

FAITH AND VICTORY

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The Kingdom of God

By Sis. Charlotte Huskey

As we celebrate the birth of Jesus, let us remember, the importance of His birth is the establishment of the everlasting Kingdom of God. His birth brought this kingdom into reality and in reach of each of us. Through His ministry, He made a way that we sinful humans can be changed into sinless holy creatures and reign as kings and priests in it.

About 550 years before Jesus was born, King Nebuchadnezzar had a dream about the Kingdom of God. The king saw a great image whose head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. Then he saw a stone cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet. "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the

silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff...and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." Daniel 2:35.

None of King Nebuchadnezzar's wise men could interpret his dream and he was ready to destroy them all when Daniel offered to interpret it. He said, "Thou, O king,...art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron:...part of iron, and part of clay, so the kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken....And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed...and it shall stand for ever." Daniel 2:37-44.

After Nebuchadnezzar died, his son Belshazzar took the throne. While Belshazzar was king, God's hand wrote a message across the palace wall while he was banqueting. The message said; "Thou art weighed in the balances, and art found wanting." That very night the Median king, Darius conquered the empire and became ruler. This happened around 530 B.C. This Medo-Persian Empire was then the second kingdom of the dream. Alexander the Great conquered the Persians in 331 B.C, making the Grecian the third kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The great Roman

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Empire was the fourth kingdom, represented by the legs of iron, and feet part of iron and part of clay. This kingdom lasted until about A.D. 476. The stone that grew into a mountain and filled the earth was the Kingdom of God that was to come during the reign of the Roman Empire.

The stone cut out without hands hit the image's feet. The image was broken and disintegrated into chaff, which the wind carried away. This stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. Being cut out without hands expresses the thought that it is not material or of this earth. It is from Heaven, formed by God Himself. It started small (a babe in a manger) but grew until it filled the whole earth.

The prophets Isaiah and Micah also told about this mountain. "And it shall come to pass in the last days, *that* the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths:..." Isaiah 2:2-3. (Micah 4:1-2.)

This stone that grew into a mountain extended itself into the whole earth and became of more importance than any other kingdom. (Daniel 2:35.) "...And the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Daniel 2:44.

According to the dream, during the Roman Empire, the Kingdom of God would appear. It did appear just as Daniel said. While Augustus Caesar was an absolute sovereign, ruling large territorial holdings in Europe and around the Mediterranean sea, he ordered Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem and there the ruler of a much greater kingdom was born. (Luke 2:1-7.)

While Caesar sat proudly on his throne, the King of that far greater kingdom was lying in a cattle-feeding trough. The power of Caesar's kingdom would dwindle into insignificance and be another history story, while the power of Jesus' Kingdom would increase until it filled the entire earth. That was more than 2000 years ago and it is still growing. No power, not even hell, can destroy this Kingdom. It will last forever. "...Jesus came into Galilee, preaching

the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand:..." Mark 1:14-15.

Through the history of man, people worshipped things they could see—images of wood, stone or precious metals, heavenly bodies, animals, etc. God, however, is a spirit and "they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth." His kingship has authority over spirits, evil spirits, spirits that rule people's lives and cause them to sin. God knew it would be hard for people to accept His Kingdom, for it would be very different from the usual earthly kingdoms, which consist of kings or monarchies reigning over millions of people and large areas of land.

Even though Jesus was born at the prophesied time, people of His day thought that He could not possibly be the King of God's Kingdom. Jesus was too ordinary, too humble. They were expecting a splendid, glorious, powerful king to reign over an earthly kingdom as the other kingdoms that they had known. Jesus however, tells us in simple words that His Kingdom is not of this world. It has nothing to do with thrones, divisions of land, authority over people, glory, fame and riches. Its Leader's first bed was a manger. Jesus told His disciples, the foxes have holes, the birds have nests but I have no place to lay My head, yet He was the creator of it all. Though rejected by men He has risen to reign over the largest Kingdom that has ever been or ever will be, and His Kingdom will have no end.

From the time of Augustus Caesar until today, the Kingdom of God has grown. Kings, empires, and governments have come to supremacy, been conquered and gone down, but the Kingdom which Jesus established will never be conquered. Never has any one kingdom affected so many people. It has filled the whole earth just as Daniel interpreted that it would. One generation of people live and die, but the next generation also love the Kingdom of God and add to its growth. Just as people through the centuries since its beginning have allowed Jesus to be their King and became a part of this everlasting Kingdom, you, too, may be a part of this great Kingdom by letting Jesus rule your life.

The Influence of Women

By Sis. Geneva Lowe
Condensed from the new book
Biblical Nuggets for Godly Women

Women have a great influence in the world. My desire is to help us recognize and accept this ability to influence others in a positive way. First let's look at the definitions of the words: recognizing, accepting and influence. Recognizing is seeing, becoming aware of and having an understanding of; acceptance means getting hold of, tapping in to and making use of. Influence is the ability to sway, to produce change, to stimulate, to motivate to an effective result. This is what we want to do, recognize the power of our influence, see it, tap in to it and use it!

We acknowledge that man is the head; God gave him that place. But we, as women, are important. I'm glad that God made me a woman! I have no desire to be a man and have all the responsibility that he has. I'm thankful to be a woman and work in my little place.

Now the kind of influence we have on others is determined by what we have on hand. In order to have the kind of influence that God intends for us to have, we need to be possessors of Godly traits. That is the only way we will have a godly influence, the kind of influence that God would have radiate from us.

We will look at some godly traits that we need to possess. I Peter 3:4 tells us we should have a meek and quiet spirit. This is so important!

II Peter 1:5-7 talks about growth. It is not enough to say, "I'm saved," and just sit meekly back. We are going to have to increase, to grow. These scriptures name several godly traits. They tell us to add virtue to our faith. Virtue means purity, holiness. We are saved, but we need to add virtue. And then knowledge is listed; we are going to need knowledge. It is important to study the Word. We need to know what we believe and why we believe it. Then we will have something to offer to others. We can have a good influence on them.

Temperance means to be balanced, sober, not up today and down tomorrow, see-sawing back and forth. It is not holding one point so high and paying no attention to another. People are looking at us, and they will be influenced by how we're handling ourselves. With our mouth we can say we have good traits, but we have to

be possessors, not just professors; what is inside us is going to come out. We may fake it for a little while, but it is going to come out. Patience, kindness, godliness, charity; all of these things are important in order to be a godly influence.

Proverbs 31 describes the virtuous woman. That passage has been a challenge to me through the years. I have thought, "Lord, that is how I want to be!" She is described as a woman who is trustworthy. Those in the world around us, as well as our families, are looking on us—we must be trustworthy. Be industrious, not lazy, but be up and about. Don't be so caught up in yourself; be thrifty, compassionate, a woman of God who is dedicated to her family and to God.

A sister said, "Your husband is a reflection of you." I thought about the part of the scripture that says, "Her husband is known in the gates." That's because of how she takes care of him. I tell my husband that I like for his clothes to be pressed and for him to look nice. He may say, "Why can't I wear this?" But whoever sees him is not going to say, "Wonder why that man has on that?" They're going to say, "What's the matter with his wife?" Behind every good man is a good woman!

I want to encourage us to take advantage of the opportunities that God provides for us. How are we influencing those around us? Our family members, our husbands? Are we encouraging them? Or are we discouraging them by always complaining and whining, not being appreciative of what they do for us; how they are providing for us. We are responsible for helping to get our husband's soul to Heaven. We can tear them down and discourage them when they have a burden to work for the Lord. Our husbands are influenced by us.

There is a saying, "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world." How are we influencing our children? Children take on so many of our ways. Whether we are faithful to God, our children are looking on. Whether we are prayerful, our children know. How faithfully are we going to service? I have seen families that did not go to church and take their children. The

(Continued on page eight.)

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This publication teaches salvation from all sin, sanctification for believers, unity and oneness for which Jesus prayed as recorded in John 17:21, and manifested by the apostles and believers after Pentecost. By God's grace we teach, preach, and practice the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ—the same gospel that Peter, John, and Paul preached, taught, and practiced, including divine healing for the body. James 5:14-15.

Its motto: Have faith in God. Its object: The glory of God and the salvation of men: the restoration and promulgation of the whole truth to the people in this "evening time" as it was in the morning Church of the first century; the unification of all true believers in one body by the love of God. Its standard: Separation from sin and entire devotion to the service and will of God. Its characteristics: No discipline but the Bible, no bond of union but the love of God, and no test of fellowship but the indwelling Spirit of Christ.

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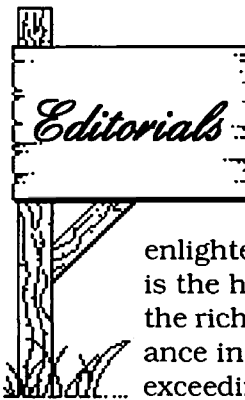
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"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places," Ephesians 1:17-20. This beautiful passage of Scripture is part of the prayer that Apostle Paul said he prayed for the Saints at Ephesus. He wanted the Saints at Ephesus to be strong in the Lord and strengthened by His Spirit in the inner man, for he knew they would be wrestling against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, and against spiritual wickedness in high places. For these Saints to be victorious in their walk with Christ they would have to be firmly established in their faith and maintain a personal, living experience with their Savior. The answer to this prayer is what would equip and empower them to face the forces of the enemy and be a good soldier of the cross of Jesus Christ.

A spiritual awakening must first take place in the heart and mind of a believer—the eyes of their understanding must be enlightened with the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. This wisdom, which is from above, motivates a believer to turn away from the things of this world that would defile their souls and keep them in a dead state of sin. It also reveals the holiness of Christ and the perfect sacrifice He made to atone for the sins of mankind. When one is obedient to this wisdom and turns away from sin and partakes of the atonement of Christ, then their soul is cleansed and made pure in the sight of God. The penalty for their committed transgressions are forgiven through the merits of Christ's shed blood, freeing them to be united in joyful fellowship with their heavenly Father. The mystery of godliness is wrapped up in this revelation and wisdom, and sadly, there are only a few who really have the eyes of their understanding enlightened.

It is reported that when Orville and Wilbur Wright finally succeeded in keeping their flying machine aloft for fifty-nine seconds on December 17, 1903 they sent a telegram to their sister in Dayton, Ohio telling of their extraordinary accomplishment. It read, "First sustained flight today fifty-nine seconds. Hope to be home for Christmas." Upon receiving the telegram the sister was so excited about the news that she rushed to the newspaper office and excitedly gave the telegram to the editor. The next morning the newspaper headline simply stated in bold, black letters, "Popular Local Bicycle Merchants to be Home for Holidays." The important news of the century was overlooked by the editor. We may think, "What a foolish man." But when it comes to spiritual things there are many who are failing to see the important point of Christ's atonement and resurrection. It has been hidden from their eyes by the god of this world.

Along with the enlightenment we receive in Christ, there also is a seed of hope that springs forth in our heart—that hope of eternal life with the One Who loves us so dearly. This bright hope works to change the focus of our heart from the things of earth to the bright reward that is waiting for us in Heaven. This hope is like an anchor that keeps us from drifting with the tide of the world and continually draws our hearts and minds heavenward. It causes our minds to dwell on the glorious things we inherit by being adopted into the heavenly kingdom of Christ. These heavenly realities make the earthly problems we face seem small and insignificant by comparison. The enlightened child of God knows the value of this hope and therefore guards it carefully.

When we consider the greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, we need to think about how powerful God really is. He is not limited by the physical restraints of the natural earth. He created the earth. There are numerous examples throughout the Bible where God demonstrated His authority over the laws of nature—causing the sun and moon to stand still, causing the sundial to return backward ten degree, calming storms, healing diseases and even bringing the dead back to life. God's power is evident in His creation and in His ability to control the balance that is maintained in the earth and heavens. When we consider His great

power coupled with His great love for us, it gives us confidence and boldness to do what we know is right and pleasing in His sight. It calms our fears and comforts us in the times of hardship and trials. It causes us to know that the words of Jesus in Mark 9:23 are not vain when He said, "...If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth."

The Gospels of Jesus Christ are filled with examples of Christ's love and compassion for suffering mortals. In Acts 10:38, Peter spoke of Jesus in this way, "How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." The Divine nature of Jesus was proven and demonstrated time after time while He ministered to the people. Now we know that He is alive and at the right hand of the Father. Hebrews 7:25 affirms that He is utilizing His Divine nature combined with His superior position to make intercession for mankind. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." These verses give comfort and hope to the child of God and draws those who desire to have a relationship with Him.

May Paul's prayer for the Ephesians be a source of help to each soul. For today we are facing perilous times when the powers of darkness are churning and foaming in the world. It is a time when all who profess the name of Christ need to also possess a genuine experience of salvation—an experience that is alive and demonstrates the power of God in their lives.

There are a few things we can do to help the eyes of our understanding to be more enlightened about the working power of God.

Pay attention to the handiwork of God. Nature is filled with His glory and when we notice and give God credit for His mighty works it causes us to understand Him better and we develop a spiritual closeness to Him through nature.

Observe how God transforms the lives of people around us. Surely all of us have seen how God has worked in our lives and in the lives of others. C. W. Naylor related hearing the testimony of an exceedingly wicked man that had formerly been a saloon-keeper. He made the statement, "When I was a sinner, I was wholly

sanctified by the devil." This man had acted only out of selfish considerations. But God, in His great mercy, changes people who were once like that, gives them a tender heart and puts a new spirit within them. Only God can do that and when we observe that transformation, we marvel and give Him the glory for that mighty work in the heart. Observing these changes in others helps us to draw nigh to the One Who can help us overcome the challenges we meet.

Notice how God works in the circumstances of life. When people have a close encounter with an accident or death they often attribute their narrow escape to the mercy of the Lord. However, God works in many more ways than that. Watch how He causes difficult circumstances to work out. Sometimes difficult trials can actually turn into blessings. Notice how the Lord places limits on how far the enemy can go in trying us. See how God makes ways through situations that seem impossible. Your faith in God will be greatly strengthened by these observations.

Spend time daily with the Lord, reading, praying and meditating on His goodness. One will learn much about Him in these times. He will come near you and reveal things you would never dream of yourself. He will be a precious companion to minister to your soul and provide comfort and grace for your daily life. These times will cause you to be more like Him in the way you conduct your life.

Be still. This can sometimes be the hardest thing to do. Would you like to enjoy peace and rest? That peace and rest sometimes only comes when you make an effort to be still. Learn to come to the throne of God and lay your burdens at His feet. Then leave them there. Learn to trust Him in difficult times. Instead of being fearful, trust. Often we hold on to our troubles and it causes our minds to whirl and churn. When this happens it is time to let go and allow God to take control of our situation. When we learn to be still we will see God working in our life. We will see perplexing situations come to a peaceful resolution and we will know how much God really cares about us.

—Bro. Willie E. Murphey
wemurphey@yahoo.com



MO—Remember my daughter (Sis. Cathy Younger) in prayer. She has several physical needs. I desire the Lord to heal some problems I am having in my back. —Bro. Jim Broker

IL—My sister, Merline Allen, asked for the Saints to pray for her. She has cancer and her kidneys are close to failing. —Sis. Norma Tiller

TX—I would like prayer for my children, Larenda and Ken. They need the Lord to help them make some changes in their lives.

—Sis. Shirley Davis

Standing Prayer Requests

Sis. Merline Allen
Sis. Gladys Cashio
Sis. Helen Carson
Sis. Genevieve Carver
Sis. Elizabeth Corteway
Sis. Waneta Creel
Bro. Terry Dawson Sr.
Sis. Guy Domin
Sis. Patsy Doolittle
Sis. Dorall Forbes
Bro. Troy Gentry
Jaden Howard
Sis. Patsy Jordon
Sis. Earnestine Jordon
Sis. Karoline Kessler
Bro. Mark and Sis. Darlene Knight
Sis. Virginia Myers
Sis. Elsie M. Offerman
Sis. Melba Powell
Sis. Sharon Quave
Bro. Vernon Robinson
Sis. Ruth Shehee
Sis. Cheryl Smith
Bro. Michael Smith
Bro. Edward and Sis. Gloria Taylor
Sis. Imogene Taylor
The Mitch Taylor family
Sis. Norma Tiller
Bro. Delmar Wilkins
Bro. Curtis Williams

Notice: The starting time for the Oklahoma State Assembly Meeting has been listed wrong in previous issues of the *Faith and Victory*. Lord willing, the first service will begin Saturday morning, December 25.

MEETING DATES

Oklahoma State (Guthrie)—Dec. 25-Jan. 2
California State (Pacoima)—Dec. 26-Jan. 2

MEETING NOTICES

OKLAHOMA STATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

The Oklahoma State Assembly Meeting of the Church of God will be held at Guthrie, OK. Lord willing, the first service will be Saturday morning, December 25, and the meeting will continue through January 2. A hearty welcome is extended to all to attend this annual gathering of God's people in the central area of the U.S. Daily worship services throughout the meeting will start at 10:30 a.m., 2:00 p.m., and 7:30 p.m. There will also be morning prayer services and youth services, the times of which will be announced at the meeting.

The campgrounds are located east off of Sooner Road on Lakeview Road, which is a little over four-tenths of a mile south of the intersection of South Division and Sooner Road. All who come will be cared for. The expenses of the meeting will be met by freewill offerings.

We especially urge the Saints in Oklahoma and the surrounding states to attend this meeting. Come praying with a burden for the unsaved and for all those who need help in soul and body. Please send all contributions for the coming State Assembly Meeting directly to the State Treasurer, Sis. Brenda Wilkins, 807 W Lake Rd, Guthrie, OK 73044.

To obtain further information about the meeting, contact Bro. Philip Gellenbeck (405) 282-2999.

CALIFORNIA STATE ASSEMBLY MEETING

The annual California State Assembly Meeting will be held, Lord willing, from December 26, 2010 through January 2, 2011. The first service will be Sunday morning with Sunday school at 9:30 a.m. There will be three services daily throughout the remainder of the meeting at 10:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

The campground is located at 12312 Osborne Pl., Pacoima, CA 91331. All are welcome and encouraged to attend. Your presence and prayerful support will add much to the success of the meeting. Three meals are provided daily as well

as accommodations for those needing them. Expenses are met by freewill offerings.

For more information you may contact: Sunset Guest Home (818) 899-2022; Bro. Paul Phillips (661) 251-6956 or Bro. Herbert Clay (818) 897-1396. The chapel phone number is: (818) 899-9021.



LETTERS
FROM
OUR
READERS

MO—Dear Bro. Willie and Sis. Neta: I feel that I am past due on giving God the praise for the Divine touch He gave me at Monark. For two or three weeks before Monark, I had been having a pain up between my shoulder blades. At first it would go away as the early morning progressed, but as time went on it lingered longer into the day until around noon. I was anointed and prayed for during the healing service and the Lord gave me a touch and took it away during the camp meeting. How I thanked Him.

Then recently I started having some pain and was not feeling comfortable. We were in revival and after I got to church I realized the Lord had taken it all away. Praise His name.

We do thank the Lord for the blessings He sent to us in our recent revival. One message on spiritual prayer urged us to pray "Give us THIS day our DAILY bread..." and then encouraged us to accept whatever the Lord put on our plate—spiritually. I thought of the scripture that talked about the "bread of affliction." When I looked it up it was Isaiah 30:20-21 "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed... And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it...." Jesus said that He is the Bread of Life. May the Lord help us to accept the daily bread that is given to us through the Father. It may not always taste pleasant as sweets do in our temporal diet, but it will always lead us home to Heaven.

May we each one keep our hearts in tune with Heaven. I truly want to make Heaven my home.
—Sis. Anita Adams



Troy Dale Meek, 80 of Shawnee, OK, passed away on Wednesday, November 24, 2010, at the Clarehouse in Tulsa, OK. He was born on July 7, 1930 to Jess and Lillian (Light) Meek.

For several years, he worked in heating and air. He also was a Deputy Sheriff in Mt. View, Arkansas for several years. He loved gardening and ranching, often telling about his days as a boy with his horses and dogs. He also loved playing his harmonica. After moving to Shawnee to an apartment at the Golden Rule Home, he played his harmonica in the Golden Rule Home, as well as in three different nursing homes in the area. His playing was a great blessing to the residents of these homes.

He loved the children of the Shawnee congregation, often giving them attention with a "high-5" and candy.

He was preceded in death by daughter, Colleen Meek; parents, Jess and Lillian Meek.

He is survived by his children, Lorraine Clark and husband, Rhett, of Tulsa, OK, Steven Meek and wife, Debbie, of Springfield, MO, and Robbin Meek and wife, Kathy, of Culver, IN; grandchildren, Raquela, Paul, Lilly, Korina, Miranda, David, Tony and Christina; great-grandchildren, Christian and Riley.

Funeral services were held at 2:00 p.m. on Monday, November 29, 2010, at Smith Funeral Chapel, Sapulpa, OK. Officiating were Brothers Charles Lowe, James Bell, and Carl Shaffer. Interment was at Greenlawn Cemetery, Edmond, OK. Funeral arrangements were under the direction of Smith Funeral Home, Sapulpa, OK.

Note of Thanks

The family of Troy Meek wishes to express their appreciation to all who have shown their love in this time of grief. The cards, flowers and phone calls are truly a comfort.—Meek Family

—Rhett & Lorraine Clark,

7212 W. Canyon Rd, Tulsa, OK 74131

The Influence of Women

(Continued from page three.)

children grew up and had little interest in going. They are following their parents. Then, even if the parents get straightened out and consecrate their lives to the Lord, they've affected their children. Then they may wonder why their children are so loose in their living and not interested in the service of God. They've influenced the children by not teaching and dressing them properly when they were little.

We want to have a positive influence. There was a man who I watched from his middle age until he grew old. He came faithfully to church. I prayed for him that he would be saved. I told my son, "His mother must have really brought him to church. I want you to remember to come to service." The things we do with our children will influence them in the years to come.

We have an influence on our siblings, though we are now adults. Since I profess to be saved, there are certain things that they expect from me; I want to perform them. My sisters-in-law were good women, professing to be saved. They noticed how I dressed. The issue of pants came up, so I explained the scripture in Deuteronomy to them that this is how the Lord wants us to dress. I just left it and went on. Those sisters-in-law quit wearing pants. I was thankful for the influence I had. This is what we want to do, to influence them in a positive way and take advantage of the opportunities to show them the truth.

Our neighbors are watching us, and they can be influenced by us. They should not hear us screaming and hollering at our children. They don't need to see us coming out scantily clad, or they will wonder, "I thought they were Christians." But when they see that you really are living for God, they will be asking you for prayer. Then we are effecting them positively.

I've lived in our neighborhood thirty years or more. The neighbors are older women. One who wasn't resting well called, asking if I could give her some scriptures to read. She had been watching me. I had never said to my neighbors, "I'm saved." But they watched me coming and going in and out. I'm glad to give them scriptures and pray with them.

Many times it is the women who are noticed most. That's why I want to encourage the women to live the life. Possess all the good traits of a virtuous woman so the world looking on can

benefit. We should be marketing the fruits of the Spirit so people will be drawn to our God. This is what we want.

I want to mention some Bible women and the influence that they had. These women made a big impact on the lives of others and on the world around them. The first woman I want to mention is Eve. (All of us are familiar with her and like to blame her.) You know how she influenced her husband and you know what happened. We don't want to have that kind of influence. If our influence is not godly, it can have a drastic effect!

Then I thought about Abigail. She was able to avert tragedy from her home. Also, as I considered Queen Esther, I thought of her as a praying woman. In order for us to have the kind of influence God would have us to possess, we are going to have to be praying women; we're going to have to stay close to God. Show a concern for others. When we have a concern for others, we will watch for opportunities to influence them in a positive way. Queen Esther was a courageous and wise woman. She handled the matter wisely. She didn't just run to her husband crying and cutting up and going on; she handled it wisely. She was able to avert this tragedy to the Jews who were around Persia. Her influence with her husband was a positive influence.

Deborah was a woman in touch with God. This is the way we're going to have to be to have the right kind of influence on others. She was willing to be supportive. We don't have to be out in the front; we're not supposed to be. We don't have to be the one to receive all the glory and praise for whatever good is accomplished. We can be supportive. Deborah was brave. It took a brave woman to do what she did. She was able to help deliver the Israelites out of the hand of Sisera, who was the captain of the king of Canaan's army, because she was in touch with God. Barak told her, "I am not going unless you go with me." She was willing to go and be supportive. Sometimes someone may need us to support them. If we have the goods on hand, and we've been living close to God, He can help us to be supportive.

So far we've talked about wives; Miriam was a young girl. She was a sister. In reading this account I found Miriam to be a loving person. She watched out for her brother. How many of us have brothers and sisters who we need to influence in a positive way? I had younger

brothers, so I tried to influence them positively toward God. Miriam was thoughtful and courageous. She bravely approached the princess, offering to find a nurse for the baby; she had thought out the best way to handle this situation. She went and got her own mother to nurse her baby brother. She could have gotten any of the Hebrew women, but she got her own mother. We have to be wise; we have to be thoughtful in order to have the right results. So Moses was allowed to be taught about God by his own mother. This produced a leader for God's people. We all know the story of Moses. God was in it all. He used this sister, and because of her influence, she was able to help save Moses and make sure he was taught about God. This qualified him to be mightily used of God later.

When we read the story of Ruth, we always focus on Ruth. But the Lord brought Naomi to my attention. Here's a mother-in-law; they can have great influence. Naomi must have been kind; she was thoughtful, desiring for Ruth to be with her own people. She was wise. Because Naomi was good and kind, Ruth said, "Thy God shall be my God. I want your God!" This is an influence I would love to have, to bring my in-laws to the Lord, to live before them so they will say, "I want your God! I want to live like you do." Ruth was willing to follow Naomi and take care of her. I believe that was because of the way that Naomi had lived and treated her.

Not only was Ruth won to the true God; she was even part of the lineage of Jesus. What an influence Naomi had! Mothers-in-law, how are we influencing our sons and daughters-in-laws? Let us possess those traits, so if they are not saved they will say, "Mom, mother, I want your God!"

Mothers and grandmothers have a great influence, as Eunice and Lois had as they taught young Timothy. Grandmothers, when our children are grown, it's not all over. We still have some work to do. Some of us have grandchildren whose parents may not be saved. Reach out to them; work with them. How many grandchildren have been brought to God because of the influence of Grandma? Grandmas, we have some work to do! Mothers can't do it all; it's good to have a grandma to step in and help to fill some of the places.

Some of us can be mentors. If you don't have children or grandchildren, look at all the children around us. Let's be mentors. There are young men and young women that need some-

body to look to. I thought of Priscilla, who along with her husband, found Apollos and taught him the truth more perfectly. There are those around us who love the Lord and have a little understanding; we can take them under our wing and teach them more perfectly. Live it before them. Apollos became mighty in the Scriptures, convincing his hearers that Jesus was the Christ. When we work with someone, the Lord can take them and make mighty women of God out of them. We may be able to do very little, yet our influence on another may cause them to go out and do a great work for the Lord.

We can all love others and show them what God is doing for us. That will influence them. Have you been positively influenced by another woman? Think about how she affected you. Maybe it was your mother or grandmother, a sister or a neighbor.

As women of God, let's take advantage of the influence that we have. Let's not be timid and feel there isn't much we can do because "I'm just a subordinate." It's all right to be subordinate; that's where God put us. But if we'll just be available to God, He can do what He wants to with us. So don't be timid and unequipped. We have to be equipped. We must not neglect those opportunities that God puts right before us; let's take advantage of them. Let's live the holy life in all its beauty, and it will touch somebody.

Salvation is so beautiful that when people see us living it, it will get their attention. You'll be surprised at the lives that will be touched. We do not know all the lives we have influenced, we may not ever know.

We want to have a godly influence. Therefore we don't want to do anything that might influence somebody in an ungodly manner. We want to have, as they say, the goods on hand. There must be nothing in us to influence those around us in a negative way. Let's be the godly influence that God would have for us to be in our congregations and in our neighborhoods.

Be available to God. Be possessors of the goods. Mere professors won't stand. Keep in touch with God and walk in the Spirit, so that God can show us somebody that may need our attention.

The full length version of this chapter may be read in *Biblical Nuggets for Godly Women*. This 351 page book, compiled by Sis. Brenda Wilkins and Sis. Nelda Sorrell, is bound in a lovely color cover. It is now available from Faith Publishing House for \$8.00 plus \$1.70 postage. It may be ordered by calling 1-800-767-1479.

Appeal To Righteousness

By Sis. Marilyn Eck

In II Timothy 3:13 we read that "...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived." Matthew 24:12 gives this warning, "And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold."

We could become a victim of this kind of spirit if we fail to be aware and watchful. In John 10:10 we have the words of Jesus, "The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." John 10:10.

The Psalmist David testifies in the first two verses of Psalm 144, "Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight: My goodness, and my fortress; my high tower, and my deliverer; my shield, and he in whom I trust..."

These scriptures inform us of evil times and conditions that will vex our righteous souls, but we are not left without help. Jesus came that we may have peace in our souls and an abundant life in Him. He will teach us how to engage in a righteous warfare against the enemy of our souls.

In I Kings 8:37, as Solomon was praying at the dedication of the temple invoking God's help with various circumstances, he prayed thusly, "If there be in the land famine, if there be pestilence, blasting, mildew, locust, or if there be caterpillar; if their enemy besiege them in the land of their cities; whatsoever plague, whatsoever sickness there be....Then hear thou in heaven..." I Kings 8:37, 39.

How does this pertain to us today? All around us we either see or know of the kind of sin Lot was living among in Sodom, the reveling and drunkenness that brought Belshazzar down, or the kind of adulterous sin Jesus dealt with as He talked to the Samaritan woman at the well. Additionally, He forgave the woman that was caught in the very act of adultery, but He told her to sin no more. Think of the madman who lived among the tombs, whose name was Legion because he was possessed of many devils and he was unable to do anything of his own free will because he was bound by other spirits. These examples show that there are consequences to sin that bring disaster. There are a few who will

sincerely repent from their heart and God will forgive their sins and bring peace to their soul.

Satan sees to it that in life there are many, many chances to be tempted, to get involved with something we think is harmless. Remember, God's Word tells us that satan will make himself appear as an angel of light or some other disguise he wants us to suppose as harmless. His aim is to steal our innocence.

Consider with me the problems mentioned in I Kings 8:37. King Solomon was speaking of where the children of Israel were then living:

"If there be in the land famine" (extreme scarcity of food; shortage of something specific.) As a person gives temptation the chance to remain without fighting it off, the source of spiritual food is being choked and cannot enter the soul to give strength to overcome.

"If there be pestilence" (something evil or destructive). What about "good" movies? Maybe even some "Christian" entertainment, country music, questionable video games or a "harmless" (?) game of cards.

"Blasting" (blight [anything that destroys or prevents growth]). Does your spiritual life prosper in this environment?

"Mildew" (thin, whitish furry coating and discoloration; a plant disease). Those detrimental things we partake of and entertain are coating our lives with a precursor of spiritual death.

"Locust" (a very large migratory grasshopper, often traveling in great swarms destroying nearly all vegetation); then the devourer will gather others into a siege.

"Caterpillar (the worm, like larvae of various insects, feed voraciously as they go and the destructive cycle continues). Have you seen the damage a tomato hornworm can do to a tomato plant? They are quite large and will strip the tender part of the plant in a rather short period of time, even feasting on some of the fruit. The plant's productiveness has been greatly hindered. The caterpillar starts out as a tiny egg, hatches, eats voraciously on the host plant and often causes it to die. Sin does likewise, spiritually, to our souls and our lives if left unchecked.

We have a dearth (scarcity, lack) among some of our young people, and adults, of desire to partake of the things that will add spiritual strength to each individual and the church as a whole. Our dear Savior lived and died that we might have life and have it more abundantly.

Consider well if you are experiencing in your land (life) famine, blasting, mildew, locusts, caterpillars or an enemy besieging you spiritually. Examine what you allow your eyes to feed on. What do you allow your ears to listen to? What do you put into your mouth? Is pleasure for the flesh very important to you? Fleshly pleasure goes in many directions. Reread your journal. Check that room that even you don't want to go into. Maybe you need to be reminded of what's in there.

Bow in humility before the Lord, the only source of true strength, asking Him to teach your hands to war, and your fingers to fight a good fight of faith. He will be your goodness, your fortress, your deliverer, your shield, and the One you can trust in.

May the Lord open our eyes to see clearly what He would have us to see, and give us courage to press forward to complete victory over that which can destroy our spiritual, and maybe even our physical lives.

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There Is A Way

By Sis. Lana Johnson

*There is a way that is narrow,
A gate that Jesus called strait.
His desire for you is to enter
Into this small, humble gate.*

*You can't look to the right or left,
And you must not look behind.
If you take your eyes off Jesus,
The devil your soul will bind.*

*To look to the left or north,
You will become barren and cold.
You will lose the Lord's Holy Spirit,
And things of the world you'll behold.*

*That broad way is to compromise
The commands in His Holy Word.
You'll have a false feeling of freedom
And think all is well with the Lord.*

*To allow for human reasoning
And say all that you do is okay
Is shortening the cross that you carry,
And it's climbing up some other way.*

*To look to the right or south
Is a trick of the enemy, too.
You will become self-righteous
In everything that you do.*

*In the heat of being a fanatic,
You'll think you're on fire for God.
Walking in the light of your own sparks
Is another wrong way to trod.*

*You'll worship your leaders and their rules
The emotion will take you high, too,
And what you don't even realize
Is that these have become god to you.*

*Oh, Lord; please give us all wisdom
In this day when division is rife.
Help us to walk with balance,
And let You be the Guide of our life!*

*Remember to never look behind you,
But set your eyes on the goal.
No matter what trials you suffer,
God's grace will bless your soul.*

*So don't turn your back on Jesus
And walk with Him no more.
If you give up salvation and backslide,
You'll be worse than you were before.*

*Keep looking straightforward to Jesus,
He'll save you from all of this strife.
He will never lead you falsely because
He is the Way, the Truth, and the Life!*

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