



The Bible Banner

December 2016



The King of Glory

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle." Psalm 24:7, 8

A young boy traveling by airplane to visit his grandparents sat beside a man who happened to be a seminary professor. The boy was reading a religious children's paper when the professor thought he would have some fun with the lad. "Young man," said the professor, "If you can tell me something God can do, I'll give you a big, shiny apple." The boy thought for a moment and then replied, "Mister, if you can tell me something God can't do, I'll give you a whole barrel of apples!"

"Is any thing too hard for the LORD?" (Gen 18:14)

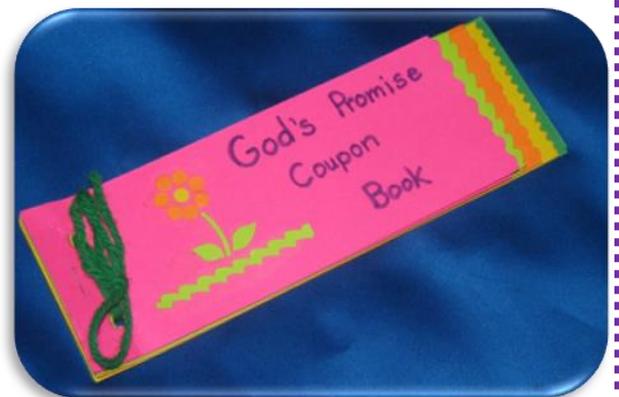
Raisin Bread Muffins

½ c dates, blended with some of water * 1 c. warm water
2 cups spelt or whole wheat flour combo 1 ¼ cup raisins
2 Tbsp lemon juice ¼ tsp salt
1 Tbsp yeast 1 Tbsp oil
Mix all ingredients well and put in oiled muffin pans. Let rise 30 minutes. Bake at 350°F for 20-30 minutes. Yields 12 muffins. These are best rewarmed for breakfast and served with vegan butter.
*May replace dates with ¼ cup applesauce and ¼ cup sucanat.



PROFITABLE TRADITIONS

Cultivate faith in God's Promises—"Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." (2 Peter 1:4) Have you ever used grocery coupons or been given a coupon book for a gift with coupons for things like one free backrub, etc.? Make and decorate a coupon book with the promises of God. Find one or more Bible promises for each category--like overcoming fear (Psalm 118:6), victory over sin (1 Cor. 10:13), promises for health (Psalm 103:2, 3), etc. Write the Bible promises in your coupon book. Coupon collectors know you may never get the backrub or the discount unless you cash in your coupon and follow the requirements carefully. So with the promises of God (1 John 3:22); don't forget to "cash them in" when you pray, reminding God of His promises. Of course, God needs no reminder, but it builds faith to take God at His word.



Consider the words of Heb. 4:2 "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it."



WHAT GOD FORGETS

As a child, I attended a little red “one-room” school-house. One day, our usual teacher was missing and we had a substitute teacher. As often happens with a substitute teacher, many of the students were testing their bounds and a multitude of names had been put up on the board for misbehavior. Each time the student misbehaved, marks were added beside his name. Unfortunately, that particular day, a large portion of the board was decorated with the marks of misbehaving students. Although I don’t remember my own name being on the board, there were so many names and so many marks, that I was sure that everyone would be punished rigorously when the regular teacher returned. I was fairly sure we would all miss recess, but even that didn’t seem a severe enough punishment for all those many marks, so I feared what the unknown punishment might be.

The next day, the regular teacher returned. As school began, I held my breath waiting to see what the punishment would be. As I expected, the teacher spoke a little about how disappointed she was that so many had been naughty. She stated that punishment was in order for all of us, but then she did something totally unexpected.

“I want to teach you a lesson,” she said, as she walked toward the board.

“You are all deserving of great punishment,” she reiterated, as we waited, sure we were about to get the worst punishment of our lives.



Upon arriving at the board, the teacher picked up the eraser and again her voice broke the fearful silence in the room. As she began to erase all the ugly marks she continued, “Even though you deserve punishment, I am going to forget this ever happened, wipe the board clean, and forgive all of you. In the same way, Jesus forgives us and wipes our sins away when we confess our sins and say we are sorry.”

That day, as the teacher continued erasing all the record of our “sins” that were written on the board, her students learned a powerful lesson about the character of God that I, for one, have never forgotten.

In like manner, all of mankind deserves punishment since *“all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”* (Romans 3:23) But even though the marks of sin are beside each of our names, God promises to “erase the board”. For the Bible says, *“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”* (1 John 1:9)

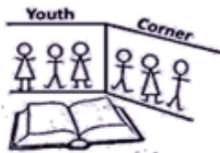
“I want to teach you a lesson,” she said, as she walked toward the board.

Although it was our sins that caused His only begotten son to have to die, God’s character is not that of “holding a grudge”, revenge, and giving us what we deserve. Instead, He is full of compassion and mercy. *“Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.”* (Micah 7:18,19)

The character of God, as described in the Bible, shows us that God is perfect. Therefore, we know that God doesn’t have a bad memory or forget things he needs to do. Yet, regarding the sins that we have confessed, He states, *“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”* (Heb. 8:12) Praise the Lord, God **chooses** to forget our sins!

In response to His kindness, today, let us **choose** to heed the words of Peter, *“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;”* (Acts 3:19)

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“Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts.” Malachi 3:10, 11

One night, a farmer sat near his fireplace, rocking back and forth in his chair, and thinking of the pastor’s sermon that morning. The pastor had talked about using the Lord for insurance and giving the money that would have been given to the insurance company to God’s work. The farmer thought he would like to follow the pastor’s advice. But if their crops were not insured and a storm came and destroyed their crops, he knew they would be in bad condition. Presently, his wife came in from tucking the children in bed and he asked her opinion on the topic. Together, they decided to use their money for God’s work and trust that God would protect their crops.



Near the end of the summer, the farmer had many fields of beautiful golden grain. God had blessed them, and it seemed that this year would be the best harvest they had ever had. But then, four days before the harvesters with the combines arrived to harvest the grain, a storm arrived.

The farmer gathered his family together to pray. This storm could mean the loss of everything to them. The farmer read Psalm 91 then the family knelt and prayed claiming God’s promises.

Ten minutes later, it was hailing hard and covering the lawn with hailstones, but the farmer kept his faith strong and trusted that God could keep the hail from damaging the grain. After the storm, the family ran outside to the field and, to their relief, discovered that the grain was perfectly fine. The hail had not even touched it.

When the harvesters arrived a few days later, they were amazed at what they saw. All over the county, farmers had lost their entire harvest to the storm, but not here, the grain was perfectly fine. Not only that, but it was the largest yield of grain they had ever harvested or seen. The farmer credited it all to the fact that he had hired the Best Insurance Agent.

God certainly did work a miracle for this farmer and his family, and he can work a miracle for you too. Will you trust Him?

Study To Shew Thyself Approved—Knowing God Better



If you ever watched a baby learning to walk, you will recognize that as long as the baby is looking at its parent or grandparent on the other side of the room, the chance of success in walking is much greater. If the child looks down at “the problem”, he inevitably falls. The same is true when running “the race that is set before us.” We must be “looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith”. (Heb. 12:1,2)



The story in the Bible of Peter walking on water (Matt. 14:27-31) teaches the same principle. *“And he said, Come. And when Peter was come down out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me.”* (Matt. 14:29,30) In order to succeed in the Christian life, we must keep our eyes fixed on God and not on the “tempest” around us. In order to keep your eyes fixed on God, it is well to study God’s character and remember how awesome our God is.

God is mighty—He is in charge of nature--*“The mighty God, even the LORD, hath spoken, and called the earth from the rising of the sun unto the going down thereof.”* Psalm 50:1 *“By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he*

layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.” Psalm 33:6 -9

God is all knowing and a wonderful counselor—Think about it, He knows all 6,000 plus languages in the world today-- “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9:6 “Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.” 1Timothy 1:17

God is loving, faithful and gentle--“He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love.” 1 John 4:8 “God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.” 1 Cor. 1:9 “He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.” Isaiah 40:11

God is ever present, a refuge anytime and anywhere--“The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms:...” Deut. 33:27 “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.” Psalm 46:1

God is all seeing; nothing is hidden from him--“The king answered unto Daniel, and said, Of a truth it is, that your God is a God of gods, and a Lord of kings, and a revealer of secrets, seeing thou couldest reveal this secret.” Daniel 2:47 “The eyes of the LORD are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” Prov. 15:3

God is all powerful. He is above the kings of the earth--“For the LORD your God is God of gods, and Lord of lords, a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward:” Deut. 10:17 “For God is the King of all the earth: sing ye praises with understanding.” Psalm 47:7 “But God is the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.” Psalm 75:7

God is holy, just and truth--- “Exalt the LORD our God, and worship at his holy hill; for the LORD our God is holy.” Psalm 99:9 “He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he.” Deut. 32:4

God is gracious, merciful and righteous --“And the LORD passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, The LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abundant in goodness and truth,” Exodus 34:6 “Thy righteousness also, O God, is very high, who hast done great things: O God, who is like unto thee!” Psalm 71:19

God is more than big enough for your problems. -- “Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men; and the weakness of God is stronger than men.” 1 Cor. 1:25 “The LORD bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect.” Psalm 33:10 “Behold, I am the LORD, the God of all flesh: is there any thing too hard for me?” Jer. 32:27

Now that you have started, how many more characteristics of God can you find in the Bible?



Should I Get a Flu Shot?

Several years ago, I happened to meet a nurse working in the hospital oncology ward. She looked like she felt terrible. Her nose was stuffy. Her eyes were red and weepy, and periodically she would interject a sneeze into her handy Kleenex. Thinking it strange that she would come to work sick when there were people with weakened immune systems, I inquired if she had the flu. She assured me that she couldn't possibly be sick because she had just gotten the flu vaccination the day before. I wasn't so sure...

According to **medlineplus.gov**, about 46% of Americans received the Flu shot last season. “The flu”, is an infectious disease caused by an influenza virus that is spread through the air from coughs or sneezes and also by touching surfaces contaminated by the virus and then touching the mouth or eyes. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Influenza>

The CDC (Centers for Disease Control) “recommends a yearly flu vaccine for everyone 6 months and older.” And states that “...Flu vaccination can reduce flu illnesses and prevent flu-related hospitalizations.” <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/index.htm>

However, before dropping this article and running to the health department to get a flu shot – perhaps we should look at some other, not so well known, facts about the flu vaccine.

Perhaps we should consider that there are thousands of different kinds of the flu (influenza subtypes) affecting people around the world. Here in the U.S. about 16 different flu shots have been approved by the FDA. None of these vaccines protect against all the different strains of flu virus. Each year the formulation for the influenza vaccine is selected based on the virus strains that are **expected to circulate**. In other words, the “active” ingredients of the flu shot are based on somebody's best guess.



*"It takes at least six months to produce large quantities of influenza vaccine. For vaccine to be delivered in time for vaccination to begin in the fall, manufacturers may begin to grow one or more of the vaccine viruses in January based on their **best guess** as to what viruses are most likely to be included in the vaccine."* (emphasis added) <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/season/vaccine-selection.htm>

In other words, there is no guarantee that the vaccination that they choose to give in a particular year will protect people from the strain that actually shows up that year. Consider these news reports, *"Flu vaccine effectiveness tends to vary from year to year. Last winter, flu vaccine was 50 to 55 percent effective overall, which experts consider relatively good."* <http://abc7chicago.com/health/cdc-flu-vaccine-may-not-be-effective-for-this-years-strains/421429/> Would you invest in brakes that worked only 50-55 percent of the time and then call that 'relatively good'?

A Fox News report in Dec. of 2014 is very telling: *"A sampling of flu cases so far this season suggests the current flu vaccine may not be a good match for the most common seasonal flu strain currently circulating in the United States, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said on Wednesday."* <http://www.foxnews.com/health/2014/12/04/flu-shots-may-not-be-good-match-for-2014-15-virus-cdc-says.html>

Furthermore, if we consider the so called, "side effects" of the flu vaccine, this is a little like buying brakes that may malfunction 50 percent of the time as well as possibly causing flat tires, broken windshield wipers, corroded battery hookups, and engine stalling, etc. The common effects of the flu vaccine include fever, shivering, fatigue, headache, muscle and joint pain. Less common, but even more dangerous effects of the flu vaccine may include anaphylactic shock, convulsions/seizures, facial or cranial nerve paralysis, encephalopathy, limb paralysis and development of the autoimmune paralysis known as Guillain-Barré syndrome. Even the CDC has now admitted that the flu vaccine can cause Guillain-Barré syndrome. *"Common side effects from the flu shot include: Soreness, redness, and/or swelling from the shot; Headache; Fever; Nausea; Muscle aches; The flu shot, like other injections, can occasionally cause fainting. Some studies have found a possible small association of injectable flu vaccine with Guillain-Barré syndrome (GBS)."* <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/general.htm>

A simple look at a few of the "extra" ingredients listed in the vaccine insert information for each dose will give us a clue as to why the human body reacts that way to the vaccinations. Here are just three of the vaccine brands.* And we have focused on only 4 chemicals.

Fluzone Intradermal Injection (2014-2015 Formula) = **20 mcg of formaldehyde**
Flulaval Quadrivalent Intramuscular Injection (2015-2016 Formula) = **50 mcg thimerosal; 25 mcg formaldehyde,**
Afluria Intramuscular Injection (Multi-dose 2016-2017 Formula) = **24.5 mcg of mercury per dose; 3 ng neomycin sulfate; 2 ng beta-propiolactone;**



Most people don't know what all these big names mean, so they just ignore them – but here are some easier to understand definitions.
Beta-propiolactone: A corrosive chemical that is carcinogenic, mutagenic, and hazardous to humans.
Neomycin: An antibiotic that interferes with the absorption of Vitamin B6 which in turn causes problems like epilepsy and retardation.
Thimerosal: A derivative of mercury, which is a known neuro-toxin linked to brain damage and autoimmune diseases.
Formaldehyde: A chemical that is highly toxic to all animals. It is also carcinogenic, and known to cause leukemia.

Some other ingredients that people may wonder about include potassium chloride—since, although apparently edible, Wikipedia states it is *"used to cause cardiac arrest as the third drug in the "three drug cocktail" for executions by lethal injection."* Vegetarians and vegans may also be concerned over that fact that the flu vaccines are egg-based or occasionally animal cell-based, including unclean animals like dogs. The CDC states, *"A cell-based flu vaccine is made by growing viruses in animal cells, which is a different manufacturing process than the traditional egg-based manufacturing process that is used to produce most flu vaccines."* <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/protect/vaccine/cell-based.htm>

So the remaining question is "If I decide **not** to get a flu vaccine, how can I avoid getting the flu?" The first tip is to boost the immune system that God gave you. Even the theory of vaccination is based on the use of the immune system. *"A vaccine works by training the immune system to recognize and combat pathogens, either viruses or bacteria. To do this, certain molecules from the pathogen must be introduced into the body to trigger an immune response."* <http://www.publichealth.org/public-awareness/understanding-vaccines/vaccines-work/>

God made our bodies to fight disease and his plan is best for boosting the immune system. One health educator suggests, *"A walk, even in winter, would be more beneficial to the health than all the medicine the doctors may prescribe. . ."* {Healthful Living p.177}



During the 1918 flu epidemic, a fresh air cure was proven to be beneficial *“Records from an ‘open-air’ hospital in Boston, Massachusetts, suggest that some patients and staff were spared the worst of the outbreak. A combination of fresh air, sunlight, scrupulous standards of hygiene, and reusable face masks appears to have substantially reduced deaths among some patients and infections among medical staff.”* <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4504358/>

Other helpful agents in boosting your immune system and combatting the flu include raw garlic, ginger, elderberry, echinacea and foods containing vitamin C. Contrast showers and cold-mitten frictions also assist your immune system in resisting disease by increasing the white blood cell counts. Do your part by getting plenty of rest, water and good nutrition then claim the promise, *“And ye shall serve the LORD*

your God, and he shall bless thy bread, and thy water; and I will take sickness away from the midst of thee.” Exodus 23:25

*You can find the current vaccine inserts here <http://www.fda.gov/BiologicsBloodVaccines/Vaccines/ApprovedProducts/ucm093833.htm>

QUOTABLE QUOTES

“The law is but a transcript of the character of God.” (Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing, pg. 77)

“I cannot spare the law one moment, no more than I can spare Christ... each is continually sending me to the other—the law to Christ, and Christ to the law... the height and depth of the law constrain me to fly to the love of God in Christ... the love of God in Christ endears the law to me ‘above gold or precious stones;’” (Wesley, The Original Nature, Property, and the Use of the Law, IV.7)

Kids' Corner

Written by D. Roberts age 13 Illustrated by D. Roberts age 11

GOD'S AMAZING CREATURES



Kangaroos live mainly on Australia. Kangaroos have large, powerful back legs, large feet for leaping, a long strong tail for balance, and a small head. The eastern grey kangaroo eats a wide variety of grasses, whereas some other kinds of kangaroos (e.g. the red kangaroo) include large amounts of bushes in their diets. Female kangaroos have a pouch where the baby kangaroo (joey) will usually stay for about nine months, before starting to leave the pouch for small periods of time. Its mother usually feeds the joey until it reaches 18 months. Just like the mother kangaroo protects and gives a safe place for the joey to hide, Jesus protects and takes care of you too.

MEMORY TEXT

Psalm 46:1 “God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.”



Patience was walking in the woods behind her house. She saw a big mean dog running toward her and growling. She quickly prayed and asked Jesus to help her. The dog ran away. Patience was glad Jesus had protected her.

Passion was walking home from school when some mean boys came toward her. Passion didn't pray. She thought she didn't need Jesus to protect her. The mean boys pushed her over and scratched her arm on the pavement. Passion's arm hurt. She wished she had prayed to Jesus.