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"Therefore said he unto them, The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth laborers into his harvest." (Luke 10:2)

January 1987

No. 013

THE LOST BOOK

Josiah was one of the youngest kings to rule Judah. He was a good king and only 26 years of age when an important discovery took place during his reign. This is recorded in the 22nd chapter of 2 Kings and also in the 34th chapter of 2 Chronicles. Josiah had sent Shaphan, his personal secretary, to the house of the Lord with this message to Hilkiyah, the high priest: "Take the money which is collected in the house of the Lord and use it to hire men to repair the house." Obviously the temple was in need of fixing. During these repairs, Hilkiyah came upon the book of the law which had been neglected and unnoticed for too many years. He then handed this book over to Shaphan.

The HARVESTER
Sun Hill Rd. Church of Christ
1120 Sun Hill Road
Birmingham, AL 35215

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Now Shaphan was a scribe whose job dealt with writing and copying of the law. Realizing the significance of this discovery, Shaphan quickly took the book to king Josiah and read it to him. Upon hearing the words and the prophecy concerning the children of Israel, the young king was so heartbroken and ashamed that he tore his clothes in anguish. His nation had forsaken the Lord and neglected the commandments of their God. It was predicted that for such action, the Lord would bring a curse and desolation to that place. However, due to Josiah's tender heart and humbleness, he was personally spared the agony of seeing this destruction with his own eyes.

Imagine the idea of losing the Book of the Law! And in the house of the Lord, of all places! It sounds so ironic. Yet, the same thing has been happening for centuries and even today! We are usually amused when we see the picture of the old woman who searches the entire house for her eye glasses. Later she finds them in the last place she looks -- right there perched above her forehead! Perhaps we are really laughing at ourselves.

Consider the person who owns a Bible but rarely uses it. It may be stuck in the closet or sitting on the shelf collecting dust. What makes this all the more absurd is if this person is a member of the church. Though it is sad to admit, we can all agree that there are such cases. There are church members who truly do not use and study the Word of God like they should. It's like losing the Book of the Law in the house of the Lord.

What can we do? First, there must be a realization of the power of God's word. *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the*

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that anybody outside of Christ can obey the gospel! *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"*(Rom. 10:13-14) Of course, this does not apply only to those men who get behind the pulpit but to every single Christian!

Where is my Bible right now? Would I recognize it if I saw it? Or has it been lost in the house of the Lord? Isn't it high time that all members of the Lord's church become familiar with the Book of all books? Peter advised the early Christians to *"add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge"*(2 Peter 1:5). I am afraid we have too many members now who believe that after baptism there is no longer a need to pick up a Bible.

It has been speculated that Josiah rent his clothes when the passage of Deut. 17:18-20 was read to him. This seemed to really point the finger at him. Let us conclude with a special look at verse 19. *"And it (a copy of the law) shall be with him, and he shall read therein all the days of his life: that he may learn to fear the Lord his God, to keep all the words of this law and these statutes, to do them."* What have we learned so far?

RAY McMANUS

FROM THE SCRIPTURES ...

ABOUT GOD'S KNOWLEDGE OF SIN

And he said, What hast thou done? the voice of thy brother's blood crieth unto me from the ground. (Gen. 4:10)

And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, How long shall I bear with this evil congregation, which murmur against me? I have heard the murmurings of the children of Israel, which they murmur against me. (Num. 14:26,27)

And the Lord heard the voice of your words, and was wroth, (Deut. 1:34)

For he knoweth vain men; he seeth wickedness also; will he not then consider it? (Job 11:11)

For now thou numberest my steps: dost thou not watch over my sin? (Job 14:16)

The heaven shall reveal his iniquity; and the earth shall rise up against him. (Job 20:27)

For his eyes are upon the ways of man, and he seeth all his goings. There is no darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity may hide themselves. (Job 34:21,22)

If we have forgotten the name of our God, or stretched out our hands to a strange god; Shall not God search this out? for he knoweth the secrets of the heart. (Psa. 44:20,21)

O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. (Psa. 69:5)

Thou hast set our iniquities before thee, our secret sins in the light of thy countenance. (Psa. 90:8)

The Lord knoweth the thoughts of man, that they are vanity. (Psa. 94:11)

Hoe unto them that seek deep to hide their counsel from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, Who seeth us? and who knoweth us? (Isa. 29:15)

For mine eyes are upon all their ways: they are not hid from my face, neither is their iniquity hid from mine eyes. (Jer. 16:17)

And they consider not in their hearts that I remember all their wickedness: now their own doings have beset them about; they are before my face. (Hos. 7:2)

But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you. (John 5:42)

But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. (John 6:64)

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△ "I OWE, △
△ I OWE, △
△ SO OFF TO CHURCH I GO" △

△ "For God so loved the world, that he gave his △
only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in △
him should not perish, but have everlasting △
life." (John 3:16)

△ "In this was manifested the love of God toward △
us, because that God sent his only begotten Son △
into the world, that we might live through △
him." (1 John 4:9)

△ "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man △
lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

△ I owe, I owe, so off to church I go to worship △
△ the one who gave his only Son for me and to △
remember the death of my Friend.

△ Submitted by △
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AS THE MANNER OF SOME IS

(A Series to Promote Church Attendance)

The parable of the Good Samaritan begins: "A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, which stripped him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. And by chance there came down a certain priest that way: and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. And likewise a Levite, when he was at the place, came and looked on him, and passed by on the other side." (Luke 10:30-32) The story concludes with a Samaritan who does indeed help the wounded man.

Why didn't the priest or Levite offer any assistance? Surely these "religious" men of God could be counted on to give a helping hand. But instead, an indifferent attitude caused them to *"pass by on the other side"*. They just were not concerned and could care less about the man who was half dead.

When it comes to church attendance, I am afraid many of us are like the priest and Levite in attitude. We know that negligence is a serious problem but we choose to be indifferent toward the situation. Just look at our mediocre attendance record when the church has its evening services or a gospel meeting is in progress. *"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?"* (Lam. 1:12). And we call ourselves *"children of God"*?

I have heard stories of how some 60 years ago out in the rural areas, lots of people would load up in a horse-pulled wagon. They would ride for hours and for miles down rugged, dusty roads. Occasionally, the wagon would stop along the way to pick up other eager passengers. What was the big event? These folks were on their way to attend a gospel meeting

being held on the other side of the county! And this took place before the automobiles were popular. Now you can hardly get anybody to drive a few minutes to go to church. What has happened to our desire for "*the sincere milk of the word*"?

It is very sickening to see how much we have digressed over the years, rather than have progressed. Few people seem to truly care about the Lord's church and attending all the services. Already several congregations have cancelled their evening services due to lack of interest and attendance. At this rate, how much longer will it be before church services become extinct altogether? This is something to think about this year.

RAY

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NEW YEAR'S EVE Get-Together on Wednesday, December 31, 1986 from 7:30pm until midnight. Come to Brushy Creek Church, Lucedale, MS. Located 5 miles east of Lucedale, 1 mile east of Hwy. 98. Everyone welcome!

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