



The Ryburn Christian Clarion

BIBLICAL STUDIES RESOURCE

Upholding the Accuracy of the God-Breathed Word

Vol. VII, No. 2

© Win.-Spr., 2010

The Ryburn Christian Clarion, 420 Ryburn Avenue, Suite C-2, Dayton, Ohio 45405-2552, U. S. A.;
(general) theclarion@godslivingroom.com; (submissions) kejamison.rd@gmail.com; www.godslivingroom.com

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 [].

THE YEARS THE LOCUSTS HAVE EATEN

WHEN I ARRIVED in Cincinnati as a young man, in the late spring of 1970, I was excited, and a little apprehensive. I had come to study commercial art, and every quarter of the Queen City greeted me with all its foliage and flora on display. One other thing made its ubiquitous presence known; the city was inundated by a growing cloud of locusts. They seemed to be everywhere, in all parts of town. It was impossible to go into a shop or restaurant without finding them hanging from the ceilings, or chattering noisily from every windowsill. Outside, these 17-year locusts, as they are called, flew from tree to bush to building, and got into open car windows or hitched rides on unsuspecting pedestrians. On one occasion, I walked for several blocks, unaware that one of these creatures had attached itself to my neck. When I scratched the subsequent itch, the critter flew off into the sky, leaving me surprised and flustered.

Needless to say, I survived the ordeal, which lasted for several weeks. Our history, however, and folklore are filled with similar tales. When the Mormons first settled the Great Salt Lake Valley, in the midst of the 19th Century,

continued on next page...

INSIDE AT A GLANCE

WITH CONTINUAL GRACE and mercy, God sustains this print outreach, leading us into new areas, geographically and spiritually. God's people, too, supplying energy and effort, are a vital part of this endeavor. Thank you.

“THE YEARS THE LOCUSTS HAVE EATEN” is an ominous title, but, as we shall see, it holds the promise of God's goodness. For those who, from their hearts, turn again unto the Lord, it is the assurance of His mercy.
by Rick Heeter, Editor-in-Chief.....1

“GOD'S MATCHLESS WORD”, this time, looks at a final section of The Word that has been used to deny women active leadership roles in The Church. We conclude our study with **“Women In The Lead For God”, Part Three**.
by Nathan R. James.....3

“FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT”: Never has the need for a stable society been more urgent, thus, from a Godly perspective, we recommend **Strong Families, Strong People: Practical Tips For Living Well Together**.
by Rick Heeter, Book Reviewer.....5

“FROM THE RESEARCH DEPARTMENT” explores how the meanings of words change over time. In **“Totally Awesome”**, we look at some “really cool,” modern terms, as well as their Biblical predecessors.
by Keith Jamison, Columnist.....6

“GOD AND COUNTRY” enters the stagnant world of 14th Century Europe, as England stands on the cusp of spiritual upheaval. **“Wycliffe And The Lollards”** make a stand for God, and pay dearly for their audacity.
by Rick Heeter, Editor-in-Chief.....8

E-mail article submissions to kejamison.rd@gmail.com.

they soon found themselves overrun by swarms of grasshoppers that threatened to devour all their early plantings, plunging the distressed homesteaders into dire circumstances.

The High Plains of the American West endured a similar onslaught in 1874, when a plague of grasshoppers covered the landscape from the Rocky Mountains to the Missouri River. Descending on homes, barns, and fields, swarms of insects began denuding the countryside of vegetation. According to Stuart Henry, one of the struggling settlers, the “hoppers” completely covered the “...grain fields, gardens, shrubs, vines...,” until they “...had been eaten down to the ground or to the bark. Nothing could be done. You sat by and saw everything go.”¹

Of course, the Holy Bible contains records of such insect infestations. In Exodus 8:17, we learn that there were “...lice throughout all the land of Egypt.” Because Pharaoh withstood the will of God, his entire nation suffered a string of such calamities. According to verse 24, because of his continued stubbornness, “...there came a grievous swarm of flies into the house of Pharaoh, and into his servants’ houses, and into all the land of Egypt...” Finally, in Exodus 10:5 and 6, Moses warned Pharaoh that his refusal to let the Children of Israel go would result in clouds of locusts that “...shall cover the face of the earth, that one cannot be able to see the earth: and they shall eat...every tree which groweth for you out of the field: And they shall fill thy houses, and the houses of all thy servants, and the houses of all the Egyptians....”

Naturally, Jews and Christians alike and a large portion of the general population know what happened, for this drama has been recounted time and time again in music, poetry, and motion pictures. The king of Egypt did not let God’s people go and, so, he and his whole nation endured a series of ten plagues, including locusts.

According to Exodus 10:13-15, an east wind blew “...upon the land all that day, and all *that* night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. And the locusts went up over all the land of Egypt, and rested in all the coasts of Egypt: very grievous *were they*; before them there were no such locusts as they, neither after them shall be such. For they covered the face of the whole earth, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every herb of the land, and all the fruit of the trees...and there remained not any green thing in the trees, or in the herbs of the field, through all the land of Egypt.”

Such vivid imagery has become a part of our collective conscience. For many, devastations like

these spell out God’s displeasure with His wandering children. To others, they indicate that the Lord’s people have simply removed themselves from the protective “umbrella” of Almighty God through their disobedient lifestyles. Whatever one believes, the truth remains that the resultant distress may be avoided, and the blessings of God accrued, but only if the heart is right before the Lord.

The nation of Israel often found itself at odds with God, falling into idolatrous practices, and leaving itself open to disaster. Around 800 B.C., the country was invaded by a ruinous plague of locusts that destroyed crops and brought to nothing the labors of the people. A merciful God, however, called out a prophet named Joel to stir and awaken His people before greater harm befell them. Joel pointed out the cause of their demise; they had turned their backs on God, and had cut off His benevolence to them.

Joel 1:13 and 14

Gird yourselves, and lament, ye priests: howl, ye ministers of the altar: come, lie all night in sackcloth, ye ministers of my God:...

Sanctify ye a fast, call a solemn assembly, gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land into the house of the LORD your God, and cry unto the LORD,

After issuing his reprimand, the first thing Joel did was to exhort the spiritual leadership, the “priests” and “ministers of the altar,” to get right with God. He then advised them to gather the “elders” and the rest of the people at a “solemn assembly,” where they could pray together for God’s mercy.

God, however, wants heartfelt repentance, not hollow actions and empty displays of sorrow. “Therefore...,” said the Lord, “...turn ye *even* to me with all your heart,...And rend [“tear” or “rip”] your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto...your God: for he *is* gracious and merciful,...and of great kindness....” (Joel 2:12 and 13) Instead of tearing their garments, which was an Oriental expression of anguish and great sorrow, God, by the mouth of Joel, told the people to “rend your heart”; let the expression of sorrow and repentance come truly from the heart. If they would do this, God would deliver them, and restore what they had lost.

Joel 2:25a and 26a

And I will restore to you the years that the locust hath eaten...

And ye shall eat in plenty, and be satisfied,...

The prophet urged God's people to repent *from the heart*. The nation's leadership could "...sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders,...and those that suck the breasts...," everyone from the oldest to the youngest, but it would be futile, lacking in deliverance, if their hearts were not honest before God. (Joel 2:16)

If, however, the hearts of the people truly turned to God, the benefits would be outstanding. God would not only bring new blessings upon them, but would also "...restore...the years that the locust hath eaten..." (Joel 2:25) He would deliver His people from their present dilemma, and would deal "...wondrously..." with them, showering upon them blessings they did not receive during their years of disobedience. (verse 26)

This is a remarkable statement, signifying God's abundant grace toward His people, even during the Law Administration. Knowing this, how much more kindly will God, our Father, deal with His New Covenant children who seek Him with *their whole heart*?

II Corinthians 3:7-9

...if the ministration of death, written and engraven in stones, was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold the face of Moses for ["on account of"] the glory of his countenance...

How shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather [or "even more"] glorious?

For if the ministration of condemnation be glory, much more doth the ministration of righteousness exceed in glory.

Using hyperbolic language, God referred to the period of law as "...the ministration of death..." and "...the ministration of condemnation..." Figuratively denigrating the Old Covenant, God elevated the Age of Grace in which we live today, emphasizing "...the ministration of the spirit..." or "...the ministration of righteousness..." dramatizing the astounding blessings that are ours if, *from our hearts*, we "...diligently seek

him." (Heb. 11:6) It also brings Ephesians 3:20, where God announces His ability to do far more than we ask or even think, into the realm of graspable possibilities.

Our ability to walk with God and experience His manifold blessings is limited only by our ability to believe Him. Indeed, once we've received His Word, the quality of our fellowship with Him is determined only by the state of our hearts before Him. To this end, God patiently revealed His Word to holy men, ultimately sending His Son to reclaim His people from the power of His ancient enemy, the Devil. Finally, He called you and I to help bring in the lost, and introduce them to the God and Creator Who loves them.

At the *Clarion*, we offer our small effort in that regard, thanking those who help us. As usual, with the first issue of each year, we extend our gratitude to the contributors of the past year's "**God's Matchless Word**" column. Ordinarily, we'd be thanking several people but, this time, Rev. Nathan R. James, of Covington, Ohio, graced the column throughout the past year with his 3-part study entitled "**Women In The Lead For God**". Part one was featured in the Spring-Summer, 2009 issue (Vol. VI, No. 3), with part two appearing in the Fall, 2009 edition (Vol. VII, No. 1), and part three being presented in this current Winter-Spring, 2010 installment (Vol. VII, No. 2). Thanks, Nathan, for a noteworthy effort.

Lastly, we offer our sincere appreciation to all who have supported us over the years. With prayers and dollars, you have proved to be indispensable. Thanks to all of you for believing God with us.

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

Endnotes:

- 1) Miers, Earl Schenck, LITT. B., M. A., L. H. D.; *The Golden Book History Of The United States*; The Golden Press, Inc. and The Ridge Press, Inc.; New York, New York (1963); Vol. 6, "Winning The West", p. 484.

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 Three

by Nathan R. James

[Editor's Note: *In this final part of this series, we shall see how a single mistranslated word has affected believing women for centuries.]*

IN THIS SERIES, we have been considering how God has included women in the spiritual leadership

of His people. With logic and careful attention to scripture, we've seen that God has not limited speaking roles in The Church to men, nor has He made a distinction between men and women when handing out spiritual gifts and callings. Perhaps the most clear verse on this subject is Galatians 3:28.

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.

Jesus Christ, in John 17:17, prayed that His followers would be sanctified by the truth. If we accept false doctrines and myths, we will not demonstrate the purity that we should as God's people, thus, throughout the epistles to Timothy and Titus, the Apostle Paul gave instructions for guiding The Church. He frequently addressed what should and should not be taught, for what is taught as truth is of vital importance to the well-being of The Church, including the topic we are considering. We, therefore, often see many verses such as the following.

I Timothy 1:3 and 4; and 6:3, 4a, and 20

As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,

Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions,...so do.

If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness;

He is proud, knowing nothing,...

O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings,...

Titus 1:10 and 11

For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers, specially they of the circumcision:

Whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole houses, teaching things which they ought not, for filthy lucre's sake.

Now, we shall turn our attention to a section in the epistle of I Timothy that has caused much difficulty. The wording in the King James Version (KJV) has contributed to the ungodly and shameful treatment of women in The Church.

I Timothy 2:12 and 13

But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over [authenteo] the man, but to be in silence.

For Adam was first formed, then Eve.

This appears to say that women cannot teach, but nothing we have studied in this series suggests this. The key here is Paul's exhortations about doctrine. Just as I Corinthians 14:34, where The Word says, "Let your women keep silence in the churches..." hinges not on who speaks but on what is spoken, even so the proper understanding and application of these verses hinge on

what is taught, rather than on who is teaching. The phrase, "I suffer not," is an obsolete expression that means, "I do not allow." Something is being forbidden here, and it is very important that we recognize just what that something is.

It may appear as though this is a broad prohibition against teaching by females, but few would take the widest possible interpretation of it. If women should not teach at all, then they should not teach Sunday school, or the third grade, or voice lessons. Surely, there must be qualifiers, for even the epistle to Titus indicates that women should be teachers.

Titus 2:1 and 3

But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

The context here again relates to "...sound doctrine..." What, then, is the qualifier that explains what sort of teaching women are not allowed to undertake? In the King James Version, it is the phrase, "...nor to usurp authority over the man..." Many individuals and churches have taken this to indicate that women may not teach men. This certainly would make it difficult for women like Junia, from Romans 16, to fulfill many leadership roles in The Church.

Romans 16:7

Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellowprisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me.

Junia is a feminine name. She was a woman and a noteworthy apostle in the First Century. How could she answer God's call to be an apostle if she could never teach? God does not limit Himself that way, nor does He limit the women He calls to service.

The simple truth is that there is a mistranslation in I Timothy 2:12. The words, "...to usurp authority over..." are a translation of a single Greek word, *authenteo*. This word is a verb that appears only once in the entire Bible, making its proper rendering essential to sound doctrine. A couple of Greek lexicons give an alternate definition that can solve our dilemma. Liddel and Scott's *Greek-English Lexicon* gives one possible translation as, "to be the author of." Similarly, *Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon Of The New Testament* says one definition of *authenteo* is, "one who does a thing himself, the author." Now, let's consider which rendering best fits this context.

First of all, from what we've seen in the previous two studies in this series, there is nothing in the Bible that gives men *general authority* over women. The husband is the "...head of the wife..." as indicated in

Ephesians 5:23, however, this is within the marriage relationship. Over and over again, scripture instructs wives to be subject to their own husbands (Eph. 5:22), not to every man who happens to walk by. What husband would appreciate that? Furthermore, the reason often given that women should not usurp authority is that man was formed first (I Tim. 2:13). How does that fit? Weren't the animals formed before man? Yes, they were, but to whom did God give the dominion? It was given to Adam and Eve.

Genesis 1:25-28

And God made the beast of the earth after his kind [or "according to its genus"], and cattle after their kind, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth after his kind: and God saw that it was good.

And God said, Let us make man in our image, after [or "according to"] our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.

And God...said unto them [male and female],...have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

The cultures from which we come exert tremendous influences over us, thus, when searching the Scriptures, we must be on guard against such cultural assumptions and biases. Part of the culture of the First Century that Timothy came up against included the myths of pagan religions that held sway throughout the eastern

Mediterranean region. One of the prevalent myths was that the first human being was a woman, and that she, herself, made man. You can see how this teaching would be directly opposed to the Word of God. Paul was simply forbidding women in The Church to teach this false doctrine. The verse in question may be rendered as, "I do not allow a woman to teach or claim authorship of man..." To teach that doctrine would be contrary to God's Word, having a corrupting influence over The Church.

When we understand that I Timothy 2:12 is a prohibition against women teaching a specific false doctrine that was rampant in the First Century, this verse fits the overall pattern of scripture. It now harmonizes very well with other verses that concern women and their roles in The Church, as well as other subjects addressed in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

God calls both men and women to serve Him. In Christ, there is no difference between male and female. Only within marriage has God set different roles for men and women. No matter what culture may say about these subjects, God's Word is truth, offering the best plan for any society, church, or individual. God is no respecter of persons, and we should imitate Him in that regard. Men can lead and women can lead; men can teach and women can teach. The Church will be much richer for recognizing the gifts and calling of God in both men and women.*

*(Rev. Nathan R. James was ordained to the Christian Ministry in August of 2009, and presently serves on the staff of **Christian Family Fellowship Ministry** of Tipp City, Ohio. Nathan lives with his wife, Rachel, in Covington, Ohio, and may be contacted by e-mail at notfromaroundhere9@yahoo.com.)*

FOR YOUR SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT

Book 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.)

Strong Families, Strong People: Practical Tips For Living Well Together

by Cathy Reichel, M. A.

IT SEEMS THAT FOR MOST of my lifetime, I've heard that the nuclear family is under assault. Well, nowadays, it's truer than ever. You would think that with all the innovations and new means of instant communication that we'd be more in touch with one another, but because of the safety and remoteness that technology offers, people are often closer to faceless individuals in cyberspace than members of their own family, however, there *are* answers. If we could just eliminate all the extraneous clamor that comes our way daily and distill everything down to what is essential, to what works, we'd really be on to something.

Enter Cathy Reichel's little book on family relationships, and what makes them work. Only 114 pages in length, ***Strong Families, Strong People: Practical Tips For Living Well Together*** is unimpressive in size, but packs a wallop with simple, common sense counsel that rests on a true spiritual foundation. Cathy's 28 years of experience in family counseling and over 37 years of Biblical study make for an ideal approach. A compilation of short articles written over a three year period for a weekly, online Christian newsletter (at www.cffm.org), each concise chapter offers practical tips for dads, moms, sons, and

daughters, encouraging all family members to slow down, communicate, and DO THINGS TOGETHER.

Nearly one hundred bite-sized chapters are grouped into seven units with headings like “Principles For Success In Strong Families,” “Attitudes That Build Strength In Families,” “Family Environment,” and “Building Spiritual Strength In The Family.” Within these units, topics like teaching your children what to want, forgiveness and thankfulness, spirituality versus religion, your family’s image, our Christian heritage, being reasonable, prayer and Bible study, and a plethora of other subjects and concerns are all tightly packed into straightforward doses of friendly counsel. A final unit, entitled “Closing Thoughts,” contains brief sharings by husband, Dale, and the three kids, Hannah, Jonathan, and Sarah, testifying to family involvement in the production of Mrs. Reichel’s book.

What’s truly beneficial is that all this advice is not just “head knowledge,” nor is it a regurgitation of popular, contemporary social or psychological theory, with a little Bible thrown in to attract the Christians. Rather, it is the result of years of lived experiences in which Cathy, a trained family counselor, along with her husband and their three kids, proved the willingness and ability of God to work within the family unit. As noted in II Peter 1:3, God’s Word contains knowledge on everything that pertains to life and godliness, and elements of that knowledge have been captured and nailed to paper in this

small volume, highlighted in eminently practical, everyday ways.

Spiritually based, clear, practical solutions to family difficulties are laid out in down-to-earth simplicity. Like the doctors’ desk reference, we have, at our fingertips, a handy tool, a handbook of sensible suggestions that work. Naturally, just owning the material and filling a narrow space on your bookshelf is not the point; putting its recommendations into practical application is. As the author observed in the book’s introduction, “...genuine, lasting happiness can only come from a sense of strength and success within the person.” To that end, this book is offered, and this review written. We invite you to see for yourself that good things *do*, indeed, come in small packages.* **

(Strong Families, Strong People: Practical Tips For Living Well Together is available for \$12, plus \$3 shipping and handling (s&h). Two copies are \$12 each, plus \$4 s&h. For orders of 3 or more books, include \$12 for each copy, and receive FREE s&h. When ordering by mail, include an order request, making checks or money orders (in U. S. funds only) payable to “Cathy Reichel.” Mail them to: Harmony At Home Press, 114 Pineapple Court, Longwood, Florida 32750, Attention: Cathy Reichel. Credit card purchasers should visit the website at www.harmonyathome.com. For more details, contact Cathy by e-mail at cathyreichel@embarqmail.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.)

“ ‘Totally Awesome’ ”

ONE OF THE KEYS that allows The Word to interpret itself is to learn the definitions of words used in the Bible according to what they meant at the time they were first spoken or recorded. Applying modern definitions to certain Biblical terms can lead to confusion. Because we are fallible human beings, we sometimes use words incorrectly, often missing the mark. The result is that, over time, the meanings of some words may change to convey what contemporary cultures believe them to mean.

A current example is the modern usage of the word “decadent.” Almost daily, one can catch TV commercials where restaurants like Red Lobster® describe their “decadent” seafood, while McDonald’s® entices you with images of “decadent” desserts. This is peculiar since the root word it comes from is “decay.” “Decadent” is an adjective derived from Latin, which, according to *The Winston Simplified Dictionary: Encyclopedic Edition* (1939), means, “deteriorating in quality; decaying or falling into ruin, declining or degenerating; or lapsing from a higher standard.” Are we then to infer that the aforementioned establishments

want us to buy their “rotten” food? The problem is that popular culture has embraced an entirely new meaning for “decadent.”

What happened is interesting. For years, the former Soviet Union railed against our “decadent Western culture.” Of course, they meant that our society was in decline and corrupting, but a whole generation of Baby Boomers took their scoldings to mean that we were overly self-indulgent. The idea stuck, so now the contemporary notion relates to partaking in sinful or excessive pleasures, resulting in the modern meaning of “decadent,” namely, “to be irresistibly enticing.” The meaning of this word has changed in my lifetime. Do you suppose the meanings of some Biblical terms have changed over the past two thousand years? Let’s see what we can find.

Our first examples, to which we alluded in the title of this article, should be obvious. Both “awesome” and “awful” come from the root “awe,” meaning, “the power to inspire fear or reverence.” “Awe” is also the reaction to great power. It can be positive, inspiring reverence, or negative, inducing fear. “Awesome,”

“inspiring some awe,” has become a frivolous, overused expression employed today almost exclusively as an exclamation. “Awful,” or “full of awe,” has degraded into a purely negative usage. It has been used so completely in this sense for so long that it has become “just awful.”

Our next examples are “terrific” and “terrible.” Both are extensions of the word “terror,” but today they have opposing meanings. Originally, forms of “terror” related the idea of great might and majesty, free from any negative connotation. For example, in Joel 2:11b, the prophet, in referring to God, said, “...*he is* strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD *is* great and very terrible...,” meaning, majestic or mighty. Consider the Russian czar, Ivan the Terrible. Many think he earned that honorific by the madness that marked his reign, but the sobriquet was applied to him as an act of veneration, to acknowledge him as a powerful leader. “Terror,” nowadays, denotes intense fear or extreme fearsomeness, but in Biblical times, it could be positive or negative, however, it always described something of great magnitude. This implicit concept of magnitude has carried over into modern times, and is what makes “terrific” mean “*very good*,” while “terrible” now means “*very bad*.”

Biblically, does the word “fear” have both a positive and negative side? It certainly does. What new Christian isn’t relieved to learn that the “fear of the Lord” refers to giving true reverence to God, rather than being afraid of Him? We can even see the differences today, if we pay attention. Consider people who handle explosives. They will tell you that you cannot *fear* them, or you will be unable to work with them, however, you must *respect* their power.

In the Bible, forms of the Greek word, *phobos*, from which we get the English word “phobia,” are translated as “fear.” Several Hebrew words, too, are rendered as “fear,” some of which mean “fear” or “terror” in the modern sense. Among them, however, is the word *yare*, meaning, “reverence.” In The Word, “fear” is sometimes used in conjunction with the word “trembling,” as in the expression, “fear and trembling.” “Trembling” is derived from the Greek word *tremor*, “to shake.” The Hebrew counterpart is *ragaz*, which generally means, “to quiver.” When used in association with “fear,” the Western mind tends to think of quaking

in terror, but this is not necessarily so. Fear is not the only thing that causes us to shake or quiver. Any strong feeling, like elation or astonishment, could do the same.

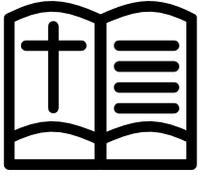
If “trembling,” in the Bible, denotes a reaction to great emotion, how can we know if the associated word, “fear,” emphasizes *fright* or *reverence*? Usually, the context will make it clear, but at times, the remoter context must be studied. This could possibly include every applicable passage in the entire Bible. For example, consider the expression “fear and trembling” in reference to our relationship with God. Does He want us to be afraid of Him, in the sense that we cower and hide? If so, why did God tell people throughout His Word to, “Fear not”? Why does He invite us to bring our cares and problems to Him? If you are afraid of someone, you don’t usually go to him for help. Since God tells us in Ephesians 3:20 that He is willing and able to do for us more than we could ever ask or think, it would seem that the “fear” we should exhibit is great respect for God’s immeasurable grace and power. Such reverence will move us to act, to obey our Father’s will. Just from this brief overview of God’s Word, we can conclude that the Oriental expression, “fear and trembling,” in essence, indicates *reverential love and obedience*. Whether we are trusting God, petitioning Him, walking His Word, sharing the Word with others, or just rejoicing in His great love for us, we are serving Him with “fear and trembling.”

As we have seen, the definitions of words and phrases can change over expanded periods, some even during our own lifetime. Since the shift in the usages and meanings of words is inexorable, looking more closely at the changes in our English words is a vital part of studying the Scriptures. Changes in language can, indeed, alter our entire perspective of particular subjects in The Word, and we should do our best to stay abreast of these transformations. As we, therefore, fear God and tremble on account of His awful terror, we should be profoundly respectful of His majesty, and moved to loving obedience because of the magnitude of His glorious might,...or something like that.*

(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.)

Asleep In Christ...

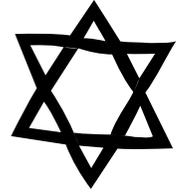
On December 14, 2009, our sister in the Lord, Marjorie Phyllis (Hand) Ogunwomoju fell asleep, and silently awaits the return of her Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will one day raise her with a glorified body unto everlasting life. She began her earthly life on July 8, 1953, growing up to enter the medical field, where she served people as a home healthcare worker and certified nursing assistant (CNA). She became a child of God at an early age and, through her deep love of the Heavenly Father, “Margie O,” as she came to be affectionately known, ably ministered the Word of God, hosting an ongoing Bible study fellowship in her home. Because of her gentle manner, her love for God and His Word, and the genuine concern she showed for those she cared for in her profession, she had a positive influence on all who knew her. We shall all one day rejoice with her, in the presence of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.



GOD

And

Country



(In this column, our editor-in-chief, Rick Heeter, will explore the Judeo-Christian heritage of America and her social and political institutions. Through this running commentary, we will discover where we came from as a people, and how we can preserve our unique, cultural identity and the liberties it fosters.)

“Wycliffe And The Lollards”

by Rick Heeter

BY THE MIDDLE OF the first millennium after the resurrection and ascension of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Holy Scriptures had been translated into over 500 languages. Sadly, however, by this time The Church had become so institutionalized and worldly that, by 600 A.D., copies of God’s Word in any language other than Latin were forbidden, under penalty of death. Jerome’s Latin Vulgate translation had been introduced in 382 A.D., and with the growing centralization of Church authority in Rome, Latin had become the preferred language among clerics.

According to Church leadership, the approval of the common folk concerning this was unimportant, for the greater part of the population of Europe at this time was illiterate. Subsequently, a schism developed, with the educated clerics on one side of the divide and the unlearned common people on the other. A split in the Body of Christ ensued that largely remains to this day, that is, the concept of a clergy and a laity. Furthermore, throughout the centuries of the Dark Ages, the clergy consolidated their power, both spiritual and temporal, over the masses, who could not read the Scriptures for themselves.

The difficulties were further compounded by Middle Ages European culture. The customs of the people, including the solidifying Church hierarchy, were far removed from those of Biblical times, making it hard for Church leaders to teach true scriptural doctrine, and even harder for the masses to grasp. Church activity became overlaid with regional traditions, along with ceremonies and rituals often extrapolated from pagan sources. Eventually, an entire culture developed in which The Church played a central and increasingly prominent role in every aspect of a person’s life, from the cradle to the grave. Meanwhile, the great truths of the Scriptures languished in obscurity, awaiting rediscovery.

There were, as we have seen, occasional glimmers of light, in widely scattered places. Enclaves of hope arose infrequently in Africa, or in the mountainous

areas of the Middle East or southern Europe, places where people clung tenaciously to fragments of the knowledge of God. Finally, around 995 A.D., an Anglo-Saxon rendering of the Bible, containing the rudiments of the developing English language, was produced, despite the prohibition of Rome regarding versions other than the Latin. There was now a hairline crack in the errant Church’s armor.

God, of course, was not inactive, but revealed Himself to the extent that the hearts of men allowed. In England, where, after the signing of the Magna Charta in 1215, the notion of personal liberty was taking root, God found fertile ground in the heart of an Oxford professor and theologian named John Wycliffe. Believing the teachings of the organized Church to be generally opposed to the Word of God, in the late 1300s, Wycliffe became a proponent of the Bible in English, for the sake of the souls of his countrymen.

This was a seminal moment in the history of Western Civilization, for the emergence of civil liberties and the rediscovery of genuine spirituality intertwined and began to grow in tandem. John Wycliffe and his faithful followers, the Lollards, found themselves at the confluence of these two harmonious, social movements and, at the risk of life and limb, believed God, and set the cornerstone for a free America. The significance of their contributions is such that we must pause to further examine and revel in their courage, which we are going to take the time to do in our next column.*

(Look for “GOD And Country” in every other issue of The Ryburn Christian Clarion. Join us as Rick Heeter, the Clarion’s editor-in-chief, examines the Biblical foundations of America.)

(Mr. Rick Heeter is the editor-in-chief, a columnist, and the book and music reviewer for The Ryburn Christian Clarion.)

**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.*

***Quotations accompanying the book review of Strong Families, Strong People: Practical Tips For Living Well Together, by Cathy Reichel, M. A., are used by permission of the author.*