



# "THUS SAITH THE LORD..."

FREE GENERAL NEWSLETTER

Encouraging people to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

VOLUME 07 ISSUE 09

SEPTEMBER 2004

PAGE 1

## The Lost Sheep (Luke 15:4-7)



**Explaining the meaning of the parable concerning the lost sheep.**

### The verses

Luke 15:4-7 "What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them,

doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found [it], he layeth [it] on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together [his] friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

### Questions and conclusion drawn

First the conclusion drawn is that at one point all 100 sheep were together.

Now for the questions: What do sheep represent? A collection of sheep is called a fold. What does a fold represent? What does the shepherd represent? What does the wilderness represent?

### What do sheep represent?

"I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves" (Matthew 10:16). "And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth [his] sheep from the goats" (Matthew 25:32). "All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the

sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad" (Matthew 26:31). Sheep represent people or souls to be won or lost.

### What does the fold represent?

"And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, [and] one shepherd" (John 10:16). All the sheep that hears Jesus' voice are part of a singular fold. This is because true hearers will listen to "every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4). That means just believing that Jesus is the Christ is actually not enough to be part of the fold. That is a good start but those who are part of the fold search for every word for it's understanding and then follow it. Why? "If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you" (John 15:7).

### What does the shepherd represent?

"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep" (John 10:11). Although the one true Shepherd is Jesus Christ, we must keep in mind that "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Ephesians 4:11). So pastors and church leaders are considered undershepherds. These should do as the Master has done.

### What does the wilderness represent?

As the children of Israel wandered through the wilderness to the Promised Land, we wander through a spiritual

**WE ARE NOT A CHURCH BUT ENCOURAGE ALL TO ATTEND CHURCH NOT AS A PEW WARMER BUT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!**

The "Thus Saith the Lord..." General Newsletter is published monthly by "Thus Saith the Lord..." Ministries at PO Box 10607, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

### MISSION STATEMENT:

Strengthen faith in God's Word.

### MISSION FOCUS:

To strengthen the faith in God's Word by reaching out to the communities through our newsletter (since 1998) as well as through our evangelistic seminars (since 1994). It is to help keep those that are discouraged about things they see inside the church from leaving, to ground those that are new or have not heard of these things before, and to strengthen those that are already grounded. And to reach out to those that are searching for a meaningful relationship with God through His Son Jesus Christ.

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**Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children.**

## WEB SITES

We host the following websites:

- www.tstl.net
- www.tstlstore.com
- www.tstlseminars.com

### ADDED LAST MONTH TO:

#### WWW.TSTLStore.COM:














- Updated blanket drive web page

#### WWW.TSTLSeminars.COM:

- Posted September and October class schedule

#### FUTURE WWW.TSTL.NET:

- The following are remaining to be transferred to the new site:

-  Daily Verses
-  Daily Thought
-  Daily Devotional
-  Daily Youth Thought
-  Daily Bible Reading
-  Radio
-  Adult Newsletters
-  Children's Newsletters
-  Children's Coloring pages
-  Forum
-  Prayer Requests
-  Online Study
-  Free Church Web

\* Please pray for the time I need to accomplish this by December.

wilderness to the heavenly Promised Land. It is the world in which we live in. This is based upon 1 Corinthians 10:5, *"But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness."* As the children of Israel were subject to trials and temptations to overcome in their physical wilderness experience, we too have trials and temptations in our spiritual wilderness.

#### What happened?

One of the sheep stopped associating with the rest of the group for any number of reasons. Some popular excuses today include: "Don't feel church is important anymore", "Was offended by someone or something", "I feel insignificant", etc.

#### What should be done?

Be watchful for these sheep and encourage them to continue with the fold.

See what caused the lack of interest and whether the issues are legitimate. Then deal with the issues if there are any, but if not, help the sheep see the reason why things are so.

If much time has gone by without recognizing a certain sheep has been missing, much more work will be necessary, including an apology from the church for the lack of a timely response. For every year a person has been missing, it usually takes at least that many visits.

#### Conclusion

Much effort may be required to bring back into the fold a lost church member, but as the Master put forth every effort, we ought to do the same. Money, time, etc. is not to be considered when the rejoicing in heaven will measure greatly. The only consideration is the willingness of the lost soul. Let us look for lost sheep.

## THAT THOU MAYEST PROSPER AND BE IN HEALTH, EVEN AS THY SOUL PROSPERETH (3 John 1:2)



#### HEALTH SNIPPET:

##### Topic: Dangers of Lust

*"Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart"* (2 Timothy 2:22).

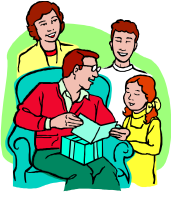
Lust can consume energy. All effort is given to obtaining the object. It may be sexual; it may be appetite; it may be just about anything. People's habits are usually affected negatively. For instance, some are willing to not eat regularly or sleep regularly so as to obtain the lusted item. This in turn creates an unhealthy immune system and overall body functions. So cease from youthful or harmful lusts. *"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts"* (Galatians 5:24).

#### HEALTHY ALTERNATIVE RECIPE:

##### **Homemade Pasta**

- 5 c Whole wheat pastry flour
  - 1 c Water
  - 4 T Olive oil
- 1) Place flour in bowl with a well in the center
  - 2) Add oil and water
  - 3) Mix together and knead until smooth (approximately 10 minutes)
    - Add a small amount of extra water as needed to achieve right consistency
  - 4) Let dough rest 10 minutes
  - 5) Roll out on floured surface to a maximum thickness of 1/16 inch
  - 6) Cut as desired, cook in boiling water 8-10 minutes

**TRAIN UP A CHILD IN THE WAY HE SHOULD GO: AND WHEN HE IS OLD, HE WILL NOT DEPART FROM IT** (Prov. 22:6)



**Character Examples From the Bible – Nicodemus With Jesus**

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him. Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:1-4). “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit. Nicodemus

answered and said unto him, How can these things be? Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and knowest not these things?” (John 3:8-10).

While in conversation with Jesus, Nicodemus tried to avoid letting Jesus know that he understood what being “born again” meant and that he was lacking it, but Jesus did not let him get away with the avoidance and finally told him that being a master of Israel, he ought to have known the meaning of such. A child who knows the answers but just does not want to provide the right response or any response should not be left to get away with such actions. When a parent directly questions a child and receives this type of response, it is blatant defiance and should be addressed.

**WHO HATH BELIEVED OUR REPORT? AND TO WHOM IS THE ARM OF THE LORD REVEALED?** (Isaiah 53:1)

- COMMENTS ON ITEMS IN THE NEWS -



The following are news items that appeared between July 16 and August 15, 2004. [Preview future news snippets at [www.tstl.net/news/](http://www.tstl.net/news/)]

**▶▶Did aliens save planet in 1908?**

Members of a Russian scientific team researching the site of the Tunguska meteorite crash of 1908 say they have found remnants of an extraterrestrial spacecraft, report a variety of Russian news agencies.

**COMMENT:** “Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them” (Job 1:6). Satan represents earth, while the sons of God represent the other worlds or life on other planets. With earth being the lost sheep, there is no purpose for the other worlds to interact with ours and so they are only observers. Therefore, any revelation of aliens is not God's intention and is merely a Satanic creation.

**▶▶Telegraph Group (UK), August 8,**

**2004 - Publisher launches 'youth Bible' - a tale of sex and masturbation**

The Contemporary English Version Youth Bible, jointly published by The Bible Society and Collins - which also publishes more traditional versions of The Bible - is written in modern idiom and includes a number of extra passages penned by contemporary authors on "youth issues". Sex is "fulfilling," masturbation is "difficult to resist" and Mary Magdalene "had something of a dodgy past". A new "youth Bible" which talks frankly about pornography and lust has been condemned by traditionalists for "dumbing down the message of salvation". The passage on pornography advises teenagers "to avoid the top shelf of the newsagents, [and] pray as you surf [the internet]". A section on masturbation cites St Paul's exhortation in Thessalonians not to be "a slave of your desires", but admits that "it can provide a release".

**COMMENT:** “Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish [ought] from it, that ye may keep the commandments of the LORD

**IN THE CHILDREN'S NEWSLETTER**

- PAGE 1** — New Testament Lesson in children's language.
- PAGE 2** — Old Testament Lesson in children's language.
- PAGE 3** — Character Lesson — Application of character attributes from both Bible lessons.
- PAGE 4** — Nature Lesson — Learning from God's nature.
- PAGE 5** — Health Lesson — Taking care of the body.
- PAGE 6** — Coloring Page — Alternating between either the Old or New Testament
- PAGE 7** — Puzzle and Definitions — Matching from both Bible lessons and answers to questions.
- PAGE 8** — Learning Activities — Object lessons in our work and in our play.

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## BIBLE STUDY



### Revelation's Conglomerate Beast Part 4 (Revelation 13:2)

1. What does the breast and arms of silver represent, which matches the bear in chapter 7? **Daniel 2:39** (first half)
2. Who was ruling in Daniel chapter 5 and what did he rule? **Daniel 5:7, 9**
3. What joint kingdom rose up after the first kingdom fell? **Daniel 5:28**

### ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S STUDY:

*Revelation's Conglomerate Beast Part 3* (Revelation 13:2)

1. What does the gold head represent, which matches the lion in chapter 7? **Daniel 2:37-38** *"Thou, O king, [art] a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and*

*(Continued on page 5)*

*your God which I command you"* (Deuteronomy 4:2). We are quite disappointed in the Bible Society for doing this, but at the same time, here is what Paul wrote for the last days. *"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves (including self satisfaction), covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, Without natural affection (men and women are to be attracted to each other and not self attraction), trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"* (2 Timothy 3:1-5).

### ►►Lexington Herald, August 7, 2004 - Getting laughs for the Lord when the joke's on Jesus

You can call them inspirational, alternative, Christian or even, as some of them plead, just clean. They are the dozens of comedians working the Washington area's gospel comedy scene. For years, these comedians have been performing at churches, community centers, parties and weddings. But now a small circuit of Christian comedy venues has popped up.

**COMMENT:** *"But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks"* (Ephesians 5:3-4). The reason God does not appreciate this form of presenting the Word is because the Word loses its reverence. Making light of the gospel reduces the belief in the power behind the gospel.

### ►►Chicago Sun Times, July 21, 2004 - Protestants soon to be minority in U.S., study finds

America's Protestant majority is about to disappear, according to a new study by researchers at the University of Chicago. But as early as the end of this year, Protestants likely will make up less than 51 percent of the population for the first time in

history, sociologists at the university's National Opinion Research Center surmise in a new report released Tuesday. If the Protestant majority does indeed disappear, the United States will be a nation of religious minorities. The next largest religious group after Protestant is Roman Catholic, at about 25 percent. The Catholic population has remained stable over the last decade, according to the NORC study.

**COMMENT:** *"For I earnestly protested unto your fathers in the day [that] I brought them up out of the land of Egypt, [even] unto this day, rising early and protesting, saying, Obey my voice"* (Jeremiah 11:7). On top of the statistics provided, most Protestants forget why they are called such. Many reformers simply were protesting over the issue of obeying the Bible verses man made traditions. So it is our opinion that the Catholic Church is the majority through numbers or influence.

### ►►Telegraph.Co.UK, July 20, 2004 - Coffee 'can make mind go blank'

Drinking coffee can cause tip-of-the-tongue moments when the brain struggles to retrieve information, according to a study. Caffeine, widely held to make people more alert, can make the mind go blank or struggle to switch between trains of thought. It can help the brain process information rapidly but interferes once the brain tries to switch between subjects, researchers claim.

**COMMENT:** *"Lest there should be among you a root that beareth gall and wormwood"* (Deuteronomy 29:18). When compared with Revelation 8:11, wormwood is a poison that can lead to even death. Therefore, any plant that is poisonous is inclusive of this and we are not to take it into our bodies. Coffee is one of them. What does God say? *"The LORD will not spare him, but then the anger of the LORD and his jealousy shall smoke against that man, and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the LORD shall blot out his name from under heaven"* (Deuteronomy 29:20).



**MOVING?** Remember, if you move, please provide us with a change of address right away so you do not miss an issue.

**NEWS FOR CHILDREN OF LIGHT** (1 Thessalonians 5:5)



The following are "sudden destruction" news items that appeared between July 16 and August 15, 2004. [Preview future

"sudden destruction" news snippets at [www.tstl.net/suddendestruction](http://www.tstl.net/suddendestruction).]

▶▶ **In Iraq, it's war**

Car bombs rip through 5 churches, killing 12, in coordinated jihad attack.

**COMMENT:** Matthew 5:11 *"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake."*

▶▶ **ABC News, July 31, 2004 - Big Apple Terror?**

Al Qaeda Plotting to Attack New York City Corporations. Authorities already have in custody a woman of Pakistani-origin arrested after crossing into Texas. She carried a South African passport with several of the pages torn out, \$7,000 in cash and an airplane ticket to New York.

**COMMENT:** Mark 13:7 *"And when ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars, be ye not troubled: for such things must needs be; but the end shall not be yet."*

▶▶ **Pastor shot dead in pulpit, July 22, 2004 - Pastor shot dead in pulpit**

Four masked men shot dead a Presbyterian pastor as she spoke from the pulpit at her church in Central Sulawesi, Indonesia. Tinulele is the latest victim of what appears to be a campaign to assassinate Christian leaders in Central Sulawesi that began in November.

**COMMENT:** *"Blessed are ye, when [men] shall revile you, and persecute [you], and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake" (Matthew 5:11).*

▶▶ **TV2Target, Norway, July 19, 2004 - Right-wing politicians want to ban Islam**

Central members of Kristiansand Progress party claims Hitler's Mein Kampf and the Koran are one of the same, and they want Islam banned in Norway.

**COMMENT:** *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you" (James 4:7).* Though the verse is on a personal basis and the government is not a religious entity, we connect the verse because they are resisting the devil's religion. The war on terrorism we continue to stress is a religious war polarizing people, nations, and the world.

(Continued from page 4)

*strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou [art] this head of gold."*

2. When the gold is revealed, what does it directly refer to? **Daniel 2:39** *"And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth."*
3. What was king Nebuchadnezzar king of? **Daniel 1:1** *"In the third year of the reign of Jehoiakim king of Judah came Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon unto Jerusalem, and besieged it."*

▶ **MORE BIBLE STUDIES ARE AVAILABLE ON THE INTERNET AT WWW.TSTL.NET AND CHOOSING THE "BIBLE STUDIES" LINK AND CHOOSING "ON-LINE STUDIES."**

▶ **1998-MARCH 2003 NEWSLETTERS ARE AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT WWW.TSTL.NET AND CHOOSING "NEWSLETTERS" LINK.**

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**ANSWERS FOUND IN THE SCRIPTURE OF TRUTH** *(Daniel 10:21)*



**QUESTION #1 –**  
Carlisle, PA –

**How can I keep from falling in sin?**

**ANSWER #1** –Christ declared of Himself: *"The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me."* (John 14:30). Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage.

We, through the power of Jesus Christ, need to come to a point where Satan cannot find the slightest inroad. That means some innocent things may disappear in addition to sin. Some that are given in to a foul mouth probably need to cut out seeing movies and television where a foul word is spoken, on average, once in every eight seconds. At the very least, expletives are stated more frequently. Someone giving up smoking may need to stay away from the pool hall and bowling alleys.

So when we check ourselves for inroads that Satan can use, do not be checking for sin only in the life. Many know what is right and wrong. Why are there compromises? Because of the inroad that Satan uses often called sympathy. Used at the wrong time it makes a Christian weak.

**QUESTION #2 –**  
Harrisburg, PA –

**If kindling a fire was breaking the Sabbath, how did they heat themselves in the colder months and did they not eat warm food on the Sabbath?**

**ANSWER #2** – *"Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations upon the sabbath day"* (Exodus 35:3).

Kindling a fire is not all inclusive of every process of starting fires. Just as the word "all" as in *"all the world wondered after the beast"* (Revelation 13:3) is not every single soul, because that would contradict the end of the chapter where the dissenters will be brought up for death (Revelation 13:15), so kindling does not forbid every aspect of having a fire.

Thank God for examples in the Bible. Kindling of fire includes from the point of chopping down a tree to actually burning it. The part of kindling condemned is found in Numbers 15:32-35.

*And while the children of Israel were in the wilderness, they found a man that gathered sticks upon the sabbath day. And they that found him gathering sticks brought him unto Moses and Aaron, and unto all the congregation. And they put him in ward, because it was not declared what should be done to him. And the LORD said unto Moses, The man shall be surely put to death: all the congregation shall stone him with stones without the camp.*

So the gathering process is not to be performed on the Sabbath day, but rather the preparation day. Keeping a fire going that was started before the Sabbath came in is fine as long as the wood has been gathered outside of the Sabbath day since that is the part of kindling that is condemned.

**QUESTION #3 –**  
Dillsburg, PA –

**Why do people avoid reading and studying the book of Revelation?**

**ANSWER #3** – Well, one possibility is that according to Revelation 1:1 God "signified" the contents of the book of Revelation. Instead of identifying the



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**SEPTEMBER &  
OCTOBER  
SCHEDULE**

**WEDNESDAY** 9/1/04  
**3:00 PM** Web Development White  
Space, Special Characters, And More  
**6:00 PM** Access Reports

**THURSDAY** 9/2/04

**3:00 PM** Web Development Intro  
**6:00 PM** Internet Introduction

**MONDAY, SEPT. 6 — LABOR DAY**

**TUESDAY** 9/7/04

**3:00 PM** ASP Coding With Access  
Database  
**6:00 PM** ASP Coding With SQL  
Server Database

**WEDNESDAY** 9/8/04

**3:00 PM** Microsoft Access Forms  
**6:00 PM** Microsoft Word Headers &  
Footers And Columns Too

**THURSDAY** 9/9/04

**3:00 PM** Word Indexes & Tables  
**6:00 PM** Web Development Forms

**MONDAY** 9/13/04

**3:00 PM** Microsoft Excel Charts  
**6:00 PM** PowerPoint Introduction

**TUESDAY** 9/14/04

**3:00 PM** ~ None Scheduled ~  
**6:00 PM** PowerPoint Master Slide

**WEDNESDAY** 9/15/04

**3:00 PM** Excel Cell Formatting  
**6:00 PM** Stress Reduction

**THURSDAY** 9/16/04

**3:00 PM** Word Customizing  
**6:00 PM** A Healthy You

**MONDAY** 9/20/04

**3:00 PM** PowerPoint Techniques  
**6:00 PM** Web Develop. List Items

**TUESDAY** 9/21/04

**3:00 PM** Web Development Block  
Formatting  
**6:00 PM** Outlook Calendar & Tasks

**WEDNESDAY** 9/22/04

**3:00 PM** Excel Loan Amortization  
**6:00 PM** Word Mail Merge

**THURSDAY** 9/23/04

**3:00 PM** Web Development Text  
Formatting  
**6:00 PM** Web Development Links

**MONDAY** 9/27/04

**3:00 PM** Word Borders & Shading  
**6:00 PM** Word Introduction

**TUESDAY** 9/28/04

**3:00 PM** Microsoft Word Tables  
**6:00 PM** Word Bullets & Numbers

**WEDNESDAY** 9/29/04

**3:00 PM** Resume & Interviewing  
**6:00 PM** Home Budgeting

**THURSDAY** 9/30/04

**3:00 PM** ASP Coding - Functions  
**6:00 PM** Visual Basic Introduction

**MONDAY** 10/4/04

**3:00 PM** What Shall I Buy?  
**6:00 PM** Word—Create A Newsletter

**TUESDAY** 10/5/04

**3:00 PM** Windows Explorer  
**6:00 PM** Microsoft Excel Edit Menu

**WEDNESDAY** 10/6/04

**3:00 PM** Publisher Mail Merge  
**6:00 PM** Microsoft Access Queries

**THURSDAY** 10/7/04

**3:00 PM** Publisher Introduction  
**6:00 PM** Digital Camera and the  
Web

**MONDAY** 10/11/04

**3:00 PM** Outlook Introduction  
**6:00 PM** Introduction To Computers

**TUESDAY** 10/12/04

**3:00 PM** Microsoft Publisher Tables  
**6:00 PM** Microsoft Publisher Objects

**WEDNESDAY** 10/13/04

**3:00 PM** Start Your Own Business  
**6:00 PM** Microsoft Excel Introduction

**THURSDAY** 10/14/04

**3:00 PM** Windows - System Tools  
**6:00 PM** Web Development Frames

**MONDAY** 10/18/04

**3:00 PM** Excel Text Functions  
**6:00 PM** Web Development Tables

**TUESDAY** 10/19/04

**3:00 PM** Microsoft Access Macros  
**6:00 PM** Microsoft Word Art

**WEDNESDAY** 10/20/04

**3:00 PM** Introduction To ASP  
**6:00 PM** Microsoft Outlook E-mail  
Advanced Features

**THURSDAY** 10/21/04

**3:00 PM** Web Development Frames  
**6:00 PM** Microsoft Excel Page Setup

**MONDAY** 10/25/04

**3:00 PM** Windows - Paint  
**6:00 PM** Access Introduction

**TUESDAY** 10/26/04

**3:00 PM** Internet Safety  
**6:00 PM** Windows - Word Pad

**WEDNESDAY** 10/27/04

**3:00 PM** Microsoft Excel Budget  
**6:00 PM** Windows - Introduction







**THURSDAY** 10/28/04

**3:00 PM** ASP Coding - Counters  
**6:00 PM** Excel Intro. To Databases

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-  **MAIN ARTICLE:** The Lost Sheep (Page 1)
-  **HEALTH:** Dangers of Lust (Page 2)
-  **PARENTING:** Nicodemus With Jesus (Page 3)
-  **BIBLE STUDY:** Revelation's Conglomerate Beast Part 4 (Page 4)
-  **NEWS:** Did Aliens Save This Planet? (Page 3)
-  **QUESTION:** How Can I Keep From Falling Into Sin? (Page 6)

And more...

(Continued from page 6)

Antichrist in reality, the Book of Revelation symbolized it by a conglomerate beast. Instead of Satan described as a fallen angel, he is signified as a fierce dragon. Some symbols are easily understood such as when a beast rises from the water or sea Revelation tells in 17:15 that it signifies "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." However, some symbols are very difficult to understand, for instance, there are a lot of conflicting ideas regarding the conglomerate beast. Those that believe the Bible to be its own interpreter go to Daniel 7 for the answer. Those that believe the beast represents a collection of kingdoms existing today look for the animal representations of countries in the world today. And there are more challenging symbols in Revelation. These challenges cause those that are secure in their knowledge to avoid

Revelation and stick with what they know.

Another reason may be that they were told that the Book of Revelation is a closed book, but by the title, revelation means to reveal.

Yet another reason may be trust in their minister interpreting the scriptures for them. If the minister does not touch much or any of revelation, then they also keep it closed.

Others may be caught up in the belief that Revelation deals only with the end days and they do not believe we are in the end days. This of course is a misnomer, seeing "All scripture [is] given by inspiration of God, and [is] profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" according to 2 Timothy 3:16.

In short, we do not know exactly why but this should help.

## BIBLE THOUGHT

*Be Ye Wise*

**Proverbs 1:5** "A wise [man] will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: To understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise, and their dark sayings."

God is not concerned that you listen to good earthly advice. God is most concerned that you listen to His Words. This is evident by the inclusion of understanding a proverb. So if you think you know the Bible because you read it through once, or worse, you have listened to what others tell you is in the Bible, then take the test. In the August 2004 issue, could you have understood the meaning of Jesus' parable beyond the infant mentality of a lost soul was saved? Could you have seen how it applies to the church as a whole and what is very specifically missing in the church, producing today's weak version? Be wise and hear the Word of God and increase in learning.