

**EDITORIAL COMMENTS** By DIETER KRIEG, EDITOR



# Everybody wants a piece of country

Land. That's the thing to have these days. It's valuable, gaining in value all the time, and precious for raising both crops and children.

Years ago it wasn't that way. Land was cheap and people would just as soon live in town. That's where the jobs, playgrounds, golf courses, clubs, and stores were. That's where the action was. The excitement, the fun, and the profit for business. Towns and suburbs were the places to be.

Things and times have changed now, however. The cities are decaying. Streets are dirty, children grow up surrounded by concrete, and welfare rolls are expanding. Youngsters who grow up with nothing to do are easy game for crime. Cities aren't the place to be anymore.

Land is where it's all at now. Those who can afford a piece of country are glad to call it home. The "country hick" of yesterday now has doctors and lawyers and architects and insurance men for neighbors. Their children have entire fields for

playgrounds and they can enjoy a thoroughly different and refreshing world.

Shopping centers, schools, churches, and entire new "towns" have moved out to the country. There's a brand new appreciation for the land. And with it there's competition for its use and eventual ownership. Despite the upsurge in appreciation and competition, however, not much is happening in regard to respect for the land. Land - the soil - is still abused by both farmers and non-farmers. Conservation is a popular topic of discussion, and is diligently practiced by a good many of our farmers, but erosion still continues and farmland - even the very best of it - gets "slaughtered" for development.

That's why land is the thing to have these days. Aside from the noble reasons supplied by agriculture, land is the thing to have because it's as good as gold in most cases. While the dollar is sinking in value, and the economy in general is in a slump, and foreign products are displacing the

"Made in the U.S.A." stuff, farmland is not only holding its own, it's considered a mighty attractive investment. Everybody wants a piece of country.

Joining Americans in their quest for land of their own are foreigners. According to government officials, no one really knows at this time how much of America's soil is owned by foreigners. But it is no secret that foreigners have been buying here, are looking to buy more, and incidents of that type are increasing rapidly.

The General Accounting Office in Washington has been asked by Congress to look into foreign ownership of American land. The fear in some circles is that foreign investors could gain enough control of land in some areas to have an impact on local conditions.

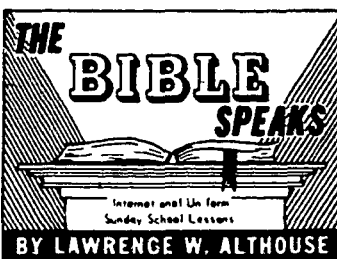
Even without foreign speculators, businessmen, and farmers eyeing good land in the United States, there's enough demand to keep prices up. That's significant since farm prices for some commodities such as wheat and other grains

haven't been attractive enough to cause farmers to bid up land prices.

Although farmers - particularly those near populated areas - were rarely alone when it came to bidding up farmland, the farmers now have more "help" in that regard than they ever had before.

With that in mind, it's almost next to impossible for farmland values to stop escalating. Were we still back in "the good old days" when everyone except the farmer wanted to live in town, land prices would probably be going down now because of the economic squeeze so many farmers face in major agricultural areas of this country. Farmers can't afford to buy land at present prices. But others can, and so the prices stay high. In many cases they're out of line with the farmer's ability to pay.

Granted, some areas of the country are reporting slight drops in land prices. But that isn't expected to last. The fact that everybody wants a piece of country is holding prices up. The world has learned that land is where it's all at.



Bible who follows the scriptures with a map may find him or herself perplexed in reading that "Philip went down to a city of Samaria and proclaimed there the Christ" (Acts 8:4). How could Philip go "down" to Samaria when every Bible map clearly shows that Samaria was located North of Jerusalem?

Of course, if you have a topographical map or you have even been there in the Holy Land there is no dilemma. Although Samaria is indeed North of Jerusalem (and therefore "up" from it on a map), it is lower in elevation than the Holy City.

Thus, anyone going from Jerusalem to Samaria would have to go "down" from a higher to lower elevation. Multitudes gave heed

There was, however, another sense in which one went "down" to Samaria quite apart from any concerns of topography. In the eyes of the Jews Samaria was always a step "down." Although Samaria occupied roughly the area of the old Northern Kingdom of Israel, the Jews regarded the people there as a racially-mixed polygot of people whose racial and religious purity had been dissipated forever. So greatly did they

look down on the Samaritans that, although it represented the most direct route North to Galilee, it was usually avoided by Jews who took the longer way around through the Jordan Valley.

When, during his ministry, Jesus traveled through Samaria on occasion and found some response from these people, his Jewish peers were scandalized, and probably his disciples as well. Thus, Philip's trip "down" to Samaria must have caused some apprehension in the early church. There must have been those who wondered

why Philip couldn't have remained in Jerusalem and Judea and worked among more "deserving" people. There was much joy

There was even some irony in the fact that it was Philip who went to Samaria. Philip was not an apostle, but simply a man who had been chosen along with Stephen and some other Greek-speaking Jews to provide for some of the early church's material needs. He was not chosen to do any preaching or teaching. He had no rank as an evangelist, yet despite his lack of high status, his results were gratifying: "...multitudes

with one accord gave heed to what was said" (8:6). Furthermore, Philip was able to perform great miracles of healing and exorcism there. Hardly the result one would have expected from a low-grade evangelist in a down-beat mission field!

Sometimes God has a way of making us come down from our lofty perches of prejudice and ego, showing us that he is in no way limited to the channels and parochialisms that seem to mean so much to us. There comes a time when each of us must go "down to Samaria."

## DOWN TO SAMARIA

Lesson for April 23, 1978

Background Scripture: Acts 8:4-40.

Devotional Reading: Acts 8:26-35

The serious student of the

## NOW IS THE TIME

By Max Smith, Lancaster County Agricultural Agent

Phone 394-6851



### TO GUARD AGAINST PARASITES

There are many kinds of internal and external parasites that infest our livestock population. All producers should make a

special effort to control all of these pests. Stomach worms can be very serious in this part of the country because of the high humidity and the dense livestock population. A sample of the feces to the

local veterinarian will reveal any infestation. At the present time we are aware that some hog herds have the problem of mange mite; this causes severe skin irritation and poor weight gains. Body

lice are likely on all species of animals and should be eliminated. Parasites reduce vigor and profitable returns. Don't allow them to reduce your bank deposits.

### TO BE CAREFUL WITH LEFT-OVER SEEDS

This time of the year we often have extra crop and garden seeds left; this is only normal and if they are stored properly, they can be used later this year or next year. Keep them in a dry place away from all weed killer sprays or dusts. The main thing is to be sure they

are not eaten by the family or fed to any livestock. Most of the seeds have been treated with one or more pesticides to control insects or diseases; this makes them unfit for human or livestock consumption. All growers should be careful in not allowing these seeds to be consumed. They should either be used, burned, or buried. Don't leave them lying around the premises. They are dangerous to children, pets, or livestock.

### THE CULL DAIRY COWS

The farm press has been

suggesting the heavier culling of dairy cows in recent months. The abundant supply of milk at this time, and indications for greater supplies in the few months ahead, might support the suggestion. No doubt every herd might have several head that are not as efficient as others, which could be sold without hurting the net profit picture. In

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## COMMENTS FROM READERS

Dear Editor:

The failure of the Jeffords cow cull bill is that it offers a politically attractive hand-out instead of a much needed solution to a basic problem

facing beef, pork and egg producers as well as dairymen. We (I fatten beef cattle) need larger markets. This means more demand and - if the government will

leave our market alone - better prices.

The greatest food fad in our history - the low cholesterol diet - has hurt us

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### Rural Route



By Tom Armstrong

## Farm Calendar

Today, April 22  
York County 4-H Family Fun Night, 7 p.m. at the 4-H Center.

Last day to pick up tree seedlings in Berks County, at the Ag Center, noon to 4 p.m. These are trees which were purchased earlier this year through the ASCS program.  
Sheep shearing school in

Cumberland County at the John F. Stamy, Jr. farm near Newville, 9:30 a.m.

Hoedown at the Hamburg Field House, 8 to 12 p.m., sponsored by the Berks County Society of Farm Women.

Nut tree grafting demonstration, 9:30 a.m. at the Senior Citizens Hall, Orwigsburg.

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