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# House to House Heart to Heart

VOLUME 25 NUMBER 3

## Centerville Road CHURCH of CHRIST

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Garland, TX 75041

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### SUNDAY

Bible Class ..... 9:00 a.m.

Morning Worship..... 10:00 a.m.

Evening Worship ..... 5:00 p.m.

### WEDNESDAY

Bible Class ..... 7:00 p.m.

### Visit Us Any Time!

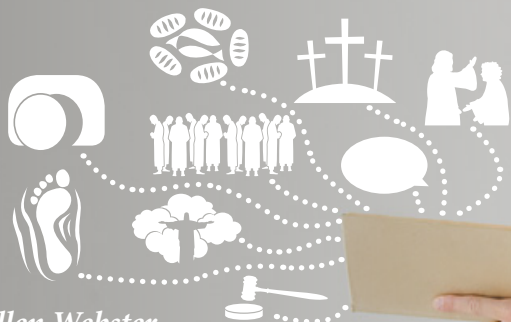
The Centerville Road Church of Christ is a visitor-friendly congregation. You will be made to feel welcome and will not be singled out or embarrassed in any way. Although a collection will be taken on Sundays, visitors are not expected to contribute. Simply sit and listen—or better yet, participate! Right now is a great time to visit. Our goal is to worship and serve God according to the pattern provided in the New Testament.

### SERVICES OFFERED:

- Adult, Elementary, and Teen Education
- Youth Series
- Vacation Bible School
- Ladies Bible Class (Sept - May)
- Family Enrichment Seminar
- Home Bible Studies
- Men's and Women's Retreats
- Monthly Men's Breakfast (Sept-May)

HOUSE TO HOUSE/HEART TO HEART is published monthly. It is sent to select Garland routes and individuals free upon request. Send all correspondence to address above. To God be the glory.

## THE AUDACIOUS CLAIMS OF JESUS



Allen Webster

Around AD 30, a rabbi named Jesus came to a Galilean village He had never visited before. Imagine the shock when, in the course of His remarks, He informed them He was God visiting from heaven (Matthew 4:12–16; John 1:14).

Suppose a newcomer to our community joins us next Sunday and mentions that he is the world's long-awaited Messiah.

What would people think? Perhaps he would be humored and probably treated nicely, but you would not bring your children to meet him. Leaders would keep a wary eye on him; security might be called; and everyone would think him mentally deficient. Neither his assertion—nor he—would be taken seriously.

Jesus made dozens of audacious claims. What did people think?

### THE MOST AUDACIOUS CLAIMS OF JESUS

- To have preexisted His own birth (John 8:58).
- To have known Abraham (John 8:56–58).
- Moses wrote of Him in Scripture (John 5:39, 45–46).
- To be greater than Jonah and Solomon (Matthew 12:41–42).

- To know God personally (Matthew 11:27).
- God was His Father (John 5:17–18).
- He came from heaven (John 8:42).
- He is the only access to God (John 14:6).
- He is the world's Messiah (John 4:25–26).
- To be the only way of salvation from sin (John 5:24; 3:13–15; 6:40; 8:24).
- Everyone must bow to Him and call Him Lord (John 13:13; cf. Romans 14:11).
- His blood brings remission (Matthew 26:28).
- To be sinless (John 18:23).
- To give life to those He chooses (John 5:21).
- Followers eat His flesh and drink His blood (John 6:53).
- Believers can pray and receive anything (Matthew 21:22).
- The dead will hear His voice (John 5:28–29).
- He will judge the world (John 5:22).
- His followers will never perish (John 8:51).

### JESUS' CONTEMPORARIES TOOK HIM SERIOUSLY

The generation living when Jesus came became humanity's eyes and ears. They saw, heard, touched, and studied Jesus (1 John 1:1–3). They judged His words,



deeds, and character firsthand; we did not have that opportunity (cf. John 20:29). Assuming the record is accurate, and that those people were reasonably intelligent and basically honest, the conclusions they reached would have been ours.

How did those respond who heard these incredible words firsthand? Common people heard Jesus gladly (Mark 12:37). His enemies heard Him madly (Luke 6:11). Many found Him believable—accepting Him as the Messiah for whom people were waiting (John 7:40–41).

Others considered Jesus' claims blasphemous (Matthew 26:65) and self-promoting, but they did not dismiss Him out of hand. They challenged, "Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?" (John 8:53). They hated Him, but they could not ignore Him.

His followers were believable witnesses; His opponents were hostile, but still witnesses. Neither group was gullible nor inclined to accept Jesus' claims without consideration (Mark 9:19; 16:14; Luke 24:25; John 20:27). People who knew Him either loved Him or hated Him, but nobody said, "Well, Jesus is a great teacher, perhaps misguided, but a good man."

### WHAT CREDENTIALS MADE JESUS' CLAIMS CREDIBLE?

*The quality of His life.* Words and actions are the primary windows into a person's character. Jesus' speech and deeds are recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Critics charge that the gospel accounts are not accurate history. To the contrary, Jesus' biographies are the earliest and best records available. In many cases, they are eyewitness reports; in all cases they are contemporary, first-century sources. They are reliable; no contradiction or factual error has been proven.

Archeology verifies that four biographies of Christ were written within the lifetime of people who saw, heard, and followed Jesus. William F. Albright (1891–1971), an archaeologist associated with Johns Hopkins University and director of the American School of Oriental Research in Jerusalem for many years, said there is no reason to believe Jesus' biographies were written later than AD 70. These were not corrupted over the centuries. Manuscript evidence shows that the early Bible had the same information as the modern Bible ("Towards a More Conservative View," 3).

If the Bible record is rejected, then there is no conversation to have about Jesus. Practically nothing is known about Him without the Bible. To claim to believe in Jesus while rejecting parts of the record

about Him (such as His miracles or His claims to be divine) is laughable. If one does not accept the Bible, then he cannot possibly know what to believe about Jesus. If one accepts the Bible, then he cannot pick and choose what to accept from it.

The combination of Jesus' morality and teachings makes a strong case. His impeccable character aligns with His audacious claims. He never had to apologize, confess sin, or ask forgiveness (even from God). He defeated Satan in an epic showdown in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1–11; Luke 4:1–13). Even His enemies proved no sin in Him. After He challenged them, "Which of you convicts Me of sin?" (John 8:46), they only called Him derogatory names and picked up stones to kill Him (8:48, 52, 59).

*Fulfilled prophecies* (John 13:19). Matthew alone lists sixty-eight Old Testament prophecies fulfilled in Jesus' life. This is far beyond the realm of coincidence or contrivance.

*Jesus' miracles.* Jesus said, "Though you do not believe me, believe the works" (John 10:38). John explained, "These are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ" (20:31).

Jesus constantly demonstrated healing power and compassion. He cured the sick, healed the diseased, corrected the malformed, restored the maimed, and returned self-possession to the demon-controlled (Matthew 15:30; Mark 1:40–45;



5:15). He empowered the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, and the blind to see (Matthew 8–9). When a man born blind was healed, the authorities interrogated him in hopes of ensnaring Jesus. The man's reply was classic: "One thing I know: that though I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25). It is hard to argue with that. He could not understand how they did not see that this healer was God's Son. "It has been unheard of that anyone opened the eyes of one who was born blind," he pointed out (9:32).

*The resurrection.* Given His miraculous power, Jesus could have avoided arrest and crucifixion. He chose not to because His purpose was to die for sin. Before His arrest He said, "I lay down My life that I may take it again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of Myself" (John 10:17–18). During His arrest, Peter tried to defend Him, but Jesus said, "Put your sword in its place" (Matthew 26:52).

After flogging Him, soldiers nailed His hands and feet to a wooden cross. When six agonizing hours had passed, He died. Then a soldier thrust his sword into Jesus' side to confirm that His life was gone. The body was removed, wrapped mummy-like with linens and spices, and placed into a tomb of solid rock. A large stone was rolled over the entrance.

Since His enemies knew that Jesus predicted He would arise in three days (Matthew 27:63–64), they stationed soldiers nearby and affixed an official seal to the tomb. Nonetheless, three days later the rock was moved, the body was gone, and only grave clothes remained.

Jesus appeared alive for forty days to more than five hundred persons, including several times to His apostles (1 Corinthians 15:1–8).

### WHAT SHOULD WE MAKE OF JESUS' AUDACIOUS CLAIMS?

What is the difference between the two scenarios of Jesus visiting a village and a visitor today claiming to be the Messiah? That generation was looking for the Messiah predicted at that time to come in the Old Testament (Daniel 9:25–27; cf. John 1:41–42; 4:25, 29, 42). If there is sufficient evidence for a reasonable person to conclude that Peter was right in declaring Jesus as God's Son (Matthew 16:15–17),

then intelligent people in every generation should believe it.

Is there sufficient evidence? Many have claimed to be God, and the world's Messiah. Most of them were debunked in five minutes. With Jesus, it is not so simple. He had the credentials. His works were undeniable (John 11:47). He was no crackpot to be dismissed on appearance. He suffered no immediately obvious mental illness. "He taught as one having authority" (Matthew 7:29). He bested His opponents in argument (Matthew 22:41–46).

Jesus' audacity forces one to believe that He was either a very evil man or the holy Son of God. His statements are only blasphemous if He is not God. They are objectionable only if He could not fulfill them. Jesus' claims are either blasphemy or truth. They cannot be something in between.

If they are untrue, then the astonishing megalomania He possessed is unsurpassed in history. If He is not divine, then He deserves no respect, for He was a hypocrite of the highest order; He misled and jeopardized sincere souls. He belongs to the class of wannabes and charlatans.

The final choice is one of four—Jesus was either a deceiver, insane, legendary, or divine. We cannot put Jesus on a shelf as only a great teacher, dismiss Him as a psychotic, or paint Him as a legend. That leaves one alternative: He is the Son of God (John 20:31).

Jewish novelist Solem Asch (1880–1957) stated, "There is no easy ground to stroll upon. You either accept Jesus or reject him. You can analyze Mohammed and . . . Buddha, but don't try it with him. You either accept Jesus or you reject." If we respect Jesus as a teacher and a man, then we should heed His words.

We must investigate His claims straight from Scripture (Acts 17:11; cf. Philippians 2:12). What we decide about Jesus is not an idle intellectual exercise. The stakes are high (John 8:24). Denying Jesus' deity forfeits a relationship with the Father (John 5:23; 1 John 2:23).

If Jesus' teachings are correct, then there is life beyond this life. It can be pleasurable or painful (Luke 16:19–31); and there are no second chances (Hebrews 9:27). So, it is important to make the right choice now (2 Corinthians 6:2). An audacious Jesus invites you to an auspicious eternity.

## What's Her Name?

At church one morning, my friend Gwen was about to start her 4-year-olds' Sunday school class when a little boy showed up without any identification. Gwen managed to get his first name but could not find out his last name. "Brian, what's your daddy's name?" she asked. "Daddy," he replied. She tried again; "Brian, what's your mommy's name?" "Mommy," he answered. Suddenly she realized exactly how she could get the answer she needed. "Brian, what does your daddy call your mommy?" His face lit up. With a grin and a deep voice, he replied, "Hey, Babe." —Susan Boatright, *Today's Christian Woman*



## 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





## Love Numbers

Of honeymooning couples last year, 9% had this in common. What?

Answer: They brought their kids along.

On their first date, 15% of married people say this happened. What?

Answer: They fell in love!

For Valentine's Day dinner, 11% of couples will do this. What?

Answer: Split the bill.

It's estimated that approximately 3,500 fifth graders will do this today. What?

Answer: Fall in love!

For Valentine's Day, 24% will look at buying one of these. What is it?

Answer: A singing card.

Though they say it shows a lack of thought by their man, 59% of women like this gift for Valentine's Day. What is it?

Answer: A gift card.

Generally, women find them romantic while men do not. What?

Answer: Love notes.

According to a *Men's Health* magazine survey, 73% of women say this is their biggest complaint about their man's cologne. What is it?

Answer: He wears too much! We know why: 55% of men keep cologne in their car. —*Sermon Fodder*

*"Many waters cannot quench love, nor can the floods drown it. If a man would give for love all the wealth of his house, it would be utterly despised."*

SONG OF SOLOMON 8:7

For more material on the home and family, fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, grandparents, and family finances, go to [www.housetohouse.com](http://www.housetohouse.com).

# Try a Little Tenderness

As a parent, do you ever feel like all you do is say "no" to your children? Do you feel guilty for seeming to correct all the time? I do!

Sometimes I feel like a mean, grumpy old stick-in-the-mud. Maybe we expect children to act like mature adults and forget they are children. Children cannot be perfect but neither can we.

Parents can use positive statements to gain a child's cooperation. Children warm to such statements and find them reassuring. The reinforcing message is intentionally left general and given for no particular behavior. It is not because your child is good in soccer or gymnastics, but "Just because you are you." Children rarely hear too much of this kind of affirmation from their parents. For example:

- Now you've got it!
- You catch on fast!
- Well done!
- You've made great use of your ability!
- I appreciate your helpfulness!
- It's great living with someone like you!

- You're on the right track!
- Thanks for trying hard!
- You really stick to your work!
- Excellent!
- You're doing much better!
- That's your best ever!
- Your helpfulness is appreciated!
- Way to go!
- How you've improved!
- I am so pleased with your behavior!
- Isn't it nice to have the job done?
- Wow, you used your time wisely!
- Fantastic!
- You really planned well!
- Your cooperation is helpful!
- I feel good about your improvement!

Constructive criticism is needed by our children, but we can get into the rut of being too negative. I think this is why Paul said, "Fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). —*"Warmest Fuzzies That Ever Wuz (Words that could change your child's life!)" Dr. Roger Allen and Ron Rose. Christian Parenting: August, 1989.*



## Ten Things Students Will Not Learn in School

1. Life is not fair. Get used to it.
2. If you think your teacher is tough, wait until you get a boss.
3. The real world will not care as much about your self-esteem as your school does. This may come as a shock.
4. You will not make \$60,000 a year right out of high school. You will not be a vice president, and you may even have to wear a uniform that does not have a designer label.
5. Flipping hamburgers is not beneath your dignity. Your grandparents had a different word for flipping burgers. They called it opportunity.
6. It is not your parents' fault if you mess up.
7. Before you were born your parents were not boring. They got that way paying bills.
8. Life is not divided into semesters. You do not get summers off, and you do not get a summer break.
9. Vaping does not make you look cool.
10. Your school may be "outcome based," but life isn't. —*Author Unknown*

# Eternal Life—A Promise

Scriptures should not be arrayed against each other. One should have insight enough into the Scriptures to know there are no contradictions. If the Lord did not give us a perfect revelation, then we have no guide in religion.

Oftentimes preachers make unbelievers. For instance, one preacher will proclaim that the Book teaches we have eternal life right now and cannot lose it. Another will stoutly deny it and say we have eternal life in the world to come. Each reads from the Bible, and the poor listener cannot tell which is right; hence, he sometimes goes into unbelief. Who can blame him?

A few of the passages that refer to having eternal life now include the following: “He who believes in Me has everlasting life” (John 6:47); “He who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life” (5:24); “He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live. And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die” (11:25–26).

There are other Scriptures that seem to teach the opposite. Mark 10:30 states that

those who have made sacrifices for His sake will receive “a hundredfold now in this time . . . and in the age to come, eternal life.” Paul wrote of the “hope of eternal life” (Titus 1:2). One cannot hope for that which he actually has (Romans 8:24).

What is the explanation? Should we pit these statements against each other? It is more reasonable to pursue a reasonable solution. This may be done, for John himself, who wrote the former passages, makes both sets of statements easily understood with this Scripture: “This is the promise that He has promised us—eternal life” (1 John 2:25). The Holy Spirit guided his writing and made his meaning clear.

There are two ways of having anything—in promise and in actuality. We first have our spouses by promise, then by actuality. We now have eternal life by promise. Paul had it “in hope,” and when we get to the city of God we will have it actually. All discrepancies disappear.

When Jesus said, “He who believes in Me has everlasting life,” it is, of course,

the truth. We have it in promises. When Jesus said, “In the age to come, eternal life,” He spoke of its actual possession.

One additional thought: If one has eternal life in promise, then there is a possibility of being cut off from that promise by unrighteous living. Let us then take heed lest we fall (1 Corinthians 10:12). —W. Claude Hall

*“Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent.”*

JOHN 17:3



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



## Bible Quiz

VOLUME 25:3

Send us your answers to receive a free Bible bookmark! We will grade and return your questions and enclose the bookmark “What Shall I Do with Jesus?” 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. 25:1** *The Book of Joshua*: 1. Nun (Joshua 1:1); 2. The priests (3:13); 3. Set up 12 stones (4:9); 4. Harlot (6:25); 5. Under stalks of flax (2:6); 6. Hung a scarlet cord out the window (2:21); 7. 13 (6:3–4); 8. Valley of Achor (7:24–26); 9. Passover (5:11–12); 10. They were strong and tall (11:21); Deuteronomy 9:2; 11. With large hailstones (10:11); 12. About a whole day (10:13); 13. Gibeonites (9:3–4); 14. 6 (20:7–9); 15. Be strong and courageous (1:9); 16. Shechem (24:32); 17. House, serve (24:15); 18. 40 (14:7); 19. Hebron (14:13); 20. 110 (24:29).

**V. 25:2** *Six Things Missing in Heaven*: 1. Marry (Matthew 22:30); 2. Die (Luke 20:36); 3. Every tear (Revelation 7:17); 4. Pain (Revelation 21:4); 5. Curse (Revelation 22:3); 6. Night (Revelation 22:5).

*Eight Things Found in Hell*: 1. Punishment (Matthew 25:46); 2. Destruction (2 Thessalonians 1:9); 3. Gnashing (Matthew 13:42); 4. Fire (Mark 9:43); 5. Furnace (Matthew 13:42); 6. Devil (Matthew 25:41); 7. Chains (2 Peter 2:4); 8. Death (Revelation 20:14).

## Women in the Bible

**Directions:** Find answers in Genesis 4:1–2; 15:2; 16:15; 21:3; 24:15–19; 25:21–26; 38:12–15; 46:19; Exodus 15:20; Numbers 26:59; Joshua 2:1–6; Judges 4:4–9, 18–21; 9:50–55; 16:18; Ruth 1:22; 1 Samuel 1:20; 2:18–21; 2 Samuel 6:20–23; 12:24; 2 Kings 4:8–17; Matthew 1:16; Luke 1:57–60; 10:38–40. Note: Two are unnamed. Questions are taken from the New King James Version.

1. What woman posed as a prostitute to meet with her father-in-law? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Who offered to water Eliezer’s camels at the well? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Who was successful in getting Samson to divulge the source of his strength? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Who was the mother of Moses, Aaron, and Miriam? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Who prophesied to Barak that he would win the battle, but the victory would be at the hands of a woman? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Who drove a tent peg through the skull of Sisera? \_\_\_\_\_
7. Who hid two spies under some piles of flax on her roof? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Who led a dance when Israel crossed the Red Sea? \_\_\_\_\_
9. Who made her son a coat each year and took it to him? \_\_\_\_\_
10. Who had a little room built onto the house so Elisha could stay with them? \_\_\_\_\_
11. Who was made childless because she mocked the way the king worshiped the Lord? \_\_\_\_\_
12. Mother of Cain and Abel? \_\_\_\_\_
13. Mother of John the Baptist? \_\_\_\_\_
14. Mother of Isaac? \_\_\_\_\_
15. Mother of Jacob and Esau? \_\_\_\_\_
16. Mother of Joseph and Benjamin? \_\_\_\_\_
17. Mother of King Solomon? \_\_\_\_\_
18. Mother of Ishmael? \_\_\_\_\_
19. Mother of Samuel? \_\_\_\_\_
20. Mother-in-law of Ruth? \_\_\_\_\_
21. Had a sister named Mary? \_\_\_\_\_
22. What was the name of Moses’ sister? \_\_\_\_\_
23. Who threw an upper millstone onto Abimelech’s head? \_\_\_\_\_
24. Who was the mother of Jesus? \_\_\_\_\_



# Have You Read the Book That Shaped America?

America's earliest settlers came in search of religious freedom, to escape religious persecution—which has again become an issue in modern times.

A new arrival who joined the Pilgrims at Plymouth in 1623 “blessed God for the opportunity of freedom and liberty to enjoy the ordinances of God in purity among His people.”

The Bible shaped much of our culture and society. Classic literature echoes Scriptural themes. Art museums are filled with pictures inspired by Bible stories.

The Bible's regulations—do not murder, commit adultery, steal, or give false testimony (Exodus 20)—form the basis of modern law.

Its lessons—treat others as you wish to be treated and be a “good Samaritan”—guide behavior in civilized society.

Early settlers founded colleges to train preachers, starting with Harvard in 1636.

Nearly half (49 percent) of Americans strongly agree the Bible contains everything a person needs to know and live a meaningful life.

More than half (51 percent) believe the Bible has too little influence on American society today.

U.S. laws enforcing punishments for the assault and rape of women, murder, and the abuse of children comes directly from the Bible. Many of these laws are found in the Old Testament book of Deuteronomy. —Adapted from American Bible Society's *State of the Bible* as reported in the *Washington Post*.

*“If the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?”*

PSALM 11:3

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

## Recommended Resource



The Gospel Broadcasting Network is unique in the world of religious TV—commercial free, and they never ask for money! Sponsored by the churches of Christ, GBN is available on many cable systems, as well as through their smartphone apps, the Roku device, and at [gbntv.org](http://gbntv.org).

## 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!

- ☐ Satan's Four Lies about the Bible
- ☐ Five Views of Mark 16:16
- ☐ Signs for the Times
- ☐ Victory Where There Was Once Defeat



## More subjects:



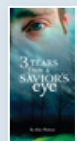
☐ How Men Can Stay Faithful to Their Wives



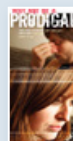
☐ Launch out with Jesus



☐ How to Face Your Golgotha



☐ 3 Tears from a Savior's Eye



☐ Why Not Be a Prodigal? (Part 2)



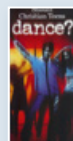
☐ Heaven Is Just 4 Steps Away (Step 1)



☐ Heaven Is Just 4 Steps Away (Step 2)



☐ Has Man Outgrown the Bible?



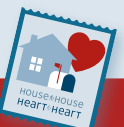
☐ Should Christian Teens Dance?

Don't see the topic you need?

Visit [www.housetohouse.com](http://www.housetohouse.com) for more subjects.

VOLUME 25:3

All materials are completely FREE of charge (including shipping in the U.S. or Canada).



# THE JUDGES

During the period of the Judges, there was a cycle of sin, suffering, supplication, and saving. Israel rebelled, was oppressed by an enemy, and called out to God; He sent a judge to deliver them. These judges were liberators, not those who administer justice.



## Influence of Jesus

Historian Philip Schaff described Jesus' power in the following way:

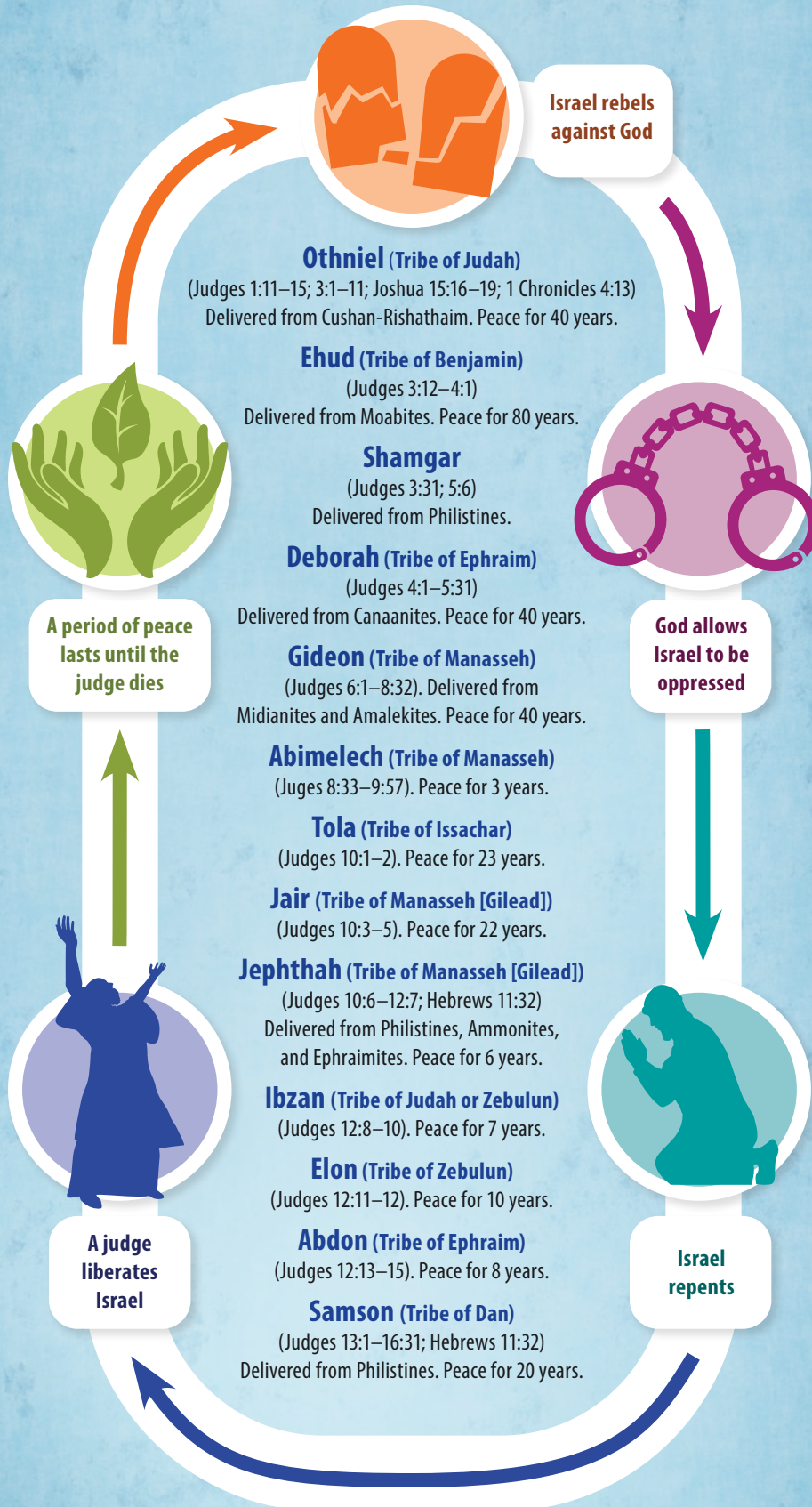
"Jesus of Nazareth, without money and arms, conquered more millions than Alexander the Great, Caesar, Mohammed, and Napoleon; without science and learning, he shed more light on things human and divine than all philosophers and scholars combined; without the eloquence of school, he spoke such words of life as were never spoken before or since, and produced effects which lie beyond the reach of orator or poet; without writing a single line, he set more pens in motion, and furnished themes for more sermons, orations, discussions, learned volumes, works of art, and songs of praise than the whole army of great men of ancient and modern times."

Roman governor Pliny the Younger in a letter to Emperor Trajan wrote that true Christians would refuse to deny Christ or worship the image of the Emperor even when threatened with torture and death. He said their fault was only that they met "on a fixed day before dawn and sang responsively a hymn to Christ as to a god, and to bind themselves . . . not to commit fraud, theft, or adultery, not to falsify their trust, nor to refuse to return a trust when called upon to do so." This behavior so baffled the governor that he wrote the Emperor to get instructions for dealing with the Christians.

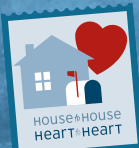
The steadfastness of Christians and their influence for Christ throughout the ages is summed up by Paul, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22–23).

*"Our God has shown us His glory and His greatness"*

DEUTERONOMY 5:24







## Do You Have Any Brass Nails?



After hearing a sermon on confession, a man approached his preacher with a heavy conscience. He asked the preacher what he should do. He explained that he worked for a boat builder and had stolen some expensive brass nails. He could not tell his employer because he would probably lose his job.

Further, he explained, "He will think I am a hypocrite. All of the times I shared my faith with him will go to waste."

Finally the guilt got so bad he confessed to his boss. He offered restitution.

The boss responded, "Sir, I always did think you were a hypocrite, but now I feel there is something in this Christianity after all. Any religion that would make a dishonest workman come back, confess that he had been stealing brass nails, and offer to settle for them must be worth having."

The man reported his boss's response to his preacher the day before the preacher was to address a group of high school students. In the course of his address he brought up the story of the brass nails. Later the principal called the speaker and said that more than fifty fountain pens and pencils, four books, and a few other items had been returned.

Do you have any brass nails on your conscience? Take care of the matter and sleep easy at night (Matthew 3:8; Acts 22:16; Philippians 3:13). —Author Unknown

*"Casting all your care upon  
Him, for He cares for you."*

1 PETER 5:7



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## OPINION POLL

Which issues do you think are the most important facing our country, and why?

<input type="checkbox"/> Abortion	<input type="checkbox"/> Immigration
<input type="checkbox"/> Alcohol/Drugs	<input type="checkbox"/> Marijuana
<input type="checkbox"/> Corruption	<input type="checkbox"/> Minority Rights
<input type="checkbox"/> Death Penalty	<input type="checkbox"/> Morality
<input type="checkbox"/> Environment/Energy/ Earth Care	<input type="checkbox"/> Supreme Court Appointees
<input type="checkbox"/> Foreign Affairs	<input type="checkbox"/> Muslims/Sharia Law
<input type="checkbox"/> Gender Identity Issues	<input type="checkbox"/> Personal Freedom/ "Big Brother" Govern- ment Surveillance
<input type="checkbox"/> Global Warming	<input type="checkbox"/> Racism
<input type="checkbox"/> Gun Control	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious Freedom
<input type="checkbox"/> Healthcare	<input type="checkbox"/> Traditional Marriage
<input type="checkbox"/> Homosexual Marriage	

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