



HOUSE to HOUSE
HEART to HEART

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House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 26 NUMBER 3



O careless soul, why do you linger?

Allen Webster

*Careless soul, O heed the warning,
For your life will soon be gone;
O how sad to face the judgment
Unprepared to meet thy God.*

These lyrics from the song “Prepare to Meet Thy God” use the language of the prophet in ancient Israel (Amos 4:12) to encourage preparation for judgment.

Lingering in a condemned world is foolish and dangerous. In the summer of 1950, the city of Flagstaff, Maine, was about to be destroyed by floodwaters. The residents had known it was coming for about a year. The flooding would not be from an unpredictable force of nature but because the local government was building a hydroelectric dam. They had to create a standing lake to generate energy, and Flagstaff would be under the lake. When the date was set, residents were given relocation funds and told they had to be gone a month before the flooding.

In those months, the city soon fell into disrepair. Building ceased and all repairs stopped. What was the use of painting a house if it would soon be covered with water? Why repair a road that would not

be used? The town became more and more bedraggled, rusted, and dusty. People shifted their focus elsewhere.

As far as we know, all residents safely evacuated, but what if a stubborn old man had said, “I was born in this town, and I’m not moving. I love this house, and I do not want to live anywhere else”? That would have been foolish, and ultimately fatal.

Genesis 19 shows a similar situation with a city on the verge of destruction. God had set a date to destroy Sodom, Gomorrah, and the cities of the plain because of the citizens’ grave sins (Genesis 18:20–21). After informing Abraham, God set out to save the few righteous people—Lot’s family—living within the city’s boundaries. God’s messengers personally went to Lot to warn him of the impending judgment (Genesis 19:12–13).

One would think that Lot would drop everything and focus on leaving. Instead, “When the morning dawned, the angels urged Lot to hurry, saying, ‘Arise, take your wife and your two daughters who are here, lest you be consumed in the punishment of the city.’”



*“Behold, now is the accepted time;
behold, now is the day of salvation.”*

2 CORINTHIANS 6:2

“And while he lingered, the men took hold of his hand, his wife’s hand, and the hands of his two daughters, the Lord being merciful to him, and they brought him out and set him outside the city” (Genesis 19:15–16).

Analyze this:

- Who is this man that lingered? Lot, the nephew and former close associate of faithful Abraham.
- When did he linger? The very morning Sodom was to be destroyed. Lot was slow when he should have been quick.
- Where did he linger? Within the walls of Sodom itself.
- Before whom did he linger? The two angels sent to bring him out of the city.
- With whom did he linger? His family. Lot’s wife looked backward when she should have faced forward. Lot’s family remained when they should have fled. Lot’s daughters let Sodom linger in them after they left Sodom behind. What a sad ending to a family. Lot did not even have enough influence on his family to get them out of Sodom.
- Why did he linger? Like his wife (Genesis 19:26), perhaps, Lot was not ready to move from that location and lifestyle. He must have felt comfortable in Sodom.

All this started by arguing workers, a desire for wealth, a me-first attitude toward his benefactor, and pitching his tent toward Sodom (Genesis 13:1–12).

Like Lot, sinners linger in a place of danger. This world is on God’s destruction list (2 Peter 3:9). There are four ways the door of opportunity can close while sinners linger (Matthew 25:10).

WHILE SINNERS LINGER, JESUS CAN RETURN (MATTHEW 24–25).

Scoffers feel that since nothing catastrophic has happened since Jesus left, nothing will ever happen, but they are mistaken (2 Peter 3:1–4). Sodom felt safe before the fire and brimstone came. Ancient Pompeii gives an idea of what Sodom might have looked like when God rained his judgment upon it. In southern Italy’s Campania region, near the Bay of Naples, Pompeii was a thriving and sophisticated Roman city, but it was quickly buried under ash and pumice after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in AD 79. It is remarkably preserved. Fiery lava sealed the people in whatever act, place, and position it found them—at the theater, baths, kitchen, marketplace, or in the practice of sin. Hearts that burned with unholy lust were forever stilled and quickly rushed into eternity.

WHILE SINNERS LINGER, DEATH CAN COME.

Death is an appointment that each will keep (Hebrews 9:27). Life is like a river that flows for a long time smoothly and noiselessly, then suddenly takes the tremendous plunge of a deadly fall.

Perhaps several times a week, there is but a step between us and death (2 Samuel 14:14). As we drive down the highway we meet semi-trucks driving at a rapid speed. What is separating them from a head-on collision? Only a slim margin. Momentary inattention could end multiple lives instantly. About the same distance and the same odds exist as we walk down a street near moving traffic.

How often in life are we in a position where a fatal fall could happen or where something could fall on us? Life is uncertain (James 4:14). An accidental shooting or attempted murder, a bad cut and fast loss of blood, or electrocution could happen. A stroke, heart attack, staph infection, aneurism, or seizure could take a person quickly. Whether it comes early or late, by natural or unnatural causes, the dust will “return to the earth as it was, and the spirit will return to God who gave it” (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

WHILE SINNERS LINGER, MENTAL INCAPACITATION CAN OCCUR.

Nabal lived after a medical episode ended his ability to communicate or decide for himself (1 Samuel 25:36–38). There are many in nursing homes and mental institutions who are still alive, but their minds no longer allow for biblical understanding and spiritual decisions. Making a spiritual change requires decision, and decision requires learning and will (John 6:44–45; Luke 13:3).

While sinners linger, a conscience can harden. The conscience is a tool God put in man to facilitate good behavior. With repeated misuse, it can become inoperative (cf. Luke 23:39; Ephesians 4:19; Hebrews 3:13; 6:6–8). It is unwise and dangerous to know what to do to please God but put off doing it. Let us not die thinking about obedience and righteousness. “Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin” (James 4:17).

Although God’s judgment may be delayed, it is certain. On that notable Day, the infidel will confess Jesus

(Philippians 2:9–11) and the disobedient will try to hide from the wrath of the Almighty (Revelation 6:17). Peter uses three historical examples of judgment and two examples of God’s rescuing the righteous from judgment to warn and to encourage (2 Peter 2). The warning is God will righteously judge the ungodly. None will escape. The encouragement is God will rescue the godly from judgment. “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts” (Hebrews 3:7–8).

Many today linger like Lot did:

- They know more truth than they live (Galatians 3:1; 5:7).
- They build their lives on things below (Colossians 3:1–2).
- They understand the battle but consort with the enemy (Ephesians 4:27; James 4:7).

- They say they love Christ but do not live for Him (Revelation 2:4).
- They believe in heaven but do not long for it (Philippians 1:21–23).
- They know life is short but live as if it has no end (James 4:14–17).

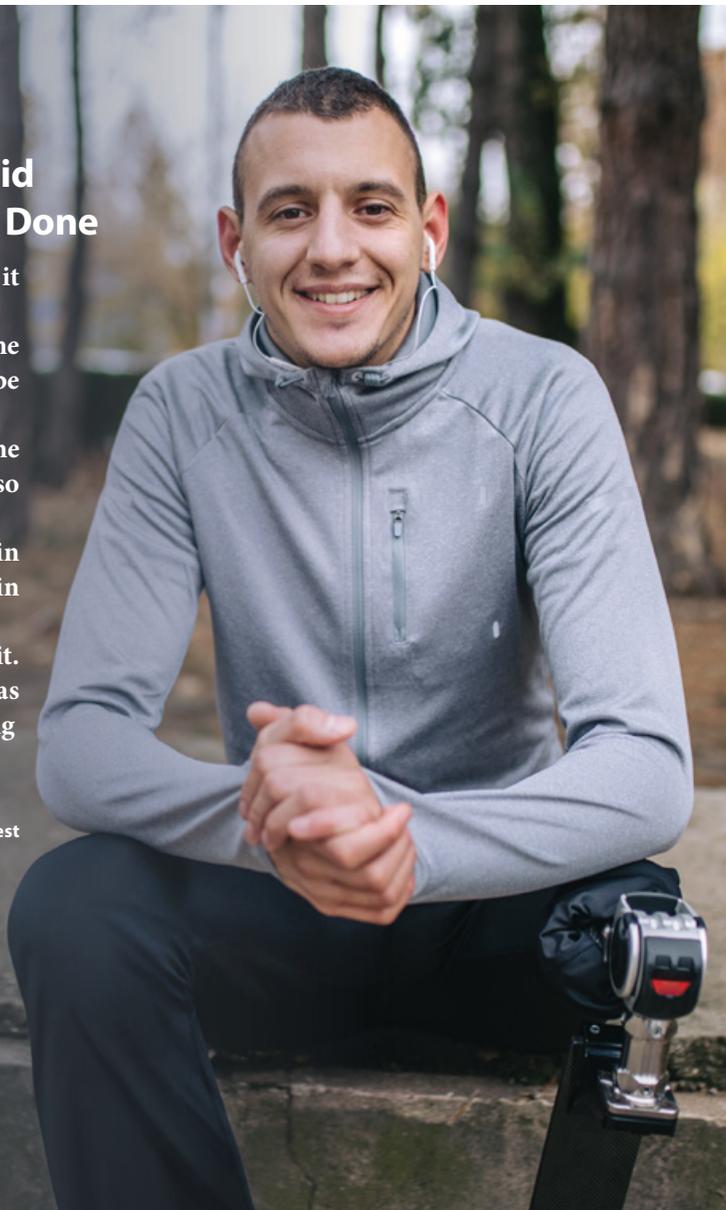
May we be wise enough now to search our ways and return to the Lord (Lamentations 3:40), use our days wisely (Psalms 90:12), and never “follow a crowd to do evil” (Exodus 23:2).

The residents of Flagstaff knew they needed to relocate because there was no future where they were. Lot stayed in fleeting comfort and almost lost his life because of it. Lingering in sin is dangerous. When Lot lingered, the Lord was merciful to him (Genesis 19:16; cf. Luke 17:32). “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation” (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Somebody Said It Couldn't Be Done

Somebody said that it couldn't be done,
 But with a chuckle he replied that maybe it couldn't
 But he would be one who wouldn't say so till he tried.
 So, he buckled right in with a trace of a grin on his face;
 If he worried, he hid it.
 He started to sing as he tackled the thing That could be done,
 And he did it!

—Edgar Albert Guest



What Is Sin?

- Sin is a violation of the conscience (Romans 14:23).
- Sin is knowing to do good, and not doing it (James 4:17).
- Sin is breaking God’s law (1 John 3:4).
- Sin is unrighteousness (failing to keep God’s commands) (1 John 5:17).



A Good Time for Flowers

*I'd rather buy a cheap bouquet
 To give my wife every day
 Than a bushel of roses white and red
 To be placed on her casket when she's dead.*

Don't wait to put flowers on a casket—give them now.

Pluck and Plant

“Die where I may, I want it said of me by those who knew me best that I always plucked a thistle and planted a flower where I thought it would grow.”

—Abraham Lincoln

“Do good.”

GALATIANS 6:10

God's Plan for Saving Man

- Divine Love:** John 3:16
- God's Grace:** Ephesians 2:8
- Christ's Blood:** Romans 5:9
- Holy Spirit's Word:** Romans 1:16
- Sinner's Faith:** Acts 16:31
- Sinner's Repentance:** Luke 13:3
- Sinner's Confession:** Romans 10:10
- Sinner's Baptism:** Acts 22:16
- Christian's Love:** Matthew 22:37
- Christian's Work:** James 2:24
- Christian's Hope:** Romans 8:24
- Christian's Endurance:** Revelation 2:10

The Whisper Test

I grew up knowing I was different, and I hated it. I was born with a cleft palate, and when I started school, my classmates made it clear to me how I must look to others: a little girl with a misshapen lip, crooked nose, lopsided teeth and garbled speech.

When schoolmates would ask, "What happened to your lip?" I'd tell them I'd fallen and cut it on a piece of glass. Somehow it seemed more acceptable to have suffered an accident than to have been born different.

I was convinced that no one outside my family could love me. There was, however, a teacher that we all adored—Mrs. Leonard. She was short, round, happy—a sparkling lady. Annually, we would have a hearing test. I was virtually deaf in one of my ears; but when I had taken the test in past years, I discovered that if I did not press my hand as tightly upon my ears as I was instructed to do, I could pass the test.

Mrs. Leonard gave the test to everyone in the class, and finally it was my turn. I knew from past years that as we stood against the door and covered one ear, the teacher sitting at her desk would whisper something and we would have to repeat it back . . . things like, "The sky is blue" or "Do you have new shoes?"

I waited there for those seven words which changed my life. Mrs. Leonard said, in her whisper, "I wish you were my little girl." —Mary Ann Bird

"Love is kind."

1 CORINTHIANS 13:4



For more material on the home and family, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, grandparents, and family finances, go to www.housetohouse.com.



Is It Safe to Come Home?

A nervous young man bit his fingernails and walked to and fro in the coach of a train. A preacher said to him, "I know that you are in trouble, and I should like to help you." The young man said that he had left home against his parents' will, and that now he would like to return home. He said that he had written to his parents two weeks ago, but that he had not received an answer from them.

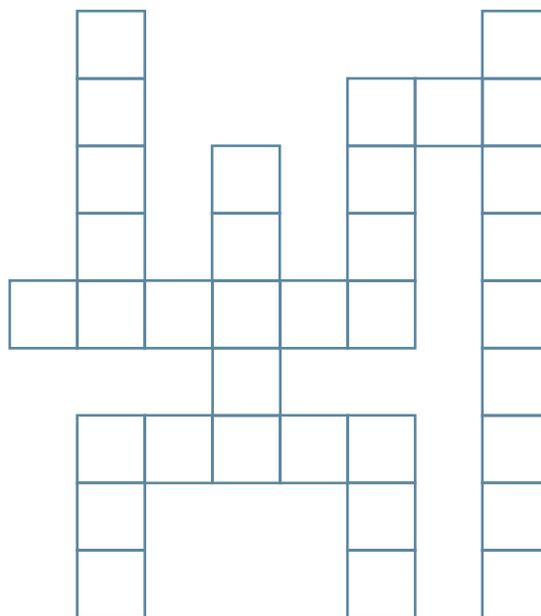
Later he wrote to his mother that if it would be permissible for him to return home, he would like for her to tie a white rag on the old crab apple tree in the front yard so that he could see it while the train passed in front of the house. The boy

wondered whether the white rag would be there. The preacher said to him, "Close your eyes, and I shall look to see whether the white rag is there. After the train went around the curve, the preacher looked at the crab apple tree and said to the boy, "A white rag is tied to every limb."

Forgiveness (pardon) is the sweetest word in the English language. It is the sweetest word a condemned criminal can hear.

"Forgiveness is the fragrance that the violet sheds upon the heel that crushed it." —"Warmest Fuzzies That Ever Wuz (Words that could change your child's life!)" Dr. Roger Allen and Ron Rose. *Christian Parenting*; August, 1989

Just for Fun Hebrews 12 Crossword



"Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us **run** with **endurance** the **race** that is **set** before us, looking unto **Jesus**, the author and finisher of our **faith**, who for the **joy** that was set before Him endured the **cross**, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the **throne** of God."

HEBREWS 12:1-2

Come Over for Dinner

Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).

A man and his wife listened while a denominational preacher attempted for about an hour to prove that the baptism of Acts 2:38 is "because of" remission of sins, instead of in order to obtain the remission of sins. The couple invited the preacher home "for" dinner, and he accepted. They asked the preacher to sit down in the living room, and then they went into the kitchen and ate dinner without asking the preacher in to eat. Later the preacher asked why he was not given any dinner to eat. They replied, "You said that to be baptized 'for the remission of sins' means to

be baptized 'because of remission of sins.' Therefore, when we invited you home 'for dinner,' we meant that you had already eaten your dinner."

The Greek word *eis*, translated "for" in Acts 2:38, is the same word translated "for" in "for the remission of sins" in Matthew 26:28. If a penitent believer should be baptized "because of the remission of sins," then Christ shed His blood "because of the remission of sins." Christ's blood is the cause of the remission of sins, and water baptism to a penitent believer is a condition of the remission of sins. —Anonymous

"In the world to come eternal life."

MARK 10:30

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.



Bible Quiz

VOLUME 26:3

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark! We'll grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark "Chronology of the Cross" as a way of saying thanks for spending time in the Word (quantities may be limited).

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State: _____
Phone: _____

Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

Answers to Previous Quizzes

V. 26:1 A Big Hairy Deal: 1. Goat's hair (Exodus 26:7); 2. Leprosy (Leviticus 13:3); 3. Samson's (Judges 16:17); 4. Camel's hair (Mark 1:6); 5. Nazarite vow (Numbers 6:1-6); 6. Absalom (2 Samuel 14:25-26); 7. Solomon (Song of Solomon 6:5); 8. Baldness (Isaiah 3:24); 9. Benjamin (Judges 20:15-16); 10. Hair (Jeremiah 7:29); 11. It was not singed (Daniel 3:26-27); 12. White, black (Matthew 5:36); 13. Covering (1 Corinthians 11:15); 14. Arranging (1 Peter 3:3).

V. 26:2 Starts with the Letter "H": 1. Hair (2 Samuel 14:26); 2. Happy (Proverbs 16:20); 3. Hard (Proverbs 13:15); 4. Harlot (James 2:25); 5. Haughty (Proverbs 16:18); 6. Head (Ephesians 1:22); 7. Hearing (Romans 10:17); 8. Heart (Proverbs 4:23); 9. Heaven (1 Peter 1:4); 10. Hell (Psalm 9:17); 11. Helmet (Ephesians 6:17); 12. Help (Psalm 46:1); 13. Holy (1 Peter 1:16); 14. Homemakers (Titus 2:4-5); 15. Honey (Psalm 19:10); 16. Honor (Exodus 20:12); 17. Hope (Hebrews 6:11); 18. Hour (Matthew 24:36); 19. House (John 14:2); 20. Humble (James 4:10); 21. Hunger (Matthew 5:6); 22. Husband (Ephesians 5:25-28).

The Minor Prophets

Directions: Find answers in Joel 1:1-4; 2:28-32; Amos 1:1; Jonah 1:2; Micah 6:6-8; Habakkuk 1:8; 2:4, 20; Hosea 1:2; 4:6; Zephaniah 1:1; Haggai 1:1-14; Zechariah 1:8; 3:8; 9:9; Malachi 3:8. Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

1. What prophet did God command to marry an adulterous woman? _____
2. In Haggai, God commands the returned Jewish exiles to _____.
3. What was Amos' original occupation? _____
4. What prophecy did Paul quote in Romans 1:17? _____
5. Where did God tell Jonah to preach? _____
6. _____ prophesied that Israel's King would come riding on a donkey.
7. Peter quoted _____ on Pentecost about the outpouring of the Spirit.
8. _____ said: "What does the Lord require of you but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God?"
9. Which prophet told God's people to renew their tithes and offerings? _____
10. _____ opens his book by depicting an invasion of locusts in Israel.
11. Zechariah has a vision of the high priest in God's presence and His angels dressing in pure clothes. What was the name of that high priest? _____
12. The Babylonians/Chaldeans have horses swifter than _____.
13. The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep _____ before him.
14. My people are destroyed for lack of _____.
15. Zephaniah prophesied during the reign of righteous king _____ of Judah.
16. Which Persian king was in power during the time of Haggai? _____
17. What did Haggai criticize the people for not rebuilding? _____
18. Zechariah saw an angel riding on a horse (Zechariah 1). Which color was the horse? _____.



Indispensable Reading

The Pony Express was the first western mail service in the early days of America. It ran from St. Joseph, Missouri, to Sacramento, California, a distance of 1,900 miles. The trip was made on horseback in only ten days. Forty men, each riding fifty miles a day, dashed along the trail on five hundred top horses. To conserve weight, only small men were employed, clothing was very light, saddles were small and thin, and no weapon was carried (even through hostile

territory). The horses wore small shoes or none at all. The mail pouches were flat and conservative in size. Letters were written on thin paper and postage was \$5.00 per ounce—a high price now, but a king’s ransom then. Yet, each rider carried a full-sized Bible! The Bible is an indispensable companion for a complete life. It is carrying a whole library in one volume. It has 66 books, 1,189 chapters, 31,102 verses, 773,746 words, and 3,566,480 letters.

Yet a motivated reader can read the Old Testament in only a couple of weeks (74 hours—64 verses a day will get an average reader through it in one year) and the New Testament in less than a week (18.5 hours—28 minutes a day will complete it in forty days; 36 minutes a day finish it in 31 days). —Allen Webster

“To you it has been given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God.”
MARK 4:11

Cut out this section and mail it to the address on the front.

Recommended Resource



Throughout history, people have wondered how they fit into the Universe. Is there really a Creator? What evidence is available, and what does that mean for humanity? The answers are the foundation of faith and of finding our purpose in life. A free, online video course is available at www.mathesis.org/courses/God-the-ultimate-reality/.

I want to learn more about the Bible!

If you knew for sure that the religious path you are on would not get you to heaven, would you change? If there was the possibility of a doubt, would you investigate? Why not request a personal Bible study today?

Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ Email: _____
 Prayer requests or comments: _____

I would like:

-  A Bible Correspondence Course
-  A DVD Bible Study
-  An In-Home Bible Study

New Tracts!

- The Beverage of Choice at the Devil’s Banquet
- God’s Heavenly Preachers
- How to Help Your Elders
- Safe, Secure, Saved



More subjects:

-  Pursuing the Elusive City of Gold
-  2nd Time-Around Dating
-  The Positive Power of Negative Preaching
-  Why should I study a Book of Jewish Mythology?
-  Don't give up . . . Don't ever give up
-  How to be a Leader in the Church
-  That was a Great Sermon on Patience
-  Who was Jesus' Grandfather?
-  Boot Camp For Christian Soldiers

Don't see the topic you need?
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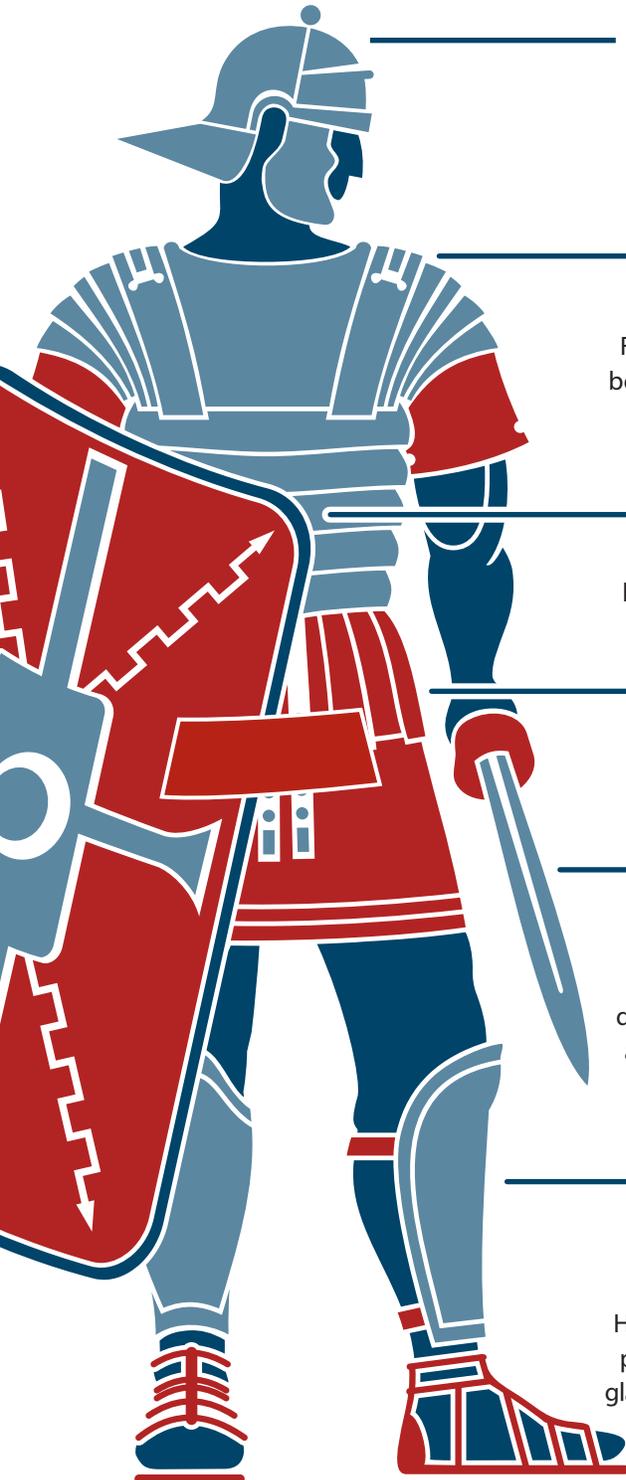
VOLUME 26:3



The Whole Armor of GOD



Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. **EPHESIANS 6:10-13**



The Helmet of Salvation

Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved. **ACTS 4:12**

The Breastplate of Righteousness

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

The Shield of Faith

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. **HEBREWS 11:1**

The Belt of Truth

Buy the truth, and do not sell it, also wisdom and instruction and understanding. **PROVERBS 23:23**

The Sword of the Spirit

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

HEBREWS 4:12

Feet Shod with the Preparation of the Gospel of Peace

How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things! **ROMANS 10:15**

3 Bible Dispensations

The **Patriarchal Dispensation** lasted from Adam to Moses, a period of 2,500 years (Genesis 1 to Exodus 20). The principal characters were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Job. It was a family law. From Adam to Abraham we have the history of the human race. From Abraham to Christ we have the history of the chosen race.

The **Mosaic Dispensation** lasted from Moses to Christ, a period of almost two thousand (Exodus 20 to Acts 2). The principal characters were Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Saul, David, and Solomon. It was a national law.

The **Christian Dispensation** began at the Cross and will last until the Second Coming of Christ, a period of nearly 2,000 years so far. This period is covered in the Bible from Acts 2 to Revelation 22. Its principle character is Christ and its secondary characters are the apostles (especially Peter and Paul). Christianity is a universal law.

Although the Old Testament covers about four thousand years of time, the actual writing of the Old Testament took about one thousand years (1500-400 BC).

From a literary standpoint, the Old Testament begins with Genesis and ends with Malachi, while the New Testament begins with Matthew and ends with Revelation.

However, from a covenant standpoint, the old covenant began in Exodus 20 and was set aside at the cross (Acts 2; cf. Colossians 2:14). The new covenant began with the death of Christ and will continue until His return.

"Rightly dividing the word of truth."

2 TIMOTHY 2:15





Good Reasons to Read the Bible

- You can find answers (1 Peter 3:15).
- God commanded it (2 Timothy 2:15; John 5:39; 1 Peter 2:2; 3:18).
- Ignorance is not excused (Acts 17:30).
- Ignorance destroys (Hosea 4:6).
- Ignorance causes church problems (Romans 16:18).
- You can make good decisions (Psalm 119:105).
- It keeps us from sin (Psalm 119:11).



The Date of Your Salvation

A preacher was talking to a woman who could not seem to make up her mind to follow Christ. "Did you know," he asked, "that God has set a definite date for your salvation?"

She looked surprised and answered, "No."

"Well," he replied, "If I show you that He has, will you keep your engagement with Him?" She replied seriously that she would. "All right," he said, "Here it is." He read from the Bible: "Now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Corinthians 6:2).

Have you kept your appointment with Him? —Eris Benson

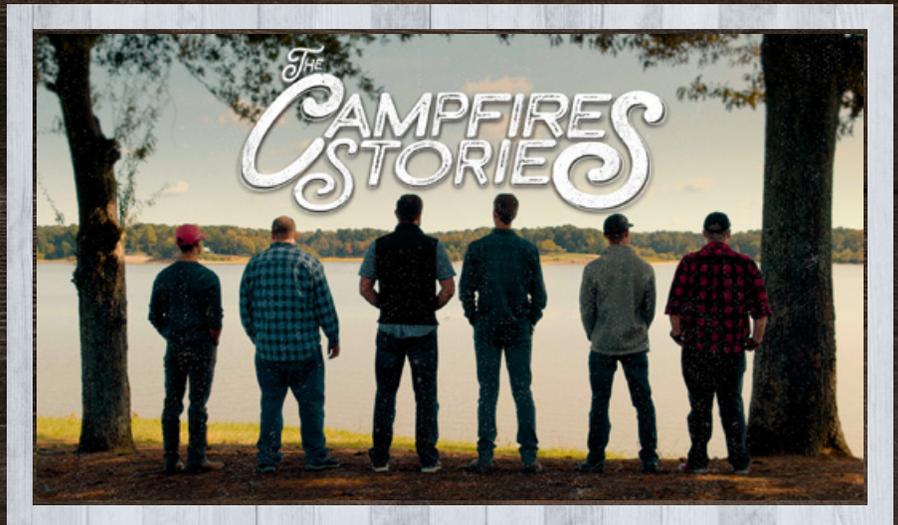
"I trust in the Lord."

PHILIPPIANS 2:24



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THIS WORLD IS NOT OUR HOME

Travel with six friends who decide to leave town to camp under the stars to escape the busyness of life, be reminded of what matters, and share campfire stories in this short film series.

HOUSETOHOUSE.COM/CAMPFIRESSTORIES