

News & Notes

Sunday, October 18, 2009

Remember in Prayer: Mary Baily; Kenneth Campbell; Sue Daniels; Donna Derryberry; Dot Ketchum; Dallas King; John and Deliah Mann; Carl Perkins; Ann Ray; Curtis Ray; Katherine Shaw; Becky Strickland; Ruby Tapp; Calvin Ursery; Joan Wilkerson; Alvie Williford;

Sympathy is extended family of Randy Neal.

Pantry item for the month of October is pasta.

If you would like **CDs** of the lessons from the joint gospel meeting, order forms are in the foyer. Please give them to Jeff Roberson.

Ashland Events: Today: Youth devotional after morning service and prayer meeting at 4:00 PM; October 25: Trunk-or-Treat following evening service in conjunction with the fellowship meal.

Area Events: December 4: Lectureship at the Charleston congregation; October 30-31: Youth rally in Ethridge, Tennessee;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: Jude—Earnestly Contending (Jude 3)

PM: Pilate—A Spineless Politician

For the Record (October 11, 2009):

Attendance: 162 Contribution: \$1665.00 Budget: \$1459.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

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Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 5:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King
Jeff Roberson
Carrol Street

ASHLAND

ANNOUNCER

“Note Those Who So Walk”

Philippians 3:17

2Thessalonians 3:14

“Note Those Who So Walk”

Ezekiel — Dry Bones

Ezekiel 37:1-14

Jeremy Northrop

The idea of someone being raised from the dead is often times intriguing. Perhaps, because of the finality of death, many people are enamored with the idea of someone coming back from the dead. There are several accounts in the Bible of people who were raised from the dead. Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead in John 11:38-44. Jesus raised Jairus' daughter from the dead in Luke 8:49-56. In Matthew 10:8, Jesus commanded the 12 apostles to go and preach to the lost of Israel and while they were going, he commanded them, among other things, to raise the dead. Of course, all of these happened through the use of miracles. 1Corinthians 13 teaches the age of miracles has ceased and no one is going to be raised from the dead today (see Ecclesiastes 9:6). Ezekiel 37:1-14 records another account of the dead being brought to life. A valley was “full of bones” and the bones were brought to life. Aside from the intriguing nature of the record, the sequence of events has several important lessons to be learned.

One such lesson concerns the faith and obedience of Ezekiel. After Ezekiel noticed the valley “full of bones” and recording “there were very many” and “they were very dry,” the Lord asked him if the bones could live again. His reply

was an expression of faith—“O Lord God, You know” (verse 3). The implication of the statement is also intriguing. Ezekiel knew that without God, there was no way the bones could live. Further, he did not know if God was going to allow the bones to be resurrected. Thus, he did not know if the bones could live. Only God knew because only God could make it happen. Today, there are many who may claim to know the future and other information which they do not know. In truth, only God knows. Christians need to follow the example of Ezekiel and realize that only God knows.

Ezekiel’s faith is also seen in his obedience to God’s commands. This obedience is seen even though the Lord asked him to do some very unusual things. How much value is there in talking to dead bones? Even more, these bones were dry indicating the people had been dead for a very long time. God told Ezekiel to prophesy to these bones two times in the record (verses 4, 9, and 11). Each time, Ezekiel obeyed the Lord and did as he was commanded. Both times, Ezekiel says it this way — “So I prophesied as He commanded me...” (verses 7 and 10). Ezekiel obeyed God.

Today, many do not want to obey God even when the commands make sense. God says to attend the worship service of the saints to be encouraged (Hebrews 10:25). God says to pray so that man can have a relationship with Him (1Thessalonians 5:17). God says to be kind to others for in serving other men, Christians are serving God (Matthew 25:31-46). Are these commands obeyed? These commands make sense. Yet, many will not do them. Ezekiel’s faith is seen in the fact that he obeyed God even when the commands did not make sense. The first reason any Christian is to do what God has commanded is simply because God has commanded it.

One of the blessings of this record is that God explains the purpose of the miracle. In verses 12-14, Ezekiel records:

“Therefore prophesy and say to them, ‘Thus says the Lord God: ‘Behold, O My people, I will open

your graves and cause you to come up from your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. Then you shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O My people, and brought you up from your graves. I will put My Spirit in you, and you shall live, and I will place you in your own land. Then you shall know that I, the Lord, have spoken it and performed it,’ says the Lord.”

First, the sequence of events was prophetic concerning the children of Israel. God said, “I will open your graves and cause you to come up from your graves....” Second, the sequence of events was to show the power of God. When God does these things the people will have proof. They will know that He is God.

In the New Testament, one finds this is the very reason miracles were done — to confirm Christ was God’s Son or God in the flesh. John 20:30-31 says: “And truly Jesus did many other signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.” The New Testament miracles are recorded that people today might have proof or believe Jesus is the Son of God. One of the reasons Ezekiel was empowered to raise the dry bones to life was that people may know God is God.

There will be one more miracle seen by men in the second coming of Christ. He will come again in the clouds (1Thessalonians 4:17). The dead will be raised (1Thessalonians 4:16). The earth will be consumed (2Peter 3:10). While this day will indeed declare, once and for all, that Jesus is the Son of God, it will be too late to believe and obey Him then. At that point, He will judge those who are alive and those who have died (2Timothy 4:1). Thus, it is ever so important that people obey Him now while there is still time: “Behold, now is the day of salvation” (2Corinthians 6:2).