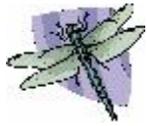


Virtual Christian Magazine

Hope And Encouragement
For The Real World

Volume 3 Number 6

July 2001



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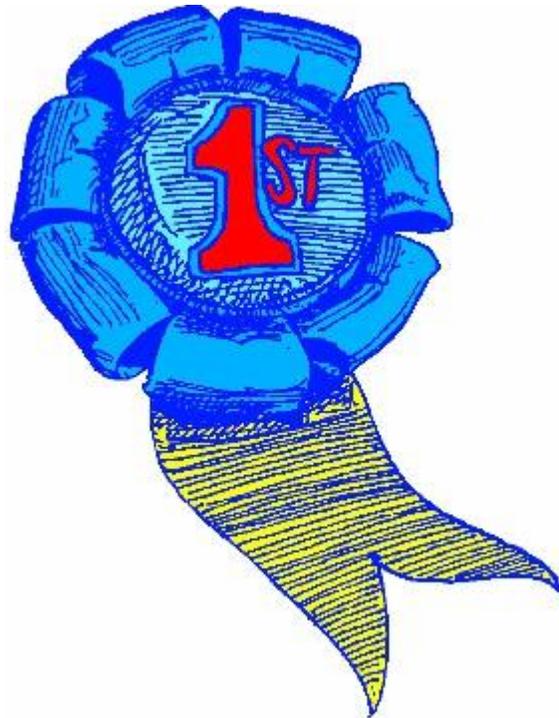
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America's Astounding Destiny: Was It Foretold in the Bible?



Few people today can remember a time when the United States didn't dominate the world scene. But America wasn't always a major power. Its humble beginnings as a British colony gave no hint of the national greatness that would lie ahead. What is equally incredible is the fact that America's ascent was foretold thousands of years ago in the Bible.

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Virtual Christian
MAGAZINE *Editorial*

Pondering the Value of Life

Being a pastor in Terre Haute during the media circus of the McVeigh execution forced me once again to examine the meaning of life.

By Victor Kubik

TERRE HAUTE, Indiana -- June 11, 2001 -- As a pastor of the United Church of God in Terre Haute, Indiana, I have been asked on a few occasions to join prayer vigils for locally held but world-known prisoner Timothy McVeigh who was executed today. I have declined to participate because the publicity surrounding this man is so out of proportion to its importance. The countdown to the execution became a media event with a life of its own. This was to be the first federal execution in over 30 years. The next one scheduled for this prison is less than two weeks away, but most will never learn or care about who the person was or what he did.

Our western Indiana city gained notoriety as the site of the execution of the perpetrator of the worst terrorist crime in U.S. history. Our city will be relieved when this event passes. This issue has spawned endless pages of commentaries including this one.

Today Timothy McVeigh was administered two lethal injections into his leg. He died peacefully, in stark contrast to his crime in which 168 people violently perished in the deafening explosion that destroyed the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Terre Haute schools were closed as a precaution against anyone having thoughts of making a terrorist statement. At the federal penitentiary, just a 10-minute drive from where we hold weekly church services, a carnival-like atmosphere existed where various groups were assigned literal camps for their vigil of the impending execution. There were more people camped outside the prison than were incarcerated inside. When the execution was stayed from mid-May, motel owners grumbled about lost business from Indianapolis 500 race-goers because the motel owners gave up that business in order to accommodate media from all over the world that had planned to come for the May execution date.

A few weeks before the execution I drove by the penitentiary and decided to turn around in the main entrance. Very quickly a guard in a flack jacket jumped out in a reactionary manner into the middle of the road. I hadn't witnessed such security consciousness since crossing once from East to West Berlin.

This all began as a tragedy of a misguided mind turning destructive hatred into an attack with no thought of who would be the victims. To his very end, McVeigh was unrepentant. On television the anguish of the families of those killed was played out. While watching one mother describing the loss of her own mother, I, too, broke out in tears as she explained that her daughter knew

more about Timothy McVeigh than about Grandma.

What is life worth? What is its value? Our temporary lives on earth are preserved by values and rules given by God. Life is so short to begin with. With demonic destruction like the Oklahoma City bombing one asks, What is life about? What does all this mean?

When seeing the surviving family members talk about lost loved ones -- sometimes with great hatred towards the murderer -- I could not help but wonder how I would do in similar circumstances. Would I be able to forgive? Would I want to witness the execution?

My mind turned to other thoughts about the value of life and to honoring those close to me: my wife, children, family, my congregations and friends. I found myself resolving to value all these while I can. I prayed that I would not have to regret anything about any of my relationships should something happen to them. The desire to reach out in love and live at peace with those I come in contact with became overwhelming. I wanted to reach out and hug my wife and son whom I love. I want to celebrate and show appreciation for LIFE.

I look forward to a world that God offers us in His Word. This is a world in which He will heal all the pain this world groans from. At the resurrection, death, the last enemy, will be destroyed. There is a time coming that will distance the ugliness and horror of this world and indeed will restore and honor life.

In the McVeigh case "an eye for an eye" was delivered, but it did not heal. In God's promised world a healing will take place that will reconcile us to the Power that most humans do not want to access at this time. The Holy Spirit of God will heal, cleanse and give life.

After the parade of events in this saga, I rejoiced in the gospel of Jesus Christ, through whom there is eternal life and healing.



You Were Born to Win!

When loneliness and depression beat you down, remember, there is Someone to help you up. Don't accept the label "loser," because you were born to win!

By Janet Treadway



THE P.A. CRACKED ON AND THE PRINCIPAL BEGAN TO SPEAK in a raspy, serious and sorrowful tone: "I have a tragic incident to relate to you, and I want you all to listen and think about it. Sara Hughes, a sophomore here, committed suicide yesterday..."

Sara Hughes -- the students sat quietly remembering or trying to remember her. Just last Friday some of the students had been listening to the radio and had heard Sara call in. Upon naming the top 10 hits in order she had been awarded a pizza party for herself and 25 of her friends. But she had not giggled with excitement as most people did when they won. She simply told the disc jockey, "Thank you -- but I don't have 25 friends." The disc jockey had tried to persuade her, but she protested, "No, really, I don't have any friends," and with a click she was off the line.



Only a week before she had been alive and now she was dead. Students shivered at the thought and turned their attention back to the scratchy voice of the principal: "Please look around you at your classmates. Is there anyone who is left out all the time, anyone who has no friends?"

Please tell your teacher if you know of anyone."

When I heard about this true story, it touched the very core of my being. Why? Because I have been down that road of loneliness myself and I am sure that many of you have too. But thankfully I chose to handle it in a different way. The fact is that many of us, young and old alike, may feel left out or that we do not fit in, but most of us get back up and get going again. What happened to Sara that she would take such a drastic action? How could she have dealt with this differently, and how could other students around her have helped her?

Before tattoo on body, tattoo on mind

It all starts with the mind and what we put into our minds about ourselves and others.

Once, walking through the twisted narrow streets of Hong Kong, a man came upon a tattoo studio. In the window were displayed samples of the tattoos available. There were anchors and flags and mermaids. But what struck him with force were three words that could be tattooed on one's flesh: "Born to lose." He entered the shop in astonishment and, pointing to those words, asked, "Does anyone really have that terrible phrase, 'Born to lose,' tattooed on his body?"

The Chinese tattoo artist replied, "Yes, sometimes."

"But," the man said, "I just can't believe that anyone in his right mind would do that."

The Chinese man simply tapped his forehead and said in broken English, "Before tattoo on body, tattoo on mind."

How insightful! Our actions reflect what is in our minds. Be careful what you put in your mind. It's so easy to tattoo negative things about ourselves in our minds.

We think, "I am a loser and no one likes me." Sara had tattooed in her mind that she was a loser, that she was not worthy to be loved and cared for by friends around her. Because of her own self-image she gave off signals to others that she would not be fun to hang around with, which caused Sara to isolate herself from others even more. Many of us from time to time sink low, and feel this way about ourselves, but we must get back up.

Talk to someone who can encourage you like Charles Eliot's mother encouraged him when he was down.

Charles William Eliot (1834-1926), former president of Harvard University, had a birthmark on his face that bothered him greatly. As a young man, he was told that surgeons could do nothing to remove it. Someone described that moment as "the dark hour of his soul." Eliot's mother gave him this helpful advice: "My son, it is not possible for you to get rid of that hardship.... But, it is possible for you, with God's help, to grow a mind and soul so big that people will forget to look at your face."

Mind and soul -- how do we develop those? By reaching out to others.

Mind and soul -- how do we develop those? By reaching out to others. A proverb says that a man who has many friends must show himself friendly. I remember when I first came to church at the age of 19 I was so painfully shy that I would stand next to the wall and not speak. Then one day my minister said, "Janet, you need to go around and speak to people. Just put out your hand and say hello." The first time I did it, I thought I was going to faint. But the more I did it, the easier it became. Now I can speak to just about anyone. My minister taught me a valuable lesson about getting my mind off self and onto others. By doing this my shyness was cured.

God sets an outstanding example for all of us to follow in reaching out and helping others. Psalm 113:5-7 says, "Who is like the Lord our God, who dwells on high, who humbles Himself to behold the things that are in the heavens and in the earth? He raises the poor out of the dust, and lifts the needy out of the ash heap." It is so nice to know that when we get down and feel as though we are on an ash heap, God is there to reach down to help us.

With constant contact with God, He can live in you and give you the confidence that you need to be outgoing and friendly. Sometimes flaws that are so big in our own eyes can be so small to others. A warm and friendly smile and being concerned for others causes people to lose sight of those flaws that seem so big to you. By focusing on others we can become healers.

Become a healer

What is a healer? Webster's Dictionary says a healer is one that heals or attempts to heal. A healer restores a person to spiritual wholeness. We should be in the business of healing.

By focusing on others we can become healers.

Everyone wants to be loved. Look for those who may be hurting so much inside, like Sara. If only someone had taken the time to reach out and offer a hand of friendship, this tragic story might not have occurred. We all should be reaching out and making a difference in someone's life. It takes so little time to show care for someone else. This act of love, of taking the time, can make a lifelong difference in a person's life.

Being people-centered, instead of self-centered, will make your life shine to others around you. We can turn depression into joy when we reach out and help others.

Words can kill

Not only can we be guilty of tattooing negative images about ourselves into our own minds, but we can also be responsible for tattooing a negative image onto another person. How? We do this by our hurtful words to others and about others. Have you ever heard the expression, "He's a loser"? It's an expression that is used freely today. Do you know how damaging these words can be? What kind of hurtful things have been said to you? How much did it hurt?

Does God look at anyone as a loser? No! It is His will for all to be sons of God in His Kingdom. Be a person who uses words that heal. We should use words that build up and encourage, not tear down. Perhaps Sara had hurtful words said to her that caused her to withdraw, pull back and become a loner. Be a healer with your words. Proverbs 16:24 says, "Pleasant words are like a

honeycomb, sweetness to the soul and health to the bones." Choose your words carefully and use them to build up and encourage.

Accept what God is doing in your life

We must accept and work with what God has given us. We may have freckles, red hair, be too short, too tall, too skinny, too fat, have a speech problem or anything else we don't like about ourselves. Sometimes we are just too hard on others and ourselves.

Being people-centered, instead of self-centered, will make your life shine to others around you.

Look what one girl came to realize after struggling with being too short. Elizabeth Elliot, in her book *Let Me Be a Woman*, records the story of Gladys Aylward who was unable to accept the looks God had given her. Gladys explained that when she was young she had two great sorrows. One, that while all her friends had beautiful golden hair, hers was black. The other, that while her friends were still growing, she had stopped. She was about four feet ten inches tall. But when at last she reached the country to which she felt God had called her to be a missionary, she stood on the wharf in Shanghai, China, and looked around at the people. "Every single one of them," she said, "had black hair. And every one of them had stopped growing when I did." She was able to look to God and exclaim, "Lord God, You know what You're doing!"

Gladys accepted what God was doing in her life. Learn to have the total confidence that God knows what He is doing with you in your life -- that you are called for a great purpose! Many things you go through are for a reason that will enable you one day to fulfill God's great plan for you. (For an in-depth understanding of God's plan for you, please request your free copy of *What is Your Destiny?*)

So how could the tragic story at the beginning of the article have had a different ending? We wish that Sara had not been telling herself negative things -- had not been engraving bad tattoos on her mind -- but had focused on the wonderful potential she had. If she had known how special she was to God and the future He had planned for her, she would not have taken her life.

Winner's Summary

- Be careful what you tattoo on your mind and on the minds of others. Remember, you are a special gift from God. Be careful not to discourage anyone by your words.
- Be a healer. Reach out to others. Get your mind off self and onto others and their concerns. This will cause you to have many friends who will love you and appreciate you.
- Accept what God is doing in your life. God can use what we think is negative about ourselves to serve Him in an even greater way.
- If you feel like taking your life, or know someone who feels that way, get help! Talk to a minister or a trusted friend. But talk to someone. Never take it lightly when someone says that he or she wants to die. And certainly pour out your heart to God about it and ask Him to encourage you. No one should ever end up as Sara



Hughes did.

You are not a loser. You were born to win!



The Amazing Engineering of the Dragonfly

Some of the greatest aeronautical engineering has yet to be discovered. Here's an amazing flying machine in nature.

By Victor Kubik



TO LEARN MORE ABOUT TOMORROW'S FLYING MACHINES, scientists are studying a safe, successful and proven aeronautical design that's been around for a long time -- the dragonfly. Engineers at Boeing Company in Seattle, researchers at the University of Colorado and others have investigated the dragonfly's graceful flying maneuvers.

For its small size the dragonfly can fly an incredible 60 miles per hour. It can dart quickly from side to side, fly backwards and stop instantly in midair. It can lift 15 times its own weight. Such feats are not yet possible with human aircraft. How is it possible with the dragonfly?

Curious researchers visited swamps and captured dragonflies to find out.

One reason they chose to study the dragonfly is because it's a comparatively simple flying creature. It doesn't change the shape of its body or wings when flying, taking off or gliding like a bird does. For example, a hummingbird's wings change shape continually during each stroke. In addition, its feathers pop up or stay down at various periods throughout each cycle. Scientists would like to know more about the hummingbird's flight, but it's just too difficult to reproduce.

The dragonfly's life

Dragonflies, looking neither like dragons nor flies, resemble little airplanes. This insect has been mystically nicknamed "snake doctor," "snake feeder," "devil's darning needle" and "horse stinger." The only accurate nickname is the "mosquito hawk." With its claws it captures mosquitoes in the air and devours them in flight. In half an hour it can eat the equivalent of its own weight.

Life starts under water when they hatch from eggs. These greedy, ugly, newly-hatched dragonfly nymphs then live in the water from one to five years, snagging victims with their long bottom lip which has snapping hooks.

When scientists began studying dragonflies, they discovered designs even more complex and advanced than what they expected.

Then, one day, they stop eating, climb out of the water and hang motionless from a reed or twig. In a short time their skin splits open and out comes the adult dragonfly. Two pairs of transparent, fairly rigid, shining gauze-like wings emerge. Each pair operates independently of the other. The dragonfly is now ready to take off and put on its aerial show. In temperate climates this period lasts only two weeks before it dies. In tropical climates the dragonfly's flying phase may extend to a few months.

While flying dragonflies spend most of their time cruising up and down streams and along the shores of lakes and ponds in search of prey. With their extra-large spherical eyes that cover half their head they can see everything around them at once. They can spot a motionless mosquito six meters away, a flying one at an even greater distance.

It was at this stage of the dragonfly's maturation that researchers brought the netted insects back to the laboratory for a look. Since the flying season of the dragonfly is short, they had to act quickly.

First, they anesthetized them to slow down their wing action to about 30 flutters per second. Then they glued their hard bodies to small wires. With non-poisonous smoke and stroboscopic photography freezing the action, they could see exactly what the air flow around the wings looked like during each part of the stroke. What did they learn?

How it flies

The dragonfly's method of flying is completely different from the smooth flight of airplanes and soaring or gliding of birds. It's a mode called "unsteady aerodynamics" which means there is constant turbulence around the wing.

The front pair of wings churns up a small vortex of rapidly whirling air. Meanwhile, the back pair of wings, which may be down when the front wings are up (or vice versa), captures the extra energy from this turbulence. This produces extraordinary lift as the air flows much faster over the top of the dragonfly's rear wing than along the wing's lower surface. By changing the tilt and speed of its wings and varying the timing between them, the dragonfly performs its graceful

acrobatics.

What's intriguing about air turbulence is that in man's flying machines, both fixed-wing and helicopters, these gyrating air currents are usually harmful and can be deadly. Helicopter blades weaken because each whirling blade runs into the turbulent path of the preceding blade. Resultant vibrations eventually weaken the metal. Many planes have crashed due to turbulence. But, the dragonfly actually produces precise, predictable turbulence and uses it to its advantage.

Applications for man

Aeronautical engineers would like to know more about the secret of harnessing turbulence. Applying this principle to aerodynamic design is still a bit complicated with today's technology because execution must be simple and predictable.

More immediate applications of what's been learned from the dragonfly's flight could be to modify existing airplane wings to give extra lift when needed. For example, if an aircraft were stalling, a wing could sense the dangerous turbulence. Then, a flap would turn up near the leading edge of a wing and stabilize the aircraft.

Learning about controlled disturbances in air and fluids could lead to more efficient designs for turbines. Also, race cars could improve their track performance.

Studying unsteady air currents never got much attention in the past because of their complexity. Today, scientists make use of supercomputers, wind tunnels and water tanks that help them understand the subtleties of airflow. And by learning from working designs in nature, aeronautical engineers are drawing closer to developing a new generation of supermaneuverable aircraft.

There's still much more scientists would like to know about the dragonfly. How does it control its flight? How does the nervous system activate its flying mechanism?

The closer we look at creation, the more evident God's reality should become.

By inspecting the perfect construction of the dragonfly, which is much more advanced than anything man has yet developed, our attention should be directed to the greatest Aeronautical Engineer of all -- the Creator God. If you came across a sleek Boeing 777 jet and stepped inside its sophisticated cockpit, you would never reason that the aircraft just developed on its own; that there was no designer and builder.

The closer we look at creation, the more evident God's reality should become. In Romans 1:20 we read, "...His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." (So how could anyone believe that the dragonfly achieved its design by evolution? Good question. For thorough answers, please request our free booklet titled *Creation or Evolution: Does it Matter?*)

The dragonfly's design is perfect. Every flaw has been engineered out. If it weren't, the little creature simply could not fly. Incidentally, dragonflies have to fly to reproduce. They mate only

in midair!

What God has created is mysterious and sometimes baffles human understanding. "It is the glory of God to conceal a matter, but the glory of kings is to search out a matter" (Proverbs 25:2). It is for man to uncover and learn from these mysteries.

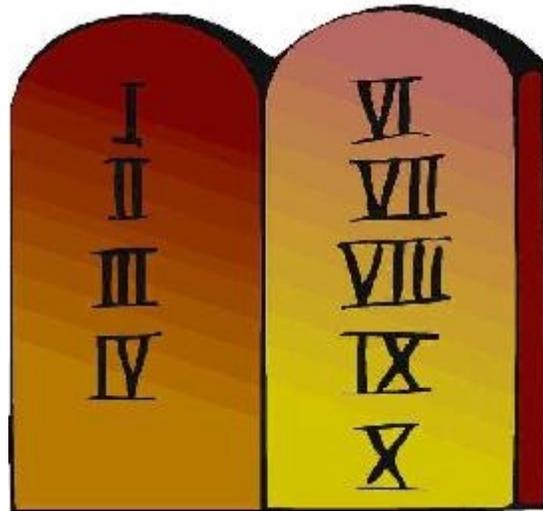
When scientists began studying dragonflies, they discovered designs even more complex and advanced than what they expected. Dragonflies are amazing, but greater than dragonflies is the Designer and Creator of dragonflies. Our God is an awesome God. He deserves our worship.



Written by the Finger of God

God is looking for people who recognize the importance of His law -- who want to have God write it on their hearts.

By Robert Berendt



ALMOST ALL OF CHRISTIANITY acknowledges that the Ten Commandments ought to be kept, however, among many the true importance of these commandments is overlooked.

It is astonishing to think that humans can presume that God would allow them to change His commandments or add to them in ways that He never intended. There are those who add so many minute details and dos and don'ts to the commandments that they make them a burden and a yoke for people.

Then there are those who try to change the commandments such as moving the day of rest from Saturday to Sunday. Another example is changing the Second Commandment about not using physical images to represent God. Some say that as long as what we do is done to worship and honor God, it is acceptable. Thus we have eggs and rabbits, trees and statues deeply involved in Christian worship practices. That violates the Second Commandment.

Then we have the great error by teaching that the commandments were "nailed to the cross" and we do not have to keep them at all as they no longer apply. The final result is the alteration of God's law to the extent that mankind has sundered his relationship with the true God.

Written by the finger of God

It is quite amazing that we humans do not recognize the importance of the Biblical statement that the Ten Commandments were written by the finger of God. In the rest of the Sinaitic covenant, the Law of Moses was given by God to Moses who in turn relayed it to the people.

Not so with the Ten Commandments! Here we see something so dramatic and forceful that we dare not turn away.

In Exodus 31:18, we read that God wrote with His own finger on the tablets that He gave Moses.

Exodus 19:19 and Exodus 20:1 tell us that God spoke the Ten Commandments to all of Israel. Other than the Ten Commandments there is no record that I know of where God spoke to the whole nation. The voice of God was extremely powerful and authoritative! The backdrop of fire, smoke and deafening trumpet blasts caused everyone to tremble in fear. In Exodus 20:22 we see that the people could not bear the enormity of the occasion and from then on Moses spoke to them as God instructed him. That was after God had uttered the Ten Commandments.

In Exodus 31:18, we read that God wrote with His own finger on the tablets that He gave Moses. When Moses broke them (a big mistake) God wrote them again. The record of what God's finger wrote was kept in the Ark of the Covenant for many centuries. The ark and the tablets vanished when God separated Himself from Israel.

Do we comprehend the magnificence of the Ten Commandments? Why would God take the time to speak them and then write them twice?

There is a huge difference between all that Moses later relayed to Israel from God and the Ten Commandments that were written by the finger of God. The Ten Commandments define sin and give guidelines for humans to live by. We show God our love by carefully obeying Him. Can we humans discard or change that which God wrote? (For a clear and interesting explanation of the meaning and application of each of the Ten Commandments, please request our booklet, *The Ten Commandments*.)

The tablets bearing the Ten Commandments, along with manna and Aaron's rod that budded, were placed in the ark. In heaven under the throne of God there is an ark. The earthly ark was made as a replica of this ark. What do we find inside the ark that presently sits under God's feet?

Hebrews 8:5 reveals that what God instructed Moses to make was a COPY of that which is in heaven! Moses was to be careful of each detail. Can we not see that what was within the ark was also a copy? The Ten Commandments, the eternal laws of God are within the heavenly ark!

Why can we not see the importance of that which God wrote with His own finger? God used drama, majesty, fear and power to show Israel the importance of the Ten Commandments.

Written on our hearts

It ought not surprise us that mankind also misses a most important spiritual event with regard to God's law. God says He will write that law on our hearts. His finger is at work again.

Since it is God who calls, Christ who redeems and God's Holy Spirit that guides and leads us, we know that conversion is from God. In Hebrews 8:10, God inspired the repeat of the promise given in Jeremiah 31:33. God says "I will put my laws in their mind and write them on their hearts." God again does the writing with His fingers that wrote the Ten Commandments!

Will mankind be given the right to alter those laws? I think not! Can we add to the laws or take away portions? I think not! Can we say the laws are cancelled and now we cannot sin? That is absurd! God forbid!

The law that is written on our hearts is the same as that which God wrote on the tablets.

Stone weathers and can be damaged or lost. The heart provides a writing space that is personal, can be frequently reviewed and can be carried with a person. The law that is written on our hearts is the same as that which God wrote on the tablets. We understand the magnification of the principles as Christ taught them. God always intended humans to live by the intent of the law and not only the letter. Jesus came to magnify the commandments and teach humans the fullness of God's intent.

You and I can allow God to write His law on our hearts. He is looking for people who want to obey and who recognize the importance of His Ten Commandments. Do you love God? Look at the strong words in the book of I John. We read in I John 2:4 "He who says, 'I know Him,' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him." In I John 3:4 it states, "Whoever commits sin also commits lawlessness, and sin is lawlessness." Finally in I John 5:1-3 John writes "Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome".

The frightening thing is that these words are so obvious and so clear that we humans are left without any excuses. We cannot say God did not make things clear. We are left with the only hope for mankind -- repent of our sins and accept the justification offered through Christ. That includes recognizing how we have sinned and determining to "go and sin no more" (John 8:11). If we love God, we will be keeping His commandments and we will recognize their beauty and majesty. And we will feel as King David did: "Oh, how I love your law!" (Psalm 119:97).



What Can We Learn From A Rooster?

Godly attributes are taught in nature, the example of the rooster being only one of many.

By Jack R. Elliott



SURPRISINGLY, A LOT!

But really, it shouldn't be so surprising. A long time ago wise old Solomon wrote, "Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise, which, having no captain, overseer or ruler, provides her supplies in the summer, and gathers her food in the harvest" (Proverbs 6:6-8). If an ant can teach wisdom, why can't a rooster?

Years ago, a rooster named "Rufus" lived on our tiny, suburban farm. When he was very young, we put him in a pen with twelve older hens that were complacently satisfied to be doing their own thing. They had their own pecking order and ignored Rufus altogether. The way Rufus coped with the situation is an example well worth noting.

Little by little, step by step, day after day, he began to take the lead. At first he did not know what his role should be or what was best to do. As time went on, each day brought him closer to a rooster's purpose and goal.

When we would let the chickens out of their pen in the late afternoon, instead of just feeding himself on insects and grass, Rufus seized the initiative by dashing to the nearest likely patch of leaves or grass and scratched vigorously for grubs and worms, coaxing the hens to follow.

It is God who sets us an example of good leadership, even in a rooster.

When he happened upon a tender morsel or two, his coaxing took on a louder, more urgent sound. Though the hens were skeptical at first, they soon learned that his concern was genuine. Then they came running -- wings outspread and feet flying. Rufus would stand protectively aside looking out for danger while they plucked up the delicacies. He repeated the action again and again as he led them about the farm.

Those hens became happy to have such a leader. His concern for their need had won their full confidence and desire to follow him.

How did he know to do that? Are roosters smarter than humans? Do they think out and practice love and care for others? Or is it just another way that God has for setting us good examples in nature.

I know that that rooster did not plan out how to charm the ladies with such outgoing consideration. It is not a case of one rooster stumbling onto it and others following, according to man's theory of evolution. God programmed this into his brain, just like you might write a program into a computer. It is God who sets us an example of good leadership, even in a rooster.

I marvel at how simply that rooster applied this important principle without having to be taught. You and I do not have such instinct. In fact, we grow up in a world that programs us toward selfishness and self-centeredness. We need instruction, example and a lot of determination to learn and practice right principles. We also need to be guided by God's word and His Holy Spirit if we are to practice righteous principles.

God has not left us just to learn from ants and roosters. He gives us full instructions in the Holy Bible, repeating over and over again in word and examples the essentials to full, successful and happy lives. Jesus set us the real, overall example during His lifetime on earth. Programming additional examples in the brain of a rooster only gives us one more example.

Since God's purpose is that we humans be guided by the Bible rather than animal instinct, we urgently need to understand the Bible. To provide assistance toward that end, we offer a free booklet, *How to Understand the Bible*. It's yours for the asking.

If He did this for a rooster, He could surely do it for us. However, we are being created for a much more important purpose than He created roosters, and our programming is purposely not yet complete. As free moral agents, we must have a willing and obedient part in it.

Through our eager participation, Christ continues His creation within us. With God's Spirit, biblical teaching and Jesus Christ's ever-present help, we can come to the perfect outgoing love and leadership required of the Family of God -- the Kingdom of God.

Becoming members of that family is God's purpose and our ultimate goal. It is what God created us for.

