On Jan. 1: Paul Revere was born in 1735, and Hank Williams died in 1953 at age 29.

**Reading: Gen. 1-3 Pasture: Gen. 2:7-8**

**The Breath of Life**

**“*And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul.” (Gen. 2:7)***

**The Body**. Man did not, evolve over a period of millions of years. By a direct creative act, Jesus Christ formed man with His own hands. (John 1:3,14) If that had been all God did however, man would have been no more than a statue. God however, breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul.

**The Bible**. In 2Tim. 3:16 we see that the Bible also, is something created by the very breath of God. *“All Scripture is given by inspiration of God…”* The word ‘inspired’ is ‘theopneustos’ in the Greek language, which means ‘God breathed’. Not just concepts and general ideas, but the very words of the Bible are ‘breathed’ by God and are as Divinely made and preserved as man himself. (Ps. 12:6-7)

**The Bequest**. God has given us a mighty inheritance. He bequeathed to us the very breath of life. Life therefore, is not to be held cheaply or wasted, but is to be used in a manner consistent with the Creator’s great plan. The Bible, our most valuable asset in living such a life, is every bit as much a living book as we are a living soul.

***Thought: Life is a gift of God, and must not be taken lightly.***

On Jan. 31: Composer Franz Shubert was born in 1797 and Sam Goldwyn of MGM died in 1974.

**Reading: Ex. 39-40 Pasture: Ex. 40:30-32**

**We Must Be Washed**

***“And Moses and Aaron and his sons washed their hands and their feet thereat: \*Ex. 40:31)***

**The Belief**. If one is to believe literally in the Word of God, which is the only sensible way to look at it, then one must believe that it is impossible for man to achieve favor with God in his own sinful and soiled state. God demands that people be clean to be in His presence, and so we must first wash before we worship.

**The Blood**. One must first be washed in the blood of the Lamb. When a person accepts Jesus Christ as personal Savior, that is exactly what occurs. The blood Jesus shed for sin is applied to our sin account, and the soul is washed clean of the stains of sin.

**The Body**. Even after salvation, we soil ourselves again each day by our continued sinning. Thus it is interesting and instructive to note that the hands and feet must be cleansed. The hands, representing things we choose to do which are contrary to God, are cleansed. The feet, representing our walk in self-will away from God must likewise be cleansed. How thankful we ought to be for 1John 1:9 where we are assured, “*If we confess our sins, his is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”*

***Thought: “What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.”***

On Jan. 2: Isaac Asimov, sci-fi writer was born in 1920 and actor Alan Hale, Jr. (the Skipper on Gilligan’s Island died.

**Reading: Gen. 4-7 Pasture: Gen. 4:1-16**

**The Superior Sacrifice**

***“If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted…” (Gen. 4:7a)***

**The Promise**. God had made the promise in Gen. 3:15 that one day ‘the seed of the woman’ would ultimately triumph over the seed of the serpent. This first promise of the Messiah would come to be known in theology as the ‘proto-evangelium’ or ‘1st declaration of the gospel.’

**The Picture**. I believe God taught Adam and Eve about the coming sacrifice of Messiah when He took the lives of animals that first time and made them coats. It seems obvious that He showed them this object lesson to teach them the seriousness of sin and the simplicity of salvation available by trusting in God’s Word of promise.

**The Procedure**. Cain refused to humble himself and bring the demanded sacrifice. Instead, he rebelled and offered the work of his own hands as being ‘good enough’. Such a rebellious course could not please God, and so God rejected that offering and Cain lost his position as leader of his family. God told him plainly however, that if he would only repent, turn around and do right, that he would be accepted and his position restored. Cain was too proud, and instead of repenting transferred his anger to Abel, whose offering had been made by faith and so accepted of God.

***Thought: Man can never find favor with God through his own efforts. If any work of man could do so, then would not Jesus have died in vain on the cross of Calvary?***

On Jan. 3, 1840: The 1st deep sea sounding occurred.

**Reading: Gen. 8-11 Pasture: Gen. 8:20-22**

**Climate Change**

***“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease.” (Gen. 8:22)***

**Science?** The word science means knowledge. Is it knowledge indeed that man has brought on climate change that has the potential of destroying life as we know it? Some are sure that is the case, and yet I for one do not agree. I am not a scientist, but base by belief on the Word of God, rather than the opinions of men.

**Cycles**. I tend to believe the warming trend our world is experiencing is a thing that occurs in cycles. I believe we will see colder temperatures coming back again, but even if I am wrong there, is global warming a bad thing? I grew up in northern Wisconsin where the temperature is colder than a Mother in law’s kiss, and I think folks would welcome a little global warming!

**Certainty**. We know for a certainty though, that as long as this world lasts, we will still have seasons as we know them. Oh, they might be a little warmer than usual, but they will still be there. We have the Word of the Creator and Sustainer of the Planet Himself on it.

***Thought: We will always have the season, for God is the reason.***

On Jan. 30, 1487: Bell chimes were invented.

**Reading: Ex. 36-38 Pasture: Ex. 36:4-7**

**When is it Enough?**

***“For the stuff they had was sufficient for all the work to make it, and too much.” (Ex. 36:7)***

**When There Are No New Missionaries**. When will our giving be enough? First of all, when no new missionaries are called to the field and no new missionaries call our Church hoping to gain support, then I suppose we can say God has restrained us from doing any more. However, that’s not likely to happen.

**When There Are No New Ministries**. All around us are people lost and going to hell. When there are no more people to reach, no more ministries to start, when we have reached every person in every jail, home, nursing home, and street corner, then I suppose we can say God has restrained us from doing more. Again though, that is not likely to happen.

**When There is No One Who Needs Mercy**. Jesus said, “The poor ye have with you always.” I suppose the time could come when no none needs help on a gas bill, or no hungry person ever needs food. I suppose the time will come when everyone has a winter coat and shelter is provided for all. However, we are not likely to see those times, are we?

***Thought: We have never done enough giving as long as there are still needs.***

*The need to give never changes.*

On Jan. 29, 1756: “Light Horse Harry” Lee, father of Robert E. Lee was born, and actor Alan Ladd (Shane) died in 1963 at age 50.

**Reading: Ex. 33-35 Pasture: Ex. 33:12-23**

**Assurance**

**“And he said, my presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest.” (Ex. 33:14)**

**Assurance Through the Scripture**. Moses wanted some assurance from the hand of God. Sure, God had called him and told him to bring the people out of Egypt and he had done so. Now however, although he had received the commandments of God, he still had some lingering doubts. How could God reassure him now that He would continue to be with Moses as he led the people? God first of all, in vs. 17, assured Moses with His Word. Today, we call the Word of God, Scripture. Do you need reassurance of your relationship? Read 1John 5:13)

**Assurance Through the Symbol**. Moses could not look upon God’s face and live, so God only revealed to Moses His back parts. Today, we must rely on the evidence of what God has done in the past. We also do not see Him face to face, but looking back at Him, we see the evidence of His love and intervention.

**Assurance Through Security**. God put Moses in the cleft of the rock and covered him with His hand. We also are kept securely in the Rock (Christ) that was cleft for us. Jesus crucified and risen, is the author and finisher of our salvation. We do not keep ourselves, we are kept by Him.

***Thought: God wants us to have confidence in Him and in His love.***

On Jan. 4, 1581: James Ussher, who calculated the earth’s beginning at Nov.23,4004 BC was born and Cornelius Vanderbilt, US robber baron died at age 82.

**Reading: Gen. 12-15 Pasture: Gen. 12:1-4**

**The Covenant With Abraham**

***“And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee…” (Gen. 12:3a)***

There were three essential elements we must notice in the covenant God made with Abraham.

**Regarding the Land**. (vs.1-2a) God’s covenant regarding the land we know as Israel. He promised to show that land to Abraham, and to give it to him and his descendants for a permanent homeland. It is small wonder the Jews so furiously claim all of Israel and are loathe to give up the West Bank area; after all, God gave it to them.

**Regarding their Living**. (vs. 2b-3b) God promised to make Abraham’s name great, and even today, all Jews and Moslems count their descent from him. God also promised to bless and prosper Abraham and his nation, and truly the land of Israel and the Jewish people have prospered in this world under the blessings of God. In addition, God promised a special blessing on those who befriended Israel, and a curse upon those who were enemies. (see here Matt. 25:31-46)

**Regarding the Lord.** (vs. 3c) Finally, God promised that through Abraham the Messiah would come. He would be the Redeemer of not only the Jews, but of all the earth.

***Thought: Abraham believed and obeyed, following God even at age 75! It’s not too late for you.***

On Jan. 5**:** Actress Diane Keaton was born in 1946 and Antarctic explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton died in 1922.

**Reading: Gen. 16-18 Pasture: Gen. 18:17-19**

**Why God Trusted Abraham**

**“*And the Lord said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do…?” (Gen. 18:17)***

**The Trust**. God was able to trust Abraham. God didn’t expect an answer for His question in vs. 17, He already knew the answer. No, He didn’t need to hide from Abraham what He was going to do. After all, if God could entrust Abraham to be the father of nations, of kings, and progenitor of Messiah’s line, He could trust him with anything.

**The Truth**. God simply told Abraham the truth. He was about to judge and destroy Sodom. God knew, that Abraham knew, that nephew Lot lived in Sodom. I suppose anyone would serve God as long as God was blessing. But, when judgment falls on that which we love, will we continue to love and to serve? The answer to that question determines whether we serve the Lord in truth or not.

**The Teaching**. In vs. 19 God assured Himself that He could trust Abraham, “For”, He said, “I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord..” Abraham led by example. Yes, he would continue to love and continue to serve the Lord.

***Thought: If God able to trust us to continue to serve and love under difficult circumstances?***

***God builds on trust.***

On Jan. 28: Abstract artist Jackson Pollock was born in 1912 and Comedian Jimmy Durante died in 1980 at age 86.

**Reading: Ex. 30-32 Pasture: Ex. 32:1-24**

**The Golden Calf**

***“And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.” (Ex. 32:24)***

**The Sabbatical**. Moses was taking a little extra time off, at least according to the people. He was lingering with the Lord and mischief began to occur. The old adage is, “When the cat’s away, the mice will play.” This was certainly true in this case.

**The Sin**. The people decided that since Moses was so long away, may be they would return to Egypt. As a symbol of their willingness to go back into bondage, they were going to embrace Egyptian gods. The god Apis, the bull was one of Egypt’s chief deities. This is what Aaron fashioned to lead the people back into sin and slavery.

**The Symbol**. When Moses returned, Aaron offered a lame half-truth excuse, (just like we often do) as why he made this calf. (I didn’t mean to do it, it just happened!) Then Moses, restoring order and putting the fear of God back in folks, ordered the golden calf pulverized. When gold is reduced to a powdery form and mixed with water, it turns blood red. This symbol would remind Israel of who their God really was and what He really meant to them.

***Thought: Why, when people have been delivered from sin and slavery, would they ever desire to go back into it again? That is exactly what we do when we choose to commit sin that has been forgiven***.

On Jan. 27**,**  1832: Lewis Carroll, author of Alice in Wonderland was born, and “Bear” Bryant, Alabama football coach died in 1983 at age 69.

**Reading: Ex. 28-29 Pasture: Ex. 28:1-3**

**The Priest’s Office**

***“And thou shalt take unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him…” (Ex. 28:1a)***

**The Servants**. To minister to the Lord is the act of a servant. Indeed, that is the literal meaning of ’minister’, to serve. Some people misunderstand and imagine a minister has a position of authority, wherein he can order people around and do as he pleases. This is not so. The ministry is more a position of responsibility than it is of authority, for the minister must seek to please God his Master, more than to please himself.

**The Senior**. It is interesting that God still decided to use Aaron in this office. Remember, Aaron had made a golden calf for the people to worship, and then had lied about how it was produced. “I put in the gold and jewels and there came out this calf.” In spite of that, God had forgiven him and was going to use him in a most singular ministry. Remember always, if we will just repent, God can still use us.

**The Sons**. Nadab and Abihu would soon die before the Lord for their self-will as they offered “strange fire” in their censers. God, in His omniscience, knew that and so called the two younger brothers as well. God always provides so we may accomplish His will. God always gives the tools needed for the task.

***Thought: There’s no need to run and hide; God our maker will provide.***

On Jan. 6, 1878: Carl Sandburg, poet and Lincoln biographer was born and Pres. Theodore Roosevelt died in 1919.

**Reading: Gen. 19-20 Pasture: Gen. 19:17-38**

**Lot’s Escape**

**“Haste thee, escape thither: for I cannot do any thing till thou be come thither. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar.” (Gen. 19:23)**

**Dispute**. Even as God’s angels were ready to destroy Sodom and called upon Lot to escape, he began to dispute with them. He was commanded to flee to the mountain, but instead insisted he be allowed to enter Zoar. The name means ’smallness’ and he seemed to think since it was little in size it ought to escape judgment. This reminds me of how many times we try and hold on to some little sin, disputing even God who commands us to “abstain from every appearance of evil.”

**Disregard**. Lot’s wife disregarded the words of the Lord which came from his messengers, and she paid the price for it. She became a pillar of salt. Since she refused to accept the word and be a positive example of a believer, she remained a negative example for all time.

**Disgusting**! The remainder of the story is disgusting to read. Lot, who had surrounded himself with the filthy conversation and evil communications of the wicked was affected. He feared even to go to Zoar and did escape to the mountain, there fathering children by his own daughters. Truly, as we are taught in 1Cor. 15:33, “evil communications corrupt good manners.”

***Thought: If God doesn’t judge America, He will have to apologize to Sodom.***

On Jan. 7, 1800: Millard Fillmore, the 13th president of the United States was born. **Reading: Gen. 21-23 Pasture: Gen. 22:1-18**

**Why Did God Tempt Abraham?**

God tempted Abraham to sacrifice Isaac to furnish us a series of pictures, or object lessons.

**Of the Father**. In this passage, where Abraham was willing to sacrifice his son, his only son, we have a clear picture of what it cost God the Father to sacrifice His only begotten Son for our sakes. Never imagine the great heart of God did not break when He saw the agony of His Son; but still He gave Him up for our sakes.

**Of the Fidelity**. Jesus, the Son,, always displayed complete and total fidelity to His Father. The Bible tells us regarding Jesus, “Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.” (Heb. 5:8) Isaac, willingly lying down on the altar and allowing himself to be bound is a perfect illustration of that kind of fidelity.

**Of Faithfulness**. We ought to be just as faithful to the Lord as were Abraham and Isaac. Nothing should be held back in reserve, and we ought to be willing to sacrifice all for the cause of Chirst.

***Thought: Any treasure I am not willing to give up for God, costs me too much to keep.***

On Jan. 26, 1826: Former 1st Lady Julia Dent Grant was born and William K. Wrigley, owner of Wrigley Gum and the Chicago Cubs died in 1932.

**Reading: Ex. 25-27 Pasture: Ex. 25:1-8**

**The Gifts of the People**

**“*Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring me an offering: of every man that giveth it willingly with his heart ye shall take my offering.” (Ex. 25:1)***

**Everyone Should**. Notice that all the children of Israel were mentioned here. Giving is something everyone ought to do, no one is left out. As far as giving back to God is concerned, there are no exemptions.

**Everyone Could**. Again, notice that everyone could do something when it came to giving. Only some of the very wealthy could afford to give gold, silver, and precious stones. However, the moderately wealthy could provide the skins and material required, while even the poor could bring brass and olive oil. Yes, when it comes to giving to the Lord, every one can do something, and ought to.

**Everyone Who Would**. A qualification is given. Only those who were giving willingly and from the heart should participate. God loves a cheerful giver, and when it comes to offerings, (over and above the tithe), we should never give because of a feeling of pressure or coercion. The tithe is demanded, the freewill offerings are requested. One will give based on one’s gratitude to God.

***Thought: All giving to God ought to be performed through the local Church.***

On Jan. 25, 1870: The soda fountain was patented by Gustavus Dows.

**Reading: Ex. 22-24 Pasture: Ex. 22:1-11**

**Crime and Punishment**

***“If the theft be certainly found in his hand alive, whether it be ox, or ass, or sheep; he shall restore double.” (Ex. 22:4)***

**The Principle**. God’s method of dealing with thieves and those convicted of crimes is far superior to the methods we have in use today. God says a thief, for instance, is to make restitution.

**The Penitentiary**. The idea of prison and a especially of the modern institution known as a penitentiary, is in contradiction to the Word of God. The idea comes from a Catholic concept of penitence. The thought is, if you can separated someone from society and give them a chance to meditate on their crimes, then they will become penitent, or demonstrate repentance to become a good member of society again.

**The Provision**. God’s provision for theft is much more logical. In the fist case, victim’s rights are considered. The victim of the crime is to have his property restored, or to see justice done. Secondly, the thief will learn by having to work doubly hard to restore that which was taken, and to support himself while doing so.

**Thought: It is unfortunate that so many who enter our prison system learn only how to be more rebellious and better criminals.**

On Jan. 8, 1824: Novelist Wilkie Collins was born, and Walter Diemer, inventor of bubble gum, died in 1998.

**Reading: Gen. 24-25 Pasture: Gen. 24:12-50**

**The Simple Life**

***“And he said, O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and shew kindness unto my master Abraham.” (Gen. 24:12)***

**The Principle**. Living for God and according to God’s will is not really complicated, it is a simple life. For instance, if you are faced with a decision, take it to the Lord first. As Psalm 37:5 says, “Commit thy way unto the Lord: trust also in him: and he shall bring it to pass.”

**The Procedure**. If we will take major decisions to the Lord and ask Him to open and close doors according to His will, He will do so. We see the prayer of Abraham’s servant in this passage. That is exactly what God did for this man, and that is what He will do for us as well. Go through the open doors and stay out of the closed ones. It really is simple, isn’t it?

**The Practice**. I believe too many people suffer extraordinary stress because they attempt to take decisions on their own shoulders they should not have to bear. Again, the Bible assures us in Psalm 37:23, “The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way.”

***Thought: Do it God’s way and prosper; do it your way, and fail.***

*Why not also ask your Pastor to pray with you about major decisions? That’s one reason God gave him to you.*

On Jan. 9, 1811: The 1st recorded women’s golf tournament was held.

**Reading: Gen. 26-28 Pasture: Gen. 28:10-22**

**In The House of God**

**The Conviction**. When Jacob dreamed, he saw the ladder that reached to Heaven. That ladder of course, represents the Lord Jesus Christ, whom Old Testament Saints knew by faith as the Messiah to come. We of course, recognize John 14:6 pictured here, where Jesus is the only way to Heaven. Although reared in a Godly home, Jacob had not accepted the Lord as his personal Redeemer, but recognized Him as the God of his fathers. Now, the conviction came to Jacob personally, and God spoke to him personally, testifying to the existence of eternal life. (“I am the God of Abraham, and of Isaac, not was the God.)

**The Conversion**. In his prayer, Jacob prayed a prayer of faith indeed. He accepted the Lord as his God, (vs. 21, and vowed to serve Him. (vs.22). Jacob was a changed man from that day on.

**The Calling**. This place always would have special meaning for Jacob. He would one day, “come back to Bethel” and renew his vows to the Lord. Until then however, he changed the name of the place from Luz (which signifies light) to Bethel, (the House of God).

Thought: It is after we see the light, that we mature and take our place in the House of God.

On Jan.. 24, 1899: The rubber heel was patented by Humphrey O’Sullivan.

**Reading: Ex. 19-21 Pasture: Ex. 20:1-6**

**Divine Jealousy**

***“Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me.” (Ex.20:5)***

**The Prohibition**. God said His people were to make no images of anything and bow down to them. Man is rebellious by nature, and according to Rom. 1:23, this is just what man did. He created false gods rather than giving obedience and glory to the true God.

**The Pondering.** In vs. 5 God explains just why He is so jealous. The iniquity, or lack of righteousness He sees displayed in those who are idolaters is often seen also in their children, grandchildren, great-grand-children, and even great-great-grandchildren. These precious souls whom God wants so badly to bless, continue on in the cycle of idolatry.

**The Purpose.** Yes, God is a God of mercy. He shows mercy unto thousands of those who love Him and obey Him. God doesn’t want to be harsh, but when selfish men refuse to teach their children the right and good way, nothing can be done to bless them. No wonder God is jealous!

***Thought: God is not jealous of us, He is jealous for us.***

*The cycle of iniquity must be broken in this generation!*

On Jan. 23, 1849: A patent was granted for an envelope making machine.

**Reading: Ex. 16-18 Pasture: Ex. 18:8-12**

**The Testimony**

**“*And Moses told his father in law all that the Lord had done unto Pharaoh and to the Egyptians for Israel’s sake, and all the travail that had come upon them by the way, and how the Lord delivered them.” (Ex. 18:8)***

**The Recounting**. (vs.8) Moses was never ashamed of the Lord. When he had the opportunity to talk to his father in law, he openly recounted all that God had done for Israel. He hid nothing from him, but spoke of the rescue from Pharaoh, and also of all the troubles God had delivered them from and through.

**The Rejoicing**. (vs. 9-10) Whenever someone loves another, they are going to rejoice when they are blessed. Jethro certainly rejoiced when he heard of all the goodness God had showed to His people.

**The Reception**. (vs.11-12) It is wonderful to see how God honored the testimony of Moses by moving on Jethro’s heart. In this passage we see how Jethro accepted God in a personal way, which is what we all would desire our testimony to other to accomplish, isn’t it?

***Thought: Never be hesitant to tell others of the great things God has done for you.***

*Never cease to praise God for His faithfulness.*

On Jan. 10, 1911: The 1st photo to be taken from an airplane was in San Diego, CA.

**Reading: Gen. 29-30 Pasture: Gen. 29:22-31**

**The Arrangement**

***“And when the Lord saw that Leah was hated, he opened her womb: but Rachel was barren.” (Gen. 29:31)***

**Polygamy.** Polygamy, the practice of having more than one spouse, was practice often in Old Testament days. However, we must never make the mistake of thinking it was approved of by God. God intended one man and one life for one life. Anything more than marriage as God instituted it is nothing but immorality and sin.

**Practice**. Now Jacob was deceived by Laban into entering into marriage with Leah, the older daughter before he could marry Rachel the younger. Although this was the usual practice of the land according to Laban, it should never have been participated in by Jacob.

**Punishment**. Jacob never loved Leah as he should. In his self-will he wanted only Rachel for his wife. Yet God, in His mercy and compassion, gave Leah children and not Rachel. One would think Jacob would have picked up on this sign from God, but he evidently didn’t.

***Thought: One man, one wife, for one life.***

On Jan.11, 1913: The 1st sedan-type car (Hudson) went on display at the 13th Auto Show in New York City.

**Reading: Gen. 31-32 Pasture:** Gen. 32:1-2

**God’s Heavenly Host**

***“And Jacob went on his way, and the angels of God met him.” (Gen. 32:1)***

**The Appearance**. Without question, the nearer Jacob got to the land of his birth, the more nervous he became. He had done some things here that had made him enemies. No enemy was more notable than his own brother, Esau. Now, all of a sudden, Jacob met a group of God’s angels.

**The Assurance**. I believe Jacob needed some assurance that God was with him. Of course he knew that God had called him to return to the land of his nativity, but now he was assured once again that the presence and power of the Lord was in this place as well. It seems to me that God always gives us courage and assurance to meet life’s obstacles, but that assurance is never given to us until we need it.

**The Ability**. Now, having seen God’s host, Jacob was able to go on. It is interesting that no one else is mentioned as having seen this host, only Jacob. God leads his people through one leader.

***Thought: Follow God’s man as he follows God and you will never go wrong.***

***“****Though none go with me, still I will follow.”*

On Jan. 22, 1771: Spain ceded the Falkland Islands to Britain.

**Reading: Ex. 13-15 Pasture: Ex. 14:23-27**

**The End of the Egyptians**

***“...Let us flee from the face of Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians.” (Ex. 14:25b)***

**Devices.** Mankind invents many devices with which to destroy each other. Whoever possesses the newest and most deadly device prides himself on being the greatest and most powerful. At this period of history, the Egyptian chariot was a kind of super weapon. No one on foot could hope to escape it. Archers could shoot from it and destroy many. No army could stand against the onslaught of Pharaoh’s army, thus equipped.

**Disturbed**. God began to fight against the Egyptians in a very curious way. He loosened the wheels of the chariots so they came off. One can see the grim humor of God displayed here. God’s actions which nullified these super weapons was not done so the Egyptians could get to Israel, but also so they could not get out!

**Destruction**. Pharaoh had been fairly warned. Many miracles had been done in an attempt to bring him to his knees, but Pharaoh would not listen. Finally, he was abandoned to judgment. He lost an army in the sea, and along with it, much of his prestige and power.

***Thought: Sometimes, learning humility carries a high price.***

*The weapons of the world will not avail against the power of God.*

On Jan. 21, 1954: The 1st atomic submarine, the USS Nautilus was launched.

**Reading: Ex. 10-12 Pasture: Ex. 12:1-24**

**The Origin of Passover**

**“And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you..” (Ex. 12:13a)**

**The Blood Acquired**. (vs.21) The lamb had to furnish the blood. Looking ahead to Messiah, of whom this was to be an object lesson, the lamb would picture the innocence of the Lamb of God.

**The Blood Applied**. (vs. 22) Each head of a family had to apply the blood to the house. It could not be done symbolically by one, but must be done by all. This reminds us that Christ’s blood must be applied individually by acceptance of Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

**The Blood Accepted**. (vs. 23) God promised that those who applied the blood would not experience the judgment that was about to fall on Egypt, the picture of the world. Indeed, only in the houses of was there no death that night. This Passover is still observed by Jews today, but they only observe it as the deliverance from Egypt, missing the larger lesson that it pictures; the deliverance from sin through the shed blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God.

***Thought: The blood is denied, unless it’s applied.***

*Passover is the fulfillment of God’s promise.*

On Jan. 12, 1773: The 1st Public Museum was established at Charleston, SC. **Reading: Gen. 33-35 Pasture:** **Gen. 34:1-26**

**The Defilement of Dinah**

***“And when Shechem the son of Hamor the Hivite, the prince of the country saw her, he took, and lay with her, and defiled her.” (Gen. 34:2)***

**Defilement**. Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, was no doubt the pride of the family. She had a father who loved her and twelve brothers who adored her and felt protective toward her. Probably, she felt confined and fettered with all this masculine protection, and one day went out on her own, out from the protection of her father’s household, ostensibly to see how the ladies lived in the part of the world they were now sojourning in. There, she was seen by young Shechem, a willful young rascal, who treated her inappropriately, and yet fell in love with her.

**Deceit**. Trying to right the wrong he had done, Shechem now asked for Dinah’s hand in marriage. The brothers used deceit with they assured these men that if only they would be circumcised, they would gladly welcome the men of that country with open arms.

**Destruction**. Simeon and Levi however, waited until the circumcisions had been performed and then attacked. The defenders could not move quickly or easily, and so were overcome and destroyed. They defended their actions by saying they were trying to regain honor for their sister, but Jacob was later to pronounce God’s curse upon their self-willed actions. (Gen. 50:5-7)

***Thought: We never have the right to seek revenge***.

On Jan. 13, 1888: The National Geographic Society was founded.

**Reading: Gen. 36-38 Pasture: Gen. 37:18-30**

**Now What Am I Going To Do?**

***“* And he returned unto his brethren, and said, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go?”**

**The Unstable**. Jacob was to say it one day, “Reuben, thou art... unstable as water.” (Gen. 50:3-4) This man never seemed to be able to take a firm stand, but like water does, he assumed the shape of the environment he was in. In the presence of his father, he was Godly and respectable. In the presence of his father’s concubines he was immoral. Now, in the presence of his brethren, he took a weak stand, keeping them from killing Joseph, yet not openly standing against their wicked plans.

**The Unaccomplished**. Reuben had good intentions, but good intentions alone never accomplish any thing. In his absence, the brothers sold Joseph into slavery. Reuben exclaimed in effect, “Now, what am I going to do?’

**The Unavailing.** Remorse is unavailing when it is not accompanied by deeds. Only when remorse is completed by deeds does it become repentance. Reuben was still the same old guy he had been. He wanted to stand for right, but he just couldn’t do it in the face of those who stood for wrong.

***Thought: “All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing.” Edmund Burke***

*Don’t be the weak link; stand for God!*

On Jan. 20, 1949: Harry Truman’s inauguration was the 1st presidential inauguration to be televised.

**Reading: Ex. 7-9 Pasture: Ex. 7:14-25**

**God’s Judgment is Always Tempered With Mercy**

***“And all the Egyptians digged round about the river for water to drink; for they could not drink of the water of the river.” (Ex. 7:24)***

**The Miracle**. Pharaoh and the Egyptians had many false gods, one of them was the River Nile. It was the source of fertility for much of their land, and regular sacrifices were made to it. Possibly, this is why Pharaoh was going down to the water on the morning in our passage. God caused the water, and the water in many of the streams and tributaries of the Nile, to become blood.

**The Misery.** People have to have water. Was this judgment one designed to completely destroy the nation of Egypt? No indeed, for God always starts out with chastisement that is relatively easy, and gets harsher only as rebellion gets more pronounced. Still, the people of Egypt were miserable at the interruption of their water supply.

**The Mercy**. We notice that God allowed the water that welled up when dug around the river was still clear and potable. This is a wonderful indication of the main thought we look at today; that God always tempers His judgment with mercy.

***Thought: If God’s judgment contained no element of mercy, who could stand?***

On Jan. 19, 1903: A new bicycle race, the “Tour de France” was announced.

**Reading: Ex. 4-6 Pasture: Ex. 6:9-13**

**And God Gave Them a Charge**

***“And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, and gave them a charge unto the children of Israel, and unto Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to bring the children of Israel out of Egypt.” (Ex. 6:13(***

**Unwanted**. Sometimes we are given a job by the Lord like that of Moses and Aaron. God may send us to share the Word with those who really don’t want to hear it. In fact, I suppose most of the world today doesn’t want to hear what we have to say, but we have the responsibility to say it, none the less.

**Unheeded**. When Moses shared the word with Israel, they didn’t listen. He would find that Pharaoh would be just as unresponsive. When this same thing happens to us we must remember that God only calls upon us to share His Word. The responsibility to share it is ours. Results are up to Him.

**Undeniable**. Both Israel and Pharaoh would one day admit that God’s message was true. Israel would embrace it rejoicing, and Pharaoh would do so repenting of his self-will and foolishness.

***Thought: God’s Word will always accomplish what God intends it to accomplish. It will either bring the freedom of eternal life to those who accept it, or put another nail in the coffin of eternal death to those who reject it.***

On Jan. 14, 1952: The “Today Show” premiered with Dave Garroway and Jack Lescoulie on NBC-TV.

**Reading: Gen. 39-41 Pasture: Gen. 39:1-6**

**God Prospered Joseph**

***“And the Lord was with Joseph, and he was a prosperous man; and he was in the house of his master the Egyptian.” (Gen. 39:2)***

**In the House of Potiphar**. Potiphar bought Joseph when the lad came to Egypt. Now, most people would have been sad and upset at the change of circumstances, but Joseph knew God was with him wherever he went, and so continue to serve Him as he had always done. Therefore God blessed him in that house, and he became overseer.

**In the House of Prison.** As the story of Joseph unfolds, we see that Potiphar’s wife lies and gets Joseph committed to prison. Now, surely Joseph will be depressed and unhappy. No indeed, he continued to serve the Lord even in the prison. Soon he was overseer of that place.

**In the House of the Potentate**. Of course we know the rest of the story. Eventually God arranged for Joseph’s release and his elevation by Pharaoh to the number two position in the Kingdom of Egypt. Once again, God prospered the servant who served him where ever he was.

***Thought; If we serve God in what ever circumstances we are in, God will bless us in spite of those circumstances***.

*When life strike you a cruel blow, look beyond the obstacle to the waiting opportunity.*

On Jan. 15, 1882: The 1st US ski club formed. (Berlin NH)

**Reading: Gen. 42-44 Pasture: Gen. 44:14-34**

**The Journey of Judah**

***“For how shall I go up to my father, and the lad be not with me? Lest peradventure I see the evil that shall come on my father?” (Gen. 44:34)***

**Heartless**. Judah took a long journey in his lifetime. He began by being utterly heartless. In Gen. 37:26-27 we see that it was Judah’s idea to sell his own brother into slavery. Judah was so heartless as to desire a profit from his own brother’s misery.

**Heedless**. In Gen. 42:21 we see again that the brothers did not heed the cries of their brother as he was in anguish. No doubt is in my mind that Judah was the most heedless of all regarding the cries of Joseph. The 38th chapter of Genesis shows the selfishness and heedlessness of this man.

**Harmless**. Joseph’s tests were to see if his brothers had really changed. Now, the speech of Judah, imploring the release of his brother Benjamin was music indeed to Joseph’s ears. His brothers had changed! Judah had changed! God had wrought a marvelous and miraculous work of repentance in him and them.

***Thought: Faith can take the most hardened heart and make it soft and tender. Has God affected your heart that way?***

*God can remake a heart to be what it ought to be once again.*

On Jan. 18, 1733: The 1st Polar Bear was exhibited in the USA.

**Reading: Ex. 1-3 Pasture: Ex. 2:10-25**

**The Son of Pharaoh’s Daughter**

***“And the child grew, and she brought him unto Pharaoh’s daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses: and she said, Because I drew him out of the water.” (Ex. 2:10)***

**The Relinquishing**. (vs.9-10) Moses’ own mother was his nurse. What an amazing provision God made for Moses and his parents. No doubt he learned the stories of God and His mighty works at his mother’s knee. Now, when he was grown, his mother had to relinquish her position and he was brought back to Pharaoh’s daughter to be formally adopted, educated, and endowed as a prince of Egypt.

**The Refusal**. (vs. 14) We are assured in Heb. 11:24 that it was faith that caused Moses to assume a different position than Pharaoh’s daughter intended him to fill. Knowing he was a Hebrew, he took a Hebrew’s part and became an outlaw.

**The Reason**. (vs. 15) Josephus tells us that Moses was already in sever disfavor with Pharaoh and that he was only looking for an excuse to have him put out of the way. Moses had become a mighty warrior and was held as a prince in the eyes of all Egypt. Now jealous Pharaoh sought to kill Moses, but he escaped with the help of the Lord.

***Thought: Faith will always call us away from the side of the world and to the side of the Lord.***

On Jan. 17, 1926: George Burns married Gracie Allen.

**Reading: Gen. 48-50 Pasture: Gen. 50:22-26**

**Joseph’s Last Years**

“***So Joseph died, being an hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.” (Gen. 50:26)***

**Terrific Content**. The book of Genesis is the book of beginnings. In this book we saw the beginning of the world, the beginning of sin, the beginning of the promise of salvation, and the beginning of the Jewish nation, Now, as we close the book of beginnings, we notice something even more striking.

**Terrible Contrast**. The last five words of Genesis are in stark contrast to the first five words of Genesis. “In the beginning God created” “in a coffin in Egypt.” What a contrast between God’s work and man’s work. God’s work always tends to life, and man’s work always tends to death.

**Type of Christ**. In the life of Joseph we have seen a wonderful representation and type of Jesus Christ. As Jesus would be, Joseph was rejected by his brethren, sold for silver, delivered into prison unjustly, was resurrected and returned to his brethren as a mighty prince and provider, and many more.

***Thought: Joseph lived life to the fullest extent possible by serving the Lord all his days.***

*What better life could we have than a life spent in service for our King?*

On Jan. 16, 1939: The comic strip “Superman” debuted.

**Reading: Gen. 45-47 Pasture: Gen. 45:4-8**

**Recognizing God’s Purpose**

***“And God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance.” (Gen. 45:7)***

**God’s Plan**. Joseph recognized that he was merely an instrument in the hands of God. He must have been tempted at times to regard himself as a great one, but he never gave in to that temptation. Instead, he saw himself and all that had happened to him as simply God’s wonderful plan. If we would only recognize the same truth in our lives, we would not suffer nearly as much depression as the average person does.

**Grace’s Provision**. The brothers most certainly did not deserve any consideration from Joseph, for they had all been heartless and cruel to him. However, God made provision for them because of His great love. It is wonderful to note that even when we don’t deserve His favor, we still enjoy His favor.

**Grudges Prohibited.** It is forbidden for God’s people to hold grudges. We must all recognize that God is in control, and that nothing happens without His allowance. Thus, if we suffer, it is only that a greater good might be achieved. Joseph learned this lesson and had forgiveness for his brothers. Ought not we do the same?

***Thought: “To err is human, to forgive is Divine.” - Alexander Pope***

*We must forgive because we are forgiven.*