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## GOING FULL CIRCLE

In Genesis 38 we have an interesting story in the life of Judah. It is recorded for us that Judah had three sons: Er, Onan, and Shelah. Verse seven tells us that Er was wicked in the sight of God, so he was put to death. Also, we find that Onan did not do his commanded duty to raise offspring for his brother, and therefore God put him to death also. Finally, Tamar was to marry Shelah, but Judah was afraid that Shelah would die just as Er and Onan did, so he worked out a deal with Tamar that she would wait until Shelah was older and then she could be his wife. Eventually, after Judah's wife dies, he seeks comfort in the arms of a prostitute. Little did he know that prostitute was his two-time daughter-in-law.

In verse twenty-four we are told that Judah was informed that Tamar had been immoral and that she was pregnant. He demanded that she be brought out and burned to death. She responded by sending the signet cord and staff she took from him as a token that he would pay her later. When Judah saw this, he realized that he had been in the wrong.

In life, we often find that things come full circle. Some call it karma, some call it getting what you deserve, but The Bible calls it reaping what you sow. Paul, in Galatians 6:7, said, "Be not deceived: God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap." The way that we treat others often determines the way that they will in turn treat us. Matthew 7:12 says, "So whatever you wish that others would do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets." If we, like Judah, do not treat others properly, it will come full circle and affect us, either in this life or the next.

--Philip Plyler, *The Main Street Harbinger*, Milan, TN, with minor editing

## THE LESSON OF THE ANTS

Several missionaries were having tea one afternoon, when an ant appeared on the tablecloth, made its way to a tea cake, walked around it, and finding nothing to eat, made straight for the sugar bowl. After eating several bits, it walked off with a small piece. They watched it disappear underneath the door. It soon returned with several of its relations. They climbed the table leg, entered the sugar bowl and ate their fill. They then departed, each with a piece of sugar in its mouth. But it did not end there—presently a swarm of ants arrived to partake of the same sweet food.

These ants teach us a lesson. The first went and told others the "good news," who, in turn, went and told the glad story to many more. Like Isaiah, the demoniac, the woman of Samaria, and others, we must "go and tell" the glad story of God's redeeming love! --Arthur Peterson, via Highway Church bulletin, Sullivan, IL

**"Go to the ant, thou sluggard: consider her ways and be wise" (Proverbs 6;6)**

## CAGED

(I've seen the following through the years, but it's worth reading again. I'm copying it from *House to House/Heart to Heart*.)

A boy with a rusty birdcage walked by a preacher. "What are you going to do with that bird?" asked the preacher. "Oh, I'm just going to poke sticks at it, shake the cage, throw water on it...fun things like that."

"What are you going to do after that?"

"I don't know; probably just feed it to the cats."

"How much do you want for it?" asked the preacher.

"Aw, you don't want it. It's just an old field bird. It doesn't sing or nothin'."

"How much?"

The boy thought awhile, and then said, "Two dollars." The preacher paid it. The boy grinned and pocketed his money. Then he watched to see what the preacher would do with the bird. The preacher just opened the cage and turned it loose. The boy walked away, shaking his head over the craziness of some people.

The minister had something else in mind. Sin has "caged" each one of us and Satan has mankind in his grasp. Jesus asks, "What are you going to do with them?"

"I'm just going to have fun with them. I'm going to tease them. I'm going to bring heartache and pain into their lives."

"And after that?"

"Well, when I get tired, I will take them to eternal destruction."

"I will buy them," says Jesus.

"You couldn't possibly want them! They will despise You, use your name in vain and reject You. Then they will kill You."

"I will give my life."

Jesus paid the price and set us free (Ephesians 1:7). Won't you accept His offer on His terms?

## MULTICULTURALISM AND TOLERANCE

About 71/ ½ years ago at Ft. Hood, Tex. Maj. Nidal Hasan, an American-born Muslim is reported to have gone on a shooting-rampage in which he is charged with killing 13 and wounding dozens of others. Before opening fire in a crowded medical building he is said to have shouted, "Allahu akbar," Arabic for "Allah is great." It is disturbing not only to know someone would do this in the name of his god, but also that reports are that others at the base knew of his threats, but ignored them because to do so would undoubtedly label them as intolerant and being Islamophobic. In other words, multiculturalism and the fear of being labeled intolerant, and thereby being demoted, prevailed over concern for the safety of dozens of people.

"Intolerance" now seems to be the cardinal sin of the day. You must regard all cultures and religions as equals. There was a time that tolerance was seen as simply respecting people's right to differ, but it has now evolved into accepting all cultures, life-styles and religions, none (especially our own) being superior to any other. As defined by Thomas A. Helmbock, executive president of the national Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity: "The new definition of tolerance is that every individual's beliefs, life-style, and perception of truth-claims are equal.... There is no hierarchy of truth. Your beliefs and my beliefs are equal, and all truth is relative."

Such sloppy thinking is destructive to one's spiritual well-being, and also to the endurance of the nation. Jesus spoke of truth as a fixed standard, praying to the Father, "Thy word is truth" (John 17:16). The foundation of our country has been Judeo-Christian values as defined by Scripture. If Jesus was to walk among us today, he would surely be tagged as being intolerant, bigoted, guilty of hate speech, homophobic, closed-minded, etc. While He showed love towards all, He never failed to address spiritual errors in His generation with the strongest of terms, even addressing the religious establishment of the day with such terms as "'white-washed tombs" and "vipers."

As the world becomes more and more unstable, may Christians hold fast to that which is stable and endures--God's truth as revealed in the word of God, the Holy Bible., --Ron

**FROM HERE 'N THERE—**

**Be careful** of half-truths. You may have the wrong half. \*\*\* **Birthdays** are good for you—the more you have, the longer you live.”

**IN OUR SERIES ON HEAVEN**, today's message will be on "*Man's Past, Purpose and Prospect*" (*Part I*). *We need to understand mankind's uniqueness in creation before we can discern our unique prospect--Heaven.*