

# THE LORD MY COMPANY

One of God's names is **Jehovah Shammah** which means the Lord is there.

This name was given when Ezekiel had a vision of the future. It is a most peculiar vision because it is all about the land of Palestine, and buildings on it, and strips of land, and a "prince" who comes to it, and what looks like a demonstration of the sacrificial system being shown for tourists.

There are also geographic changes described, and mention of amazing trees, whose leaves are potent medicine, and a river is described, flowing, apparently, from the Mediterranean to the Dead Sea.

However, you want to interpret this vision (ch.40-48) it has a happy ending. It seems that God wants us to know that He has everything in order. The world may run amuck, and create confused messes, but God has a plan which He will set in place, and when He's finished everything will be where He wants it, nice and tidy.

The end of the vision is about a city which God says will be built in Palestine, with the names of the tribes of Israel on its gates – perhaps a symbol of restored Israel -and the name of the city will be 'The Lord is there' – in other words, all the Israelites in the restored kingdom will be Christians, because the Lord is there with them.



The Bible says : "I will give them a heart to know me ... and they shall be my people, and I will be their God: for they shall return to me with their whole heart ".

# THE LORD MY PEACE

Another name of God is **Jehovah Shalom** which means the Lord send peace.

This name was given when an angel visited Gideon. The angel came to Gideon with a message – that he, Gideon, was about to lead an Israelite army against a mighty enemy force. Gideon was uncertain as to whether this would really happen so he asked the angel for a sign to confirm the message. (Judges 6:24)

The angel told Gideon to make a meal and place it on a rock. Gideon did so and the angel touched the meal with the staff he was carrying. Instantly fire “came up out of the rock”, burning the food as a sacrifice. Then the angel disappeared.

Gideon was amazed that he had seen an angel face to face and lived to talk about it! He was expecting to die at any moment... but God spoke and told him not to be afraid. It was at this point that Gideon built an altar and called it Jehovah Shalom.

He called it this because God was at peace with him.



The Bible says: “Great peace have they which love your law: and nothing shall offend (harm) them’. Psalm 119:165

# THE LORD MY RIGHTEOUSNESS

Another name of God is **Jehovah Zidkenu** which means the Lord our righteousness.

This name is found in a prophecy by Jeremiah. He was a prophet who described the coming fall and capture of the little southern kingdom of Judah, but he also predicted the restoration of Judah, and also the restoration of the northern kingdom of Israel.

But how could God restore these two nations? They were wicked and rebellious. They had broken the Law so many times there was now nothing left of God's mercy – they had used it all up. All God could do now was destroy His people, slowly but surely, until there was not a single Israelite left.

But God saw something wonderful, away down the centuries. He saw His only Son, coming to earth, and then dying on a cross to take the sins of Israel. With this 'deposit' of unlimited mercy available, God could now declare that He was going to turn His people from death row into life row.

God promised that, in the Messiah's days, He would begin to restore Israel and Judah, and bring them out of their captivity into a secure and safe place to live. These unrighteous people, fit only for hell, would now be turned into a righteous people!



The Bible says: "He (Jesus) shall be called The Lord our (Israel and Judah's) Righteousness." Jeremiah 23:6) King James version

# THE LORD MY SANCTIFIER

Another name of God is **Jehovah Mekaddishkem** which means the Lord that sanctifies you.

This name was given when Israel was camped in the wilderness. God had already given the people the Ten Commandments, and many other laws, so they were already well aware of the high standards which God expected of them.

Then God began to tell them about keeping the Sabbaths – which meant not just a rest every seventh day, but all the other Sabbaths. These were for arrangement of finances, of city and country buildings, of slaves and servants, of borrowing and lending, and land, and they covered all sorts of other social events.

Then God said to Israel that if they kept His Sabbaths, they would be a sanctified people – that means they would be special to Him.

Well we Christians don't have to keep any Sabbaths these days, because Jesus has set us free to make up our own minds about what we do with all and any days. We have our conscience to guide us, and the freedom to operate under love rather than law. But the same principle applies – if we obey Jesus, we become a special person for God, separate and very special.



"I am the Lord that sanctifies you". Exodus 31:13

# THE LORD MY BANNER

Another of God's names is **Jehovah Nissi**, which means the Lord my Banner.

This name was given after a terrible battle between the Israelites (as they journeyed through the wilderness), and the nation of Amalekites, who, it seems, suddenly attacked them. It was an unnecessary and brutal thing to do, and God promised, after the Amalekites had been defeated, that He would wage war against Amalek "from generation to generation".

It would seem, therefore, that Amalek represents not just the nation of Amalek, but also all enemies of God's people. If that is so, then God is still waging war against all enemies of Israel, and also of His royal family, the Church.

If you read the story of the battle (Exodus 17:8-16) you will see that Moses directed the fighting, in that, as long as his arms were raised, Israel won, but when he lowered them, the Amalekites won. Moses was a symbol of Jesus. Moses was weak, and needed support, but Jesus is now in command, and He never tires.

Christians can therefore be assured, that as long as their enemies are about, Jesus is also there, flying his banner of victory over them.



The Bible says: "Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah Nissi' Exodus 17:15 (King James version)

## THE LORD MY HEALER

Another of God's names is **Jehovah Ropheka**. This name was given when the people of Israel were wandering through the wilderness on their 40-year trek to the Promised Land.

They came to a pool and tried to drink from it, but the water was sour. They started to complain (yet again), so God told Moses to throw a tree into the water. When he did this, the waters turned fresh and "sweet". Then God told the Israelites that if they would only obey Him, He would take away all sickness from them.

What a tremendous promise! The Israelites could have been the only nation in the world which had no sickness!!

But they continued to disobey God, so they missed the chance. However, the tree in the water is a symbol of Jesus. The tree was cast into the waters – it died in the midst of the sourness of the sour water. Jesus gave his life in the midst of a sour old world. But the effect of the tree on the water was to make it sweet – just the effect Jesus has on the lives of those who receive him into their hearts, and obey Him as Lord.

And one day those who drink the "sweetness" of Jesus will never be sick – forever.



The Bible says: "If you will diligently hearken to the voice of the LORD your God, and will do that which is right in his sight... and keep all his statutes, I will put none of these diseases upon thee ... for I am the LORD that heals you. Exodus 15:26 (King James version)

# BIBLE SECRETS

One of the most amazing things about the Bible is the way it tells us things which we would not know if we were not told by the Bible.

For example, what were the names of the magicians who opposed Moses in Egypt? You won't find their names anywhere in the Old Testament. But you will find them in 2 Timothy 3:8: Jannes and Jambres.

And what did Jesus say when he was praying all by himself in the Garden of Gethsemane? How could we know unless God told us? "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup ..." Matthew 26:36.

And how did Peter know that Ananias and Sapphira had secretly decided to keep back some of their money and then lied about it? (Acts 5)

There are many examples of this. There are parts of the Bible which tell us what people were thinking, or what they did when no-one was looking. We are told how Jesus felt about the people, what certain people prayed when no-one was listening, what the earth looked like while the Great Flood was surging about on it, and so on. God gives us hundreds of such insights. Why? Because it's His Book, and He can write it however He wants!



The Bible says : "And she (said) 'You God see me.'" Genesis 16:13 (King James version)

# VOLTAIRE

A man called Voltaire once proclaimed that Christianity would be dead in 100 years' time. Voltaire was, at the time, a much-respected man, with many admiring followers.

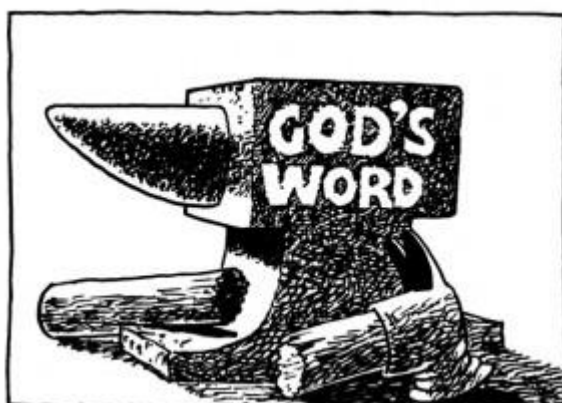
The funny thing is, only a few years after Voltaire died, the Geneva Bible Society used his house and his printing press to print stacks of Bibles!

History is full of stories like this. God is unstoppable.

A nice little story which illustrates this is the one about the hammer and the anvil. Now an anvil is a very strong lump of metal, with a flat top and usually a point, and usually the anvil is worked by hammers, which come down on red hot metal.

It is possible to wear a hammer out on an anvil... in fact it's possible to wear out MANY hammers on an anvil.

This is just like God's Word. Over the many hundreds of years since God started putting His Book together, critics have come along and tried to destroy it. These 'hammer' people have bashed themselves to death on God's Word, and when they are gone, there stands the anvil, still as strong as ever.



The Bible says: "The counsel of the LORD stands for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations". Psalm 33:11 (King James version)



# NO TIME FOR HIM

Time after time I have met Christians who do everything but spend time with God. It's not that they are bad Christians, or even that they want to be so busy, it is just that life is so busy and they have so much to do! Sometimes it boils down to a lack of self-discipline.

Christian children often go through the day like this. They start the day sleepy, and the time is rushing along so they don't have time for anything but getting dressed, eating breakfast, packing school bags and going out the door. They spend all day at school, then they get home tired, hungry and not in the mood for anything spiritual. They grab something to eat, relax, and watch TV for a while.

Then comes dinner, dishes, more TV and maybe a computer game. Then comes homework, and some conversation, a bit more food, then Oh look at the time! Time to go wearily to bed, far later than planned, and then they see the Bible beside the bed. Maybe tomorrow...

The sad thing is, most of the things that keep Christians like this from spending time with God are good things. There's nothing sinful about breakfast, school, homework, TV and so on. But what a trade-off. God waits patiently for time with His child, but it never happens. Too busy.



The Bible says: 'And the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in, choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful'. Mark 4:19 (King James version plus a slight change)

# WHAT A WONDERFUL MAN

Ever since Jesus came to earth, many people have said good things about him. (His enemies have said bad things of course, but that is their problem, not his!)

But just think of Jesus for a moment. He had no money, and no weapons, yet he has conquered the hearts of millions. He has more followers than Alexander the Great, and more than all the Caesars, and other rulers and kings including Napoleon ever had.

Jesus never had a science degree yet what he said is still the best and the wisest comments on what he spoke about. He never went to a speaking school yet he spoke perfectly – he never corrected himself, or made a slip. He never had to go back on something and update it.

He never wrote a book, yet the Book about him has been the world's number one best seller since it was written. And he himself has been the subject of millions of books, sermons, lectures, and so on.

He never wrote a song, yet people have been singing songs about him for 2000 years. Some of the world's greatest music has come from his followers.

The influence of Jesus on this world has been so amazingly out of proportion with his talents and appearance it must be a miracle! And even today the numbers of people who are becoming Christians is growing – one estimate put it at about 60-70,000 per day. (Including about 10,000 every day in China)



The Bible says: 'And fear fell on them all, and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified". Acts 19:17 (King James version)

# THREE REASONS WHY

There are three main reasons why people reject Jesus.

First, they are ignorant of him. They know all sorts of stupid stories and lies about him, but they don't know the truth. For example, some people think Jesus was an actor, or a con-artist, or the product of his follower's imagination, or just the son of Joseph, a carpenter. Others think he was a magician, or a liar, or a fraudster. Some say he never really died on the cross.

Secondly, they are too proud to accept him. They know that if they accept Jesus as Saviour, they will have to admit they had a lot of things all wrong. They suppress the truth so no one will suspect that they are bothered or interested in Jesus. They cling to their theories and opinions and block embarrassing facts about Him out of their thinking.

Thirdly, they have a moral problem. They know that if they allow Jesus into their lives they will have to stop doing something which they enjoy, but which they know is wrong. This means that they would rather keep sinning and go to hell than turn from sin and go to heaven.

From time to time you meet people who say they have searched the world for "truth" but have not found it. Quite often these people have been as keen to find truth as a burglar is to find a policeman! They say they want truth, but they deliberately avoid He who calls Himself THE TRUTH!

If anyone wants to know God, He will make a way through. God is good at building bridges.



The Bible says : 'And you shall seek me, and find me, when you shall search for me with all your heart". Jeremiah 29:13 (King James version

## WHEN THEY CAME KNOCKING

Some, or many Christians, (sad to say), get rather nervous when someone from a cult comes knocking at their door. They face the charming wolves and hope they can defend themselves against the clever, Bible-quoting people...

Wouldn't it be nice if, every time a cult knocked on the door of a Christian, the Christian met them with a big smile and a personal testimony, or explained to them correctly and accurately from the Bible, what a Christian really was! If every time the cult quoted a verse the Christian explained the verse clearly! If every argument the cult raised the Christian defeated confidently.

Did you know that cults prey on weak Christians?

Once many years ago two members of a cult came up my front path. To get to my door they had to pass a Bible verse on my garage and another verse on the shed wall. By the time they reached my back door it was obvious to them that there were Christians in the house!

So why did they keep coming? They were supposed to be Christians too, weren't they? It would seem then, that coming to my door was a waste of time?

The reason they came was because they were not Christians, but wolves, looking for a lamb to eat.



Jesus said: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves". Matthew 7:15 (King James version)

# SAVED BY GRACE

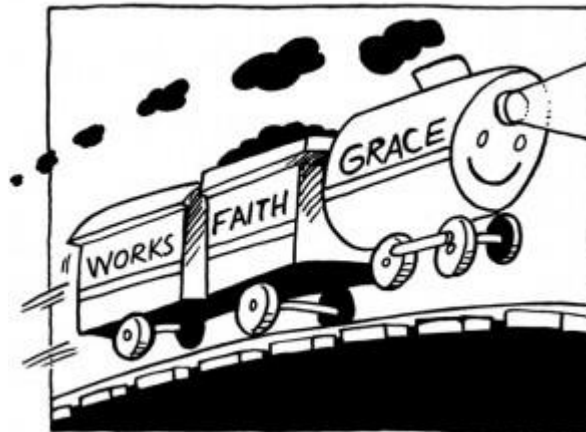
Have you ever wondered: If I am saved by grace, (which means the unearned, unmerited, undeserved favour of God), why does God also expect me to do good works?

To answer this, imagine you can see a little train. It is a three-piece train, with an engine at the front, and two carriages. The engine represents God's grace, the first carriage represents our faith, and the last part of the train represents good works.

Now, see what happens if you mix the order up. Can good works go before God's grace? No, because we cannot earn our way into heaven. Can our faith pull the train? No, because our faith has to be based on something: God's truth. Can God's grace come last? No, because without God's grace we cannot even be saved. Yet we need all three to make us a Christian.

What actually happens is that first of all God offers us salvation (the engine), but that salvation is useless to us unless we grasp it by faith (the first carriage), and then, the reason we are saved is so we can live like Christians should (good works).

We need all three. We need God to save us, and our faith to take hold of that salvation, and we need to show we are saved by the way we live.



The Bible says: "Faith without works is dead". James 2:20 (King James version)

# YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU

People say this about death. When you die, they say, you can't take anything with you – to wherever you may be going!

But just suppose you could take something with you . . .?! Some people would take money, others would take land, or buildings, machines, pets, collections, music or art. Anything and everything would start to disappear from our planet, leaving us less and less. Whole houses, or estates would vanish, sucked away into the grave by the greedy deceased!

But wait a minute, there is another way we can look at this. Lets suppose that you are going to heaven, and you have children. If your children are saved they will go to heaven too, so you will, in a sense, be able to take them with you. Or suppose you have some really nice friends, and they are Christians, guess who you will be seeing in heaven?

One really important reason why Jesus died for you and me was so that, if we choose to take Him as our Saviour, he can bring us into His Everlasting Home. That is the only way in, and it is free. All we have to do is accept the finished work of Jesus on the cross, and we instantly receive a full pardon for all our sins, and a guaranteed place in His Kingdom.



Jesus said: "In my Father's house are many mansions (dwelling places, or places to live): if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you". John 14:2 (King James version)