

I want us to look at a verse that parallels what we have just read in Mark. “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen” (Matthew 28:18-20).

In my Bible there is a paragraph mark at the beginning of verse nineteen. Do you generally start a completely new idea with the word *therefore*? No! *Therefore* is a conclusion based upon something that has just been said. Jesus said, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore." He goes on to say that He is with you always, even unto the end of the world. Now you can understand what the *therefore* is there for. Because He has received all power we can go and teach. If He had received all this power just to keep to Himself the *therefore* wouldn't make much sense. Notice what He said, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He is saying that He has received all power, *therefore* go and teach all nations because I am going to be with you. He is the power that attends the message. Without Him there is no power in the message. He has to be in you when you preach the gospel to the world. He preaches it through you.

I heard a saying that I think is really neat. I am not sure I'm reproducing it correctly, but it goes something like this, "I made it my mission and goal to preach the gospel to every nation, kindred, tongue and people, and if necessary I will use words." That just goes to show the importance of our character, of our daily lives. It is more than just preaching! Someone can go and just preach, preach, preach but if they don't have a life that attends the message then the power is missing. Jesus says He is the one who has all power and if He is with you then you have that power working for you. He

says with God all things are possible (Matthew 19:26).

I want us to see a little more of what this gospel is. Paul wrote, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith" (Romans 1:16, 17). Usually you can replace the word *for* with the word *because*. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ:" because "it is the power of God unto salvation." Then it goes on in verse 17, "for" or because "therein is the righteousness of God revealed..." I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ *because* it is the power of God and it is the power of God *because* the righteousness of God is revealed there. That is what the gospel is: A revelation of the righteousness of God.

This is what the first angel comes to preach, a revelation of the character, the righteousness, of God. This is the everlasting gospel and this has been the everlasting gospel from everlasting. This has always been good news. It has always been about revealing God's character. Satan has thrown slander and reproach upon God's character, saying that He is no good. That has been Satan's attack from day one of his rebellion. Christ came to preach the gospel, to counteract the lies of Satan. That message is about God and His character of love. That is what the everlasting gospel is. The gospel also reveals how the kingdom of God is established in our

hearts. "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come" (Matthew 24:14). So the gospel goes all the way to the end. The very last message to be given to the world is the gospel. It is a revelation of God's righteousness and His love.

Let's take a look at what the angel who comes with the everlasting gospel has to tell us. He cries "with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Revelation 14:7). He spoke with a loud voice. Remember the saying that we will preach the gospel to all the world and if necessary use words? This loud voice includes our characters. It includes the manner in which we live. "Actions speak louder than words." You can preach the gospel without saying a word. This angel, or messenger, comes with a loud voice and I think we can see in that a "loud life." The life is going to be visible to the world. In fact, the Bible tells us that the Gentiles are going to come before the saints when God's character is revealed in them (Isaiah 60:1-3). They are going to see something in God's people that is amazing, that will cause them to take notice and say, "These are people who have been with God." That is a loud voice. The life speaks loudly.

Fear God

This angel comes with a loud voice and the first thing he says is, "Fear

God." Does this mean you should be afraid of God? There is a lot more to the word *fear* than meets the eye. If we fear somebody do we usually like to go and be around them? No! We want to run and hide. If we see them coming we will go somewhere else. Remember that is what Adam did when he sinned. God came looking for him, walking through the garden, and where was Adam? He was hiding. He said, "I was afraid." Is that the kind of fear we are to have of God? No! We are to hold him in the ultimate reverence.

I'd like to take a look at what the Bible says about fear. "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13). Did you know fearing God and keeping His commandments go hand in hand? They go together. Notice that the end of the third angel's message says, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God." Do they have the fear of God? Of course they do. They keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus. Was Jesus afraid of God? Did He run and hide? No! He did the opposite. He ran toward God. He wanted to spend every moment that He could with His Father. This is somebody who feared God more than anyone; better than anyone had ever done. Yet He was desirous to be in God's presence as often as possible. Can we take that example for ourselves, to have that type of a fear?

"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge: but fools despise wisdom and instruction" (Proverbs

1:7). If you want to have knowledge you have to start with the fear of God. That is the very first thing you must have. In my life that was the first thing. When I came out of the world the first thing that I learned was to honor, respect and be in awe of how great God is. Like David said, “I am poor and needy; yet the Lord thinketh upon me...” (Psalm 40:17). This was the beginning of my experience, to recognize His love and kindness toward me. He is so great, yet He still thinks about me.

Paul wrote, “Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear” (Hebrews 12:28). We are to serve God with reverence and godly fear. Godly fear and reverence go hand in hand. Notice it says godly fear. If there is a godly fear, there must be an ungodly fear. Which type are we to have? The godly fear of course. We don’t want anything to do with the other type of fear.

“For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind” (2 Timothy 1:7). God has not given us the spirit of fear. There is a godly fear and there is another fear. That is the fear that the world has. Christians are to have nothing to do with that type of fear. That is not godly fear and God does not give that to us.

Different Types of Fear

When Adam was found after he had sinned, he said to God, “I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid my-

self” (Genesis 3:10). Adam was afraid of God and ran to hide from Him. This is an ungodly fear.

God spoke the Ten Commandments to the children of Israel from Mount Sinai, attended by an awesome display of power. “All the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off. And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die. And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not” (Exodus 20:18-20). The Israelites, who had just come out of Egypt, were troubled by what they saw. They were kind of like Adam, removing themselves from the presence of God. What was Moses doing? He was going right up the mountain, but the people were drawing away. Did they have a godly fear? No! They had a fear that God didn’t give them. They had the wrong type of fear. Moses told them to “fear not” and then he said, Because “God has come to prove you, and that his fear may be” before you. So they were supposed to fear and not fear at the same time. Obviously, the fear that he is telling them not to have is the ungodly fear that makes them want to run and hide. They were supposed to have a different type of fear. Godly fear does not cause you to want to run and hide.

The Bible says, “By mercy and truth iniquity is purged: and by the fear of the LORD men depart from

evil” (Proverbs 16:6). Departure from evil is a fruit of the fear of God. You can understand why it is the beginning of wisdom. This is the first thing we need to have because then results will come, one of which is that you will depart from evil.

The Bible also says, “The fear of the LORD is to hate evil: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate” (Proverbs 8:13). So here we see that the fear of the Lord is to hate evil. Do you and I naturally hate evil? No, naturally we have a love for evil and a hatred for righteousness. What did Jesus have? He definitely had the fear of the Lord. The Bible tells us that He loved righteousness and hated iniquity. That is a description of His character. That is a picture of what He is like. Is this to be your experience today? How can you get that? How can you come to love righteousness and hate evil? By having Him dwell within. Jesus said, “I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for without me ye can do nothing” (John 15:5). If you do not allow Christ to live in you, “ye have no life in you” (John 6:53). Having Christ living within is the only way we can get that fear that hates evil.

The Bible says, “Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still. Selah” (Psalm 4:4). Do you think that Jesus stood in awe of His Father? He did. He had a fear of God that caused Him to be in awe of His Father. How amazing is our God! David had this awe of God. He said, “What is man,

that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him?” (Psalm 8:4). He stood in awe of how great God is. Here it says that we should stand in awe and sin not. When you have this awe of God it has a result that you sin not.

Parental Fear and Trust

God said, “Ye shall fear every man his mother, and his father, and keep my sabbaths: I am the LORD your God” (Leviticus 19:3). Isn’t this strange? Here it says that you are to fear your mother and father. Now if you see a young child and every time his father comes by he runs and hides in the corner shaking would you think that is a good father? Is that the type of fear God is talking about here? Definitely not! I want you to see that there is a relationship here between the fear that we are to have for our God and the fear a child should have for godly parents. Our fear of God includes a parental trust, respect and honor. All of this is included in the fear of God.

David sang, “And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD” (Psalm 40:3). Think about this. In English a lot of times those two words, fear and trust, are opposite. You can’t fear somebody and trust them at the same time. Yet, here it says if you fear the Lord you will trust Him. Similar to your parents; if you have a godly fear for your parents you will trust them because you will know that they are looking out for your best interests. That is the way

our Father is. He is always looking out for our best interests. Even His commandments were given for our good (Deuteronomy 10:13). Are they really good? He says, “Thou shalt not steal.” Back in my worldly days I didn’t obey that commandment and, at times, that put me in dangerous situations. There was a time when a man threatened to get a shotgun and shoot me. Do you think God told us not to steal for our good? It is dangerous to turn away from that. If you disregard those commandments you are in danger. Everything that He tells us is for our benefit. There is nothing that He commands us to do that is to hurt us. Some people think that He tells us not to do things so we can’t have fun. That is not true. He provides the means to change what is *fun* for us. Our love should be for righteousness, not evil. We must be born again. With Christ in us we will love righteousness and hate iniquity.

Fear as a Means to Holiness

Paul counseled, “...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (Philippians 2:12). Fear and trembling is designed to have a work. It is designed to be profitable for us. James admonished, “Let patience have her perfect work” (James 1:4). The same could be said for fear. Let godly fear have its perfect work. Let it do what it is designed to do. One of the things it is designed to do is to remove sin from our lives.

Paul explained, “Having therefore these promises, dearly beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holi-

ness in the fear of God” (2 Corinthians 7:1). Why do you think the angel started the message of the everlasting gospel with “Fear God”? Was he trying to get you to be afraid and run and hide? No, he was trying to point out that there is something that has to start the experience. In order for the everlasting gospel to change your life it has to start with the fear of God. This is the beginning of wisdom.

John wrote, “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death” (Revelation 21:8). The fearful in this text are fearful of God; not trusting that He is a God of love. They are afraid of God to the point they want to run and hide. They are like the Israelites who wanted to hide and let Moses be their intercessor. They are like Adam who hid from the face of God. They haven’t realized that God’s purpose is not to hurt them, but to help them, and so find themselves outside the city.

Being afraid of God is a result of our sinful condition. The Bible says that sin separates between us and God (Isaiah 59:2). This is not because God refuses to accept us after we have sinned. No, No! God has promised, through Christ, to accept all who come to Him (John 6:37). God is always “ready to forgive” (Psalm 86:5). God loves sinners so much that He gave His only begotten Son to die for us (John 3:16). When we sin, God doesn’t stop loving us, yet sin makes

a guilty, shameful chasm between us and God so that we do not want to face Him. When we come to Christ, who has promised never to cast us away, He removes that barrier and we can enjoy peaceful communion with God.

Fear of Man

The Bible says, “The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion” (Proverbs 28:1). In another place it says the wicked run when they hear a shaken leaf (Leviticus 26:36). If you look at the history of Israel there are many examples of this. The enemies of Israel would suddenly get up and flee when no one was chasing them, or they would get scared and start killing each other for no visible reason. All kinds of strange things happened because they did not have the proper fear of God. “The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe” (Proverbs 29:25).

The righteous are bold as a lion. The Bible tells us a lion will not back down even if a multitude of shepherds come against him (Isaiah 31:4). A lion is not afraid and the righteous are as bold as a lion. If you look at the history of righteous men in the Bible you will see that. When Israel endured a drought for 3 ½ years at the word of Elijah, King Ahab sent men to kill Elijah. They had been looking for Elijah for years, then Elijah came before the king, “And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father’s

house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the LORD, and thou hast followed Baalim” (1 Kings 18:17, 18). Elijah was bold as a lion.

The righteous will say, “The LORD is on my side; I will not fear: what can man do unto me?” (Psalm 118:6). God says, “I, even I, am he that comforteth you: who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass” (Isaiah 51:12). God is so much greater than any man or situation that could possibly come your way. He is more than able to handle it, and bring you through victorious. Now this may look differently to you than you would expect, but God knows what He is doing. Even if you die, God has guaranteed that is not the end for you. If you endure unto the end, you have a glorious future awaiting you at the first resurrection. God says, “The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come” (Isaiah 57:1).

The Bible says, “There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love” (1 John 4:18). The fear that is cast out by perfect love is ungodly fear. When God fills your heart with His love you no longer need to be afraid of anything. God wants to flood your heart with His love. Paul informed us, “the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us” (Romans 5:5). Jesus said God is more willing to do this for

you than any earthly father is willing to give good gifts to his child. Jesus said, "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" (Luke 11:13). If you ask God to give you His Spirit, and believe in your heart that He does it, you will receive it and it will shed abroad God's perfect love in your heart, casting out ungodly fear.

Complete Trust

God asked Abraham to offer the ultimate sacrifice, his own son. When Abraham was about to slay his son, God sent His angel to intervene, saying, "Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me" (Genesis 22:12). I have read that before and wondered why the angel did not say, "Now I know that you *love* me." Instead the text says, "Now I know that you *fear* me." The word fear is a broader term that includes love along with trust, reverence and awe. The fear that Abraham had caused him to trust God so completely that he believed God would raise his son from the dead. Godly fear includes absolute trust.

Jesus was asleep in a boat and a great storm came. The disciples were afraid and thought they were surely going to die. They decided to wake up Jesus saying, "Lord we perish" we're going to die. "And he saith unto them, Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the

winds and the sea; and there was a great calm" (Matthew 8:26). Did they have a godly fear? No, they had a fear of the elements. What is the worst that can happen? They could have drowned. Jesus said, "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (Matthew 10:28). All that can happen is your physical, temporary life can be taken away.

I once read a story of a lady on a boat in a storm and others around her were troubled, but she was calm. They came to her asking how she could be so calm and she told them, "If my time is done on this earth, then resting on the bottom of the sea is as good a place as any. However, if the Lord still has a work for me to do here, there is no storm in the world that can sink this boat." Don't you think we should have that attitude? The disciples were missing that, but Jesus had it. Jesus knew that there was nothing to be afraid of. When He arose He rebuked His disciples saying, "Why are ye fearful, O ye of little faith?"

Fearful and unbelieving, those are the ones who will be outside the city. The lack of ungodly fear and faith go hand in hand. If you have faith in God what are you going to be afraid of? There is no reason to have fear of men who are going to die. We need to have fear of God and if we have that fear we will not have the fear of men. The worst thing that can happen is to be outside of the kingdom. You may act out of fear to preserve your life for a little while here, but if you miss out

on eternal life what have you gained? Nothing at all! We need to make sure that we are guarding our eternal lives. This is much more valuable than our temporary lives.

Jesus said, “Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows” (Matthew 10:31). I like that because it shows us that we are very valuable to God. He cares for the sparrows. He cares for all of His creatures, but He is more concerned about you than any of them. He will take time; He will do whatever it takes to make sure that you are going to make it.

Jesus encouraged us, “Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom” (Luke 12:32). Isn’t that good news? God loves you so much. It is His good pleasure to give you the kingdom. Don’t be like the Israelites who wanted to hide. Don’t be like Adam who ran away from God. No! Be like Jesus who wanted to spend all the time He could with His Father.

Conclusion

The first part of the first angel’s message is given to prepare us to receive the rest. It starts with “Fear God.” This fear is not the type of fear that causes you to hide, but instead fills you with awe, love, trust and gratitude to God. The Bible says that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. The whole duty of man revolves around fearing God and keeping His commandments. Keeping His commandments is a natural result of having Christ in your heart giving you the proper fear of God. The fear of

God is to hate evil. If you don’t hate evil then you don’t have the true godly fear. That hatred for evil only comes through Christ who loves righteousness and hates iniquity. Jesus wants to impart His character to all who invite Him in.

There is godly fear and there is ungodly fear that causes man to run and hide when no man is pursuing. That’s the wrong kind of fear. It may seem that the disciples had good reason to fear when it looked like they were going to drown, but Jesus said they had little faith and that there was no reason to fear because the Father was taking care of them.

If the disciples had the proper fear coupled with faith, they would have trusted God and they would not have felt the need to wake Jesus. As Jesus said, it is the Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom. He cares for you more than any of His other creatures. He gave His own Son to die for you. You can trust Him. You can turn your life completely over to Him and He will take care of you better than anyone else. Paul wrote, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Timothy 1:12).

I pray that you will make a full surrender to God. Maybe there is something you are holding onto that is keeping you from turning your life over completely to Him. It’s not worth it. It’s not worth anything that you can possibly think of to keep you from the kingdom. So, I encourage you to turn your life over to Him. You will never regret that decision. >>

Encouragement for the Fearful

by Kendra Beachy

For someone who struggles with fear or panic it can be easy to read things into a study such as the previous article and feel ashamed, or feel that no one understands what it is like. It can also discourage you into believing that because you can't control your fears you are lost and, therefore, why continue believing or trying. Knowing this, Lynnford asked that I include some of my testimony. While it is not easy for me to write this, I pray it will be an encouragement.

I went through several events during my childhood that changed the way I reacted to everyday occurrences. My mother once told me she was surprised that I was able to function at all, given the level of fear I operated under. It was second nature to me; my second breath in a new situation was always to be afraid.

I hid it well because I did not want others to know I was afraid. I was ashamed of my fears and when verses were shared such as, "The fearful and unbelieving will have their part in the lake of fire," I became even more fearful because I had a heart for God and wanted to serve Him. I did not want to be lost. I believed that He who created me, knew my heart and my fears. I did not know how He was going to make it okay, but I was sure that all things were possible with God and that He would, somehow.

Eventually, my body betrayed me and I was no longer able to hide my

emotions. I suffered from daily panic attacks. For several years I could not drive or go into crowded places, such as a grocery store, without the most awful fear choking me.

The only thing that took it away was if I sat in a darkened, quiet room, just me and my Bible. God gave me so many things. I know that I would not be here today without His sustaining power. The devil put many thoughts into my mind, yet time and time again God raised the standard of His word to fight back. It was often a minute-by-minute fight of truth against pure evil.

I once shared some of my struggle and was told, "Well, I'd say that if you are experiencing these things you don't have enough faith. I'm glad that God is giving you verses, but if you're afraid it means you don't love God." One of the hardest was when someone said, "You really need to get a handle on this Kendra, remember Job? 'The things which I feared have come upon me,' you're going to self-fulfill your own destruction." Those types of comments can be devastating to someone who is hanging on by threads. The cords of God's love encouraged me and brought me through. God said, "I drew them with cords of a man, with bands of love" (Hosea 11:4).

I couldn't sleep until I found a plaque that read, "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety"

(Psalm 4:8). When I was afraid I would place it under my pillow and repeat the verse over and over. My sleep became sweet.

I found solace in the stories of those in the Bible, labeled friends of God, who dealt with so many of the emotions I was experiencing.

Then my husband preached a sermon on the death of Christ. He spoke of how Jesus was terrified in the garden (Mark 14:33) and I knew that I had been given a Savior who truly understood my fears. He was afraid and He was without sin. He still believed that His Father had His best interest at heart even though He didn't fully understand what was happening.

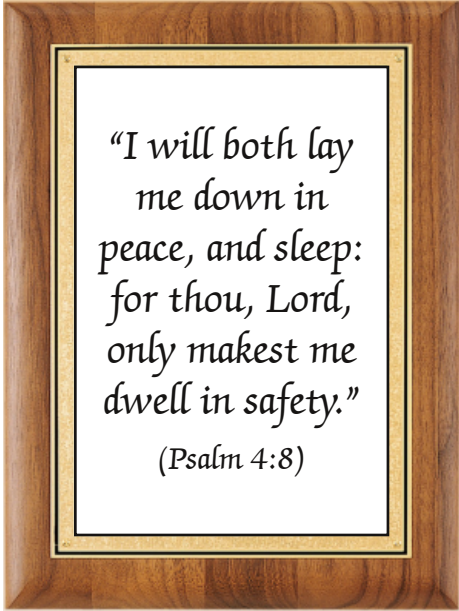
Then I looked at the cross where Jesus cried out, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46). Yet, there, cloaked in darkness, the Father was closer than He had ever been before (Psalm 18:4-11; Matthew 27:45, 51). It hit me that so many times we allow the darkness of fear and depression to shame us into turning our backs on God and feeling that we are stuck in a hopeless rut. I came to see that during those darkest moments God is right there. He promised to never leave us nor forsake us. During those times He cloaks Himself in the dark to be there for us in ways He has never been before, if we will only recognize His presence.

I now drive, I sleep, I do things that are unfamiliar to me and for several years now I have done them without fear. That is only through the grace and mercy of God. "He brought me up

also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings" (Psalm 40:2).

If you see your own experience in any part of my story, God longs to deliver you as well. If you are struggling with fear, please do not let a study discourage you, let it encourage you in the love of God. He who takes care of the sparrows and knows the number of every single hair on your head (Luke 12:7) will not leave you there alone in the darkness.

Your struggle may not be with fear, but whatever it is, His strength is made perfect in weakness. He is right there with you, fighting for you against the principalities and powers of this world. You cannot fight it yourself, but you don't need to. Set yourself and stand still, know that He is God and He has you in the palm of His hand (Isaiah 49:15, 16). »



*"I will both lay
me down in
peace, and sleep:
for thou, Lord,
only makest me
dwell in safety."*

(Psalm 4:8)

Present Truth
You May Freely Eat?

by Jim Raymond

Turmeric—Food as Medicine

This Asian prize is its own twin.

Esteemed culinary herb imparting its unique flavor to curries, condiments, and many other foods around the world. As it's ot'her self, turmeric plays an important role in four (maybe all) of the oldest known wholistic medicine systems in the world, of which the Chinese and Indian systems are best known in the occidental cultures. Turmeric's recent popularity in western cultures continues to grow along with the list of potential medicinal benefits being revealed by research, not to mention the trendy culinary romance the West is having with all things Asian and Indian. Fascinating—the same humble compound that gives the bright yellow color to US mustard and the dresses (saris) that adorn India's daughters is a promising natural agent that may prevent or mitigate the progress of arthritis, IBS, Alzheimer's, cystic fibrosis, several cancers and issues with aging. For example, in 1000 people between 60 and 93 years old, researchers found that cognitive performance (which drops like a rock in Alzheimer's disease) is better among those who eat curry at least occasionally. The usual amount of turmeric in a serving of curry is ¼ teaspoon (0.6 grams). Turmeric adds its voice to the growing evidence that including even small habitual dietary intakes from youth builds healthy benefits

to be reaped over the lifetime. “Let thy food be thy medicine?” Yes! With thanksgiving for turmeric as another of God's huge little gifts. Honoring little gifts this huge requires more than good intent and should not be left to chance.

On the therapeutic side, people mostly use turmeric for its anti-oxidant and anti-inflammatory activities, which are attributed to curcumin, its primary bio-active constituent. Curcumin is showing itself able to relieve inflammation and the associated pain as well as, or better than, popular NSAIDs (non-steroidal anti-inflammatory drugs) whether prescription only (like celecoxib branded as Celebrex®) or OTC (like Motrin® and its generic Ibuprofen). Customarily, whole turmeric is used in India to relieve general pain and inflammation form injury, arthritis, or to help recover from an active exercise workout. The most popular natural herbal from of delivery is as teas and milks. These delivery methods fit natural “Food as Medicine” principles (which are nat-



urally preventive and aim to defend health, wellbeing and long life).

India's Ayurvedic practitioners frequently call for milk as a functional carrier for herbal preparations of dried turmeric. Recently a few practitioners, claiming that milk has its own set of side reactions, have switched to mixing with fresh vegetable juices and vitamin-C or grapefruit juice to get better absorption and better results. The enhanced absorption, suggestion using grapefruit or black pepper, has merit. Both contain compounds that extend the life of the three curcuminoids by slowing their degradation in the liver, thus keeping the active working forms in the circulation longer. Black pepper is popularly used even in the sweetened milk tonics.

Turmeric dose amounts used in research range from 1.2 to 4.5 grams per day (1200 to 4500 mg or ½ to 2 teaspoons respectively). One teaspoon of turmeric powder weighs in at just 2.27 grams (2270 mg). These serving-dose levels are doable using a “Food as Medicine” model, especially if drawing on the above-mentioned concoctions. A shot of Recovery Cocktail upon rising will for sure be an eye opener, as well as set a 2270 mg dose of turmeric to working first thing.

Countering chronic indigestion; 87% of people involved in a study found relief using 2 grams (1 scant teaspoon) of turmeric powder daily. So turmeric powder stands up to its reputation as being a reasonable tummy-soother (for about 9 out of 10 people). Chronic indigestion sufferers may find incorporating turmeric as a key ingredient in their meals (recipes level) to be better suited to their specific needs, or at least

preferable to more pills. Meeting the needs of chronic indigestion sufferers with a typical medical method would be to down capsulated turmeric (500 mg) with water four times a day. Putting this information to work within a “Food as Medicine” context still uses a Day-part Menu Plan, replacing the capsules with yummy food items from which the whole family will benefit. The goal is to incorporate 2 grams of turmeric a day, divided into four serving-doses of at least ¼ teaspoon each.

Turmeric is more than curcumin, and “Food as Medicine” as a wholistic approach can advantage all that it is. Some of the beneficial oils in turmeric do not dissolve well in water. So when a beverage is considered to carry the turmeric powder, choosing one that has some inherent fat will capture more of the whole product. For Ayurveda, milk fits this carrier role with some advantages over other fat forms. Milkfat (butterfat, or dairy-fat) has some similarities to coconut oil in that it too contains significant amounts MCT oils (capric, caprylic and lauric acids). This type of fat is absorbed directly into the blood stream; so oily turmeric constituents can, so to speak, get to work sooner and closer to their native state. Other fat types and their solubles take a trip thru the liver before showing up to work in the blood stream. The liver is not kind to curcuminoids and starts aggressively converting them into less bio-active forms, so less of the curcuminoid workers get into the blood with each round trip thru the liver. Milk may sometimes work at odds with the objective, so it's good to have a variety

of options and to dance between them occasionally. Coconut milk would be a good option to choose.

The morning day-part serving-dose of turmeric may start in a hot beverage like herbal tea or broth, or could brighten a smoothie using coconut milk, homemade nut milk, or kefir as the base. This would allow the dose to be stirred into an individual portion after a family-sized batch is made--though it would rob the other family members of those huge little benefits that come later in life.

Other opportunities to incorporate serving-doses into the menu are to: mix a ¼ teaspoon dose into a serving of hummus, or mash it into avocado to spread on shredded wheat-like crackers (highly favored by our editor); stir it into a serving of nut butter and

coconut oil. About 2 teaspoons of coconut oil a day fills the basic need for its essential fatty acids.

Some people experience a gentle laxative effect from turmeric, so start slowly (even if using supplement capsules). If coffee (America's most popular toxic GI and esophageal irritant) is still an A.M. ritual because of the laxation, then a hot turmeric tea may be just the ticket to make the swap for a warming, tummy-friendly beverage without losing that moving experience.

If the evening serving-dose brings a sleep-altering laxative effect, try some other way to get this important dose to stay the course thru the whole night. This could be as simple as moving the dose back a few minutes (with an outer limit of an hour) to allow all urges to pass before tucking in. Alternatively, mixing ¼ teaspoon turmeric into something that does not disturb sleep when eaten close (30 to 45 minutes) to bedtime is the trick. Another option (among many), is a lightly sweetened horchatta (cinnamon flavored ground rice milk) or turmeric flavored rice "pudding" with a big pinch of ginger and a sprinkling of cinnamon. The mixture of cinnamon and ginger is famous for impeding laxation and does not usually take a lot. Tip: Both cinnamon and vanilla give a sweet impression and a few drops of pure vanilla extract will enhance sweetness without sugars or artificials.

Substitution lists in some cookbooks suggest curry powder for turmeric. This will not work in a "Food as Medicine" context. Curry powder or paste mixes contain turmeric in varying amounts along with other ingredi-

Sample Day-part Menu Plan

(Showing 5 turmeric servings)

- **Early Riser: tea, milk or juice**
- **Breakfast: tofu**
- **Lunch: hummus dip and crudités**
- **Supper: side of quinoa pilaf with raisin and cashew**
- **Bedtime: ½ cup of horchatta**

spread on toast, snack crackers or in the PBJ sandwich (the most popular homemade lunch sandwich in America—on white "cotton" bread. Amazing!) Tip: get a natural nut butter in which the oil rises to the top. Instead of stirring it back into the mix, pour it off and measure it. This amount (or less) can be replaced with a quality

ents, which dilutes the amount of turmeric and its bio-active constituents. When using a prepared curry mix in a recipe for a “Food as Medicine” item, add the required amount of turmeric in addition to the curry preparation or, alternatively, cut some of the curry mix called for in the recipe by up to the turmeric amount added to achieve the per serving “dose” amount. Either option will rarely damage the eating quality of the recipe, even when turmeric is the first-stated ingredient on the curry mix label. Similarly, either turmeric or saffron will impart a bright yellow color to cooked food, but the culinary uses of the two should not be confused. Their taste and aroma are significantly different and, even though some recipes will recommend it, neither will make a good stand-in for the other.

Recipes

Quick Service Recipe Tips: Set a shaker of turmeric on the table. Try it on everything and “keep that which is good” on the menu plan. It is surprisingly good in 1/3 cup of plain full-fat yogurt sweetened with ½ teaspoon of maple syrup. Keep a shaker of ground turmeric by the stove and include a little in any compatible dish: excellent in tomato soup, amazing on sautéed apples; ditto on green beans and onions; add it to egg, tofu, potato, grain salads and sides; add extra to curries. Mix brown rice with raisins or prunes and cashews, and season with turmeric, cumin, cinnamon, coriander or a combination thereof. Flavor up a dip with turmeric and serve with raw cauliflower, celery, sweet pepper,

jalapeno and broccoli florets. Turmeric is complimentary to most lentil dishes. Turmeric also brightens salad dressings.

Curried Quinoa Mango Kale Salad

Servings: 4 as a main dish.

1 cup quinoa
1 tsp curry powder
1 tsp turmeric
2 cups kale, cut into ¼” ribbons
1 Tbs balsamic vinegar
1 cucumber, peeled, seeded, quartered and sliced
1 cups mango, ½ - ¾” cubed
1/3 cup minced parsley
1/2 tsp salt
1/8 – 1/4 black pepper

Preparation

Cook the quinoa per package directions for a firm product (usually 1 part quinoa to 1½ parts water; where 2 parts water yields a softer product). Use a saucepan between 2 to 3 times larger than the combined amount of quinoa and water called for. This space is needed the next steps. 5-minutes before the end of the covered simmer phase, stir in the curry and turmeric, using two forks, lightly toss in the kale. Cover and cook for 5 more minutes. Remove from heat, fluff, and cool. Once the quinoa has cooled, add balsamic, Mango, cucumber, parsley, and adjust seasonings. Serve room temperature or chilled. (Off season? Substitute frozen mango or peaches, adding just before serving while still a little icy)

Southwestern Tofu Scramble

Servings: 6

1 med. red bell pepper, diced (1cup)

1 small carrot, diced (½ cup)
4 green onions, chopped (½ cup)
1 clove garlic, minced (1 tsp)
½ tsp ground cumin
1½ tsp ground turmeric
14-oz. firm tofu, drained & crumbled
½ tsp hot sauce
2 Tbsp chopped cilantro
salsa, for garnish

Preparation

Heat large nonstick skillet over medium heat and coat the pan with coconut oil (scant teaspoon). Add bell pepper and carrot, and cook 7 minutes, or until just tender. Stir in green onions, garlic, cumin, and turmeric, and stir-cook 1 minute more. Add tofu and hot sauce, and stir-cook 5 minutes, or until heated through and all liquid has cooked off. Stir in cilantro, and serve with salsa.

Turmeric Tea - for Two?

Warm up to a caffeine-free morning!

Servings: 1

1 cup water
½ tsp turmeric
¼ tsp ginger
pinch of black pepper (optimal absorption)
½ tsp maple syrup (or choice)

Preparation

In a small pan, bring water to full boil. Add the turmeric, ginger and pepper to fully boiling water. Reduce heat and simmer 8-10 minutes. Remove from stove and strain into cup. Optional: add lemon or lightener of choice.

Variations: A few diehard black coffee drinkers, omit the other “stuff” and use a teaspoon of turmeric then strain it and “drink it yellow”! Those more gentle (and sane) strain the hot

tea into a cup of warmed coconut milk and share with a friend; they may double the turmeric or even add a cinnamon stick, a bruised cardamom pod or a small pat of butter. Herbal tea drinkers may simply add turmeric (¼ teaspoon) to their usual tea and steep. Be mindful of spatter when boiling or sautéing. Turmeric can stain most porous things like plastics (including melamine) or lower-end glazed cups.

Turmeric Blackened Okra

Slice the okra round, oblique, or long, sauté in a scant teaspoon of coconut oil over medium-high heat until liquid is gone and okra starts to show small blackish specks. Just before all liquid is gone, dust with turmeric (½ teaspoon per serving) and sprinkle with salt (try a smoked sea salt) and a pinch of black pepper to enhance absorption. Serve while as hot as possible! Frozen sliced okra works well but requires a bit more nurture—the water is released earlier and will disappear quickly; size the pan to allow mostly a single layer.

This also works with halved or quartered Brussels sprouts, small cut broccoli stem, and cauliflower stem, alone or with chopped mushrooms.

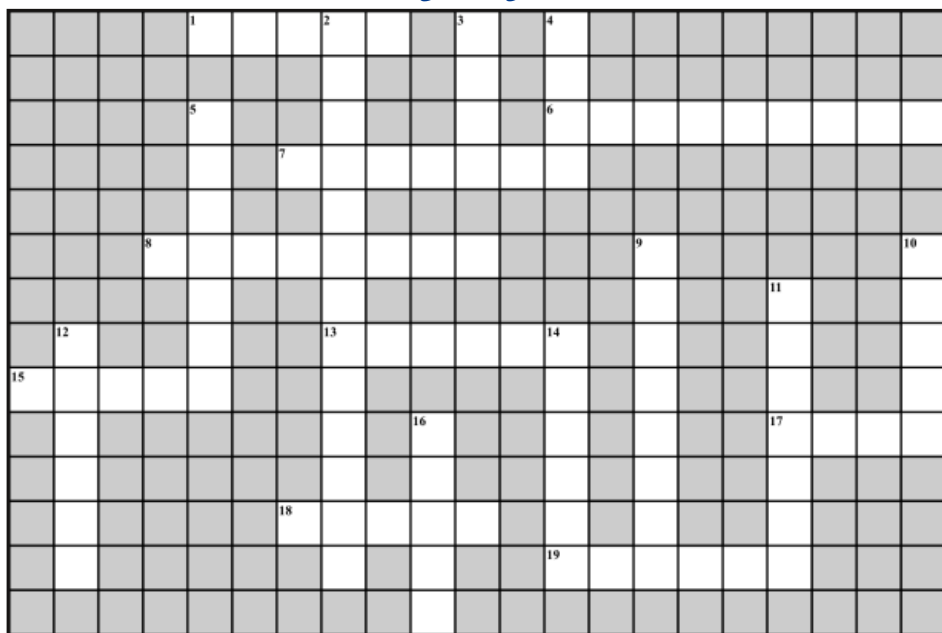
Turmeric offers a good example of both edges of the Hippocrates principle (food as medicine and medicine as food). As a food, small amounts (starting at only one curry meal per month) show significant disease prevention potential over the lifespan. As a medicine, many people are benefiting from its potent therapeutic effects.

Blessings! JR

Present Truth
Something for the Young at Heart

This month we are continuing a series of crossword Bible studies based on the book, *Bible Handbook*, by Stephen Haskell. In order to maintain the flow of the study, this crossword puzzle is not split into Across and Down sections—Across or Down is indicated at the end of each line. (The KJV is required.)

The Work of Angels - Part 2



Answers will be printed on the back page of next month's issue.

- “And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over ____...” Revelation 14:18—
3 Down
- John saw that the New Jerusalem “had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve ____, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel.” Revelation 21:12—**13 Across**
- “And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, ____, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert.” Acts 8:26—
14 Down
- “But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to ____ for them who shall be heirs of salvation?” Hebrews 1:13, 14—
8 Across
- Jesus said, “Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven ____ angels do always behold the

face of my Father which is in heaven.” Matthew 18:10—**16 Down**

- While Daniel was praying an angel visited him saying, “I am now come forth to give thee skill and ____.” Daniel 9:22—**2 Down**

- “I saw in the visions of my head upon my bed, and, behold, a ____ and an holy one came down from heaven.” Daniel 4:13—**11 Down**

Note: This evidently refers to an angel.

- The angel said, “Let his ____ be changed from man’s, and let a beast’s ____ be given unto him; and let seven times pass over him.” Daniel 4:16 (1 word)—**15 Across**

- “This matter is by the ____ of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the holy ones.” Daniel 4:17—**12 Down**

- God said, “Behold, I send an ____ before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared.” Exodus 23:20—**18 Across**

- After His resurrection, Jesus “was taken up; and a ____ received him out of their sight.” Acts 1:9—**1 Across**

- “And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in ____ apparel.” Acts 1:10—**10 Down**

- These two angels said, “Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so ____ in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11—**17 Across**

- “Be not forgetful to entertain ____: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.” Hebrews 13:2—**6 Across**

- One day Abraham received a visit, when he said, “My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, ____ not away, I pray thee, from thy servant.” Genesis 18:3—**4 Down**

Note: At first Abraham was unaware of the identity of His visitors. To his pleasant surprise, Abraham received a visit from two angels and Jesus Christ Himself.

- Jesus told a parable about wheat and tares, then explained, “The enemy that sowed them [the tares] is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the ____ are the angels.” Matthew 13:39—**7 Across**

- At the end of this world, Jesus “shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall ____ together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matthew 24:31—**19 Across**

- Daniel wrote, “I beheld till the thrones were cast down [Hebrew: set up], and the ____ of days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire.” Daniel 7:9—**5 Down**

- “A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the ____ was set, and the books were opened.” Daniel 7:10—**9 Down**

What Really is Sin

by Alonzo T. Jones

(Many people have inquired, "What is Sin?" The various answers given to this question demonstrate the widespread lack of understanding on this topic. A wrong answer to this question can potentially have severe negative effects upon your Christian experience. The following article gives a balanced, biblical answer to this question, and I believe all will benefit from its study.

Editor)

I wish you to consider for a little while what really is sin: what it is in essence. You know the divine definition: "Sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4). Now I wish you to consider what it is to transgress the law. Is it only the positive doing of something that is evil?—No; it is the COMING SHORT of positively doing that which is good (James 4:17). Is it not written that "whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all"? (James 2:10).

In another word, sin is the coming short of the righteousness of God (1 John 5:17). To come short of the righteousness of God is to transgress the law. Then, whatever righteousness I may present, whatever deeds I may do, as obedience to the law of God as it stands in his word, which, in any sense at all, or to any degree at all, comes short of the righteousness of God, that is sin: it is indeed transgression of the law. This is emphasized by the fact that both in the Hebrew and in the Greek the word that God selected by which to convey to the minds of men the root-thought of what is sin, of what is transgression of the law, is the

word that means to "miss the mark;" and to miss the mark by coming short.

It was in the time when they used bows and arrows that the word was selected. A man, with his bow and arrow, shooting at a mark, would aim most carefully, and would do his very best, to hit the mark: all his intentions were good; his purpose and his endeavor were of the best; but yet he could not reach the mark. He missed the mark by coming short. He was not strong enough to give to the arrow that impetus which would carry it so that it would hit the mark. Remember he did not miss the mark by overshooting, but by coming short of it. That is the root-thought in the word which God chose, both in the Hebrew and in the Greek, to convey to mankind the idea of what sin is.

Now no man in the world is strong enough, doing his very best, to hit the mark of the law of God, which is only the righteousness of God; for "all have sinned, and come short" (Romans 3:23). That mark is too high as well as too far away for us to hit it. But, bless the Lord, "when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly" (Romans 5:6). And in Christ alone we find the hitting of the mark. Therefore, "forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13, 14). In Christ it is, only in Christ, that we find the righteousness of God, which is the keeping of the law of God. Only in Christ do we find the keeping of the law of God.

Come then, look with me at that law. By it is the knowledge of sin (Ro-

mans 3:20). That covers everything. All there is in sin is covered by that. Suppose you and I look into the law of God and get the brightest, clearest possible view that a man can get of that law. Suppose I see its demands in the greatest breadth that a man can; and that we actually fulfill, to perfection, all the breadth of it that we see—have we really fulfilled it? Think of that. Have you? Have you then fulfilled the law as God fulfills it? as God would if he were in your place?—Oh, no. We have fulfilled only what we could see. But have we seen it all, in its intensity of righteousness?—We have not. No one but God can, for it is only the law of God.

That law being the law of God, only God's righteousness is truly manifest in it: it expresses only that; so it is the reflection of what God is, in character. And that being so, nobody but God can see the true measure of the righteousness that is in the Ten Commandments. And there is the fallacy of our thinking that we can do true righteousness by keeping the Ten Commandments. We can not grasp the righteousness of the Ten Commandments. If we were able to grasp it, we might do it. But that would require that we be infinite in understanding. But there is none infinite but God. Therefore none but God can grasp the infinity of the law of God.

There is another phase of this: I look into that law, and I see to the greatest height and breadth that I can; and I do to perfection all that I see—whose is the doing?—It is only mine. I have done it to perfection according to my understanding. I have done all that I can see. But the seeing is only mine,

not God's; and the doing is only mine, not God's; therefore all the righteousness of such doing is but mine, not God's. Now put this with that. The only righteousness that any man can ever see in the law of God is his own righteousness. And God can see in the law His own righteousness.

Therefore, I state the principle in a broader way: The only righteousness that ANYBODY, God or man, can see in the law of God is his own righteousness. But when God sees in the law of God His own righteousness, it is all right: for it is the righteousness of God; it is holiness; it is the genuine. But when we see in the law of God our own righteousness, it is only "filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6); it is only self-righteousness; it is only sin.

Therefore it is written, "If righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain" (Galatians 2:21). To nobody in the wide universe does righteousness come by the law. Righteousness, to angels as to men, is the gift of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Head of the universe, with God. Consequently, there is no righteousness that comes to anybody but by the faith of Jesus Christ. And when the cross was set up on Calvary, it became the center of the universe. The cross of Christ contains the whole philosophy of the plan of salvation: it is the seal of salvation to the angels who never sinned; it is the sign and seal of salvation to men who have sinned. To the angels who never sinned, the cross of Christ is the seal of certainty that their righteousness will abide forever, that they will never sin; to sinful men, it is the sign and seal that they will be saved to the ut-

termost from all sin, and held in righteousness for evermore.

So, then, righteousness cometh to the world only as the gift of the Lord Jesus. "Now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, . . . even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ" (Romans 3:21, 22). He is the One through whom it comes; He is the One who paid the price of it, who took upon Him the curse; the One who bore the penalty and paid all the claims of sin and death, upon every soul. And to Him belong the glory, the honor, and the majesty for all the righteousness of men who have sinned; and for the security in righteousness of angels who never sinned.

This is the gospel, and this is the salvation which the Lord Jesus brought. And this gives a glimpse of the mighty thing that sin is, and of what a fearful depth it is to which sin has plunged us, in plunging us into death—when it took such a gift, and such a price, to deliver us. But, thank the Lord, the deliverance in righteousness and life is as high on that side as the loss in sin and death is deep on that side. And so it is written: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me"—may have, or maybe shall have, "everlasting life"? Is that it?—No, no. To you it is written; to me it is written; listen: "He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, **HATH** everlasting life [listen more], and shall not come into condemnation; but [listen yet more] **IS PASSED** from [what] . . . Is passed from death..." (John 5:24). Then where was he before he believed?—He was in death. Where is the man who

today hears the words of Jesus Christ, and does not believe them? Where is he, whoever he may be or wherever he may be? Suppose he belongs to the church? He is in death. And has his name on the church book; but does not believe? He is in death. Comes to meeting on Sabbath, hears the word of God which Jesus brought, and yet does not believe on Him? He is in death. Look at it. And again: "He that loveth not his brother abideth"—abideth, abideth—"in death" (1 John 3:14). Where is he, then?—He is in death, in the power of death: death is his shepherd.

That emphasizes what we had at the beginning, and all the way through—that death is the only portion of anybody in this world who is outside of Jesus Christ. They are subject to death; death is their ruler, sovereign, and shepherd, who attends them as they go here, there, and everywhere. But, thank the Lord, there is salvation to every man in the world; for He who came **CONQUERED DEATH**. He conquered death; bless His name.

And note the power that is in Him to conquer death, and the power that was displayed in Him in the conquering of death. He gave Himself up, bodily and wholly, to the power of death. He went into the enemy's prison-house; He allowed Himself to be locked up there, in the bonds of death, and a great stone was rolled unto the mouth of the sepulcher, and the sepulcher was sealed with the seal of the Roman Empire. So, both by the chief of the spiritual powers and by the chief of the temporal powers of this world, the Lord Jesus was locked in the power of death. But, being dead, He broke the power of death!

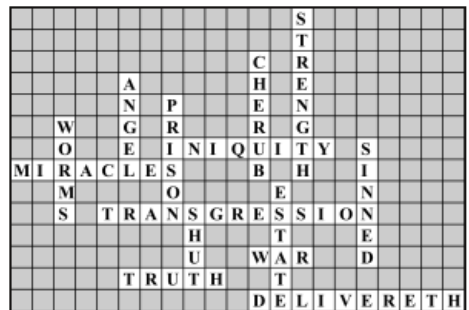
It is a little enough thing that one who is alive should break the power of death. But, oh, the majesty, the divinity, the infinity of the power of Him who, being dead, could break the power of death! That is the majesty of our Saviour, of the Lord who has bought you and me, and who is able to, and who does, set us free from the power of death. And when this “vapor” vanishes away, and we lie down, Christ will say, as of Lazarus, He “sleepeth.” True, he was, and we may be, locked in the bonds of death. But what does that amount to when our Lord has so completely conquered all the power of death? Therefore it is written: “I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I [I who was dead] am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of heel and of death” (Revelation 1:18). That is the power of our Saviour.

Look at it again. He came forth from death. Why?— “Because it was not possible that he should be holden of it” (Acts 2:24). Think of it! All the power of death exerted to the fullest extent of all temporal and spiritual powers of this world,—all that power could not possibly hold in death Him who was DEAD. Bless the Lord! What has He, the Mighty One, to fear from death even? Oh, death is conquered, and the victory is ours today, who believe in Jesus. For it is written: “He that

heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but IS PASSED FROM DEATH unto LIFE” (John 5:24). Thank the Lord!

Oh, then, rejoice in the life which is life indeed. Stand up as Christians, holding up the head. Take the long, deep breath that belongs to him whose life comes from the depths of the Eternal. This is the salvation which the Lord Jesus brings, and gives, full and free, to every soul. Then drink it in, and rejoice in it for evermore. Tell it to those who are dead. Carry the good news to those who are lost,—that here is salvation—salvation from sin—salvation from death; for he, being dead, conquered death, and manifested the divinity of His power. And rejoice for evermore in it all.

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Answers to Last Month's Crossword Puzzle

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