

## A Consecrated Life, Part IV

(A Life Devoted to God)

### Daniel 6

This month's lesson, *Stay on Track*, will focus on Daniel's courage and commitment to Jehovah God. Just like in chapter three, jealousy has raised its ugly head again, but this time the target is Daniel. There is a lot of talk these days about *Haters*. This is my definition: "*Haters*" could be, but are not necessarily, enemies. Because of jealousy and envy they refuse to acknowledge any good you do, have done or will do. They'd rather keep silent than acknowledge or encourage you. Although they may not help you, they will not seek to hurt you. Conversely, enemies are those who may compliment or pretend to encourage you, but all the time, plot against you. They study you, look for weaknesses, and devise ways to take you down. These are ENEMIES! Daniel's problems emanated from the latter.

Daniel remained faithful to God throughout his Babylonian captivity. He was known for his intelligence, wisdom, ability to interpret dreams, and for his practice of praying to God three times daily. Darius is now King of Babylon, and he loves Daniel because of his excellent spirit. Though Daniel was a captive from Judah, he was given power, authority and position over many others in that land. King Darius planned to appoint 120 administrators and give Daniel authority over all of them.

Unfortunately, Daniel had many enemies. After learning of the king's plan to promote him, some became jealous and began to look for ways to annihilate him. They plotted and looked for ways to discredit him, but could not find anything to use except for his devotion to God. What a wonderful testimony! Wouldn't it be great if the worse thing someone could say about us is that we are really devoted to the Lord?

Daniel's enemies played on the king's pride and wrote a decree, stating that no one in Babylon could pray to any god but the king. The king was not aware that this was all a plot to kill his beloved friend Daniel; so he signed the decree. After Daniel was told of the new law that was to be honored for thirty days, he went into his house, opened up the window, and prayed as usual. What courage and commitment he demonstrated!

King Darius was distraught after learning about the charges brought against his friend, but had no power to change the law. The laws of the Medes and Persians were irrevocable. Daniel was thrown into the lion's den, but God locked the mouths of the lions and he was saved. However, those who plotted against Daniel, along with their families, were thrown into the same lion's den they had planned for him. Don't be guilty of plotting anyone's downfall, especially someone devoted to God. God sees all! He will repay!

Sisters and brothers, Daniel stayed on track and never wavered concerning his faith. Let's ask God to help us to be as faithful!

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## A Consecrated Life, Part V

(A Life Devoted to God)

Daniel 10:7-12, 12:13, John 14:1-6, Revelation 22:7

Last month's topic admonished us to *Stay on Track*. This month's topic advises us to *Keep Watching*. It is the last of a five part series entitled, "A Consecrated Life." This title was chosen to highlight those whose lives were wholly devoted to God's service. Are you wholly devoted to God? Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and our Lord Jesus while He was on earth, lived their lives totally devoted to God.

It's important to *keep watching* as we wait for the blessed return of our Savior. In Daniel chapter 10, we see Daniel in a period of mourning for three weeks. He was given a revelation from God. An angel was sent to give him the meaning of the message through a vision. While standing on the bank of the Tigris River with his companions, the Lord's angel, dressed in fine linen and with a gold belt around his waist, appeared. Only Daniel was given the privilege of seeing this vision. That lets me know that God does not always intend for everyone to recognize or see the vision He's given to us. For a time the vision maybe for our eyes only! Some may do as Daniel's companions did in chapter 10. They ran away with fear, because they did not understand what was occurring.

The angel assured Daniel that God heard his prayer the moment he prayed, but the Prince of Persia delayed the answer. God sent Michael, the Archangel, to fight with him to release it. That's why we can't give up when we pray. We must be steadfast and unmovable, believing that God is working things out on our behalf. God will hear our prayer, and its answer will be released at the appointed time.

In John chapter 14, Jesus prepares the disciples for His departure. He tells them that He's going away to prepare a place for them to be with Him in the future. They did not fully comprehend what He was saying. Thomas said to him, "*Lord, we do not know where you are going, so how can we know the way?*" Jesus answered, "***I Am the Way, the Truth and the Life.***" Brothers and sisters keep watching for Jesus, because there is no other way to the Father but through the Son!

Finally, in Revelation 22:7 Jesus leaves His final words of encouragement for His followers. Jesus says, "***Look, I'm coming soon! Blessed is the one who keeps the words of prophecy in this book.***" Upon hearing the word of God, John fell to his face and began worshipping the messenger. He was told to stand, because the one

delivering the message was a servant, just like him. His words to John and to us was,  
***"Worship God!"***

Sisters and brothers, be vigilant, and keep watching, because Jesus is coming back!

Merry Christmas to Everyone!

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## **PRAISE IS WHAT I DO**

My earliest exposure to the Word of God was as a small child listening to my mother's daily morning Praise and Worship Service! Before daylight my mother woke up singing love songs, praise songs and praying to her Heavenly Father. She sang and prayed while preparing to get her children off to school and get herself to work. As a small child I didn't understand why she carried on so. As a teenager I sometimes resented her morning routine, because it disturbed my sleep before I was really ready to get up. Her praise and worship tortured me on mornings when I had stayed up late talking on the phone the night before, instead of doing my homework and going to bed at a decent hour.

Subconsciously my mother's daily praise and worship implanted God's Word in my heart. The Word kept my spirit in check whenever sin had an opportunity to tempt me. Through the words of my mother's songs, I learned to love Jesus with all my heart, mind, body and soul. I learned that He first loved me, and He suffered bled and died so I might live eternally. I learned that we are Christian soldiers in a spiritual battle, and that we are to put on the whole armor of God in order to stand against the fiery darts of the devil. I learned that I would go through the storms of life; however, with Jesus I would make it through victoriously.

My mother's songs inspired me to learn more about Jesus. Paul's instruction to study to show yourself approved unto God became invaluable to my Christian Walk. My studies have confirmed that Jesus is always the answer. Studying the Word has made me thankful. I thank God who sent His Son. I thank His Son who so willingly came that we might live the abundant life. I also thank the Holy Ghost that comforts me and never leaves me alone. I thank my mother too for waking me up early in the morning. When I did not want to be disturbed she forced God's Word into my spirit. I now appreciate her intimate relationship with God.

Now, like my mother, praise lifts my spirit no matter what I'm going through. My praise is a release of my cares, fears and doubts. I take everything to the only true and living God who gladly takes my problems and solves them. Through praise I can enter the Holy of Holies and rest in my Jesus' arms, and I can bask in the peace that passes all understanding.

Madeliene Lorraine Banks Mitchell



Sister Madeliene was born in St. Louis, Missouri, but she was raised in San Francisco since infancy. She is a woman who truly loves the Lord and is not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ. Sister Madeliene is the mother of four biological children, one adopted child and has fostered many others. She is the proud grandmother of twenty-two and great-grandmother of six.

Sister Madeliene retired from United Airlines after thirty-four years of dedicated service. She is a member of Revival Center Ministries under the leadership of Apostle Ricky Nutt, where she serves as an usher. She is looking forward to returning to Haiti in June of 2015, on her second Missionary Sojourn.

## Becoming the Greatest

(Take the Stairs and Avoid the Elevator)

*He had a dream in which he saw a stairway resting on the earth, with its top reaching to heaven, and the angels of God were ascending and descending on it. Genesis 28:12 NIV*

Deep inside almost everyone desires to be great in some way. On the playground children chatter about who's the greatest dodgeball players, kickball players or marble shooters. This chatter soon gives way to talk of the greatest dancer, video-gamer or dresser. Soon we set our sights on personal greatness with a desire to achieve our potential. Everyone is in a hurry to become the greatest that she can be.

Fortunately the greatest self-help book of all times, the Bible, gives us a lot of tips on achieving greatness. Of all the great Bible men and women, Jacob stands out as one who learned the hard way that becoming great is often a lengthy step-by-step process that is designed to make you grow into your destiny.

In Genesis 28, Jacob was running from his twin brother, Esau, who vowed to kill him for stealing his birthright. This is the modern day equivalent of stealing his brother's inheritance. Jacob had used lies and deception to get everything. Ultimately getting too much too soon made him one of the "Most Wanted" and an outcast. Yet, Jacob knew that his greatness was prophesied before he was born.

What's wrong with expediting the process when you know that you are born to be great? Well, while running for his life Jacob had a dream about a stairway stretching from earth to heaven with angels ascending and descending. Scholars interpret the stairway as a connection between God and man. However, the vision suggests another basic truth that God leads us step-by-step to our destiny. There is no express elevator to our destiny, because each step along the way is important to our growth.

Psalm 37:23, says "[t]he steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way." Each step in life's journey strengthens and prepares us for the next step. Jacob ultimately amassed great wealth and had twelve sons and a daughter, but along the way he learned to work hard for what he wanted. Jacob learned that sometimes he worked hard and things didn't turn out the way he expected, but God even used his failures to build a great legacy. Ultimately, he learned to be a great Dad and make sacrifices to protect his family.

God has a stairway for each of us. Only by ascending those stairs can we reach our own personal greatness. It takes time to go from one step to the next. However, like Jacob, God's plan is for us to learn that greatness is about sacrifice and service to others. (*But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. Matthew 23:11.*) He sent Jesus to show us that the steps to greatness

take time and patience. So, when your personal quest for greatness seems to lead to an endless series of steps, remember Jacob and avoid the elevator button.

# I WILL BLESS HIM

## Psalms 34:1-4, 8

*1. I will bless the Lord at all times: his praise shall continually be in my mouth. 2. My soul shall make her boast in the Lord: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad. 3. O magnify the Lord with me, let us exalt his name together. 4. I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. 8. O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him.*

**THE CHOICE -- Psalm 34:1** David's declaration, "I WILL bless the Lord at ALL TIMES," gave me confidence to make the same counterintuitive choice during the most complicated time of my life. Throughout David's life his unbroken praise is consistent. His pattern of praise and thanksgiving, especially during the lowest points in his life, speak volumes about David's public and private adoration for God. Regardless of his challenges David made a choice to let his language and behavior always show love and gratitude to God. The Psalms are David's way of saying, "Lord I thank you for little, small, miniature, and even minuscule acts of mercy granted to me as king." When David rises to see a new day, his praises are filled with happy, celebratory expressions. The more David celebrates the Lord, the more we witness his trust in God and God's love for him.

**THE INVITATION -- Psalm 34:2-4** How awesome it is to have the privilege to boast about the Lord! Even more awesome is the opportunity to broadcast the King's glory with a stirred-up, jubilant chorus of worshippers. Oh my, what a sweet sound would cover the whole earth if we would all reverence the Lord with praise. I can only imagine what it would be like if believers would establish in the atmosphere an eternal echo of praise to the Lord. The earth would change to a heavenly place. David invites us to magnify (make large) the Lord with him and to lift His name together. Here and now David exhorts us, "*In God we boast all the day long, and praise thy name for ever.*" (Psalm 44:8.)

**THE RETURN -- Psalm 34:8** I learned so much from reading about David, and those lessons came to life during my own crisis. The most important lesson was P.U.S.H. **PRAISE UNTIL SOMETHING HAPPENS.** That is the message in "Oh taste [*open your mouth*] and see [*open your eyes*] that the Lord is GOOD: blessed is the man that trusteth in him. We experience God's presence in our praise. Truly knowing the Lord comes from our personal experiences and relationship with Him. "You got to know him for yourself," some would say. The ultimate discovery is that knowing God builds trust. Where there is trust in God, there is confidence. Where there is confidence, there is motivation for the heart, mind, body and soul to say "Yes! I will." There is a big return on an offering of praise, so . . . **make his praise glorious!** (Psalm 66:22.)





Cassandra Hughes is the Founder/Organizer of Daughters Without Dads and Families in Oakland, California. In her new normal, following the sudden death of her son, Cassandra has learned to look for “Triumphant in Tragedy.” Her life and that of her family is a testament to Psalm 34. Cassandra recognizes victorious living is a choice, she also understands the importance of serving others experiencing hopelessness. As she work for the Lord Cassandra says, **“No matter what -- I WILL!”**

## Check Your Word Works

Death and life are in the power of the tongue. (Proverbs 18:21.) When we speak we pronounce life or death -- there is no gray area. We often justify things we say, but the crucial question remains are we speaking death words or life words? The answer lies in 1 John 3:14, which clearly states that “. . . we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” Whatever is not done in love is deadly!

When we speak or serve others our motives ought to be pure and unselfish. Our words should reflect the character of our heavenly Father. When we open our mouths to speak we should ask ourselves, “Are these words uplifting and edifying, or are they discouraging and destructive?” An internal check-up is necessary, because we are responsible for everything we say or do. The Bible says, “Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, THAT shall he also reap.” No matter what gift we possess or office we walk in, if our words and deeds do not flow from love, then we are causing destruction. Do we want to reap destruction?

We commit murder with our tongues. Our words cause bloodshed or plagues in other’s souls (mind, will, emotions, intellect). This sounds harsh because we don’t want to see ourselves as murderers, but we need to check ourselves and repent daily.

Our self-check list should include truth, honesty, justice, purity, loveliness, virtue, praise and good reports. These are the things we should think on and speak on exclusively. If what we say doesn’t meet all eight criteria above we need to keep it out of our mouths. Often words may meet one of the criteria but not the others and cause damage, hurt and pain. For example, just because something is true doesn’t mean it is lovely, pure or of a good report. Examine the motive for speaking truth. Is it to uplift or edify, which brings life? Or is it to destroy and damage, which brings death?

Does destruction or production happen when we open our mouths? James asks whether bitter and sweet water can come from the same fountain. No! However, the tongue is an unruly evil no man can tame. It can spew both bitter and sweet words. We need to get in the presence of God to tame our tongues so they speak life. We need hot coals from the altar to cleanse our lips, so we will speak words that bring abundant life.

Beloved ask the Father to cleanse and heal you now. Your words come from the heart, and out of the heart flows the issues of life. Hurting people hurt people.

Father, I repent of committing murder with my tongue and I ask you to heal me. I need your Holy Spirit to guide me and direct my tongue to speak life. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.

Maya Scott



Maya Scott is humbly God's servant, and she desires to please Him in all aspects of her life. She is pushing towards her destiny and all God has for her as she teaches HIS word, prays for HIS people, counsels young women and the young at heart, and speaks what HE speaks to her to encourage, uplift and edify the Body of Christ in whatever way HE leads. She loves to worship and be in HIS presence.

She is married to Pastor Anthony Scott Sr., and is the mother of five sons and three grandsons with another coming soon. She is the daughter of Madeliene Mitchell who she honors for keeping her anchored in unconditional love.

# **A Consecrated Life - Part I**

(Dedication to the Service of God)

I just completed a week of awesome studies at vacation Bible school. This year's theme was "Journey off the Map." The focus was on witnessing and evangelism. On the first night, God opened up the heart of a 10-year-old young man who immediately accepted Christ when the invitation was extended. I would like to share an overview of each night's lesson that had a tremendous impact on both the young and the more mature saints. I will share Monday's topic in this article, and the other topics thereafter, if the Lord is willing.

If one is going on a journey and wishes to arrive at a desired destination, it is always helpful to have a guide. Our destination as believers is to be eternally in the presence of Jesus, who is our Guide. Monday's topic was "**Know Your Guide.**" The study opened, as shown below, with the uniqueness of Jesus' birth, ministry, death and resurrection:

**Uniqueness of His Birth** – Jesus' mother was a virgin. He was not a product of human effort, but a Holy child, whose blood was untainted, because He possessed the blood of His heavenly father. He was born in a lowly stable, not a palace, in the town of Bethlehem.

**Uniqueness of His Ministry** - Jesus' public ministry began at the age of thirty and lasted approximately three and a half years. He was a practicing Jew who went to the synagogue on the Sabbath Day. He traveled to many areas teaching and preaching the kingdom of God. He healed many who were sick and performed numerous miracles. He mentored and prepared His disciples for ministry after His departure.

**Uniqueness of His Death** - Jesus came to this earth to die for the world's sins. No one else was qualified, because blood was required. All of mankind's blood is polluted due to Adam's sin, but Jesus' blood was pure and undefiled. He was buried in a borrowed tomb, because He would only need it for three days.

**Uniqueness of His Resurrection** - There is no other person who claimed to be deity that has risen from the dead. Just the fact that Jesus rose from the dead is unique within itself. We don't serve a dead God. Our God is ALIVE and WELL! He sits on the right hand of the Father, interceding on our behalf. His Spirit lives in the hearts of believers.

Sisters and brothers, it is important to get to know your Guide. Remember, in order to be effective witnesses, we must have firsthand knowledge regarding the person on whose behalf we speak. Hearsay testimony is not admissible. You have to know Him for yourself!

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## **A Consecrated Life - Part II**

### Daniel 1

(Dedication to the Service of God)

In last month's article we talked about the importance of *Knowing Your Guide*. This month we will see the rewards in *Following Your Guide*.

To follow is defined as, *to go or come after; to move behind in the same direction*.

Does it seem strange to you that someone would have a guide and yet refuse to follow him or her? That's exactly what some believers do. We make a decision to confess Jesus as Savior and Lord and then refuse to follow Him with our whole hearts. However, this is not the case of Daniel and his three Hebrew companions, Haniniah, Mishael and Azariah. They were brought to Babylon after Jerusalem was defeated to serve in the court of King Nebuchadnezzar. These four young men were approximately 15 years old. They were handsome, intelligent and were from royal families.

The first thing their captors did was change their names. In changing one's name, it suggests forgetting one's identity and receiving a new one. Their captors took away their names that were tied to their God and gave them names that were associated with the Babylonian gods.

Two basic Hebrew names for God are El and Yahweh. Daniel and Mishael's names refer to EL while Haniniah and Azariah's names refer to Yah in Yahweh.

- Daniel, "**God is My Judge**" name was changed to Belshazar meaning "**Bel protect the King**"
- Haniniah, "**The Lord Shows Grace**" was changed to Shadrach which means "**Royal or Great Scribe**"
- Mishael, "**Who is like God?**" name was changed to Meshach which means "**Who is like Aku?**"
- Azariah, "**The Lord Helps**" was changed to Abednego which is interpreted "**Servant of Nebo.**"

Daniel and his friends were given rich food to eat from the king's table, but asked permission to eat a diet of fruit and vegetables that was more suited to their dietary laws. After the designated time ended, Daniel and his friends looked better than those who ate the king's food. Though he was in captivity, Daniel never forgot who he was and whose he was. He was not influenced by the culture in which he lived, but determined in his heart that he would not defile himself with what was not allowed by God.

Daniel's resolve to not compromise caused him to gain favor with those in authority. When you honor God by following His instructions, He honors you. Sisters and brothers, let's not allow the world to influence our behavior and cause us to walk in disobedience. Let's follow our Guide!

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## Trusting God's Promises

God is not a man, so He does not lie. He is not human, so  
He does not change His mind. (Numbers 23:19 NLT)

We are all accustomed to hearing promises. At some point in time we have made promises or others have made promises to us. Unfortunately some of those promises were broken. Excuses such as forgetting or circumstances beyond human control help to explain the reason for not keeping a promise. But no excuse changes the consequences of a broken promise.

I remember moving to California from Alabama. I had raised my nephew from three weeks old until he was almost five. I took him everywhere I went. He thought I was his mother. I slipped away from him when I moved in order to avoid hurting him. He was so hurt that later I made the situation worse by **promising** I would take him to California with me when I returned to Alabama for my first visit.

Regretfully, when I returned I was still living with my play sister and could not bring him. Until this day it hurts me to think of the grief I saw on his little face as I told him that he could not come with me. He looked at me sad, disappointed and crying as he said, "But you PROMISED ME!" He learned too early the hurtful effect of people changing their minds and breaking promises.

If people are hurt by broken promises, then just imagine how God feels. God expects us to keep our promises. Moses warned, "This is what the Lord commands: When a man makes a vow to the Lord or takes an oath to obligate himself by a pledge, he must not break his word but must do everything he said." *Numbers 30:1-2 (NIV)*. We must be careful when making promises to God because of the dangerous consequences.

When you make a vow to God, do not delay to fulfill it. He has no pleasure in fools; fulfill your vow. It is better not to make a vow than to make one and not fulfill it. Do not let your mouth lead you into sin. And do not protest to the temple messenger, "My vow was a mistake." Why should God be angry at what you say and destroy the work of your hands? *Ecclesiastes 5:4-6 (NIV)*

It is far better not to say you will do something than to say you will and then not do it.

Unlike us, GOD is a PROMISE keeper. When God made a promise to Abraham he swore by himself, because there was no one greater by whom he could swear. (*See, Numbers 22:16, Hebrews 6:13.*) His promises to us include: forgiveness, the Holy Spirit, prosperity, peace, protection, health, wisdom, and resurrection. God's greatest promise is eternal life through His precious Son, Jesus Christ. His promises guarantee fulfillment without disappointment.

Are you willing to trust God's promises?



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# Get Your Bounce Back

John 10:10, Romans 8:35-39

The word of God found in John 10:10 tells us that the enemy (Satan) comes only to steal, kill and destroy. Reviewing this past year, one can conclude that he is fulfilling his mission. He has stolen someone's joy and peace and has killed and/or destroyed someone's dream or vision for his or her family, ministry or business. He has brought about great loss through the loss of good health or the death of a loved one. He has caused others to lose their homes, businesses or other property. Satan's goal is to render us hopeless and useless for the kingdom. He uses discouragement and disappointment to achieve this goal.

In spite of all of these things, we can be encouraged. Jesus said He came to give us life in abundance. There is nothing that the enemy can do or send our way that Jesus cannot turn around for our good. That's why I always look forward to the New Year. It offers a new beginning! Opportunities to regroup, rekindle passion and recover what was stolen present themselves. Unrealized dreams and second chances possibly can be attained in the New Year.

Until Jesus returns, Satan will remain on his mission; but I want you to make up in your mind to *Get Your Bounce Back*. No one said this journey would be easy but Jesus promised to be with us always, even until the end of the world. Don't allow Satan to cause you to lose your purpose or to become stagnated. No, don't just sit there and have a pity party, start moving and tell yourself that you will not be defeated, and that you will fulfill your God-given purpose here on earth.

The Apostle Paul says it so well in Romans 8:35-39, and it reads as follows:

***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? As it is written: "For your sake we face death all day long; we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."(NIV)***

Brothers and Sisters enter this New Year determined more than ever to *Get Your Bounce Back!*

Happy New Year!



## God Will Provide

On the morning of the ministry's monthly convalescent home visit, I was asked to bring words of encouragement to the patients and staff. I asked the Lord what should I tell His people, and He spoke to my heart regarding His provision.

I was reminded of the story of the Prophet Elijah and the widow of Zarephath, found in 1 Kings 17: 7-15. Earlier in the chapter, Elijah prophesied to Ahab that there would be a drought in the land and that it would end only at his (Elijah's) behest. The Lord instructed Elijah to leave his present location and go east to the Kerith Ravine and drink from that brook. God instructed Ravens to bring food to the Prophet in the morning and evening while he was there. Then the brook dried up.

Later the Lord instructed the Prophet to go to Zarephath where He (the Lord) had instructed a widow to feed him. When he arrived at the gate, a widow was there collecting sticks. The Prophet asked her for water and a piece of bread. She explained to him that she did not have any. She said that she only had a little flour in a jar and a little oil. She stated she just had enough to make a little cake for herself and her son to eat.

The Prophet Elijah assured her that it would be replenished if she would agree to make him a cake first and then one for herself and her son. She followed his instructions, and the flour and the oil miraculously lasted until the drought was over.

Sisters and brothers, God will provide! The Prophet Elijah, the widow and her son were all important to God, and you are important to Him, too. God knows your needs. He promised to supply all of our needs, according to His riches in glory (Philippians 4:19). Sometimes He uses supernatural means as He did using the ravens to feed the prophet. He can also provide for us by using someone we may or may not know to help us. I'm not concerned about the method He uses to provide; that's His business. I'm just grateful that we serve a faithful God who cares and is concerned about the things that concern us. There is a song that says, "Anyway you bless me Lord, I'll be satisfied, as long as I know it's you Lord, I'll be satisfied." Sisters and brothers, God will provide!

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## It's So Hard to Say Goodbye to Yesterday

The words in this title were made famous in the early 90's by the popular group Boyz II Men. Their simple song about the difficulty of letting the past go rests on a complex concept. Yesterday, which is something that we cannot get back, can at times seem so difficult to let go. Even though we have no power to control yesterday, we want to hold on to it. The important question we should ask ourselves is, "What is it about yesterday that makes us so afraid to say goodbye?"

Some of us lost loved ones. For others our financial situations, cars, status or even a love that went astray makes us want to hold on to yesterday. An interesting thing about reflecting on the past is how rapidly our moods change. We can easily go from a high of remembering how good we looked, how fast we ran, how much money we had or other great times. This can quickly turn to the reality of our current situation. It's not to say that what we have now is not as good as what we had then, but it's just a difference we may choose to accept grudgingly. Regardless of what Boyz II Men said, nothing in this world is meant to last forever. There are some things we just have to let go even if it hurts.

Fear of the unknown may make it hard to say goodbye to yesterday. Things will be different. What are we supposed to do now? How can we possibly go on? We may feel all alone. Deuteronomy 31:6 says "**Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the LORD your God goes with you, he will never leave you nor forsake you.**" God is with us, so let's stop focusing on what was, and begin embracing the promises that God has for our lives. Philippians 3:13 says, "**I do not consider, brethren, that I have captured *and* made it my own [yet]; but one thing I do [it is my one aspiration]: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead.**" (Amplified.) Great times are ahead.

In this changing world full of yesterdays we should be happy to know that as Christians we have a Savior whose love for us is unconditional and unchanging. Jesus was there with us yesterday when times were good. Jesus was with us yesterday when we needed to be lifted up. He is here with us today in our current situation. He will be here with us tomorrow to celebrate our victories and tackle the new obstacles that life will inevitably throw our way. Because we know that "life happens," we appreciate that Jesus just happens to be here.

Being human makes it hard to say goodbye, but being a Christian makes it easy to say hello to what lies ahead. Be blessed.

Ian M. Freeman



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## “Thy Will Be Done In Earth, As It Is In Heaven”

Matthew 6:10

Jesus saw God’s will as the just and good, sovereign wisdom governing all things. He accepted God’s will without question. Unlike Jesus, we put too much confidence in our own wisdom. While God is our heavenly father, he does not want to crush our wills and make us slaves. Instead, by His will He wants to eliminate conflict and destructive tensions in life and help us live a life of harmony and peace.

We miss out on harmony and peace when we resist God’s will. This is the price we pay for departing from God's will like sheep gone astray who have turned everyone to his own way. (Isaiah 53:6.) We go astray in our conversations, our conduct, our choices and our careers. Our frustrations and sleepless nights are the results of ignoring God's will.

The way angels submit to the will of God in heaven should be our example here on earth. To the degree that we follow this heavenly example of submission, we cooperate with God in establishing His kingdom here on earth. God wants us to experience the holy happiness and harmony of a heavenly life here and now. This is the abundant life that Jesus spoke of and that He is eager to make a reality for each of us. With this purpose in mind Jesus gave us instructions on how to pray for heavenly happiness on earth.

Jesus taught His disciples to pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." His model prayer is a divine blueprint for building a rewarding life that is completely satisfying to the heart. The blueprint includes adoption into the family of God, as Jesus said, “whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother.” (Matthew 12:50.) The plan also provides immediate access to the kingdom for those who follow the prayer and actually do God’s will on earth. (Matthew 7:21.) Jesus made this clear when He said, “The kingdom of God does not come with observation; nor will they say ‘See here!’ or ‘See there!’ For indeed, the kingdom of God is within you.” (Luke 17:20-21. NKJV)

If we want to experience heaven on earth, then our first concern must be God's will, God's way, and God's work. When God's will takes first place in our lives, our attitudes, ambitions and actions reflect the glory of God. Let’s resolve to pray sincerely and regularly, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven," and do God's will.

## Mamie Burgess

Mamie Burgess is a member of the San Francisco Christian Center and the Daughters of Zion. She is a retired Registered Nurse who loves to help others by volunteering her time to programs such as the Oceanview Merced Ingleside Community Center. She is a willing worker and fills in wherever she is needed.

## Touch Tenderly With Your Tongue

*James 3:5-10 (KJV)*

*<sup>5</sup> Even so the tongue is a little member, and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! <sup>6</sup> And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity: so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. <sup>7</sup> For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind: <sup>8</sup> But the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. <sup>9</sup> Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. <sup>10</sup> Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be.*

Make it your job to touch all Christians tenderly with your tongue. The tongue is the smallest member of the body, yet it can cause so much destruction. It can build up and bless, or it can tear down and destroy. The choice is yours. Think about the cliché, “Sticks and stones may break my bones but names will never hurt me.” This is an out-right lie. Name calling and negative comments can and do hurt. They cause hurt that can run so deep that the pain is immeasurable.

The scripture compares our tongues to the kindling of a fire. If not kept under control, a fire can do so much damage. Every year wild fires destroy homes, acres of land and everything in their path. Their destructive forces often touch things that can never be restored. So when you speak, think about of this analogy prior to deciding what you will say.

However, avoiding destruction and hurt is not about speaking in a manner that is politically correct. We should lovingly speak the truth without apology. Speaking the truth in love ensures that Christians remain grounded in sound doctrine. This is how you build up others and build unity in the body of Christ.

As members of the body of Christ you have a responsibility to think before you speak. Before you open your mouth ask yourself these questions:

Can and will God get the glory from what I am about to say?

Will what I say bless this individual or individuals?

How would I receive what I am about to say?

Also, remember the Golden Rule (Matthew 7:12). Simply put, the rule is to treat people like you would like to be treated. God is holding you and me accountable for all we do and say. Do you want to explain how you can come in and give God all the praise, and then tear down your brothers and sisters? My sister, my brother reading this be mindful that God expects us to watch what we say. Make it your job to touch all Christians tenderly with your tongue.



Evangelist Anika Evans is an active member of the Calvary Hill Community Church of San Francisco, California, pastored by Rev. Dr. Joseph Bryant, Jr. Currently, she serves as Worship Leader, Director of the Music Ministry, Prayer Warrior for the Intercessory Prayer Team and a member of the Ministerial Alliance. Evangelist Evans received a degree in Christian Ministry from the Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in 2009.

She is an award winning Gospel Recording Artist and the mother of two daughters -- Ki'mani Lyn and Ki'ara Lynae Evans. Called, anointed, appointed and assigned by God, Evans was publically affirmed and commissioned as an Evangelist in October of 2014.

## Love Drives Out Fear

1 John 4:18

The person who loves God with his whole heart has no fear of death, judgement or hell, because this kind of whole-hearted, perfected love guarantees access to God.

1 John 4:17 speaks of boldness, which naturally leads to a discussion on the opposite subject of fear. John says that perfect love produces courage in the day of judgement, because it makes us like Christ who is the judge. In the text he explains and expands on that statement when he notes that there is another way in which love produces boldness. It casts out fear.

A number of years after Jesus resurrection and ascension, the early church struggled to figure out what it looked like to live faithfully for God. During that period John wrote to believers instructing them on how to live. He wrote, “There is no fear in love, but perfect love drives out fear, because fear includes punishment, and the one who is afraid has not been perfected in love.” (1 John 4:18 *Lexham English Bible*.)

All of us naturally live with some degree of fear. Some of us are concerned about job security, rent or mortgage payments. Others harbor anxieties about health or family concerns. And though most days it’s not on our minds, some have a quiet, lingering fear of death. The world offers a number of solutions for our fears. It suggests that the right doctor or life coach will teach us how to live without fear.

The scriptures, however, declare that love casts out fear. Your love for God and God’s love for you set you free from all fear. 2 Timothy 1:7 says “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.”

Are you prone to fear and anxiety? What things do you worry about most often?

God invites you to release your fears and be filled with His perfect love.





Minister Vanessa Bailey is an active member of the Olivet Missionary Baptist Church of San Francisco, California where Rev. Steven A. Bailey is Pastor. Minister Bailey serves as the Praise and Worship Leader, Assistant to the Youth Pastor, and Director of the New Members Class. She received her license to preach in December of 2006, at the age of 22, and she has been on fire for the Lord ever since. She is the wife of Deacon Aaron Bailey and they have two children – Markayla (12) and Alanie (5) – and another child on the way. Minister Bailey understands that she cannot do anything without God, and more importantly, that with God all things are possible.

## The Prayer of a Desperate Woman

The story of Hannah is an inspiration to most women, especially for those who have had trouble conceiving. As Mother's Day approaches, I am reminded of the prayer of this desperate woman. Hannah was Elkanah's favorite wife. Although he lavished her with gifts and favor, there remained a void in her heart. She was unable to conceive. Rachel, the favorite wife of Jacob, also had trouble conceiving and said to him, "Give me a child less I die" (Genesis 30:1). The inability to conceive probably does not mean much to many today; but during biblical times, to be a barren woman was viewed as a curse from God.

We learn in 1 Samuel, chapter one why Hannah was not satisfied with just being Elkanah's favorite. His other wife, Penninah, had a number of sons and daughters. She was jealous of the love that he had for Hannah. Since she could not control how he felt about her, she looked for ways to make Hannah's life miserable. She taunted her regularly about her inability to conceive. Sometimes one is blessed in one area so much that folks become jealous. Whichever areas in which one is lacking, enemies try to use them to taunt and hurt.

In those days, it was the custom to go to Shiloh yearly to worship. While there, Hannah arose early in the morning and began to seek God and pray that He would open up her womb. She was a desperate woman who didn't care about what anyone thought about her. She was willing to do whatever it took to get God's attention. Have you ever felt so desperate about something that you thought you would die if God did not intervene? That's how Hannah felt!

Hannah's prayer was such that the Priest Eli thought she was drunk with wine. Although she prayed with all her heart, her words were not audible. She prayed within her heart and wept. I don't know about you, but I've been in that position. It took me years after marriage to conceive; and after conceiving, I was ill throughout the pregnancy. I remembered how my mother prayed for us, calling us by name; so I began to pray for myself and my unborn child.

Hannah prayed and asked God to look on her affliction, and give her a male child who she would dedicate to Him (God). God answered Hannah's prayer and blessed her with a son whom she named Samuel, meaning, "Asked of God."

Because of the prayer of a desperate woman, the Prophet Samuel was born. Women, make sure your children hear you pray for them. They will be strengthened, and in turn, will know how to pray for their children. God answers prayer, even the prayer of a desperate woman!

Happy Mother's Day!

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## REFLECT

This is the time of year we traditionally set aside to reflect on God's goodness. The year 2014 brought us wedding bells and newborns. We also had sickness and the loss loved ones, but through it all God has been with us. He was there through the difficult moments. God, because of His goodness, stopped bad situations from getting worse. When we said "Lord, I don't know how I'm going to get through this," God already had a plan. We kept the faith and believed God would give us everything we needed to get through. Now here we are in a new year.

Throughout the Psalms David reminds us to take the time to look back on our lives and reflect on the goodness of God. He encourages us to praise God for His greatness, His compassion and His faithfulness. He instructs us to thank God for His many gifts. David's message is like that in the old hymn telling us to "count your blessings, name them one by one."

Read Psalm 145 again. Take some time alone to reflect on every part of this psalm. Look back on the past years, and trace God's hand that provided you with everything you needed. In spite of everything that happens, God is always there. He never leaves us, nor forsakes us. Most important, He gave us the greatest gift imaginable -- the gift of his only Son, Jesus. If that did not impress you, then think about the very breath you are taking, for that is also a gift from God.

Think of how generous God is toward us. When God looks at us, (I'm sure He laughs -- HA! HA!) with all our baggage, with all our junk, with all our hang-ups, all He wants to do is bless us. His love for us outshines our flaws. His perfect love enables Him to look beyond our sins. Through God's love our needs are supplied. When we ask He blesses us with our wants in addition to our needs. God's desire to have a relationship with us is so great, that He cannot wait to bless us and to pour out on us that which makes us happy. He does not bless us because we deserve it, instead He does it because He loves us. God's love for us is like a flame that is constantly burning; it surrounds us comforts and protects us. Our praise to God fuels that flame. The more we praise Him the greater we feel the warmth of His love.

We have reflected on God's goodness towards us over the past year. We know what He brought us through. We have evidence of His goodness, so this year we will STAND. Today we have assurance that the giving God is always with us. Now then, what is our new year's resolution? I think we should enter into the new year with praise, ultimate praise, extraordinary praise, continuous praise, and more praise. Let's continually PRAISE the Lord this year.



Carmen has been a member of New Providence Baptist Church for many years. She loves Jesus. She is also a member of the Daughters of Zion Women's Ministry, a fellowship that encourages, teaches and nurtures spiritual growth. Carmen has worked as a License Vocational Nurse at Laguna Honda Hospital for the past 18 years. Her favorite scripture is Jeremiah 29:11.

## “THE GIFT”

The Bible identifies many gifts that God has given us. Eternal life, peace beyond comprehension and unspeakable joy are just a few of God’s gifts. As I researched the word gift, I found these definitions: **Something that is given to another person, a group or an organization. A special ability. A notable capacity, talent, or endowment. Something voluntarily transferred from one person to another without compensation.**

The word gift is important in the Bible. We should understand its meaning and implications. In Romans 3:24, we find the Greek word *dorean*, which means “free gift” used to refer to grace. It is something given above and beyond what is expected or deserved. Every New Testament occurrence of the word “gift” relates to a spiritual transfer from God to man. It is what Jesus offers to the Samaritan woman at the well. John 4:10 says: *If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.*

Romans 5:15 says: *But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!*

Many of us have received gifts throughout the year for one reason or another. Others have received gifts, but fail to recognize them. As I looked back over the past two years, I felt God had forgotten my name on His gift list. My father and all my aunts and uncles except one passed away leaving me feeling I had no reason to celebrate – but God. Yes, I said, “but God!!!” When I celebrated God, He blessed me with so much that I did not have hands to hold it. I was blessed with the gift of my first grandchild which brought me so much joy. He blessed me with good health, a roof over my head, and food on the table. I am thankful for these gifts and many more from God.

As we enter the holiday season enjoying our families and friends, let us not forget the many gifts God has given us. Let’s share the joy and goodness of God as we fellowship with one another. God has given us the gifts of life and eternal life through Christ Jesus. His best gifts are freely given, but it’s our responsibility to receive the gifts by faith. (John 1:12; 3:16; Ephesians 2:8-9).

The Bible is clear that salvation from sin is a free gift. It is my prayer that your hearts will be open to receive God’s precious gift of salvation this holiday season.

Sandra Scott

Sandra R. Scott has been a member of the Daughters of Zion Women’s Ministry for over 10 years, and she serves as the Ministry Assistant. She is a Senior Social Worker for the City and County of San Francisco. She is a member of New Providence Baptist Church under the leadership of Pastor Michael Gilmore. She is the proud mother of one daughter, Shantel, and a new granddaughter, Segen. Her favorite scripture is Proverbs 3:5-6, *“Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.”*

## A Consecrated Life - Part III

### Daniel 3

(Dedication to the Service of God)

In last month's article we talked about the importance of *Following Your Guide*. This month we will see the benefits of *Trusting Your Guide*.

There's going to come a time of testing in the life of every born again believer. The test does not come so God can see what we will do because He already knows the outcome. The test comes to show us and others just how devoted we really are to Him. Talk is cheap, but true devotion and trust in God is costly! James says it well in chapter 2:17-18, **"Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.**

If we say we trust Christ, our faith will be tested. John Maxwell said, "A faith that has not been tested, cannot be trusted." In Daniel chapter 3 God puts Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego to the test. Brothers and Sisters when God begins to prosper you because of your faithfulness you will have enemies. There will be those who cannot stand the fact that the favor of God is upon your life and will look for an opportunity to set you up, undermine your progress, and sometimes to destroy you. The Bible says that jealousy is as cruel as the grave. Never underestimate what someone with a jealous and envious spirit will do! But I'm so glad that God sees and hears all. He promised to Fight for us, but we must keep our hands clean from evil.

A statute of King Nebuchadnezzar was erected and a decree went out which stated that whenever the trumpet sounded the people should bow down and pay homage to it. Those who hated the three young men knew that they were devoted to Jehovah God only, so when they would not bow down they relayed their behavior to the king. They were warned of the consequences for not obeying the king's orders but this did not move them. They were determined to trust God through what would be a fiery trial.

After hearing the king's threat to throw them into a fiery furnace for their disobedience, the young men stood boldly declaring that their God was able to deliver them even from a fiery furnace, but even if He didn't, they would not bow down to anyone but God. They were thrown into the fiery furnace for their faith, trust and dedication to the living God. However, God stepped into the fire with them, therefore, no harm came to any of them. Their faith was tested beyond measure and they proved by their actions that they had full trust and confidence in God. Do you trust God like that? When the trials of life come, will you be able to stand? Trust Your Guide!

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## God Will Come Through

### 2 Kings 18-19

The God we serve is faithful. The Bible clearly states in 2 Timothy 2: 13 that He is faithful even when we are not. His faithfulness is not depended on our actions but on His character. God never makes promise He does not keep. He is altogether trustworthy. God is Sovereign! He needs no one's approval or permission to bless you, and He does all things according to His will and purpose. His timing is always right. Someone has said He's an on time God. He is never too early or too late.

The word of God found in Ephesians 3:20 tells us that He (God) is able to do immeasurably more than what we can think or ask. Take a minute and think of something you've dreamed about that you considered too difficult if not possible to achieve. Our God is able to exceed all of your expectations.

There are times in our lives when it seems as though we are being pressed on every side. It's easy to become discouraged and lose faith during those times. The enemy will whisper all sorts of threats and lies in our ear because he wants us to be overwhelmed with fear, instead of being filled with faith.

I'm reminded of the story recorded in 2 Kings 18 & 19. Sennacherib, King of Assyria sent messengers to intimidate Hezekiah, king of Judah with threats of destruction. The Assyrian army was known to have conquered many nations and were feared. They knew that the Israelites served only one God. who had come through for them in the past. So, the first thing they attempted to do was to destroy the Israelites confidence in God. They recounted other nations whose gods did not protect them and consequently were conquered by the Assyrians.

What Sennacherib didn't realize is that the other nations gods were not gods at all. They were instruments carved out by human hands. He would soon discover that the God the Israelites worshiped was the only true God. The Assyrian King's messengers blasphemed and ridiculed God because they did not fear Him. The word of God was given to the Prophet Isaiah to encourage King Hezekiah and assure him that God would come through.

The Assyrian king was arrogant and relied on the strength of his army and the power of his gods. If I were able to speak I would say to the King of Assyria, "don't let your wooden god fool you. My God is all mighty and powerful. He is faithful and I know He will come through.

The enemy maybe attempting to discourage you right now with his lies. Remind yourself of God's promises and tell the devil, you can't make me doubt Him because I know too much about Him and I know that my God will come through.

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## Make Sure God Gets the Glory!

Numbers 20: 1-13 - Isaiah 42:8

Have you ever taken credit for work you did not do, or has someone taken credit for work you've done? I'm sure most of us can relate to one of the two scenarios. It's one thing for us to take credit for someone else's work, but it is dangerous to take credit for what God has done.

In Acts 9:32-35, we see the Apostle Peter healing a man who was paralyzed and bedridden for eight years. Peter, being used by God, told Aeneas that Jesus Christ had healed him; so he could pick up his bed and walk. Peter realized that it was God alone who heals and that he (Peter) was only the instrument used to carry out God's will. He never took credit for the miracles God performed through him.

It is tempting to get puffed up and filled with pride when God chooses to use us in ministry. I caution you to not allow the enemy to deceive you into believing that you have done the work. No, sister, no brother, it is God! Philippians 2:13 says, "***For it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.***"

God's word tells us that Moses was a very humble man and a great leader, but in Numbers 20:10 for the very first time, we see him boasting about his accomplishments. He said to the people, "***Listen, you rebels, must we bring you water out of this rock?***" Moses was saying the he and Aaron were responsible for the water coming out of the rock. In doing so, he failed to honor God! For that mistake, God told him and Aaron that neither of them would make it to The Promised land.

God, who is no respecter of persons, said in Isaiah 42:8, that He (God) will not share His glory with anyone. Yes, Moses was used by God in a powerful way, but he (Moses) was just the messenger. Never worship the messenger, but thank God for sending him or her. God, and God alone, deserves the glory for everything He does through us and for us. Sisters and brothers, let's make sure that God gets the glory!

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder



# The Incomprehensible Love of God

Incomprehensible is defined as something that is impossible to understand. It also means that which is limitless or incapable of limitations.

On February 14th many celebrated Valentine's Day. It's a day observed by many to show appreciation for those they love. Many show their love by purchasing flowers, candy, going out to dinner or preparing a meal for that special someone. When my son was a teenager, I would always send him a card in the mail with a gift just to remind him how much he was loved and appreciated.

But when I think about the love of God, it's nearly impossible for me to comprehend. How can a mere human be cable of fully understanding the kind of love that our heavenly Father has for us? His love for us is the greatest love story ever told. Thankfully, God has given us His Word to help in our quest to understand Him better.

Throughout the Bible we are given examples of God's love for His people. He loves us so much that he left His place in heaven, came to earth, wrapped Himself in flesh, was born of a woman, suffered and died at the hands of those He created. The Bible tells us in John 3:16 that God so loved the world that He gave His only Son that whosoever believes in Him will not perish, but have everlasting life. This unselfish kind of love is incomprehensible to me. The manner in which we love is often dependent upon what we receive. We love God because He first loved us. (1 John 4:19)

The Bible also states in Romans 5:8, that God demonstrated His love toward us while we were yet sinners, He (Christ) died for us. His love was poured out for us while we still in our sins; walking in disobedience and rebellion. God's love for us is not dependent on what we do, or we would be in trouble. There is no limit to the love of God. It will last an eternity.

We may never fully understand the depth, height and breadth of God's love for His people, but we don't have to (Ephesians 3:18). All we have to do is accept His gift that has been freely given (Ephesians 2:8-9).

I may never fully understand the degree to which God loves, but I'm so grateful He loves me like He does, aren't you?

Elder Shirley Freeman, Founder

## There Is No One Greater

We often sing the song, “Awesome.” We chant, “Our God is awesome, He can move mountains, keep me in the valley, hide me from the rain...,” but do we fully comprehend just how awesome our God truly is? One of the definitions for awesome is, “to inspire an overwhelming feeling of reverence, admiration, or fear.” We have reasons to be in awe of God, and according to Proverbs 9:10, the fear of the Lord (reverence) is the beginning of wisdom.

**Let's look at a few examples of the awesomeness of God:**

- I. **Exodus 14:** God protected the Israelites from their Egyptian enemies while cornered at the Red Sea. He parted the sea to allow them to pass through on dry land. Once they were safe, He caused the waters to return. The Egyptians who pursued them were drowned in the Red Sea. Sisters and brothers, He is the same God today. He can bring you out on the other side and drown that which was pursuing you. There is nothing too hard for our God. **He is AWESOME, He is MIGHTY and He is MAGNIFICENT!**
- II. **John 6:16-22 and 11:** Jesus defies nature by walking on water and resurrects Lazarus who has been dead for four days.
- III. **In Matthew 8: 23-27 Jesus Calms a Storm:** While Jesus was asleep in a boat with His disciples, a fierce storm arose. Strong winds and waves began to strike against the boat. The Disciples, terrified, cried out to Jesus. He said, "Peace, be still," and both the wind and the waves obeyed Him. The question was asked, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the waves obey Him?" He is an Omnipotent God (all powerful) who is able to do exceedingly and abundantly above all we can ever ask or think.

**God is greater than any need any of us may ever have.** He promised to supply all of our needs in proportion to His riches in glory. (Philippians 4:19)

**God is greater than any sickness that tries to invade our bodies.** The Bible tells us that Jesus came doing good (Acts 10:38). He healed the sick, gave sight to the blind and made the lame to walk. He is Jehovah Raphe, the God who heals. Remember, the doctors treat, but only God can heal.

**He is greater than any sin in our lives.** The Word of God tells us that Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost (Luke 19:10). If you trust in Him, He will wash ALL of your sins away, past, present and future.

**His name is greater than any other name.** Philippians 2:9-11 tells us that God the Father has exalted Jesus to the highest place and gave Him a name that is above every name and that at the name of Jesus EVERY knee shall bow and EVERY tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is LORD.

**Sisters and brothers, there is No One Greater!**

**Happy Resurrection!**

## Who is Your Shepherd?

I memorized the 23<sup>rd</sup> Psalm as a child in Sunday school. I love this Psalm because it reminds me that I have a Good Shepherd who knows everything about me -- and still loves me.

### **The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.**

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep." **John 10:11 (NIV).**

David was a young shepherd boy who learned from experience what it takes to care for sheep. He knew the success of any flock depends on the type of shepherd who cares for it. David took good care of his father's sheep. He also saw himself as a sheep, and he acknowledged that the Lord was his Shepherd.

This Psalm is about God's provision, guidance and protection. It emphasizes that the Lord supplies our every need. Because his needs were met, David was totally content with his Shepherd's care.

### **He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.**

I read somewhere that sheep are easily frightened, so it is difficult to get them to lie down. The shepherd must see to it that his flock is safe from all harm. A jumping rabbit can frighten a sheep and stampede the whole flock. If one startled sheep runs in fright, they all will follow in blind fear. But seeing their shepherd in the field quiets a flock of sheep like nothing else can.

It is also a fact that sheep will not rest when they are hungry. Shepherds have to move flocks for miles in search of green pastures for grazing. Sheep will not drink from noisy, fast moving waters. They require a slow flowing stream. Sheep lie down only after they have eaten enough and feel safe.

### **He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.**

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way. **Isaiah 53:6**

If sheep are left to themselves, they will graze on the same grass until even the roots are gone. They need a shepherd who will lead them to new pastures. Psalm 100:3 lets us know that we are God's people and the sheep of His pasture. Our Shepherd always leads us down the paths of righteousness.

### **Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.**

David is confident going through the valley, because his Shepherd provides for, guides and protects him in the valley. Some may be going into the valley, while some are going through and some are coming out, but none need to fear because the Lord is with them. David ends this Psalm with a declaration that implies he will stay with the Good Shepherd forever.

The Good Shepherd gives satisfaction, peace and security.  
Who is your Shepherd?



Carmen Rutherford is a child of God. She has been a member of New Providence Baptist Church for over twenty years. There she serves as Sunday School Teacher and Vacation Bible School Director. Carmen is a scholar and member of Daughters of Zion Women's Ministries where she serves as Co-Encouragement Coordinator. She truly loves the Lord and is humbled when given the opportunity to share His word.

## Dr. Yaisa Andrews-Zwilling



Dr. Andrews-Zwilling is originally from Trinidad-Tobago, where she completed her B.Sc. in Biochemistry and Chemistry. From there she went to train at the prestigious Max Planck Institute for Experimental Medicine in Gottingen, Germany, where she received both her M.Sc. and Ph.D. in Neuroscience. Under the supervision of Dr. Nils Brose, she made important contributions to the field of synapse formation during her Ph.D., studying the effects of protein-protein interactions in the release of neurotransmitters at the presynaptic active zone.

She then went on to join the laboratory of Dr. Yadong Huang at the Gladstone Institutes, where she turned her efforts to studying the role of apoE4, a major risk allele, in the onset and progression of Alzheimer's disease (AD). Using animal models, she discovered that apoE4 causes GABAergic interneuron dysfunction in the hippocampus, which leads to spatial learning and memory deficits similar to humans with AD.

Dr. Andrews-Zwilling then established her own research program to develop drugs that block the detrimental effects of apoE4 on nerve cells in collaboration with Dr. Robert W. Mahley at the Gladstone. Her research also expanded beyond AD into the area of traumatic brain injury, an increasingly common neurological problem that is also associated with apoE4.

Dr. Andrews-Zwilling is currently working at SanBio Inc., a company which develops regenerative therapies, using stem cells, for neurological disorders, including stroke and TBI

She is the recipient of many awards including the Award for Young Scientists from the Alzheimer's Association and the National Award for Excellence in Science from the National Institute of Higher Education, Research, Science and Technology, the Ministry of Science and Technology and the Caribbean Academy of Sciences.

Dr. Andrews-Zwilling is married to Dr. Daniel Zwilling and together they have two sons.