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By Rev. Fred B. Lunsford,
Pastor, Little Brasstown
Baptist Church

THE CURSE OF
NEUTRALITY

Scripture: Judges 5:23:
Curse ye Meroz, said the
angel of the Lord curse ye
bitterly the inhabitants there-
of; because they came not to
the help of the Lord, to the
help of the Lord against the
Mighty.

The period of the Judges
was a very strange period in
the History of the Hebrews.
Deborah chanted her song of
triumph, one of the most
famous battle odes ever sung.
Then, there comes the curse
upon Meroz.

Why was Meroz cursed?
It was not cursed because
she decided to fight on the
wrong side. Neither because
she gave the enemies aid, or
got rich selling war supplies
in time of a conflict. The
thing that caused the curse
upon the town was that its
people did nothing.

When the call came to fight
they stayed at home. The sin
of Meroz was the sin of in-
action. While neutrality may
sometimes be virtuous, it is
usually the mark of contempt-
ible cowardice.

The banner of righteousness
is a flag that cannot be car-
ried by weak-kneed neutrals.
In the realm of the moral and
spiritual not to decide for the
right is to ally with wrong.

Why didn't they take part
in the conflict?
I am sure that some re-
fused because they had no
vital interest as happens so
many times today, then others
may have said, as many do
today, the time is not right,
maybe some other time. So
many things could have been
the reasons as we think of
the excuses that people of this
day use when they fail to fol-
low the Lord in battle. Some
one may have said I don't
like the leader or the long
used excuse I don't have time.

"Oh, yes," somebody says,
"I just don't believe in this
anyway." So many times our
people say, "I don't believe
in Missions for they won't
hear anyway or it will cost
too much." Had our fore-
fathers reasoned thus, what
would have been our own
situation today?

What is the curse?
The curse of God that des-
cended upon the community for
that cowardly neutrality in the
day of conflict was three-
fold.

It was first of all a curse
of inactivity. Inactive people
are miserable. God blesses
toil.

God loves the toiler. Carlyle
once said "To work is to
worship." You as a Christian
will not be held guiltless when
inactive. The lack of exercise
will cause disease and finally
death.

Second the curse of friend-
less snobs. These people were
lonely and desolate, as any
people become that forget God
and fail to stand for Him in
time of war as well as in
time of peace and joy.

The third is the lack of
joy in the victory. All of
Israel except Meroz sang the
songs of victory. To have no
part in victory is to know
bitterness. If you want to be
a happy Christian then you
must wage the battle for the
Lord Jesus Christ in a brave
way. God is very much dis-
pleased with a shirker or one
that wants to remain neutral
when there is a job to be done
for Him.

There is a great job for all
of us to do in this day and in
this country and abroad. It
would be great if all of our
mountain people would stand
up and be counted for the battle
for right. In so doing these
things we must stand against
the things that are wrong which
so often try to creep into our
country.

Are you a soldier or a
coward?
**Becky Raxter
Honored On
11th Birthday**

ANDREWS - Mrs. Gene
Raxter entertained Saturday
afternoon at her home for
her daughter, Rebecca, honor-
ing her on her eleventh birth-
day.

A birthday cake centered the
table. Favors were cups of
candy and nuts.

Following games and danc-
ing, refreshments were serv-
ed to the following guests:
Charles Nichols, Phillip Rog-
ers, Kenneth Lambert, Mike
Hawk, Freida Ladd, Della
Tatham, Janice Tatham,
Merel Gill, Debbie Crawford,
Lois McClellan, Gail Hogsed,
and Gloria Jean Conley.

Cherokee Scout & Clay County
Progress, Thurs., Oct. 26, 1963

Cuz's Corner by Bagley

**Cuz Carved A Cleft In
The 'Rock Of Ages'**

I'll bet you didn't know that
people suffer from Hoof and
Mouth Disease the same as
cattle. They sure do, And I'm
living proof of the fact.

I think they shoo cows and
burn their carcasses when this
malady is discovered in a
herd. I just hope that the same
remedy doesn't become
popular among people. If it
does I've had it cause I'm
forever opening my big mouth
and doing my dead level best
to cram both feet in it. I
usually succeed.

Let me give you an ex-
ample or two and you'll see
what I mean.

Not long ago I went to Church
one Wednesday night. Now I
don't make a practice of going
much on this particular night
--- a lot of other people don't
either. But there were ten or
eight of us there. And you know
how it is when there's just a
handful. Everything is kinda
informal. Everybody will do a
lot of chattering in such an
atmosphere.

We didn't even have any-
body there to play the piano.
So, you know how that is when
you're trying to sing. If you're
like me you need some kinda
music to cover up an off-key
voice like mine. But we never
had nobody. And we were gonna
try to sing one anyhow.

We didn't have a song leader
either, but that wasn't any-
thing new, especially on Wed-
nesday nights. So our preacher
says he'll lead us. I was glad
he volunteered cause he has a
good, strong, loud voice and
with him leading I knew I
would be drowned out. So would
everybody else. Anyhow he
said, "What'll we sing?" I
suggested 'Rock of Ages'
cause that's the only one in
the book that I know the page
number of.

We waded into it and it came
out pretty good considering
we didn't all get started at
the same time. I noticed too,
that I usually got to the end
of the verses before the rest
of 'em did, but I'd always wait
for 'em when I finished first.

When we came over this
line, "Rock of ages cleft for
me, let me hide myself in
thee" I was thinking that with
such a little bit of bitty bunch as
we had there that night the old
rock wouldn't have to be cleft
very much to hide us.

As soon as everybody got all
through singing, for a few sec-
onds, there was utter silence.
When the silence was at its
utmost I told 'em what I
had been thinking.

Everybody was real polite
--- they all laughed and agreed
with me. But before they were
all through chuckling at this
little wise-crack of mine the
preacher says "Brother Bag-
well, (our preacher has a lot
of trouble with my name), lead
us in prayer."

I was pretty sure he called
on me only because I had open-
ed my big mouth. It took me
several seconds before I could
get my thoughts collected and
try to sift something serious

out of 'em to pray out loud
about.

A silent prayer did occur to
me immediately, however,
"Lord, please help me to learn
to keep my big mouth shut."
Then here just the other day
I did it again--- opened my
mouth and crammed both feet
in it.

I was getting ready to go to
work with about a minimum of
time for getting dressed.

I took a clean shirt out of
the drawer and began affixing
all the necessary
accouterments to it, such as
name plate, badge, and foun-
tain pen in the pocket. When
I tried to button the collar
button it came apart in the
middle and fell off.

That laundry!! If I've told
'em once I've told 'em a
hundred times not to send
my shirts back with the collar
buttons busted. Of all the
things that needle me, this
does the most. Probably on
account of when I try to sew
on buttons I usually stick my
finger three or four times
before I get the job done. So
I'm blowing fuses right and
left and the things I'm say-
ing about this laundry for
doing this to me!! There ain't
no use for me to write none
of 'em down here cause pa-
pers wouldn't print it now.

While I'm still pretty work-
ed up I decided to call said
laundry and give 'em a piece
of my mind. I realized that if
I gave 'em a piece of it
I wouldn't have much left but
I was sure in a mood to share
it with 'em.

I called 'em. The softest
gentlest lady's voice answer-
ed. I thought to myself: She
is practicing that business of a
soft answer turneth away
wrath. But I was determined
that it wasn't gonna turneth
away MY wrath. I said
"Listen here, Mrs. Mullig-
an, I want you to know just
how prevaricating --- PRE-
VARICATING???" I meant to

say "EXASPERATING".
But there it was. And all
the things I'd planned to say
so emphatically --- well, I
said some of 'em but a lot
less heatedly than I had origi-
nally intended, cause by
the time I got through swap-
ping PREVARICATING for
EXASPERATING she probab-
ly thought I was lying about
the cock-eyed button anyhow.
Just another example of the
Hoof and Mouth Disease I
told you that I was suffering
from.

**BIBLE
QUESTIONS
& ANSWERS**

By Tom Ledbetter
Andrews Church of Christ

Question: Is it all right
to do anything that is
"Good" in religious prac-
tices?

Answer: The writer of
Proverbs says that there
is a way that seems right
to man, but the ends there-
of are the ways of death.
(Pro. 14:12) It is not left
to man's judgement to guide
his own steps (Jer. 10:23)
so we cannot devise what
is good and bad as far as
religious practices are
concerned.

Paul tells us that God's
word completely furnishes
a man (II Tim. 3:17) so we
need no other guide. We
have a very strict warning
not to add to or take away
from the word of God (Rev.
22:18-19).

We have an example in
the life of King Saul that
stresses this idea. He was
told to destroy everything
among the Amalekites, but
he chose to disobey and
bring back the best to sacri-
fice. Because of this un-
approved change, even
though nice, he was reject-
ed by God from being king.
(I Sam. 15:1-23)

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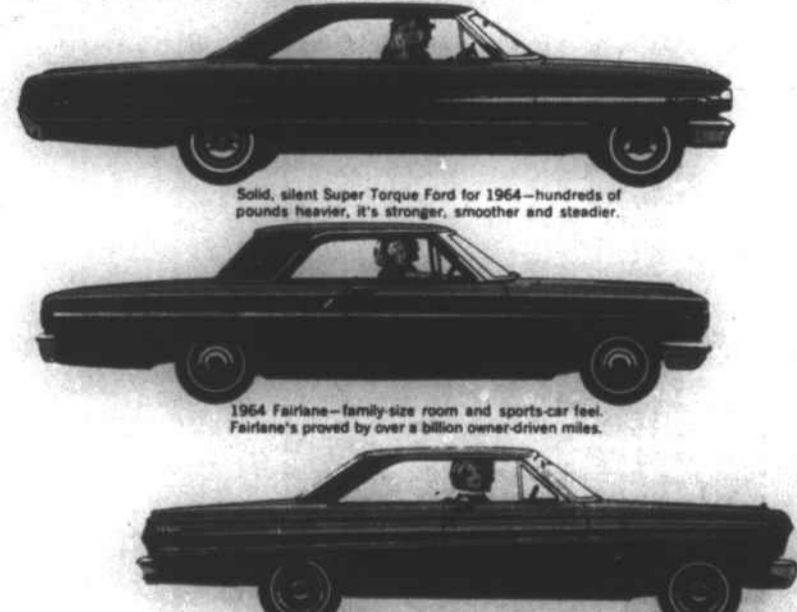
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