

Cindy Bassett

# The Bible Corner



I've always been proud of my father. He had not chosen an easy life. Our house was built on the very edge of town, far from the city and the rest of society. "Shem," he would say to me, "I don't want you mixing with those other people. They don't live right with the Lord."

I never questioned my father's judgment about such things. He was so firm in his beliefs that his strength seemed to pass onto the rest of the family.

Besides, on more than one occasion, I had heard townspeople calling my father "that fool Noah." I wanted no part of people like that.

One day though, even I began to have serious doubts about my father's judgment. It all started when he seemed to become obsessed with chopping trees. From early in the morning until there was no daylight to see anything by, he chopped the trees. This went on for several days, and finally I asked him about it.

"The world is going to end soon," he said matter-of-factly, still wielding his ax.

I stood dumbfounded for a few minutes until he stopped chopping. "The Lord is going to destroy everybody and everything by sending a flood," he said. "I'm building a boat so that we can be saved." Then he went right back to his chopping.

While his words still hung in the air, I went to confront my mother. She waited patiently until I had finished recounting my previous conversation, and then she said: "Shem, I believe in your father. If he says that God spoke to him, then it happened?"

"But why would God destroy all that He has made?" I demanded.

"Because He is sorry that He ever made these people who live around us," she re-

plied. "People have grown to be so evil that they have broken the very heart of God!"

We helped father gather into the ark a male and a female of each animal type. One day soon after we had completed that task — while a crowd still stood laughing alongside the ark — the Lord closed the door to the great boat and the rain began to fall.

It rained for many days. I didn't mind the rain too much, because the ark had been well-made, and it was dry and warm inside.

My father kept track of the days somehow, and each day he told us: "It's no good just believing in God during the good times. We have to trust Him to take care of us during the trouble, too!"

Finally, one day he announced: "It's over." The rain had stopped, but our boat continued to drift for what seemed like an endless number of days before the waters receded. After a few weeks, my father sent a dove forth from the ark. Finding no dry place, however, the bird soon returned. Seven days later, my father released the dove again. This time it returned to the ark holding an olive branch in its mouth, and we cheered jubilantly.

My father had led the way into a new world. As soon as his feet touched dry ground, he knelt down and kissed the earth. Together we built an altar to God and thanked Him for saving us. And then, just to the east, a magnificent rainbow rose in the sky. My father said it was God's sign to us that the world would never again be destroyed by flood.

I wasn't afraid anymore; I had learned to trust God in the dark.

Scripture Reference: Genesis 6-9:18

Father Albert Shamon

# A Word for Sunday



Sunday's Readings: (R3) Matthew 15:21-28; (R1) Isaiah 56:1, 6-7; (R2) Romans 11:13-15, 29-32.

In chapter 13 of Matthew's Gospel, Jesus is rejected by the Jews. From then on, the rejection deepens. Paradoxically, the religious Jews reject Jesus, whereas the pagans accept Him. Thus, having clashed with the Pharisees, Jesus withdrew to Tyre and Sidon — pagan lands. Here a foreigner — a Canaanite woman — joined herself to the Lord (R1).

She called on Jesus, as Peter and the disciples had done during the storm at sea (Matthew 14:24-32). She addressed Him as "Lord" and added the messianic title "Son of David."

Jesus made no response — perhaps to develop her faith. She persisted, not once or twice, but repeatedly. So the disciples begged Jesus to dismiss her by granting her request. Jesus answered them in a voice loud enough to be heard by the woman: "My mission is to the lost sheep of Israel."

At this point a test of wills took place. The woman showed herself plucky and determined, by doing what His disciples did not; she did Him homage with the plea, "Help me, Lord."

Our Lord was touched. He saw her faith growing and, perhaps in jest, quoted a proverb: "It's not right to take the food of sons and daughters (of Israel) and throw it to the dogs (the Gentiles). To call a person a dog was a contemptuous insult. In those days, dogs were unclean scavengers of the street — lean, hungry, savage and diseased curs.

But we must remember that the tone and look with which something is said makes all the difference in the world. We can be sure that Jesus pronounced this proverb with a smile on His face and a twinkle in

His eye. He had seen something in that woman He admired. He saw her as one who could match riddle with riddle, insult with insult, and turn one wise saying with another to her own advantage.

Moreover, we must remember that the word for dogs that is used in the Greek text is not the word for street dogs (*kuon*); instead, the diminutive *kunarios* is used — referring to lap dogs or household pets.

The woman was quick to see this linguistic distinction and with her ready wit parried, "Even the puppies eat the crumbs that fall from their masters' tables." Jesus' eyes lit up with joy at such faith. Instantly, He rewarded it with the desired cure.

The Gospel of Matthew recounts two meetings between Jesus and Gentiles, here and in chapter 8, verses 5-13. In each instance, He lauded the Gentile's faith and rewarded it with an instant miracle. At these points, Jesus crossed a clear border, by extending his message beyond Jewish boundaries and showing that salvation is for all. "The foreigners who join themselves to the Lord . . . them will I bring to my holy mountain (R1)."

The "dogs" are with us yet. They bark from the media, our streets and our neighborhoods. They are the poor and the needy; the depressed and the oppressed; the young calling for help; the hungry, diseased and the dying; aliens seeking to cross our borders; and nations hungering for a peace based on justice and liberty.

All these are Canaanites. We can and we must respond to the barking by active charity. Only then shall we, like Jesus, be able to quiet the barking and take away the bite — the cynicism unbelievers might have about Christians. Incidentally, the word cynicism has its roots in the word dog (*ku-nos*) — it is the snarling and barking of disbelief.

# FUNERAL DIRECTORS

THOSE WHO WISH TO HAVE ARRANGEMENTS CARRIED OUT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE IDEALS OF THEIR FAITH, CONTACT THE FUNERAL DIRECTORS LISTED BELOW FOR PRE-NEED OR AT-NEED SERVICES AND COUNSELING.

### ROCHESTER

**Malcolm M. Nulton.....James R. Gray**  
Four locations for your convenience  
**Funeral Homes:**

<b>Ashton-Smith</b> 853 Culver Road 716-482-6260	<b>Nulton</b> 1704 Penfield Road 716-381-3900	<b>Mattie</b> 853 Culver Road 716-482-2440	<b>Payne-Nulton</b> Macedon, N.Y. 315-986-7781
--	---	--	--

**Younglove-Smith**  
Funeral Home, Inc.  
Serving Greece  
1511 Dewey Avenue  
Rochester, N.Y. 14615  
(716) 458-6200

**Schauman-Sulewski**  
Funeral Home Inc.  
Edwin Sulewski  
2100 St. Paul Street  
Rochester, N.Y. 14621  
(716) 342-3400

### IRONDEQUOIT

**Schauman-Sulewski**  
Funeral Home Inc.  
Edwin Sulewski  
2100 St. Paul Street  
Rochester, N.Y. 14621  
(716) 342-3400

**Michael E. Siedel**  
Funeral Home  
1270 Norton St.  
Rochester, N.Y. 14621  
(716) 544-5000  
If no answer 342-9300

**Burns-Hanna**  
Funeral Home  
1795 East Ridge Rd.  
Rochester, N.Y. 14622  
(716) 467-5745

**Droser**  
Funeral Home  
Edward J. Droser  
Alan E. Droser  
1717 Portland Avenue  
Rochester, N.Y. 14617  
(716) 342-3000

**Paul W. Harris**  
Funeral Home Inc.  
Richard P. Harris  
Charles E. Davis  
570 Kings Highway S.  
(corner Titus)  
Rochester, N.Y. 14616  
(716) 544-2041

**May Funeral Home**  
George L. May Jr.  
Raymond L. Welch  
8783 Culver Rd.  
Rochester, N.Y. 14622  
(716) 467-7957

### GATES

**Alvah Halloran**  
and Son, Inc.  
Funeral Home  
H. Daniel Halloran  
2125 Chili Avenue  
Rochester, N.Y. 14624  
(716) 247-7590

### GREECE

**Arndt Funeral Home**  
1118 Long Pond Rd.  
(near Maiden Lane)  
Greece, N.Y. 14626  
Ronald John Arndt  
Parking for over 100 cars  
(716) 225-6350

**Vay, Schleich**  
and Meeson  
Funeral Home Inc.  
"Greece's Largest and  
Most Complete Facilities"  
2692 Dewey Avenue  
Greece, N.Y. 14616  
(716) 663-5827

2301 Dewey Avenue  
Opposite Holy Sepulchre Cemetery

## HART MONUMENT CO.

Since 1856

865-6746