

# The Bible Banner

January 2026  
Updated



**"He shall Come...as the Rain"**  
Hosea 6:3



The following story, though highly contested by higher critics and unbelievers, God helped the Bible Banner editor to find in answer to prayer.

Due to its contested nature, we replaced it in the first Bible Banner. But apparently, someone out there needs it. God sent us these words, *"For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar..."* Romans 3:3,4 At a certain university, there was a professor of philosophy who was a deeply committed atheist. His primary goal for one required class was to spend the entire semester attempting to prove that God couldn't exist. His students were always afraid to argue with him because of his impeccable logic. For 20 years he had taught this class, and no one had ever had the courage to go against him. Sure, some had argued in class at times, but no one had ever really gone against him (you'll see what I mean later). Nobody would go against him because he had a reputation. At the end of every semester, on the last day, he would say to the class of 300 students, *"If there is anyone here who still believes in God, stand up!"* In 20 years, nobody ever stood up. They knew what he was going to do next. He would say, *"Because anyone who believes in God is a fool. If God existed, he could stop this piece of chalk from hitting the ground and breaking. Such a simple task to prove he is God, and yet he can't do it."* And every year, he would drop the chalk onto the tile floor of the classroom, and it would shatter "into a hundred pieces." All of the students could do nothing but stop and stare. Most of the students were convinced that God couldn't exist. Certainly, a number of Christians had slipped through the class, but for 20 years, they had been too afraid to stand up.

Well, one year there was a freshman who happened to get enrolled in the class. He was a Christian and had heard the stories about this professor. He had to take the class because it was one of the required classes for his major. And he was afraid. But for three months that semester, he prayed every morning that he would have the courage to stand up no matter what the professor said or what the class thought. Nothing they said or did could ever shatter his faith, he hoped. Finally, the day came. The professor said, *"If there is anyone here who still believes in God, stand up!"* The professor and the class of 300 people looked at him, shocked, as he stood up at the back of the room. The professor shouted, *"YOU FOOL! If nothing I have said all semester has convinced you that God doesn't exist, then you are a fool! If God existed, he could keep this piece of chalk from breaking when it hit the ground!"* He proceeded to drop the chalk, but as he did, it slipped out of his fingers, off his shirt cuff, onto the pleats of his pants, down his leg, and off his shoe. And as it hit the ground, it simply rolled away, unbroken. The professor's jaw dropped as he stared at the chalk. He looked up at the young man and then ran out of the lecture hall. The young man who had stood up proceeded to walk to the front of the room and share his faith in Jesus for the next half hour. 300 students stayed and listened as he told of God's love for them and of His power through Jesus.

Little decisions, like raindrops, multiply and create a ripple effect that makes a big difference. Indeed, it is written, *"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God."* Deuteronomy 32:2,3

## Burritos with Homemade Tortillas

**Burritos** - Spread tortillas with refried beans. (You can make your own by mashing beans and adding a little oil, salt, onion powder, and garlic powder.) Top with your favorite vegan cheese sauce, tomatoes, olives, onion, lettuce, bell pepper or cucumber, and tofu sour cream. Fold into a burrito.

**Loren's Tortillas** (Named for the missionary to Africa who originated this recipe)

2 cups hard white wheat flour*	1 cup unbleached flour*
1 cup soft white wheat flour*	1 tsp sea salt
2 Tbsp ground flaxseed	1 ½ cups warm-hot water

Mix all ingredients in a Bosch [mixer] for 8 minutes [or knead by hand]. Divide into 18 equal parts. Roll out in a small amount of oil and cook on flat cast iron skillet or nonstick frying pan. Be sure not to overcook. No [additional] oil is

needed to cook them. Store in gallon zip-lock bags. They will stay flexible when cold if not cooked too long. May be frozen.

\*By cutting the flour amount slightly, we have found we can also make these with all white wheat flour (100% whole grain).



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## QUOTABLE QUOTES

**"That which God plants He will take care to keep watered."** -- Matthew Henry



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## Time for Refreshing -- Editor's Note



An old newspaper pictured a downtown fire in a large city with many firemen doing their assigned duties in seeking to control and extinguish the fire. However, the thing that caught people's interest in the picture was a fireman, dressed in his fireman's gear, with an oxygen tank on his back, and helmet in his hand, kneeling by a fire hose taking advantage of a leak in the hose to grab a quick sip of water.

Some might criticize and say that he should be fighting the fire. He was on duty, and every fireman was needed in the fighting of the fire and the saving of lives. However, the fireman was wise. He was taking time out in the midst of the heat to refresh himself that he might be able to fight the fire better.

As believers, we are in the midst of a battle against the world, the flesh, and the devil. But we need to take time out to drink and obtain the refreshing Water of Life for ourselves.

God has a plan and a time for refreshing. Exodus 23:12 says, *"Six days thou shalt do thy work, and on the seventh day thou shalt rest: that thine ox and thine ass may rest, and the son of thy handmaid, and the stranger, may be refreshed."* This pattern of refreshing and rest on the seventh day began at creation, before there ever was a Jew. Genesis 2:1-3 records, *"Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it he had rested from all his work which God created and made."*

This is indeed, the first mention of the Sabbath, as referenced back to in Exodus 20:8-11. It says, *"Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the LORD thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it."* An interesting fact is that the Hebrew word Sabbath used in Exodus 20:11 is actually on the surface in Genesis 2:2,3 in Hebrew. It is the word *"rested."* Here is the word for *"the Sabbath"* in Exodus 20:11. **שַׁבָּת**. As you can see in my screenshot,<sup>1</sup> the first

letter on the right is actually a "hei" **ה**. This letter is kind of like our English letter "H." Here, it is used as the definite article *"the."* Indeed, the seventh day of the week is *"the Sabbath,"* not just *"a sabbath."* It is *"the Sabbath"* commemorating creation. Any other day besides *"the"* day

God sanctified and made holy is just a counterfeit sabbath. But back to the Hebrew. Both places where it says God rested, the word is actually Shabbat. Here is the Hebrew word in Genesis 2:2 for the phrase *"and he rested."*

The first letter on the right is the prefix *"and"* **וַיִּשְׁבֹּת**, but you can see the similarity of the last three letters to the word Sabbath or Shabbat above. And here is the word used for *"rested"* in Genesis 2:3 **שָׁבַת**. Although there is still a small difference, the similarities between Sabbath/Shabbat and the word for rest here are obvious even to a non-Hebrew speaker.

The word for Shabbat/Sabbath/rest in Hebrew has a few other interesting connections. *"Shabbat or the Sabbath, is derived from the Hebrew word shevet, meaning 'to dwell,' and also relates to sheva, the number seven."*<sup>2</sup> You can actually find this recognizable verb form/conjugation **שָׁבַת** for *"to dwell"* in Psalm 133:1. This reminds me of Exodus 25:8 *"And let them make me a sanctuary; that I may dwell among them."* This signifies that the Sabbath, the seventh day, is literally a sanctuary, a temple in time, that God gives us because He wants to dwell among us. Every Sabbath, God takes the time to spend the day with us. God's presence is the Sabbath blessing!

But there is even more underneath the surface of the word Sabbath and its connection to seven. Just as God rested because He had finished/completed His work, seven in Hebrew is linked to completion. In Hebrew seven is also linked to a covenant or oath. Consider the origin of the rainbow in the natural world. God said, *"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth."* Genesis 9:13-16 Interestingly, the rainbow displays seven





colors (identified by Isaac Newton),--red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and purple. In Hebrew, the act of taking an oath (shaba) is linguistically tied to the number seven (sheba), implying a complete, binding declaration, as if repeating it seven times. It basically



means “to seven oneself.” The Hebrew connection of seven, the swearing an oath, and the sound “sheba” (whose root word is shaba) actually surfaces in the English in Genesis 21:29-31. It says, *“And Abimelech said unto Abraham, What mean these seven ewe lambs which thou hast set by themselves? And he said, For these seven ewe lambs shalt thou take of my hand, that they may be a witness unto me, that I have digged this well. Wherefore he called that place Beersheba; because there they swear both of them. Thus they made a covenant at Beersheba.”* Beersheba means “well of the oath.” It is interesting to find a refreshing well linked with the number seven and making a covenant. It’s almost like there is a whole “Sabbath layer” for study available in the Bible. No wonder we can spend eternity studying God’s word!

And indeed, the Sabbath is the sign of God’s covenant with man. In Exodus 31:17 God says, *“It is a sign between me and the children of Israel for ever: for in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day he rested, and was refreshed.”*

This is repeated again in Ezekiel 20:12 *“Moreover also I gave them my sabbaths, to be a sign between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that sanctify them.”* And yet again in Ezekiel 20:20 God says, *“And hallow my sabbaths; and they shall be a sign between me and you, that ye may know that I am the LORD your God.”*

If in the Bible the precedent has been set that seven signifies completion, rest, and a covenant or sign, it doesn’t take a rocket scientist to figure out what the Bible means when it says, *“They have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark [or the sign] of his name.”* Revelation 14:11 It is also interesting that Revelation 13:18 says, *“Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.”* I believe among other things, this number means that man, instead of having the sign of God, fails in His side of the covenant. A covenant is a two-sided promise like a marriage vow. So God has said in effect, *I want to dwell among you on the Sabbath. Come unto me and ye shall find rest. The seventh day is the time I seavened myself.* But instead “the man of sin” rejects God’s offer and says, *6--I’ll choose my own day, a sabbath, that is not “the” seventh-day Sabbath. He tells God, 6-- I’m not complete in keeping my covenant by seavening myself with you. 6--I don’t want to dwell and rest with you.* Weighed in the balances and found wanting (lacking), the man of sin/the beast and His followers effectively slam the door in God’s face and reject His offer of love.

But the woman Elisheba, meaning “God is my oath,” keeps the covenant and becomes the bride of the great High Priest (Exodus 6:23). In the New Testament, we find that Elisabeth, also meaning “God is my oath,” conceives in her old age and she with John (in utero) are the first to recognize the advent of the Messiah, the Truth. (Luke 1:41) I pray that you will choose to be part of that group that choose to enter into God’s rest. For connecting with the seventh day, Paul reminds us, *“There remaineth therefore a rest [Greek--sabbatismos] to the people of God...Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest.”* Hebrews 4:9,11a

1-- Screenshot from <https://www.blueletterbible.org/kjv> (Although this site allows you to parallel the KJV with Hebrew, it uses the less accurate BHS text. However, in the places we cited, it matches the pure manuscripts.) 2--<https://firmisrael.org/learn/shabbat-shalom-what-is-the-sabbath/>

### **Profitable Traditions-- Making the Sabbath a Delight** Some “refreshing” things God suggests to do on the Sabbath.

**Remember to rest. Set aside work, excess cooking, buying/selling and burdens--** Exodus 20:8-11, Nehemiah 13:15-21

**You may begin celebrating Sabbath at Friday sunset with a special sundown service--** Leviticus 23:32, Nehemiah 13:19

**Sing--**Psalm 92:1 lists a song for the Sabbath day

**Go out in nature--**Psalm 19:1, Revelation 14:7, Genesis 2:1-3

**Worship God --**Isaiah 66:23, Ezekiel 46:1-3

**Make Sabbath a delight.** Do special Sabbath activities--Isaiah 58:13

**Evangelism --** Acts 18:4

**Gather with fellow believers for prayer--**Leviticus 23:3, Acts 16:13

**Medical Missionary Service--** Luke 13:10-17

**Help hurting people** (visit shut-ins, etc.) -- Matthew 12:11,12

**Listen to Bible-based Sermons -** Acts 13:42, Acts 15:21

**Read and/or Memorize Bible Verses--**Luke 4:16,17, Acts 13:44



## **Five Easy Ways to Lower Your Blood Pressure**

Questions about high blood pressure ranks in the top four of the most searched-for health question on Google.<sup>1</sup> With modern digital equipment and blood pressure cuffs, people can easily take their own blood pressure these days. Normal blood pressure level is generally less than 120/80. Conversely, you are considered to have severe hypertension (high blood pressure) if your numbers are higher than 180/120 and you are having chest pain, shortness of breath, back pain, numbness, weakness, change in vision or difficulty speaking.<sup>2</sup>

Here are five easy ways to lower your blood pressure.

1. **Drink more water** because when you are dehydrated your body compensates by trying to hang on to the water it has. Part of this process causes your blood vessels to tighten making your blood pressure rise. (Think of putting a smaller end on a garden hose, increasing the pressure.) Here's how it works. *"When you're dehydrated, sodium levels in your blood typically rise. Your system responds by releasing more of a hormone called vasopressin, which works to help your body hang on to water. Vasopressin also can cause your blood vessels to tighten, or constrict, which makes your blood pressure rise."*<sup>3</sup>

2. **Get proper nutrition.** Eating **adequate potassium and a plant-based diet** are both known to help regulate blood pressure. An article from the National Library of Medicine states, *"There is consensus that plant-based diets are associated with lower blood pressure"* For example, *"The Epic-Oxford study included more than ten thousand British subjects and showed that vegans presented the lowest levels of hypertension and blood pressure (BP), while meat-eating individuals presented the highest ones...Potassium is the most abundant intracellular mineral, and its role in the regulation of BP is well established...many vegetables such as green leafy vegetables and some fruits such as bananas are rich in potassium, which might at least in part explain why vegetarian diets are associated with significant reductions in BP compared with omnivorous diets "*<sup>4</sup>

3. **Temperance in all things.** Drinking alcohol, smoking and even drinking caffeinated drinks can raise your chances of having high blood pressure. *"High blood pressure can be caused by a wide variety of lifestyle factors, including obesity, diet, smoking, stress and alcohol consumption. New blood pressure management guidelines recently published by the American Heart Association recommend Americans abstain from drinking alcohol completely to control their blood pressure...The healthiest choice for your blood pressure is no alcohol at all."*<sup>5</sup> In addition, the Imperial Center for Family Medicine reports, *"Caffeine is a stimulant that can cause a short-term increase in blood pressure lasting several hours. This spike happens because caffeine blocks adenosine, a compound that widens blood vessels. With less adenosine available, blood vessels constrict instead. This restriction, coupled with caffeine's adrenaline-boosting effects, temporarily increases the force of blood flowing through tighter vessels. The result? A noticeable jump in blood pressure, especially in people who aren't accustomed to ingesting caffeine."*<sup>6</sup>



4. **Reduce Stress levels.** In many people who otherwise seem to follow a healthy lifestyle, stress may be the trigger of high blood pressure. Indeed, I have observed "white coat hypertension (WCH)," which is stress from having a nurse or doctor take your blood pressure. I've also seen stress from seeing the blood pressure monitor say you have high blood pressure raise a person's blood pressure more. And I've seen people with other anxiety or distress being the obvious cause of their high blood pressure. In this case, it would be well to consider Proverbs 17:22a *"A merry heart doeth good like a medicine."* Considering the literal Hebrew, another way of saying this is *"A rejoicing heart doeth good..."* Both the word "rejoicing" and "merry" suggest an audible happiness. Thankfulness to God and especially singing is a good approach to lowering your blood pressure. Another healthy method for dealing with stress is exercise. In fact, the Mayo Clinic has a whole article called, *"Exercise: A drug-free approach to lowering high blood pressure."*

5. **Garlic** is another good drug-free approach to high blood pressure. In fact, garlic is so effective, PubMed Central states, *"Garlic supplements have shown effectiveness in reducing blood pressure in hypertensive patients, similarly to first-line standard anti-hypertensive medications...The average reduction in SBP [systolic blood pressure] of 8–10 mmHg induced by garlic supplements, alone or in combination with other blood pressure medications, is comparable to that of conventional standard blood pressure drug therapeutics, estimated to reduce the risk of cardiovascular events, such as heart attack, coronary artery disease, or stroke by 16–40%."*<sup>7</sup> The amount of garlic used varies some, but it is usually between 600 mg to 1.2 grams a day. This is the equivalent of about 2 garlic cloves or around 1/2 tsp of garlic powder. Some people I've talked to have reported an immediate reduction in blood pressure when garlic was taken combined with water, but some of the long term effects reported seem to take up to 12 weeks or about 3 months. So remember these five easy ways to lower your blood pressure: Water, potassium-rich plant-based nutrition, temperance, garlic, and reducing stress with exercise, thankfulness, and singing.

1-<https://www.registerednursing.org/articles/americans-top-health-questions/> 2-<https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/high-blood-pressure/understanding-blood-pressure-readings>

3-<https://health.clevelandclinic.org/dehydration-and-blood-pressure> 4- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10224875/#CR1> 5-- <https://www.vcuhealth.org/news/why-the-new-blood-pressure-guidelines-say-to-avoid-alcohol/> 6- <https://icfamilymedicine.com/how-your-daily-caffeine-habit-affects-blood-pressure/>

7-<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/high-blood-pressure/in-depth/high-blood-pressure/art-20045206#:~:text=If%20you're%20not%20used,to%20take%20a%20quick%20walk.>



## Propagating Falsehood -- Prophetic News Notes & Study to Show Thyself Approved

"Mommy, where do reindeer live?" I heard a child ask her mother one aisle over from me in the store. The mother replied, "Do you think reindeer are real?" The child declared emphatically, "Yes, they're real." This was followed by, "They are?" as the mother questioned, her voice making it clear that she did not believe reindeer were real... "What a world we live in today," I thought. Society has propagated falsehoods of flying reindeer with red noses for so long that now the adults think that reindeer aren't real, when actually they are a deer species that live up north in parts of Greenland, Scandinavia, Russia, Alaska, and Canada. Along these lines, the Bible states that when *"that Wicked"* one or the *"mystery of iniquity"* comes, people will *"believe a lie."* The reason given is *"because they received not*

*the love of the truth.*" 2 Thessalonians 2:7,8,10,11 People who were fine with planting and propagating falsehood, as they sowed, they will reap. (Galatians 6:7) It reminds me of quote I read once, stating *"When Protestantism...shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvelous working of Satan and that the end is near."*<sup>1</sup>



Recently, I found the propagation of papal falsehoods on the official White House website. A December 8, 2025, headline reads, *"Presidential Message on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception."* The article, apparently written or condoned by President Trump, begins, *"Today, I recognize every American celebrating December 8 as a Holy Day honoring the faith, humility, and love of Mary, mother of Jesus and one of the greatest figures in the Bible. On the Feast of the Immaculate Conception, Catholics celebrate what they believe to be Mary's freedom from original sin as the mother of God."*<sup>2</sup>

Although so far, the President is only "recognizing" what Catholics believe, one should already be asking, "If, as a country, we 'recognize' this false holy day, do we also 'recognize' what satanists, Muslims, and Hindus believe and 'recognize' their holy days?" If not, is this "respecting" one religion above another at a government level? Although this is only a Presidential message, not a law of Congress, is it "respecting" a particular religion? This seems to me to be testing the limits of the spirit of the First Amendment. *"Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof..."*<sup>3</sup> The above statement by the government also lends credence to the lie that Mary the mother of Jesus was without sin. This is wholly unbiblical and is a falsehood. Romans 3:23 says plainly, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"* Romans 3:10 reiterates, *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one."* Indeed, Psalm 14:3b also said, *"There is none that doeth good, no, not one."* In the Bible, the only one mentioned as being sinless is Jesus. In Hebrews 4:15 it says of Him, *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin."*

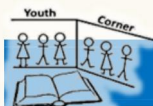
We are told in Revelation 13 that the nation with lamb-like horns will speak like a dragon. Since in Revelation 12:9 we find that the dragon parallels the serpent, we should expect that it might say, *"Yea, hath God said?"* and *"Ye shall not surely die."* just like the serpent in Eden in Genesis 3:1,4. And indeed, the Presidential message gets bolder. Casting doubt on God's word, it declares, *"For nearly 250 years, Mary has played a distinct role in our great American story...Today, we look to Mary once again for inspiration and encouragement as we pray for an end to war and for a new and lasting era of peace, prosperity, and harmony in Europe and throughout the world."*<sup>2</sup> At this point, this message has gone from declaring what Catholics believe, to making a bold statement honoring Mary as playing a role in American history. Yet according to the Bible, Mary is dead. Ecclesiastes 9:5,6 states plainly, *"For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not any thing, ... Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun."* Job reiterates that the dead do not play a part in society after they die. *"As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away: so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more. He shall return no more to his house, neither shall his place know him any more."* Job 7:9,10 Paul makes clear that, God *"only hath immortality."* 1 Timothy 6:16a Mary is dead, not playing a role in American history. Indeed, she is not in heaven either for Psalm 115:17 declares, *"The dead praise not the LORD, neither any that go down into silence."*

Yet the lie continues as the article grows more blatant still. The Presidential message states, *"In her [Mary's] honor, and on a day so special to our Catholic citizens, we remember the sacred words that have brought aid, comfort, and support to generations of American believers in times of need: 'Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.'"*<sup>2</sup> As a Protestant, I protest. All these words are NOT sacred, holy, or biblical. And Mary is NOT alive to pray for us. Mary does NOT mediate for us, presenting our case to God, Jesus does. 1 Timothy 2:5 declares, *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus."* Although Mary was blessed, the exaltation of Mary to the position of the immortal God is an invention of Rome. It is nowhere condoned in the Bible. In fact, Jesus made this clear at least twice. Luke 11:27,28 records, *"And it came to pass, as he [Jesus] spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."* It is evident that Jesus' biological mother and brothers get no special favors over those who hear and keep God's word. This is reiterated in Mark 3:31-35, which records, *"There came then his brethren and his mother, and, standing without, sent unto him, calling him. And the multitude sat about him, and they said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren without seek for thee. And he answered them, saying, Who is my mother, or my brethren? And he looked round about on them which sat about him, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother, and my sister, and mother."* Instead of blindly conforming to the traditions of men, may God help each of us to take time to study His word and, like the biblical Mary, faithfully take God at His word. (Luke 1:26-38)

1-- Maranatha, pg. 190.2 2--<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/2025/12/presidential-message-on-the-feast-of-the-immaculate-conception/>

3--- <https://constitution.congress.gov/constitution/amendment-1/>





## The Rain Test

"Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name:" Amos 5:8

A certain missionary describes a preaching mission to an island off the South China coast. There were seven in the ministering group, including a sixteen-year-old new convert. The island was fairly large, containing about 6,000 homes. The missionary had a contact there, an old schoolmate of his who was headmaster of the village school, but he refused to house the group when he discovered they had come to preach the Gospel. Finally, they found lodging with a Chinese herbalist, who became their first convert.

Preaching seemed almost fruitless on the island, and the missionary discovered it was because of the dedication of the people there to an idol they called Ta-wang. They were convinced of his power because on the day of his festival and parade each year the weather was always near perfect.

"When is the procession this year?" the young convert asked a group that had gathered to hear them preach.

"It is fixed for January 11th at nine in the morning," was the reply.

"Then," said the new convert, "I promise you that it will certainly rain on the 11th."

At that there was an outburst of cries from the crowd: "That is enough! We don't want to hear any more preaching. If there is rain on the 11th, then your God is God!"

The missionary had been elsewhere in the village when this confrontation had taken place. Upon being informed about it, he saw that the situation was serious and called the group to prayer. On the morning of the 11th, there was not a cloud in the sky, but during grace for breakfast, sprinkles began to fall and these were followed by heavy rain. Worshipers of the idol Ta-wang were so upset that they placed it in a sedan chair and carried it outdoors, hoping this would stop the rain. Then the rain increased. After only a short distance, the carriers of the idol stumbled and fell, dropping the idol and fracturing its jaw and left arm.

A number of young people turned to Christ as a result of the rain coming in answer to prayer, but the elders of the village made divination and said that the wrong day had been chosen. The proper day of the procession, they said, should have been the 14<sup>th</sup> at 8 p.m.



When the missionary and his friends heard this, they again went to prayer, asking for rain on the 14th and for clear days for preaching until then.

That afternoon the sky cleared, and on the good days that followed there were thirty converts. Of the crucial test day, the

missionary says: "The 14th broke, another perfect day, and we had good meetings. As the evening approached we met again at the appointed hour. We quietly brought the matter to the Lord's remembrance. Not a minute late, His answer came with torrential rain and floods as before."

The power of the idol over the islanders was broken; the enemy was defeated. Conversions followed. Believing prayer had brought a great victory. Indeed, "Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby thou didst confirm thine inheritance, when it was weary." Psalm 68:9

### Kids' Corner



The Paedocypris fish is considered the world's smallest animal with a backbone. Here it is pictured on somebody's finger. It weighs only 0.00004 ounces or less than a milligram. That is 2-3 times less than a mosquito that weighs around 2.5 milligrams. These tiny organisms live in acidic peat swamps in Southeast Asia. The Bible says, "*The fishes of the sea shall declare unto thee. Who knoweth not in all these that the hand of the LORD hath wrought this?*" Job 12:8b,9 This tiny little fish reminds us that Jesus is "*faithful in that which is least,*" therefore we can trust Him to be "*faithful also in much.*" Luke 16:10