



# The Ryburn Christian Clarion

BIBLICAL STUDIES RESOURCE

*Upholding the Accuracy of the God-Breathed Word*

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Unless otherwise stated, all passages are quoted from the King James Version (KJV) of the Holy Bible. All explanatory remarks by a writer within scripture verses are enclosed in brackets [ ].

## INSIDE AT A GLANCE

**GOD IS ABLE** to do much with little. That's truly the case with the Clarion. With donated equipment and a small group of financial supporters, He has carried us to 32 states, and into Europe, Africa, and South America.

**"LIFE IN A CLAY POT"**: Because of the wonderful work of the Lord Jesus, we have eternal life, and are filled with the power of God. It all resides, however, in what II Corinthians 4:7 calls "...earthen vessels..."  
by Rick Heeter, Editor-in-Chief.....1

**"GOD'S MATCHLESS WORD"**: Last issue, we disclosed how God worked mightily in Old Testament women. Now, **"Women In The Lead For God", Part Two**, clarifies misapplied verses that have kept women down for centuries.  
by Nathan R. James.....3

**"FROM THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT"** explores "wonders." What are they? We know of signs and miracles, but what are wonders? We wondered about it, so we decided to examine **"The 'Wonder Of Wonders' "**.  
by Keith Jamison, Columnist.....5

**"FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT"**: Many Christian music CDs are released yearly, but few of these efforts approach the tender love that is expressed for God in Pamela LoVerme's mostly-original collection entitled **Behold**.  
by Rick Heeter, Music Reviewer.....6

**"INVESTIGATING CREATION SCIENCE"** continues our examination of the first chapter of Genesis. In **"Stellar Signposts"**, we look at the first use of the word "signs," and its implications for all mankind.  
by Keith Jamison, Columnist.....7

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## Life In A

# CLAY POT

**F**OR THE CHRISTIAN BELIEVER, God's gift of holy spirit that one receives at the time of salvation is a great equalizer. We all have certain shortcomings in the flesh, or are disadvantaged in some way by our physiognomy, but God's spirit within us is designed to compensate for anything we lack in our flesh. Incredibly, our God and Father has taken up residence in our less-than-perfect bodies, but is always willing and able to help us rise above our carnal deficiencies.

Although the body that the Lord God formed of "...the dust of the ground..." for Adam must have been dynamically robust (Gen. 2:7), the first man's disobedience to God opened the door for Satan to ravage the physical nature of mankind, plunging subsequent humanity into a maelstrom of myriad afflictions. The result is that today the spirit of the risen Christ often dwells in weak or broken vessels, but God is not deterred. As we shall see, the Creator, in times past, frequently made known His Word and delivered His saints by the hands of those who, on the surface, appeared unqualified for Godly service. The same is true since the Day of Pentecost. God is able to save by the strong or weak, or by many or few. He requires only a

*continued on next page...*

believing heart. It's true that God wants His people healed and whole, but the Scriptures also show that He is willing to work in those who have not yet received their deliverance, for our God looks only on the heart.

There are numerous records in the Bible showing men or women, with no obvious infirmity, walking in harmony with the Lord. There are, also, many accounts that depict those with physical limitations having a close relationship with Almighty God. One obvious example concerns Abraham and Sarah, his wife.

God had promised Abraham that He would give unto him and his descendants all the land of Canaan for an inheritance forever. As an old man, however, he found himself still "childless." Complaining to God, Abraham declared, "...Behold, to me thou hast given no seed..." (Gen. 15:2 and 3) It appears that his wife had simply been barren, for, "...Sarah...bare him no children..." Sarah, too, expressed dismay in a Hebrew idiom by saying, "...the LORD hath restrained me from bearing..." (Gen. 16:1 and 2) Age and the barrenness of Sarah's womb, however, were no obstacles to God.

According to Romans 4:19 and 20, when Abraham "...was about an hundred years old..." he finally got to the place where he ignored "...the deadness of Sarah's womb..., but was strong in faith [believing], giving glory to God..." Sarah, too, who originally laughed within herself at the promise of God, came to the place where she believed, for she "...received [*lambano*, in Greek] strength to conceive seed, and was delivered of a child when she was past age..." (Heb. 11:11) Not only had Sarah been barren all her life, but when she finally had the son that God had promised her, she was "...past age..." In other words, she had long since gone through menopause, for, as Genesis 18:11 notes, "...it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women."

In Hebrews 11:11, we observed that Sarah "...received strength..." which enabled her to conceive and bare her child. The Greek word *lambano*, rendered "received" in this verse, means to "receive into manifestation." When she believed God, Sarah literally received into evident form all the physical and psychological strength she would need, to not only conceive but, to go through childbirth. All this took place in an aged woman who had been barren all her life, and who hadn't had a menstrual cycle for years! Isn't God wonderful? When men and women believe His Word, even their feeble bodies cannot trammel or restrict the awesome power of God!

The Book of Judges provides further examples of individuals who walked with God, even though, by man's reasoning, they might have seemed to be unlikely candidates for the work to which God called them. In Judges 3:14 and 15, after Israel had been subjugated by the king of Moab for eighteen years, God answered the prayers of His people by raising up a deliverer named Ehud, "...a man lefthanded..." of the tribe of Benjamin. In ancient Eastern culture, the left hand was considered to be the hand of cursing, while the right hand was the hand of blessing. In fact, use of the left hand was usually reserved only for cleaning one's self after having a bowel movement. In spite of this, the Children of Israel were inspired to follow Ehud, and, by his leadership, "...slew of Moab...about ten thousand men, all lusty, and all men of valour..." The result was that Israel then enjoyed eighty years of peace, all because of the believing action of one left-handed man. (Judg. 3:29 and 30)

Then, there's Deborah, whom God raised up to lead Israel against Jabin, king of Canaan, who "...mightily oppressed..." the people of God for twenty years. (Judg. 4:2 and 3) Of course, Deborah was also culturally out of step, like Ehud, for she was a woman in a patriarchal and paternal tribal society. According to custom (but, not according to God's Word), she, as a prophet of the Lord, lived in the wrong kind of vessel, for she was a female. Nevertheless, she so walked with God that "...the children of Israel came...to her for judgment." (Judg. 4:5) Under her wonderful leadership, the Canaanites were defeated, and "...the land had rest forty years." (Judg. 5:31)

David provides us with still another example of God ignoring the physical attributes or deficiencies of a man or woman. We don't refer to David as he was when he reigned as king over Israel, but as he was in his youth. A mere shepherd boy, he didn't look the part of a mighty man of valor like his older brothers, but, as God told the prophet in I Samuel 16:7b, "...the LORD looketh on the heart." Guided thus by God's revelation, Samuel anointed David to be the king of Israel. In appearance, according to verse 12, David was "...ruddy, and withal of a beautiful countenance, and goodly to look to..." yet God called him to be captain over His people. Even in his confrontation with Goliath, his fair looks hid the heart of one who loved the Lord and sought to do His will. Indeed, when the huge Philistine drew near to David on the field of battle, he grew angry and disdained David, for he saw only "...a youth...of a fair countenance." He couldn't see the bold, trusting

heart that believed in the delivering power of the Lord, but God could. Goliath came against David with "...a sword, and with a spear, and with a shield..." all formidable weapons in the hands of a well-trained veteran of many military campaigns but, against one who trusted in "...the LORD of hosts, the God of the armies of Israel..." skill and martial accoutrements proved useless. (I Sam. 17:42-45)

There may be times when we focus on our inadequacies and the weakness of our flesh, but the same truth that we've noted in these Old Testament accounts is still relevant today: what's in the container is more vital to God than the container itself. After all, the earthen container will someday be replaced by something much better. Of course, God would have us to be blessed and healthy in every way, but even if we are not, the love and power of God may still reach out to others by means of our lives. As II Corinthians 4:7 affirms, "...we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." That means that even if our earthen vessel is cracked, even if the jar of clay we live in is broken in some way, even "...though our outward man perish..." the treasure inside, the "...inward *man*..." is invigorated by God as we continue to walk with Him. (verse 16)

In II Timothy 2, Paul wrote about vessels of honor and vessels of lesser honor. The context deals with standing approved before God by "...rightly dividing the word of truth..." and by avoiding "...profane *and* vain babblings..." which engender "...ungodliness." (verses 15 and 16) The Heavenly Father, "...concerning the truth..." seeks always to encourage and inspire His sons and daughters to hold The Word in their hearts, and live it in love. Such a believer would be "...a vessel unto honour,...meet ["fitting" or "adequate"] for the master's use, *and* prepared unto every good work." (verses 18 and 21) Again, the contents are more important to God than the container!

What manner of vessel are you? It's not a matter of perfect health, worldly rank and prestige, or property. What's important, according to I Peter 3:4, is "...the hidden man of the heart..." It's "...that which is not corruptible..." that lives in these clay pots we call our bodies, that has lasting value and eternal significance. Indeed, it is that "...which is in the sight of God of great price." As God's children, let us labor in those things that are of greater value to God, and so further the outreach of His wonderful, matchless Word.

-----by Rick Heeter, Editor-in-Chief

## **GOD'S MATCHLESS WORD:**

### **A Forum For Presenting The Light Of Life**

*(This column features a wide range of subjects from God's Word as they are set forth by a host of preachers and teachers from differing avenues of Christian thought and various areas of Biblical study and concern.)*

## **“Women In The Lead For God”**

### **Part Two**

*by Nathan R. James*

**[Editor's Note:** *In this second part of this series, we examine certain New Testament verses that have been misapplied for centuries, thus denying women full access to everything God has made available in Christ.]*

**THERE APPEAR TO BE** many contradictions between I Corinthians 14:34 and 35 and other verses regarding our subject. We can, however, see a consistent pattern throughout the Scriptures showing women serving in ministry.

#### **I Corinthians 14:34 and 35**

*Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law.*

*And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church.*

Several women prophets are mentioned in the Old Testament. Indeed, the Book of Acts and the Epistles list many women who walked by the spirit of God, and ministered in the First Century Church. It is, therefore, certainly an oddity that these verses in I Corinthians 14 seem to forbid this activity. Even the Apostle Paul, by revelation, wrote that, "in Christ Jesus," there is no difference between men and women.

#### **Galatians 3:28**

*There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond*

*nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.*

All “in Christ Jesus” have received the same gift of holy spirit, and each is called to function in the Body of Christ. Only a few particular scriptures are addressed to *women* and not men, or to *men* and not women, but these are always explicitly stated. Women are certainly included where we read, “I would that ye all spake with tongues, but rather that ye prophesied...” (I Cor. 14:5a)

Furthermore, in I Corinthians 11:3-12, the Apostle Paul instructed the believers as to how a married woman ought to pray and prophesy. In this chapter, we see particulars addressed to men and women separately, but the difference is only in whether one prays and prophesies with a covered or uncovered head. The covered head was a cultural symbol of marriage. Similarly, in our culture, we use rings worn on the third finger of the left hand. Unlike our custom, however, the symbol of the covered head was reserved for wives only. Husbands did not wear such a covering, so the apostle’s instruction was that wives ought to pray and prophesy with their heads covered, but husbands should not. Now, let’s consider verse 16 of chapter 11.

#### **I Corinthians 11:16**

*But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God.*

Rather than fight about this subject, simply let it go. Then, why bring it up at all? While the physical covering of the head is not spiritually significant, what it symbolizes is. Covering the head symbolized the husband’s loving protection and headship of his wife. God intends the husband and wife to be “one flesh,” as His Word says in Genesis 2:24. They should thus act in concert, moving together with the things of God.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthian women not to put aside the symbol of their marriage, it was the marriage that was on his mind, not the symbol. The wife should not ignore her responsibility to her husband. Her believing and ministry should not in any way contradict her role as a wife. Her responsibilities as minister and wife are not to conflict with each other. The Godly arrangement set forth in The Word allows her to fulfill both roles.

If we consider I Corinthians 14:34 and 35 in light of these scriptures from chapter 11, it should be obvious that God would not explain in one place how a woman ought to prophesy and, a few chapters later, forbid her to do so! We can thus see that any interpretation of I Corinthians 14:34 and 35 forbidding women to prophesy (or speak) must be in error. If a woman prophesies in a meeting of the church, the applicable verse is I Corinthians 14:31, which is addressed to both men and women.

#### **I Corinthians 14:31**

*For ye may all prophesy one by one, that all may learn, and all may be comforted.*

The prohibition against women “speaking” in the church from I Corinthians 14:34 and 35 must then be concerning something else. The first thing to realize is that the word “women” in the King James Version should be translated “wives.” The Greek word used here may indicate either, and only the context determines what it should be. Reading the context, we see that these women must be married if they are to carry out the instruction in verse 35 to “...ask their husbands at home...” Now, if wives may never speak, how can they pray and prophesy? This prohibition must apply to only a particular form of speech by wives. Indeed, a wife may be a prophet (See Judges 4:4.), and thus be addressed, not by verses 34 and 35 but, by verse 29, where it says, “Let the prophets speak...”

When we read verse 29, it is immediately obvious as to what this refers. It deals with a prophet exercising his or her ministry by prophesying. This verse does not address prayer, teaching, or small talk. It is concerned only with prophecy, which is why the people here are referred to as “prophets.” They could have been called believers, saints, sons of God, or any of several other things, but they are not. It means literally, let the prophets, when they speak as prophets, speak.

The purpose of I Corinthians 14 is to clear up confusion as to how a meeting of the church should proceed. It is written at length so the Corinthians, and the rest of the Church of God, may understand how to “...let all things be done unto edifying...” doing so “...decently and in order.” (verses 26 and 40) It is not meant to prevent anyone from operating manifestations of holy spirit, or fulfilling a God-given ministry.

Now, let us look at verses 34 and 35 again, using the same logic we used in verse 29, remembering that the word for “women” should be the word “wives.” It thus says, in verse 34, “Let your wives keep silence in the churches...” This no more includes wives prophesying than verse 29 includes prophets discussing sports or the weather. Rather, it is concerned only with wives speaking as wives. That is why it calls them “wives.” They, too, could have been called believers, or saints, or sons of God, but they are not, because this section does not apply to believers praying, saints singing, or sons of God exhorting one another. Instead, it is only concerned with a wife addressing her husband with something that ought to wait for another time.

This fits perfectly with the instruction from verse 35 to “...ask their husbands at home...” We can carry this understanding all the way through, thus, when we read, “...it is a shame for women [“wives”] to speak in the church...” we know that it means that it’s a shame for wives to speak as wives in a meeting of the church. They ought not to interrupt the edifying of the saints with questions for their husbands, nor think that their position as wives allows them any special privileges in the meeting. Can you imagine a wife calling out during a meeting to her husband who is teaching, “Honey, why don’t you read that other verse”? What if she constantly asked her husband,

“What does that mean”? It’s one thing to do that at a movie theatre; it’s something else to interrupt the teaching of The Word that way. Remember, too, that in the First Century, there were no microphones or amplifiers. If people in the assembly didn’t keep quiet, they would drown out the one speaking for God at that moment. How embarrassing!

That is why the Scriptures say it is a shame for wives to speak in their capacity as wives during a church meeting. There is a time for a believing wife to prophesy, and there is a time for her, *as a wife*, to speak to her husband. If she can’t tell the difference, it’s embarrassing.

A woman’s role as a wife and her role as a child of God are perfectly laid out in the Bible, and should never contradict or interfere with one another.\*

*(Rev. Nathan R. James, during 2005-2006, participated in “The Fellow Laborers” program of Christian Family Fellowship Ministry of Tipp City, Ohio. In August of 2009, he was ordained to the Christian Ministry. Nathan lives with his wife, Rachel, in Covington, Ohio, and currently serves on CFFM’s staff. You may contact him by e-mail at [notfromaroundhere9@yahoo.com](mailto:notfromaroundhere9@yahoo.com).)*

## **FROM THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT**

*(This column, featuring the work of Keith Jamison, the director of The Ryburn Christian Clarion’s Research Department, examines God’s Word and how its application in our Twenty-First Century lives has been influenced by mythology, philosophy, and tradition.)*

### **“The ‘Wonder Of Wonders’ ”**

**H**AVE YOU EVER wondered about *wonders*? Have you wondered what they are, or if they are the same as signs and miracles? What is God’s purpose for wonders? We sometimes hear teachings about miracles and/or signs, but are often left wondering about wonders. In this article, we will be taking a brief look at the word “wonders” to get a clearer idea of what they are. We invite you to wonder along with us as we wander through the Scriptures seeking an answer.\*\*

The primary word translated as “wonders,” from the Greek, is *teras*: a supernatural prodigy (marvel), a wonder, miracle, portent, or omen. In the New Testament, it is always rendered as “wonder(s),” and *only* used in conjunction with “signs” and/or “miracles.” *Teras*, in the New Testament, denotes “wonders” performed by God, and lying “wonders” engineered by the Adversary.

The Greek word for “miracles” is usually *dunamis*, which is also translated as “power.” It is translated as “mighty deeds” in II Corinthians 12:12, and in II Thessalonians 2:9, it is rendered as “power.” In both of these verses, it is used with “signs” and “wonders.” “Signs,” “miracles,” and “wonders” used together suggest an interrelationship among them. A spiritual event may be a “sign,” a “miracle,” or a “wonder,” or a combination thereof. “Signs” (in Greek, *semeion*) designate something, and “miracles” are workings of power, but what are “wonders”?

“Wonder” is an English word derived from the Anglo-Saxon noun *wundor*, which means, a portent, an omen, or marvel eliciting surprise and admiration. According to *Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged* (1981), a “wonder” is, in

part, a cause for astonishment or surprise; an extraordinary deed or occurrence; or something of outstanding effectiveness, causing amazed, curious, and excited admiration, and inciting a state of rapt, absorbed, questioning attention. We think about it, and marvel over it. In short, a wonder causes us to wonder, but what does The Word say about them?

The first use of the English noun “wonders” in the Bible is in Exodus 3:20, where God tells Moses, “...I will stretch out my hand, and smite Egypt with all my wonders [*pala*]...” The Hebrew word used here is *pala*, and it means, “separate or distinguished, singular or wondrous.” This word first appears in Genesis 18:14a, where the question is posed, “Is any thing too hard for the LORD?” The phrase “too hard” is from the word *pala*. This idea fits with our word “wonder,” for the harder something is, the more likely we are to be amazed by it.

Why then does God author such amazing occurrences? For one thing, they are tremendous attention-getters! God uses wonders to cause people to think and reflect, for some will not believe unless they see something. In John 4:43-54, we find the account of the Lord Jesus healing a nobleman’s son. In verse 48, Jesus tells the nobleman, “...Except [or “Unless”] ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.” Even the Apostle Thomas would not believe in the risen Christ until he had seen the Lord and His wounds with his own eyes (John 20:24-29).

This need of man to see “tangible” evidence of God’s mighty workings is a compelling reason for the Lord’s use of signs and wonders. Indeed, most of the recorded signs and wonders in the Book of Acts facilitated the outreach of The Word. Sharing the

Scriptures boldly in association with signs and wonders resulted in The Church's increase and early unity (Acts 2:41-47). In this regard, II Corinthians 12:12 names "wonders" as one of the "...signs of an apostle..." for they indicate that these individuals are of God, thus, causing many to believe.

## II Corinthians 12:12

*Truly the signs [semeion] of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs [semeion], and wonders [teras], and mighty deeds [dunamis].*

This is a fascinating verse, for all the Greek words we've been discussing, *semeion*, *dunamis*, and *teras*, are here. *Dunamis* is normally translated as "power" or "miracles," however, it is rendered here as "mighty deeds." If the King James Version (KJV) translators had rendered *dunamis* as "miracles," (which is acceptable) you would have all three spiritual effects being declared to be the "...signs of an apostle..." Of course, the word "signs" in this phrase is also from the Greek word *semeion*. This all seems to verify the close interrelationship among these spiritual evidences, which we referred to earlier in this article. It *appears* that a "miracle" (*dunamis*) may be described as a "sign" or "wonder," and that a "sign" (*semeion*) may be a "wonder" or "miracle," and that a "wonder" (*teras*) may also be a "miracle" or "sign." Perhaps, only God knows the lines of demarcation among them (if there are any), but they are ALL certainly proofs of His mighty workings.

There is one final point to be made about wonders, namely, that not all of them are authored by

God Himself. In Matthew 24:24, Jesus Christ warned His disciples, saying, "...there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders [teras]..." Mark 13:22 expresses the same truth, employing the Greek word *teras* for "wonders," and cautioning saints to beware, for Satan uses such, desiring "...to seduce...even the elect [God's people]." In addition, II Thessalonians 2:9 tells of one who, in the future, will come with "...all power and signs and lying wonders [teras]." Because of this, the saints are told not to seek after signs and wonders, for true spiritual evidences will follow those who first believe God's Word (Mark 16:17-20).

This has been an intriguing subject, and I am certain that we have not thoroughly nailed it down. Suffice it to say that we still wonder somewhat about wonders. Let us simply acknowledge that any topic concerning God can only be truly understood in the light of His *wonderful* Word. While God can do all manner of wonders, He does not waste them; He does them to help His children believe. Wonders are wonderful, enriching our understanding of life, and our Heavenly Father. They remind us that all things are possible for God, and that He loves us more than enough to give us outstanding blessings. God is willing to do more for us than we could ever imagine (Eph. 3:20). As long as we are willing to trust God and believe, we can truly have wonder-filled lives.\*

*(Mr. Keith Jamison is the director of The Ryburn Christian Clarion's Research Department and, now, also serves as the Clarion's production assistant. Send your comments, as well as article submissions, to Keith at [kejamison.rd@gmail.com](mailto:kejamison.rd@gmail.com).)*

# FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT

## Music Review

*(This column offers our readers a variety of inspirational and edifying submissions. In this "grab-bag," you will find essays, book reviews, testimonies, poetry, compositions, letters, music reviews, and other things designed to exhort and comfort God's people.)*

## Behold

by Pamela LoVerme

**MUSIC IS SOMETHING** I've enjoyed as long as I can remember. I've even written a few songs myself. When listening to new material, I usually find myself drawn first to the lyrics. Maybe that's why I ended up as an editor; words and what they are capable of expressing have always been important to me. When, however, I listened to Pamela LoVerme's musical selection for the first time, I was immediately struck by the heart behind the message.

Of course, the message is there, too. Bubbling and splashing like clear, cool water from a mountain

spring, loving lyrics in praise of the Lord God shower you with thoughts of eternity's certainty. From the opening cut to the last gentle, fading notes at the CD's end, **Behold** sprinkles you with crystal droplets of truth that, as you listen, wash away worldly grime.

From the opening selection, "The Lord is Coming Back," which makes you thrill at the prospect of leaving this fallen world behind, to "Abba," which overflows with child-like gratitude to a loving Father, the CD's nine tracks take you on a worshipful journey to a place of quiet communion. The first eight selections, both

music and lyrics, were composed by Pamela herself. Largely consisting of praise and thanksgiving, these tunes almost constitute a collection of contemporary psalms. The overall effect is restful and healing.

The CD's final track is the beloved, traditional hymn "Be Thou My Vision." With the first verse being sung by Pamela in old Gaelic and supported by an original musical arrangement, performed by the entire LoVerme clan (plus friends), it lends a heartfelt, solemn conclusion to the album. Although not one of her own works, Pamela's soulful vocal approach ties this one in well with the other eight, nicely capping off the collection.

Newly-married Pamela, now bearing the surname of Janovyak, sings lead vocals on all selections, and plays acoustic and electric guitars, keyboard, and piano on a number of cuts. She is accompanied by family and friends singing harmony, and playing guitar, violin, pennywhistle, drums, and sundry other instruments. Not the hard-driving fare of so many Christian ensembles, the effect is ballad-like, and altogether refreshing. In fact, the CD's title song, "Behold," is a tender but stirring devotional to the God of our salvation.

Pamela works as a portrait photographer, and makes her home in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Having grown up in

a God-centered, musically involved family, her skill with instruments and maturing abilities as a songwriter have opened this wonderful door to her by which she can share her sense of awe and delight for a Creator Who loves us all personally. With a lilting quaver in her voice, her vocals can kindle in others a deep, emotional yearning for a more intimate fellowship with the Father and His Son.

If an oasis of refreshing in the midst of a dry-desert day appeals to you; if you long for quietude under the rustling boughs of sleeping trees; if a growing longing to touch the Father's face with heartfelt love whispers to your soul, **Behold** can take you there. It did me.\*

----- by Rick Heeter, Music Reviewer

(**Behold** is available for a minimum donation of \$10 per copy, plus shipping and handling (s&h). When ordering 1-5 CDs, add \$4 s&h; for 6-10, add \$6 s&h; for 11-20, add \$8 s&h; and for 21 or more, add \$10 s&h. Make checks or money orders payable to "Pamela Janovyak," and mail to: Mrs. Pamela L. Janovyak, 1623 Crosby Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15216, Attention: Behold. Please include written details specifying the particulars of your order based upon the ordering information given above, or write or e-mail requesting an order form. You may reach Pamela by e-mail at [pamelajanovyak@yahoo.com](mailto:pamelajanovyak@yahoo.com).)

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## **INVESTIGATING CREATION SCIENCE**

*(In this column, which appears in every spring and fall issue of The Ryburn Christian Clarion, members of the Clarion's research team explore the timely and unfolding evidence that supports the Biblical assertion concerning the Divine creation of all things, visible and invisible. Join us as we take a journey into scripture and science alike to investigate the latest, compelling proofs.)*

### **“Stellar Signposts”**

*by Keith Jamison*

**R**ECENTLY, WE HAVE talked about how the sun, moon, and stars were placed to give light, both physical and spiritual, upon the Earth, and how The Word is written in the heavens. We've also noted that heavenly bodies are sometimes used by God as signs. Since there are more examples in the Scriptures regarding signs than what appear in the night sky, we shall present a brief overview of this term.

“Sign” is a very general term in English. It is the perceived or reasoned *indication* of something. For example, road signs *indicate* everything from your location (street signs, route signs, mile markers, etc.), to warnings of what's ahead (low bridge, high water, curves, etc.), to driving instructions (exit, stop, yield, etc.). There are also billboards and store signs used to attract your business. Of course, one *indication* of an individual is his or her name. Quite often, we *indicate* our identities by SIGNing our names; we write our SIGNatures. There is also the fact that if something is SIGNificant, we put a mark or emblem on it (an enSIGN or inSIGNia).

In the Bible, signs seem to be everywhere: pointing to something, emphasizing something, or

declaring something. In Matthew 9:1-8, Mark 2:1-12, and Luke 5:17-26, we have accounts of men stricken with palsy (paralysis). In each record, the Lord Jesus forgave their sins. The result was that they were healed. Each account links forgiveness of sins with the resultant healing. Even though the word “sign” does not occur in any of these records, the subsequent healings are the outward *indications* of God's forgiveness. To be more precise, the healings are the outward *indications* that the men in question believed, and accepted the forgiveness offered by Jesus Christ. For those who witnessed these events, the healings *indicated* the presence and power of God, and in each record, God was, indeed, glorified.

In John 4:48, Christ told a nobleman, “...Except [or “Unless”] ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.” This is true of many people today. Indeed, most people would follow anyone who showed them a sign, hence, the recurring Biblical warnings against seeking after signs, because, “...there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets....” (Matt. 24:24) In Judea, at the time of the Lord Jesus' birth, many sought after signs, but they were blind to the genuine signs in the stars. Sadly, as we noted in the article “**Written In**

**The Stars' "** (Spring-Summer, 2008; Vol. V, No. 3), only the Magi are credited with rightly interpreting the heavenly *indications* of the Redeemer's birth, and they were not even of the stock of Israel. (Matt. 2:1 and 2)

**Psalms 19:1-2**

*The heavens declare* ["prophetically make known"] *the glory of God; and the firmament* ["expanse"] *sheweth his handywork.*

*Day unto* ["after"] *day uttereth speech, and night unto* ["after"] *night sheweth* ["sets forth"] *knowledge.*

The stars in the firmament, these "stellar signposts," declare, or recount, God's glory, *indicating* and revealing knowledge every night. They proclaim God's works, and speak of things past, and things yet to come. Ignorantly, modern man searches the night sky for the knowledge that is there, seeing only the phenomena, and not the message the stars convey. Astronomers, employing scientific aids, regularly peer into deep space in their attempts to learn the origin of the universe, and the origin of life on Earth. Subconsciously, they are looking for God, seeking to slake their innate "God-hunger," whether they realize it or not. Astrologers, also, seek knowledge in the heavens, but their use of a twisted analysis of the movements and relative positions of celestial bodies is nothing more than idolatry, wherein they worship and serve "...the creature ["created thing"] more ["rather"] than the Creator..." (Rom. 1:25) The knowledge is, indeed, displayed in the stars, but the ancient understanding of how to "read" it is mostly lost to us today. To retrieve any bit of it, we must turn to God's written declaration, for only therein will we find insight and instruction regarding signs in the heavens.

In most cases, in the King James Version (KJV) of the Bible, the Koine Greek word for "sign(s)" is *semeion*. In the New Testament, it is usually translated as "signs," and frequently appears in conjunction with "wonders" (*teras*, in Greek) and "miracles" or "power." (*dunamis*, in Greek) In the Old Testament, the Septuagint uses *semeion* for the word "signs" in Genesis 1:14. This is the first use of *semeion*, "signs," in the Bible, and is, therefore, most SIGNificant. Its basic meaning is, "a sign, mark, or signal," thus, an *indication* of something. The Hebrew counterpart in this verse is *oth*, which means, "a signal or mark."

**Genesis 1:14**

*And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be*

*for signs* [semeion, in Greek; oth, in Hebrew], *and for seasons, and for days, and years:*

Verses 15 and 17, of Genesis 1, further announce that these celestial bodies are there "...to give light upon the earth..." Both verses use the exact same phrase, and the words for "light" in both verses, from the Greek AND Hebrew, represent the widest application of the meaning of light. In short, the definitions go far beyond mere physical light, expressly denoting spiritual light (knowledge), or, what we call enLIGHTenment. (See: " 'To Give Light Upon The Earth' "; Vol. IV, No. 3; Spring, 2007)

The underlying theme of the entire Word of God is the redemption of mankind by a Savior, the Son of God, Who would also utterly defeat Satan, God's longtime foe. Certainly, the knowledge revealed in the heavens is in harmony with what has been recorded in writing by holy men of old, and vice versa. In truth, the Scriptures declare that "...the invisible things of him [God] from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made..." (Rom. 1:20) From the opening pages of Holy Writ, and from the time the stars were made, the message of redemption and salvation has been a continuous expression to mankind of God's love and constancy. In His heavenly scroll, God placed *indications*, signs, to provide man with hope for better things to come. We have noted here only a scant few. The ones in the heavens declare the glory of God, continuously, and few there are that hear their voice.\*

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*(Please join us in every other issue of The Ryburn Christian Clarion as the "Investigating Creation Science" column explores the compelling truths of our existence.)*

*\*Articles and columns submitted to The Ryburn Christian Clarion are edited to ensure correct spelling and punctuation, proper grammar, and clarity of expression. Furthermore, no article or column herein should be construed to be a comprehensive study of the subject under consideration.*

*\*\*We gratefully extend our appreciation to Mr. Keith J. Daniels, of North Smithfield, Rhode Island, for his work in supplementing the research that allowed us to produce the article entitled "The Wonder Of Wonders' ", which was featured in this issue of The Ryburn Christian Clarion.*

## ***Awaiting His Return...***

*We pause for a moment to reflect and to sadly acknowledge the passing of a beloved pastor, and tremendous brother in Christ. On Tuesday, November 3, 2009, Dr. Stephen J. West fell asleep in Christ, and now silently awaits the return of his risen Lord and Savior. Born in January of 1956, Stephen was a native of Dayton, Ohio, who later served honorably in the United States Marine Corps. In his forties, he founded Akribos Theological Seminary (in Huber Heights, Ohio), and served as its first chairman of the board, before leaving that post earlier this year. His vision was to establish a Christian academy that would train loving servant-leaders, equipped with accurate Biblical knowledge, who could ably minister within the Body*

*of Christ. By God's grace, this goal was realized before his passing. Stephen's labors in the Lord will have a ripple effect among God's people for years to come, and his absence will be deeply felt by many.*