

# Milk & Honey

Vol. XX June, 2006 No. 6

*Spiritual Food and Encouragement for Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ*

## They Left It All Behind Them And Never Returned

Bob Gessner

### 1. Abraham left the lure of the city for the lonely wilderness.

“So Abraham departed as the Lord had spoken to him...they went out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to the land of Canaan....” (Gen. 11:31-12:4)

God called Abraham to a land that was totally unknown to him. He called him from a city that was full of comfort and luxury to a land that was lonely and wild. At the time that God called Abraham, he lived in Ur of the Chaldees, one of the many cities in Babylonia. “Ur was the largest city on the west bank of the Euphrates. Its position was most favorable for commerce. In Abraham’s time it was a center of wealth and luxury, of learning and of the arts and sciences. It was a great commercial community. All classes participating in trade required a knowledge of reading and writing. From very ancient times, schools and libraries existed and an extensive and varied literature was represented by them.” (D. Miller)

Urquhart has said: “We now know that Abraham came out from one of the grandest civilizations which the world has ever seen, and made one of the biggest sacrifices which faith has ever offered. He came out from the midst of culture and of luxury. At God’s command he turned his back upon all their prospects and their allurements, their honors and their ease, and became a wanderer and a stranger, a man without a fatherland or a continuous resting place, and whose only home was the fellowship of God.”

“By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to the place which he would afterward receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise as in a foreign country, dwelling in tents with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise; for he waited for the city which has foundations, whose builder and maker is God.” (Heb. 11:8-10)

2. **Moses left the grandeur of the palace for the backside of the desert.** “And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in words and

deeds. But when he was forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel.” (Acts 7:22,23) Moses was so exercised about the state of his brethren that he was willing to leave behind all the learning, luxury, and prestige of Pharaoh’s palace. “The first forty years of his life is briefly summed up as the time during which he was educated in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and was mighty in word and deed. He was brought up in all the attractions of Egypt in order that in relinquishing them he might have sympathy with any extent of surrender which the people of God might be called to. Others might have much to surrender, but none so much as he. If the people felt it hard to relinquish the leeks and the onions, how much more was it for Moses to turn from all the luxuries and honors of Pharaoh’s court in which he had moved! The magnitude of his own surrender qualified him to call others to follow him in it; his own personal renunciation of all Egypt’s attractions entitled him to be the leader out of Egypt.” (J. B. Stoney)

“By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh’s daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward.” (Heb. 11:24-26)

3. *And down through the centuries of the church age, there are many who left behind places of prominence and pleasure in obedience to the call of god and to that which was of higher importance.* Both Abraham and Moses left because by faith they were willing to place that which was NOT seen above that which was seen. “While we do not look at the things which are seen, but at the things which are NOT seen. For the things which are seen are temporary, but the things which are NOT seen are eternal.” (2 Cor. 4:18) I’ve had the honor and the privilege of knowing such men who have lived during my own life time. I choose not to give their names (they would not want it), but rather to record their example.

(1) There have been those who have walked away from lucrative job careers. They left them behind in order that they might have more time to serve the Lord.

(2) There have been those who left behind prominent positions in the religious world in order to serve in obscurity and even under ridicule.

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## Rightly Dividing The World Of Truth: Some Important Distinctions.

Willie Burnett  
Part 2

### THE CHURCH

The church is a completely new insertion in the prophetic program, and has several internal distinctions that we should observe:

#### THE BODY OF CHRIST vs THE LOCAL CHURCH: [ Acts 2; 1 Cor. 12 ]

##### **The Body of Christ:**

Without exception, all believers since Acts 2 are in the Body of Christ, the universal Church of God, and this can never be taken away from them. They are members in the Body by the Baptism of the Spirit. The Lord is their Risen Head in Heaven.

##### **The Local Church:**

The Local Church is the local representation of the Body of Christ, as ordained by God, and established by the apostles for the well-being and mutual edification of the saints and the continuation of the work that Christ began. The Apostles did not only evangelise, but the Commission demanded that they teach the disciples to “observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you,” and they established Local Churches wherever they went, instructing them in the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and giving apostolic teaching regarding Church order. Membership in the Local Church can be temporarily suspended. if the Church determines that disciplinary action is required in the form of excommunication. The government of the Local Church has been delegated by God to elders who are made such by the Holy Spirit.

#### THE LORD’S SUPPER vs. THE LORD’S TABLE. [ 1 Cor. 11; 1 Cor. 10]

1 Cor. 10 deals with the subject of the Lord’s Table, whereas 1 Cor.11 deals with the Lord’s Supper. The two are related, but distinct from each other in a number of ways.

SUPPER [ 1 Cor. 11 ]	TABLE. [ 1 Cor. 10]
• An “ordinance” appointed by the Lord	• Partaking is non-ceremonial
• Partaken of weekly	• Partaken of daily
• Involves the Emblems of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus	• Involves feeding daily from the Word
• Involves “remembrance.....”	• Involves “fellowship with God.”
• Key element is “Worship”	• Key element is “Com munion” with God.

#### HOLY PRIESTHOOD vs ROYAL PRIESTHOOD. [ 1 Peter 2]

##### **Holy Priesthood:**

As Holy Priests our activity is concerned with Worship – “offering up spiritual sacrifices to God”. In other words, the activity is “Vertical.” This needs to be better understood in our Worship meetings. The purpose of our gathering is not to edify each other, or to share comments with each other, but primarily to converse with God, concerning His Son. We hear again the words of Joseph to his brethren “ Go tell my father of all my glory in the land of Egypt.” May the Lord help us to refocus in our worship and to set our sights on Him rather than on ourselves.

##### **Royal Priesthood:**

As Royal Priests we “show forth the virtues of Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light.” In other words, the activity is “horizontal,” - reaching out to men in our exercises. and this could involve preaching the Gospel or Ministry to the Saints, teaching in the Sunday School. etc. All service must be carried out with the dignity and responsibility expected of priests.

These then are some of the important distinctions that must be observed when studying Scripture. Failure to observe these distinctions will lead to confusion and violation of the context in which truth is presented. The writer has found these to be most helpful in his own experience, and hopes that they will also be helpful to others. \*

## Shepherding Conference II

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# Using What You Have

Steve Hulshizer

*There is a lad here, which hath five barley loaves, and two small fishes: but what are they among so many? John 6:9*

A number of years ago I had the unique experience of filing for, and obtaining two U.S. patents. Engraved copies of the patents currently hang on my wall, one hidden by a bookcase holding Spread The Word publications. They were for an electrical switch and a timer. The patents have now expired, and I never made a penny from them!

While I was going through the process of obtaining these patents I had visions of grandeur! I envisioned the Brinks truck pulling up to the front door to deliver the bags of money I would make from them. I also thought of all the great things I could then do for the Lord! In time the gracious Master taught me a valuable lesson—Learn to use what you have for Him without thinking of what might be if you had more money or greater facilities!

Most readers are unaware that Spread The Word has operated out of one room in two of our homes for over 20 years. One brother came and wanted to know where the warehouse was that held the literature! (While we keep a good deal of literature on hand, our printer kindly stores much of it at his shop.) At one time we were offered a complete printing operation, but after considering what would be involved with such an operation—employees, buildings, utilities, etc.—we graciously declined the offer. We preferred the low overhead of the one room operation! By the way, many other saints around the world are using a portion of their homes or businesses to operate a ministry for the Lord, perhaps a prison literature ministry, radio outreach, or classroom.

Have you ever thought of what you have that could be used for the Lord, even if it is small, or few in number. Most saints have an occupation which can be used to further, or support the Lord's work. Builders, engineers, dentists, doctors, car dealers, computer programmers, and many others currently use their skills, facilities, and resources to support the Lord's work and the Lord's servants around the world and at home.

I would like to encourage you to take a moment and think of what you have that you could use for the Lord. You might be surprised! You will also be blessed beyond words when the Lord takes your few loaves and multiplies them to the blessing of many others! \*

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There are no trivial assignments in the work of the Lord.

Vance Havner

# The Faithful Rechabites

Norman E. Roberts — May-June 1987

What a remarkable family the Rechabites must have been! (Jeremiah 35) Their ancestors had placed some stringent vows upon them, and through the generations they had observed them punctiliously. Their true pilgrim character was to be maintained in that they were to live in tents, and they were not to own property, to farm, or to plant vineyards. They were also to be total abstainers from wine, a restriction the Christians of my day could identify with much more easily than those of today.

In a day much like our own, when God's people were marked by unfaithfulness on every hand, the Lord designed a peculiar test for these Rechabites. He had His godly prophet, Jeremiah, take them into His holy temple. And there, in the privacy of that place, where there were no eyes to see them, the prophet sets before them pitchers of wine and cups to drink from. No doubt the pitchers were of shining silver and the cups delicate goblets. And the wine must have appeared so enticing. And here was a man of God inviting them to drink! Surely old Jonadab, who had helped Jehu cleanse Israel of its Baal worship instituted by the notorious King Ahab (2 Kings 10), must have been a bit fanatical to place such ridiculous restrictions upon his posterity. After all, that was at least 200 years ago. And anyway, they had faithfully observed the "important" things - they did not own property, sow seed, plant crops, or anything like that. And they had been living in tents all these years. Surely God would not mind if they just took a little drink. In fact, it might even offend the prophet if they refused!

But these stalwart men reasoned differently. They courteously, but clearly, explained to Jeremiah why they could not accept his invitation, reviewing just enough of their family history to justify their position. The Bible does not say so, but I think a smile must have broken across the weeping prophet's face, as he heard them speak. To him, as well as to the Lord, the Rechabites represented a little pocket of faithfulness in a godless and careless day.

What do the Rechabites have to say to us today? That Christians who do not drink have a better testimony in

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**For God sent not his Son into the world  
to condemn the world; but that the  
world through him might be saved.**

**John 3:17**

**June, 2006**

## **Continued from page 1 – *They Left It All...***

(3) There have been those who had to leave behind their immediate family in order to continue to walk pleasing to the Lord. Their parents disowned them, but they refused to compromise their faith.

(4) There have been those who sold their spacious homes in order to live in humbler abodes so that they might better fulfill their high calling to serve Him.

It has been a great honor and privilege to know such men and women. Their faith has been an inspiring example of what Christ has been doing through the power of transformation in the lives of those who trust Him. As the Divine Potter, He has shaped their lives into His own image (2 Cor. 3:18). Christ left behind the glories of heaven when He came into this world and He lived in obscurity as He fulfilled the mission that His Father sent Him to accomplish. WHAT HAVE YOU LEFT BEHIND? Nothing yet? It's not too late. You can still do it. "Therefore, let us go forth to Him, outside the camp, bearing His reproach. For here we have no continuing city, but we seek the one to come." (Heb. 13:13,14) \*

## **Continued from page 3 – *The Faithful Rechabites***

the world than those who do? Perhaps. But even more importantly, that divinely implanted convictions are not to be easily cast aside, no matter how godly and well-intended the source encouraging compromise may be. In Jeremiah's case, of course, he was simply testing the Rechabites as God had told him to do, that he might have an object lesson for the faithless people of Judah. In our day, there are those among us with very different motives urging us to cast aside convictions for which those who have gone before us have paid dearly. And to the extent that these convictions have solid Scriptural foundations, we do well to courteously, but clearly explain why we cannot depart from them. \*

## **QUOTE**

Daniel Webster, 19th-century American Senator and Secretary of State, was dining once in the company of literary men in Boston, when the conversation turned to Christianity, and he stated his beliefs. A Unitarian minister opposite him asked, "Mr. Webster, can you comprehend how Jesus Christ could be both God and man?"

Webster replied, "No sir, I cannot comprehend it; and I would be ashamed to acknowledge Him as my Saviour if I could comprehend it. If I could comprehend Him, He would be no greater than myself, and such is my conviction of accountability to God, my sense of sinfulness before Him, and my knowledge of my own incapacity to recover myself, that I feel I need a supernatural Saviour." \*

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