

“If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God...” (1 Peter 4:11).

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“By The Way”

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“By the way” is an oft used expression. Many times it is used unnecessarily in our speech (incidentally, in passing, as an aside). The phrase occurs 92 times in God’s book. There are no unnecessary words or phrases in divine revelation! “By the way” is used in the sense of during the course of a journey. Did you realize life is a journey (Gen. 47:9)? A lot of things happen by the way!

1) *We Can Be Deceived.*

Judah was deceived by the way. His daughter-in-law, Tamar, “... put her widow’s garments off from her, and covered her with a veil, and wrapped herself, and sat in an open place, which is **by the way** to Timnath...” (Gen. 38:14). Judah “...turned unto her **by the way**, and said, Go to, I pray thee, let me come in unto thee; (for he knew not that she was his daughter in law.)” (Gen. 38:16). As Judah was deceived by the way, so can we be! We are warned, “Let no man deceive you...” (Eph. 5:6) and “Be not deceived...” (1 Cor. 6:9; 15:33; Gal. 6:7; 1 Jn. 1:8)!

2) *God’s Providence Is At Work.* The life of Joseph is the story of providence. Joseph made provisions for his family to go down from Canaan into

Egypt. “And to his father he sent after this manner; ten asses laden with good things of Egypt, and ten she asses laden with corn and bread and meat for his father **by the way**. So he sent his brethren away, and they departed: and he said unto them, See that ye fall not out **by the way**” (Gen. 45:23-24). If you had been Joseph, would you have realized God’s providence at work in your life and said, “...God sent me before you to preserve you a posterity in the earth, and to save your lives by a great deliverance” (Gen. 45:5-8)? By the way, God is able to turn the evil people may think against us unto good (Gen. 50:20)!

3) *We Can Become Discouraged And Complain.*

During the wilderness-wandering journey, “...they journeyed from mount Hor **by the way** of the Red sea, to compass the land of Edom: and the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way” (Num. 21:4). You have to watch discouragement! It can lead to all kinds of trouble! On this occasion, discouragement led to complaining, and God never has liked complaining! “...the people spake against God, and against Moses, Wherefore have ye brought us

up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? for there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread” (Num. 21:5). Thus, “...the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died” (Num. 21:6). We need to be reminded to “...fear not, neither be discouraged” (Dt. 1:28; Josh. 1:9). Jesus said, “Murmur not among yourselves” (Jn. 6:43). Paul wrote the Corinthians, “Neither murmur ye...” (1 Cor. 10:10). The Philippians were instructed, “Do all things without murmurings...” (Phil. 2:14).

4) *Children Must Be Taught.* Moses exhorted the children of Israel, “And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest **by the way**, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up” (Dt. 6:7). This statement is repeated almost verbatim in Deuteronomy 11:19, as the Scriptures place emphasis on child-teaching and training. Proverbs 22:6 records, “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6). We must do this today, by the way!

5) **Brotherly Love Is To Be Shown.** It is written in the fifth book of Moses, “Thou shalt not see thy brother’s ass or his ox fall down **by the way**, and hide thyself from them: thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again” (Dt. 22:4). Each of us must learn to show a brother’s love! Remember the four words of Hebrews 13:1? “Let brotherly love continue.” John reminds us, “But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him?” (1 Jn. 3:17).

6) **Men Die.** Joshua 5:4 explains, “And this is the cause

why Joshua did circumcise: All the people that came out of Egypt, that were males, even all the men of war, died in the wilderness **by the way**, after they came out of Egypt.” This shows the accomplishment of the Lord’s promise, back in Numbers 14, “Your carcasses shall fall in this wilderness; and all that were numbered of you, according to your whole number, from twenty years old and upward, which have murmured against me...save Caleb...and Joshua...” (vv. 29-30). As these died by the way, so will we, unless the Lord comes first! “For as in Adam all die...” (1 Cor. 15:22). “...it is appointed unto men once to

die...” (Heb. 9:27). So, we must be prepared every step of the way!

By the way, Saul asked, “Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” (Acts 9:6). A man of Ethiopia was baptized and went rejoicing, by the way (Acts 8:26-39). By the way, Simon sinned and, being told to repent and pray, requested, “Pray ye to the Lord for me...” (Acts 8:18-24). What will you do, by the way?

Choosing A Church

In a survey this question was asked: “Why did you choose the particular church which you now worship with?” The results were:

- 9% because of the architectural beauty of the building.
- 18% because of convenience to their homes.
- 3% because of the ministers of the church.
- 22% because there were people in the church whom they respected.
- 34% because neighbors or friends invited them to that church.

Your life and personal invitation are vital ingredients to the growth of the Lord’s church!

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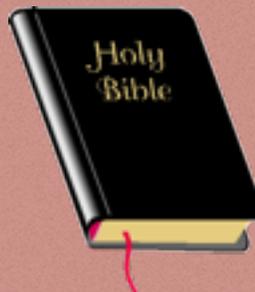
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