



"All right — all right — I'm coming — now can't you guys shut up?" I mumbled to myself in answer to the cows' bawling.

I grabbed a hold of the sliding door in an effort to get out of the bitter cold outside, and into the comfortable warmth of the barn. Several good hard pushes and a few kicks wouldn't budge it. Like most everything else, it was frozen solid. Rubbing my ears briefly, and blowing into my hands to warm them, I ran around to the milk house to enter the barn from there. Although also held fast by ice and snow, the door slid open with the aid of a pitchfork which was kept near there.

I fumbled for the light switch and the cows instantly turned their heads towards me with louder "moos" than ever. Turning the radio on for friendlier company, I started the silo unloader — which was just as reluctant about "waking up" on this icy morning as I had been. Gradually, it picked up speed, and feed began to tumble down the frost-covered chute.

Bosco, one of my favorite cows, stretched her head out towards me as I walked past her and let me hear a "moo" which was almost loud enough to vibrate my cold bones. She was promptly slapped, even though she was a big pet. "Take it easy," I said, "you'll be fed in a minute!" Meanwhile, I walked to the grain storage area. A cold blast of air shot through

the door as I opened it. "There's got to be a more comfortable way to make a living," I thought silently. The wind whipped down through the cracks between three small silos and sent some of the finer particles of grain into my eyes.

Returning to the dairy barn, I began to give each cow a heaping forkful of silage. The wind continued to whistle outside — even managing to lift a window out of its place and leaving it dangling and clattering. I stopped feeding and walked over to put it back into place, then securing it with a small wooden wedge driven between the metal frame and concrete block wall.

"Seventeen degrees in York and Lancaster; 15 in Harrisburg," I heard the radio announcer say. With the wind-chill factor it was minus 12.

It wasn't until I was done feeding silage that I noticed the cows' bawling hadn't subsided too much. I guessed they were complaining about the cold. Maybe they'll calm down after they have their grain.

Then Bosco told me what was wrong. I should have known. She was pressing her nose into an empty drinking bowl as hard as she could. No water! Feeling badly about having slapped her earlier, I hugged her head and told her (and in a way every other cow in the barn) that I'd work on it right away to fix it.



"Good morning," the man on the radio said. His words irritated me a bit. "Some morning," I thought, "no water, 17 degrees outside and a wind which makes it feel as though it's 30 degrees colder yet."

Checking several water bowls while the cows continued to bawl and look at me with big, anxious eyes, there was no water to be had anywhere. The pressure gauge on the water tank, with its "0" reading, looked more like a thermometer. I dreaded a broken-down pump and hoped it was just a frozen pipe somewhere. Thawing it would be a problem, unless I could manage to get some hot water out of the water heater in the milk house.

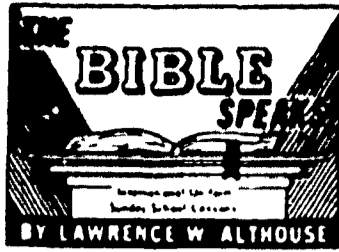
"Maybe it's just a fuse," I thought, holding on to the idea with lots of hope. Yanking the switch box open, I inspected both fuses. They were both intact. "Just my luck," I mumbled, while 40 cows begged for water with deafening tones.

Our well was underneath a "small house" with a roof over it which was simply slid off the side to get to controls and pump. The whistling wind cut right through my jacket. Boy, it was cold. It wasn't my day

In my hurry to get things fixed, and with the bitter cold possibly slowing the bloodflow to my brain, I had forgotten to take a flashlight out with me. Racing back around to the milk house, disgusted with myself and the weather, I grabbed it, ran back, and jumped across the low concrete block wall. I couldn't have hoped any more than I did that a fuse would be blown in the weathered box I was about to open. I was almost afraid to open it — knowing what it would mean if I did not find what I wanted.

Aiming my flashlight into the box, and crouching down low to get a good look, I discovered that luck was with me. Another trip to the milk house followed, but if a fuse is all it took to get the cows their water, I would have been willing to walk a couple of miles for it.

"You'll have your water now, gang!" I announced happily as I strolled back into the barn to watch the pressure gauge creep back to 20 or 30 pounds. Its normal reading was between 40 and 60, but with a herd of thirsty cows, it wouldn't get there for a while.



WHAT'S A GREAT FAITH?

Lesson for February 15, 1976

Background Scripture: Matthew 14 through 15.

Devotional Reading: Hebrews 11:1-6.

"O Woman, great is your faith!"

That is what Jesus said to the Canaanite woman. Hers, he said, was a "great" faith. What did he mean?

To suffer many things

Before we try to answer that question, however, we need to deal with the story itself, for it is a troubling story, one that many Bible readers would prefer to skip over and ignore.

If we read this story carefully, we must choose one of the following alternatives:

(1) That Jesus was actually prejudiced against Canaanites (non-Jews) and the woman had to argue him into helping her

(2) That the account is not an accurate rendering of what really happened

(3) That Jesus' remarks reflect, not his own convictions, but the prejudices of others, perhaps his disciples, and he is using them simply to shame them and test the persistence of the woman.

We cannot prove any of these three, but the third interpretation seems to fit so much more closely the picture of Jesus we get elsewhere in the gospels. The words of Jesus in Matthew 15:21-28 seem totally uncharacteristic of Jesus.

Thus, when he initially responds to the woman's request for healing with silence, he seems to be waiting to see what will be the response of his disciples. He does not have to wait long: "Send her away," they cry, "for she is crying after us!" (Matthew 15:33).

Crumbs from the table

Their motivation is hardly admirable: "Do something for her quickly so that she will stop bothering us!" (How like the dollar bill dropped quickly but reluctantly in a contribution envelope in order to get rid of the door-to-door canvasser!)

Isn't it their own prejudice with which he is shaming them when he says: "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel?" And who could believe that Jesus is speaking for himself when he says to her: "It is not fair to take the children's bread and throw it to the dogs!" (Why should we deprive our own families to help some stranger far away?)

Jesus would find that "his people" are still saying audacious things like that today. Can't you just hear him repeating to us our own blasphemous clichés: "Charity begins at home," - "God helps those who help themselves," etc.?

So what is the "great faith" that Jesus sees in this woman?

It is not the arrogant pride of belonging to the "right" group, or having the "right" beliefs - as the disciples did. It is, however, the humble



NOW IS THE TIME...

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To Establish Soil Conserving Practices

Early spring is a good time to correct soil erosion problems by establishing contour strips, terraces, or sod waterways. The conservation of soil and water is a national interest and every land owner should be interested in doing his best possible job of conserving these natural resources. In the spring while the ground is being prepared for the season's crop, these practices can be introduced into the farming program with a minimum of disturbance. Fields with any slope should be either straight stripped or layed out in contour strips. Crop terraces can be established to help carry off the surplus water without severe soil losses. We urge local land owners to give some attention to these practices; many have already accepted these soil conserving methods with rewarding results.

To Obtain Seed Supplies

The middle of February is too early to be planting farm or garden seeds in this part of the country, but it is not too early to be ordering and receiving the seeds and materials needed for spring planting. No doubt the "urban garden boom" will continue this summer; this means many more customers for limited seed supplies; therefore, those who wait until planting time might find seed supplies very limited. Seeds left over from last summer may be used providing they were stored in a dry place away from weed killing chemicals. The running of a "rag-doll" test on some of the seeds might determine the percentage germination that can be expected.

To Use

Fertilizer Wisely

Even though fertilizer prices have moderated all growers should use commercial fertilizer efficiently and according to a complete soil test. If the test does not recommend a certain fertilizer element, then it should not be purchased or applied; the fertilizer dollar can be saved or put into needed lime or other elements. Properly limed soils will make more efficient use of all fertilizers and give better chemical weed control on crops. Livestock and poultry manure contain fertilizer elements (nitrogen, phosphorus, and potash) and should be considered when determining fertilizer needs. If the complete soil test reveals the soil to be excessively high in a certain fertilizer element, then that ingredient should not be applied this year.

but persistent trust that God will not fail to help us if we diligently seek him.

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To Build Soil Organic Matter

As warmer weather turns our attention to the new cropping season, many farmers and gardeners have the problem of a very heavy soil; clay-type soils fit into this group and should get some attention with additional organic matter. Any type of livestock or poultry manure, sawdust, wood shavings, or peat moss can be used to increase organic matter; this material should be mixed into the topsoil for several consecutive years in order to improve soil texture. When this is done additional lime may be needed in order to prevent the soil from getting too sour; however, in the long run these materials will improve the yield of nearly all crops. Heavy soils do not hold moisture as well and inhibit normal root development.

Farm Calendar

Feb. 16

The third of three beef cattle management seminars for Schuylkill County; 7:30 p.m. at the Schuylkill campus of Penn State. Les Burdette of Penn State will speak.

Pesticide certification seminars, 1 and 7 p.m. at Coatesville Vc-Tech School.

Pa. - Md. Roadside Marketing Conference continues through the 17th at the Sheraton Inn, Gettysburg, 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Corn growers clinic, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Founder's Hall, Hershey; for Lebanon-Dauphin County growers.

Manheim Young Farmers hold pesticide seminar on chemicals and labeling. Feb. 17

Southeast Pa. Soybean Day, various topics discussed, 9:30 a.m. at Holiday Inn, Kulpville.

Farm Partnership Workshop 10:30 a.m. at the Chester County Extension Office, West Chester.

Dairy Management meeting for the Garden Spot Young Farmers.

Crops and Soils Day, Farm and Home Center Auditorium, 9:30 a.m.

Ephrata Area Young Farmers meet 7:45 p.m. at High School.

York County Corn Clinic, York 4-H Center, 9:30 a.m.

Manheim Young Farmers hold pesticide seminar on equipment and calibration.

Atlantic Breeders District 1 meeting, 12 noon, in the Palm - Schwenkfelder Church.

Feb. 18

Swine management meeting at the Lancaster Farm and Home Center, 7:30 p.m.

Cumberland County Corn Growers Clinic, Embers Restaurant, Carlisle.

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