

Adam & Eve Eat the Forbidden Fruit

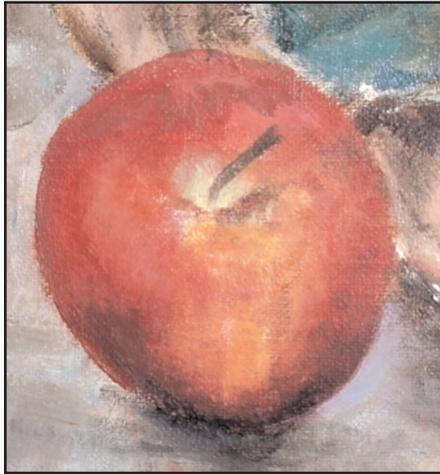
What kind of fruit was the forbidden fruit? What was the significance of eating it? What was the result of eating it?

By Gregory Dullum

Adam and Eve had everything going for them. They were living perfect lives in a perfect place with a perfect relationship with a perfect God until they ate the forbidden fruit. They had been taught that it was WRONG to eat it. So why did they do it?

We discussed Satan's conversation with Eve last month. Now notice the result of that conversation:

"So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate" (Gen. 3:6).



Painting by Gregory Dullum

What Was the Fruit?

What kind of fruit was the forbidden fruit? Many believe it was an apple.

"Men have grown apple trees for their fruit since before the dawn of history. Apples are often mentioned in early legends, poems, and religious books. The 'fruit' which the Bible says Adam and Eve ate in the Garden is believed by many to have been an apple" ("Apple," *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1956 ed., vol. 1, p. 342).

A minister once preached that worldly traditions are often wrong. He argued that since so many in the world assume it was an apple, it probably was NOT. The Bible calls the tree "the tree of the knowledge of good and evil," NOT an "apple tree." It probably had its own one-of-a-kind fruit that no longer exists today, he said.

On the other hand, traditions and legends often have an element of truth to them. So it *could have been* an apple.

The reality is, THE BIBLE DOESN'T SAY what kind of fruit it was. The *type* of fruit was NOT the issue. *Obedience* to God's instructions was the issue!

"...[T]his 'tree of the knowledge of good and evil' was designed to be a test of man's fidelity to God; and it is obvi-

ous that, in the state of probation in which Adam was placed at so early a stage of his existence, a positive command like this, not to eat of a particular tree, was the simplest and easiest trial to which his fidelity could have been exposed. He lived in the midst of inexhaustible abundance; for the liberal terms on which it was offered to him were, 'of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat.' The eye and palate were alike gratified. Every source of enjoyment was freely open to him, and his heart seemed to have nothing further to desire....

"But a positive command like this was not only the simplest and easiest, it was the only test to which Adam's fidelity could have been submitted. In his particular circumstances he could not have been put on probation as to any of the branches of the moral law [the 10 commandments]; for, as he was not yet living in society, the prohibition could not with any sense or propriety have been directed against killing, stealing, or any other violations of social duty; and being in an un-fallen state, as little could the prohibition

have been directed against the duties of the first table [the first four commandments]; against worshipping God by images, or taking his name in vain.

"A positive command like this, not to eat of a particular tree, was a test of obedience which was in every respect the most suited to the existing condition of man, and the most highly expressive of the goodness of God" (*A Commentary, Critical, Experimental and Practical on the Old and New Testaments* by Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset and David Brown, 1945, Vol. 1, p. 42).

The *fruit* was NOT the important thing. *Obedience* was. God could have assigned *the task* of being "the tree of knowledge of good and evil" to any fruit tree. It was NOT the *fruit* that made a difference—it was *obedience* or *disobedience* to God's instructions.

Eve First to Disobey

Eve First to Disobey

Let's examine what Gen. 3:6 says and doesn't say. It does NOT say *both* Adam and Eve conversed with the serpent. It does NOT say they *both* saw the tree was good for food. It specifically says *the woman* saw that the tree was good for food, etc. Why only the woman? *Because Adam was not part of the conversation.*

Although the verse immediately follows Eve's conversation with Satan, the verse does NOT say she *immediately* went and ate the fruit. It says "So, when the woman saw..."

How long did it take her to make up her mind that the tree was good for food? God and her husband had said No! A serpent had told her Yes! Who was she to believe? How long did it take her to decide to believe the serpent over her husband and God?

She may have mulled it over in her mind for several days. She may have

ADAM AND EVE

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Adam and Eve

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walked closer and closer to the tree, and nothing bad happened. She may have examined the fruit carefully from a distance and then up close. It didn't seem to be poisonous or bad in any way. Nothing bad happened to her as she approached the fruit. She may have reached out a finger and touched the fruit. Nothing bad happened. She may have seen birds peck at the fruit or squirrels grab the fruit, run with it in their mouths, and eat it at a distance. Nothing bad happened to them.

She may have wrapped her fingers around one. Nothing bad happened. She may have pulled it close to her face and sniffed its aroma. It smelled sweet. Nothing bad happened. She may have plucked it from its branch and held it her hand, turning it over and over, examining it. Nothing bad happened. There was nothing about this fruit that looked bad or dangerous.

She saw no reason to avoid the fruit. It wasn't ugly or rotten. In fact, it was pretty. It didn't stink. It had a pleasant fragrance. It felt ripe in her fingers. It looked to be good for food!

As she examined the fruit physically, and came closer and closer to committing sin, the words of the serpent echoed in her mind. "Your eyes will be opened." "You will be like God." She wanted that. She desired it. She longed for it.

To satisfy her burning desire, she put the fruit to her lips and bit into it. The taste was sweet—not something to be avoided. She chewed and swallowed. She waited. Nothing bad happened. The serpent had been right after all, she thought. She didn't die!

Adam did NOT take fruit from the tree and eat it. After Eve plucked a forbidden fruit and tasted it, what did she do? "She also gave to her husband..." She ate it first and then *gave it to her husband*.

Adam may have spotted Eve near the tree and wondered what she was doing so close to the forbidden fruit. He may have been the one who told her not to touch it, and now he saw her touching it! He may have run to her side to stop her. But it

was too late. The fruit in her hand had a bite taken out of it. There was no "unbiting" the fruit. The deed was done.

With Adam beside her, and forbidden fruit in her belly, Eve did the only thing she could think of. She gave some fruit to her husband. Her action told Adam, "See—I ate of the fruit and nothing bad happened. It was good! Now you try it!"

Adam's Reaction

The Bible doesn't tell us what went through Adam's mind. It tells us simply, "and he ate." Why did Adam eat of the fruit? Why didn't he "just say NO!"?

It's possible that Eve had shared some of the serpent's words with Adam, and created doubts in his mind about God's command. The Bible tells us Eve was deceived but Adam wasn't. Eve swallowed Satan's argument hook, line and sinker. Adam may not have swallowed the whole lie, but he may have been influenced by it. It may have weakened his resolve.

It has been speculated that Adam ate because his wife gave it to him. He had been alone before his wife was created. He didn't like it. It was a very lonely existence. Now, Eve had eaten the fruit, and was heading down a different path—one that led to death. He would rather walk with her down the path leading to death than walk without her on the path leading to life. He would rather die with her than go on living without her.

Many husbands or wives follow their mates into sin. I have noticed that if one mate stops attending church, the other usually stops attending as well. It doesn't always happen, but it seems to happen more often than not.

The Result of Eating

Once they had eaten the fruit, Adam and Eve waited to see if something bad would happen. They thought they might drop dead, but they didn't.

Instead, their way of thinking changed. No longer living in innocent, peaceful obedience to God, they were now living in suspicious, distrustful, anxious disobedience.

Prior to eating the fruit, they had not noticed that they were naked. Suddenly, they realized they were revealing all to a member of the opposite sex, and they felt ashamed by it. They felt a need to hide their private parts from their mate and from God. Instead of considering that her body was under her husband's authority (1 Cor. 7:4), Eve thought of her body as her own, and wanted to hide it from him. Adam felt the same way about his body. Instead of being something beautiful to be enjoyed in marriage, sex suddenly became something dirty.

"Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden" (Gen. 3:7-8).

Now that Adam and Eve had sinned, they wanted nothing more to do with God. They were now afraid of Him. God didn't hide from Adam and Eve because of their sin; *they hid from Him!*

The more we allow ourselves to sin, the less we want God in our lives.

God called to Adam, asking where he was. Adam told God, "I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself."

God asked Adam, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?"

Adam replied, "The woman whom you gave me to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate" (vv. 9-12).

Adam blamed Eve. He did not blame himself. And he didn't blame the serpent, again indicating he was not present when the serpent deceived Eve. He described his wife as "the woman whom YOU GAVE to *be with me*." In other words, he claimed it was ultimately *God's fault*, because God gave him the woman. And Adam said he *had to follow her* as she went in the wrong direction because they were intended to STICK TOGETHER.

When God asked Eve why she ate, she did not tell the whole story. She did not say, "I wanted my eyes to be opened and I wanted to be like You." No, she, too passed the blame. She said simply, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."

(To be continued!)

Know Your Bible

By Charles Nenninger

1. What is the 5th commandment?
2. What is the 10th commandment?
3. What is the 7th commandment?
4. What is the 2nd commandment?
5. What is the 9th commandment?

(Answers on page 5)

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JOHN THE DISCIPLE WHOM JESUS LOVED

John concludes Revelation, writes two more epistles in code, trains his successors and dies of old age.

By Gregory Dullum

Part 24

Prelude-Setting

Having completed Christ's messages to the seven churches in Asia, John continued the vision in Chapters 4 and 5, giving a prelude to the remainder of Revelation. He described God's throne and a scroll with seven seals. Only the Lamb of God was worthy to open the seals and reveal what will happen in the last days of man's society on the earth.

The End Time

The first six seals included the "Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse." These four were the white horse (false prophets), red horse (war), black horse (famine) and pale horse (pestilence) (Rev. 6:1-8; Mat. 24:3-8; *The Book of Revelation Unveiled At Last!* by Herbert W. Armstrong, 1972, p. 16). The fifth seal described a time of tribulation coming upon God's church:

"Then the Lamb broke the fifth seal. I saw underneath the altar the souls of those who had been killed because they had proclaimed God's word and had been faithful in their witnessing. They shouted in a loud voice: 'Almighty Lord, holy and true! How long will it be until you will judge the people of earth and punish them for killing us?' Each of them was given a white robe; and they were told to rest a little while longer, until the total number was reached of their fellow servants and brothers who were to be killed as they had been" (Rev. 6:9-11, *Today's English Version* throughout).

The sixth seal revealed earthquakes and heavenly signs (vv. 12-17).

Chapter 7 broke from the story flow and described two great groups. The first group had God's seal of protection placed on their foreheads and were numbered at 144,000. They are to live through the rough times prior to Christ's return and will be made immortal at that time. The other group is called the "innumerable multitude." They know God's truth but reject it and must suffer through the Great Tribulation. While in captivity, these people repent and return to God. They may lose their physical lives in concentration camps but they gain their eternal lives.

The seventh seal, which John began describing in Chapter 8, consisted of seven

trumpets, signaling the last seven events before Christ returns to this earth. The first four trumpets detailed destruction of the earth, of the sea, trees, rivers and atmosphere (vv. 1-13).

The fifth, sixth and seventh trumpets are also known as the three woes.

Revelation 9 describes the fifth trumpet (first woe). It is the gathering of the great armies in Europe and their conquering of modern-day Israel (United States, Britain and the English-speaking peoples) (vv. 1-12; Armstrong, p. 38).

The sixth trumpet (second woe) is a gathering of an army of 200 million soldiers from Russia and Asia, ready to battle a revived Roman Empire found in Europe. These two remaining empires will seek to destroy each other—and as a result would destroy all life from the earth—If Christ did not plan to return in the nick of time (Rev. 9:13-21; Mat. 24:21-22; Armstrong, pp. 38-39).

While this is happening on the world's political scene, God has two witnesses preaching a worldwide message of warning, repentance and hope of a world tomorrow ruled by the returning King of kings. John's vision next described these two who preach from Jerusalem during the final three-and-a-half years of man's civilization. At the end of three-and-a-half years, the government of the revived Roman Empire will have the two witnesses martyred. For three-and-a-half days their bodies will lie in the street. But then they will be resurrected by God. They will rise into the clouds to the accompanying noise and shaking of great earthquakes. This will happen immediately before the final trumpet blows and Christ returns (Rev. 11:1-19).

In Chapter 12 Christ revealed through John the history of his church—the Church of God—from A.D. 31 to his return. The chapter begins with a description of Satan attempting to destroy Christ. When this fails, Satan goes after God's church pictured by "the woman." But the church is protected in the wilderness 1,260 days (years). Later, as the time of Christ's return draws near, Satan, filled with wrath, attempts to crush God's church in the Philadelphian era—the era which today lives on the earth. The church is given the wings of an eagle to fly to a place of safety in the desert where she will be nurtured for three-and-a-half years, safe from Satan's attack. While the two witnesses are preach-

ing in Jerusalem, the Philadelphian era of the church is in a place of safety preparing to meet Christ. Satan then turns his wrath on the Laodicean era of God's church.

Revelation 13 describes two beasts which picture revivals of the Roman Empire. The first "was allowed to fight against God's people and to defeat them, and it was given authority over every tribe and people, every language and nation" (v. 7). God's people will be captured and killed (vv. 8-9). The second beast is a great false religious leader who will perform miracles and will cause the world to worship the revived Holy Roman Empire.

In Revelation 14, three angels bring their messages. The first announces to the world that a time of judgment has come. The second announces the fall of Babylon (possibly the Roman Catholic Church; possibly this whole world's evil system), the third announces punishment for those who worship the revived Roman Empire or the Catholic Church which supports it.

In Chapters 15 and 16, seven last plagues are poured out on the earth to punish those who worship the beast. The first produces painful sores. The second turns seas to blood. The third turns fresh water into blood. The fourth causes the sun to scorch the earth's inhabitants. The fifth brings darkness. The sixth dries up the Euphrates so Asian armies may attack European armies at Jerusalem. The seventh produces a great cry, "It is done!" and is accompanied by earthquakes, thunder, lightning and gigantic hailstones.

John's vision next described the false church in Revelation 17 and 18, including its fall.

In Chapter 19, Christ returns to earth, makes war with the armies of this world and defeats them. He marries the true church and establishes his government.

In Chapter 20, John described the resurrection to eternal life of baptized believers. Satan will be bound and unable to harm humanity for 1,000 years while those humans will ready this planet for a greater day. Near the end of 1,000 years, Satan will be loosed for a short time and again will deceive many people before he is cast forever into outer darkness.

Once Satan is out of the picture forever, all humanity who had not yet received eternal life will be brought back to physi-

JOHN

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John

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cal life and given a chance to live God's way for up to 100 years. People who never knew Christ's way will get their chance at this time. (They are not lost in some hell fire.)

The final two chapters describe the new heaven and new earth as physical creation is turned from physical to spiritual and God the Father establishes his throne on the earth.

Conclusion of Revelation

The vision John received ended with upbeat messages and dire warnings:

"Then the angel said to me, 'These words are true and can be trusted, And the Lord God, who gives his Spirit to the prophets, sent his angel to show his servants what must happen very soon.'

" 'Listen,' says Jesus, 'I am coming soon! Happy are those who obey the prophetic words in this book!'

"I, John, have heard and seen all these things. And when I finished hearing and seeing them, I fell down at the feet of the angel who had shown me these things to worship him. But he said to me, 'Don't do it! I am a fellow servant of yours, and of your brothers the prophets, and of all those who obey the words in this book. Worship God!' And he said to me, 'Do not keep these prophetic words of this book a secret, for the time is near when all this will happen...'

"I, John, solemnly warn everyone who hears the prophetic words of this book: If anyone adds anything to them, God will add to his punishment the plagues described in this book. And if anyone takes away anything from the prophetic words of this book, God will take away from him his share of the fruit of the tree of life, and his share of the Holy City, which are described in this book.

"He who gives his testimony to all this, says 'Certainly so! I am coming soon!'

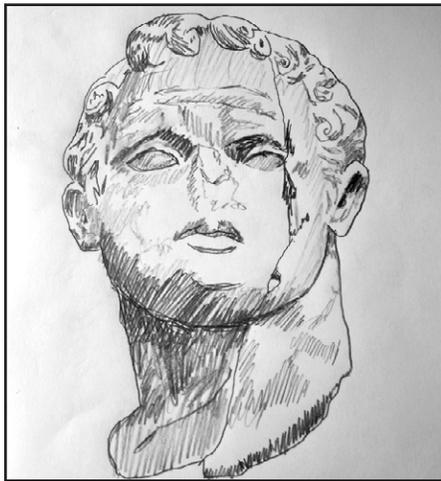
"So be it. Come Lord Jesus!

"May the grace of the Lord Jesus be with you all" (Rev. 22:6-10, 18-21).

Nerva Becomes Emperor

John had been banished to the isle of Patmos by Emperor Domitian. The emperor was now having problems back in Rome.

Domitian was an oppressive ruler who demanded to be called "lord and god." Any criticism of himself was considered treason and the penalty was death. This caused problems for government officials as well as for the Church of God. So



Drawing by Gregory Dullum

Emperor Domitian banished John to the Isle of Patmos. When Domitian was murdered in 96, John was freed. This bust of Domitian was thrown from the northwest corner of the temple in Ephesus when his memory was officially condemned after his death.

many men of high rank were executed that a conspiracy was formed and Domitian was murdered in 96.

The plot was so carefully concealed the army was caught unprepared and had no candidate to put forward as a replacement for Domitian. The senate seized this opportunity and chose one of its own members, Nerva, as emperor. He was already an old man when he became emperor in 96 and reigned only until 98 (*The Mainstream of Civilization* Part 1 by Joseph Strayer, Hans Gatzke, E. Harris Harbison and Edwin Dunbaugh, 1969, p. 85).

Under Nerva, John was freed from Patmos and allowed to return to Ephesus (*Foxe's Book of Martyrs* by Marie Gentert King, p. 13; *A History of the True Religion* by A. N. Dugger and C. O. Dodd, 1972, p. 56).

John went on tours into the heathen regions around Ephesus preaching the Gospel. He also visited the churches, ordaining bishops and clergy (*Commentary on the Whole Bible* by Robert Jamieson, A. R. Faussett and David Brown, 1964, p. 1513).

Also during this time he trained Polycarp, Papias and Ignatius for their roles as church bishops in the upcoming second century (*Halley's Bible Handbook* by Henry H. Halley, 1962, p. 558).

Polycarp by this time was about 28 years old ("Polycarp," *The World Book Encyclopedia*, 1956 ed., vol. 13, p. 6479).

2 John Written

Though John was free, persecution

against the Church of God increased. It became dangerous to merely mention the church in correspondence. When John penned his final two letters about the year 97, he resorted to code.

When he addressed the church, he did not use the name "Church of God." Instead, he wrote to the "dear Lady and to her children." Those who were in the church and knew the truth understood that the "dear lady" and her children referred to them (2 John 1-2).

In his travels, John was happy to find Christians still obeying God. Not all had been deceived, martyred or had left the faith. John wrote words of encouragement and warned against false teachers:

"How happy I was to find that some of your children live in the truth, just as the Father commanded us. And so I ask you, dear Lady: let us all love one another.... This love I speak of means we must live in obedience to God's commands...

"Many deceivers have gone out over the world, men who do not declare that Jesus Christ became mortal man. Such a person is a deceiver, he is the enemy of Christ [Anti-Christ—NKJ]. Watch yourselves, then, so that you do not lose what you have worked for, but will receive your reward in full.

"Anyone who does not stay with the teachings of Christ, but goes beyond it, does not have God... If anyone comes to you, then, who does not bring this teaching, do not allow him in your home; do not even say, 'Peace be with you.' For anyone who wishes him peace becomes his partner in the evil things he does.

"I have so much to tell you, but I would rather not do it with paper and ink; instead I hope to visit you and talk with you personally, so that we shall be completely happy.

"The children of your dear Sister send you their greetings" (vv. 4-13).

John concluded his short epistle with cautious words—stating he had more to say but would tell them in person rather than risk putting words on paper and possibly bring persecution on the church and on himself.

John Writes 3 John

Sometime after John sent out his short epistle to the church, brethren from another church brought him bad news. One of the leaders of this particular congregation had ignored John's epistle. He sought to glorify himself and taught lies. He also was inhospitable to traveling ministers and taught other brethren to be that way. This evil man was Diotrephes.

Which church Diotrephes attended is

unclear. But John responded to this problem by writing to Gaius (or Caius). There are several men with these names mentioned in the Bible. He may have been the Gaius or Caius of Macedonia (Acts 19:29), or of Derbe (Acts 20:4), or of Corinth (Rom. 16:23; 1 Cor. 1:14). It is likely he was a convert of John's, a layman of great wealth, and could have been Caius, bishop of Thessalonica or Caius, bishop of Pergamum. He probably was not Caius, bishop of Ephesus, if John were writing from there ("John, the Second and Third Epistles of," *Smith's Bible Dictionary* by William Smith, 1967, p. 307).

The Scriptures indicate Gaius was a convert of John's (vv. 2, 4) and a minister (v. 5).

John did not use his own name in his introduction. Instead, he used the code, "From the Elder." John was the last remaining of the original apostles and indeed was elderly. He probably was in his 90s.

John told Gaius how messengers had arrived from his church: "I was so happy when some brothers arrived and told how faithful you are to the truth—just as you always live in the truth. Nothing makes me happier than to hear my children live in the truth" (vv. 3-4).

John praised Gaius for helping traveling ministers (vv. 5-8).

Then he told Gaius of the trouble Diotrephes was causing in his congregation:

"I wrote a short letter to the church; but Diotrephes, who loves to be their leader, will not pay any attention to what I say. When I come I will bring up everything he has done: the terrible things he says about us and the lies he tells! But that is not enough for him; he will not receive the brothers when they come, and even stops those who want to receive them and tries to drive them out of the church!

"My dear friend, do not imitate what is bad, but imitate what is good. Whoever does good belongs to God; whoever does what is bad has not seen God" (vv. 9-11).

On the other hand, the congregation had a good man named Demetrius. Of him, John wrote:

"Everyone speaks well of Demetrius, truth itself speaks well of him. And we add our witness, and you know what we say is true" (v. 12).

Again, as in 2 John, there was much more John wished to write, but prudence forced him to wait and tell Gaius in person. "I have so much to tell you, but I do not want to do it with pen and ink. I hope to see you soon, and then we can talk personally.

"Peace be with you.

"All your friends send greetings. Greet all our friends personally" (vv. 13-15).

There is no reason to doubt John fulfilled his intention and continued his travels as long as he was physically able.

John's Incredible Life

What a life John had lived! A cousin of our Savior, he knew Jesus as a child growing up. John was a disciple of John the Baptist, who prepared the way for Jesus' ministry. He was one of the first disciples to follow Jesus as He began his ministry. John was privileged to be one of three closest disciples to our Savior, an inner circle who received instructions and saw things not made available to the other disciples.

John remained on site to watch Jesus' crucifixion when all other disciples had fled. He was one of the first to see the empty tomb after Christ had risen.

John was there on Pentecost A.D. 31 when Christ began his church. He traveled with Peter, preaching the gospel. He was with Peter when Simon Magus attempted to buy the holy spirit.

John took care of Mary, the mother of Jesus, until she died.

He outlived all of the other apostles, fleeing Jerusalem before the Roman armies overthrew the city A.D. 70.

John became bishop of the church at Ephesus and trained three men who would lead the church after his death: Polycarp, Papias and Ignatius.

John wrote a Gospel which adds much to our understanding of Jesus' life. He wrote three short epistles that tell us a lot about the condition of the church at the end of the first century. And he was privileged to receive the vision of Revelation from Jesus which gave his church so much hope, for it tells the "rest of the story." It reveals how man's government will end and how God's government will be established! How incomplete our understanding of prophecy would be if we didn't have Revelation!

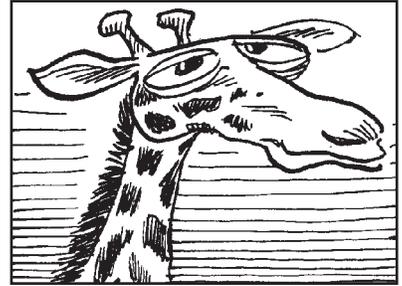
John died near the end of the first century of old age. He was the only one of the original apostles who did not die a martyr's death (Dugger and Dodd, p. 56).

Why did he, alone, escape violent death? Perhaps it was because he was the disciple whom Jesus loved the most.

Know Your Bible Answers

- 1) Honor your father and your mother.
- 2) You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.
- 3) You shall not commit adultery.
- 4) You shall not make idols.
- 5) You shall not bear false witness.

Fun Fact



Drawing and Fun Fact are courtesy of NAPS
A giraffe can go without water longer than a camel can.

Witerature

Wit and wisdom to complement the truths of the Holy Bible can be found in secular writings. Here is this month's selection:

The Tale of Despereaux by Kate DiCamillo, Candlewick Press, 2003, pp. 24-25.

If You Don't Conform

"'Once upon a time,' he read aloud, relishing the sound. And then, tracing each word with his paw, he read the story of a beautiful princess and the brave knight who serves and honors her.

"Despereaux did not know it, but he would need, very soon, to be brave himself.

"Have I mentioned that beneath the castle there was a dungeon? In the dungeon, there were rats. Large rats. Mean rats.

"Despereaux was destined to meet those rats.

"Reader, you must know that an interesting fate (sometimes involving rats, sometimes not) awaits almost everyone, mouse or man, who does not conform."

Rom. 12:1-2, Rev. 18:3-4. John 16:33

Quotable Quotes

"If things go wrong, don't go with them."

—Roger Babson

Memory Scripture

"These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." —**John 16:33**

Where Love Does Rule

(Trijan Refrain)

By Marcus Omer

O' save the day, O' save the day.
Your life looks simple when
those patchwork dreams defined your way,
revealed what might have been.
Turn back the clock, rekindle the flame,
rewrite the morals of the game.

Turn back the clock
Turn back the clock
the ecstasy of youth reclaim.

O' save the day, O' save the day.
You doubtful man now muse;
in backward glance, the time betray?
This foolishness refuse.

Take up the cause, reverse the trend.
you men, the ancient sage befriend.

Take up the cause
Take up the cause
from glory vain you must ascend.

O' save the day, O' save the day.
From tribulation rest,
on wings of Truth above the fray,
then scale you to the crest.
Where love does rule, you'll bide and dine
on bread of life, a feast divine.

Where love does rule
Where love does rule
you'll find your place upon the Vine.

Evolution vs. Creation

By Gregory Dullum

Is evolution the story of man?
Or did God reach down and form him
from ground?
Is amoeba the ancestor of man?
O where on the earth can the proof be
found?

The earth! The earth is where the answer
lies.
Look closely at creation around you.
Examine each leaf, each flower, bees, flies;
Animals from monkeys to caribou.

Search the heavens at night and you shall
see
Who else in such a way could show his
wares?
The star-filled sky above the raging sea;
The power of storms and the sun's bright
glare.

This could not have happened on its own
accord
But part of the masterpiece of the Lord.



Ukraine Signs E.U. Pact

“Dealing a defiant blow to the Kremlin, President Petro O. Poroshenko of Ukraine signed a long-delayed trade pact with Europe on Friday [June 27] that Moscow had bitterly opposed. He then declared he would like his country to one day become a full member of the European Union” (“Defying Russia, Ukraine Signs E.U. Trade Pact” by Andrew Higgins and David M. Herszenhorn, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, June 27, 2014, p. 1).

In the last days there will be three powers seeking world domination—the king of the North, king of the South and kings from the east (Dan. 11:40, 44, Rev. 16:12). North of Jerusalem is Europe, which is prophesied to have a 10-king union revival of the Holy Roman Empire (Dan. 2:40-44, Rev. 17:10, 12-14). Kings from the east may be a union of Russian and Asiatic nations. The king of the South may be a union of Moslem nations.

The king of the North may come from the current European Union. Ukraine appears to be aligning with that Union, but Russia may use military force to pull Ukraine back into its fold.

Deadly Viruses Spread

“Middle East Respiratory Syndrome, or MERS, first appeared in Saudi Arabia late in 2012. In all, more than 700 cases have been documented in 20 countries, nearly all of them linked to Saudi Arabia. More than 250 have died” (“Flawed Saudi Response Is Cited in Outbreak of the Middle East Virus MERS” by Ben Hubbard and Donald G. McNeil Jr., *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, June 29, 2014, p. 1).

Meanwhile, “Health workers here [Kolo Bengou, Guinea] say they are now battling two enemies: The unprecedented Ebola epidemic, which has killed more than 660 people in four countries since it was first detected in March, and fear, which has produced growing hostility toward outside help. On Friday [July 25] alone, health authorities in Guinea confirmed 14 new cases of the disease.

“Workers and officials, blamed by panicked populations for spreading the virus, have been threatened with knives, stones

and machetes, their vehicles sometimes surrounded by hostile mobs” (Fear of Ebola Breeds a Terror of Physicians” by Adam Nossiter, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, July 27, 2014, p. 1).

“In an ominous warning as fatalities mounted in West Africa from the worst known outbreak of the Ebola virus, the head of the World Health Organization said on Friday [Aug. 1] that the disease was moving faster than efforts to curb it, with potentially catastrophic consequences, including a ‘high risk’ that it will spread” (“Ebola Virus Is Outpacing Efforts to Control It, World Health Body Warns” by Adam Nossiter and Alan Cowell, *The New York Times*, www.nytimes.com, Aug. 1, 2014, p. 1)

Meanwhile, a painful but not so deadly disease is being spread by tiger mosquitoes in the Caribbean and U.S.:

“Asian tiger mosquitoes, which can transmit a virus called chikungunya, are a major pest in St. Louis and ‘definitely exist’ in Cape Girardeau, said Dr. Christina Frazier of Southeast Missouri State University.” Although the disease has not yet been found in Missouri, there is an outbreak in the Caribbean and it has turned up in Florida and several other states.

“The name ‘chikungunya’ is derived from a native African dialect and means ‘man who is bent up’ because of the extreme joint pain the disease caused when it was first identified” (“SEMO professor warning about mosquito-borne virus,” *Southeast Missourian*, July 25, 2014, pp. 1A, 5A).

“Pestilences” are one sign we are nearing Christ’s return (Mat. 24:3, 7-8).

Deadly Quake Hits China

“Rescuers found scores of survivors Monday [Aug. 4] as they dug through homes shattered by an earthquake in southern China that killed at least 398 people and injured more than 1,800....

“The magnitude-6.1 quake struck at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday” (“Survivors found after deadly China quake” by Christopher Bodeen [Associated Press], *Southeast Missourian*, July 25, 2014, p. 9A).

“Earthquakes in various places” also are a sign we are nearing the return of Christ (Mat. 24:3, 7-8).