

Ministers:  
the congregation

Kenny Chumbley  
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Sunday:  
8:00 AM: WGCY  
9:00 AM: Worship

Wednesday:  
7:00 PM: Bible Study

[gibsoncitychurchof  
Christ.com](http://gibsoncitychurchofChrist.com)

**This Past Week:**  
Worship—42  
Wednesday—17  
Contribution—\$1560

**For meditation:**  
**Proverbs 28.7–9**  
What wisdom  
does Solomon  
give for life at  
home? In busi-  
ness? At wor-  
ship?

**Radio program:**  
WGCY FM, 106.3  
Sundays at 8 AM

## *A roar—fear—paralysis*

Nimrod may have been a mighty hunter, but I doubt he could have hung with Mike McGuire.

Mike McGuire can put meat on the table—with a bow-and-arrow, muzzleloader, or 12-gauge—and build a tree stand more luxurious than a Dallas Cowboys' skybox.

The other night, Mike was telling me that when a big buck deer trots by his stand too fast to draw a bead on, he lets out a big, "RAWOOMP" (I hope I didn't misspell this). I thought, "That sounds like a dumb thing to do," but Mike explained the noise freezes the deer in its tracks while it tries to figure out if the noise represents a threat. That slight pause is all the time Mike needs to set his sights and pull the trigger.

Lionologists say lions do the same thing. When they have tracked a unwitting gazelle and are ready to pounce, they roar, which freezes the gazelle, and gives the slower lion all the time it needs to close the distance and kill its victim.

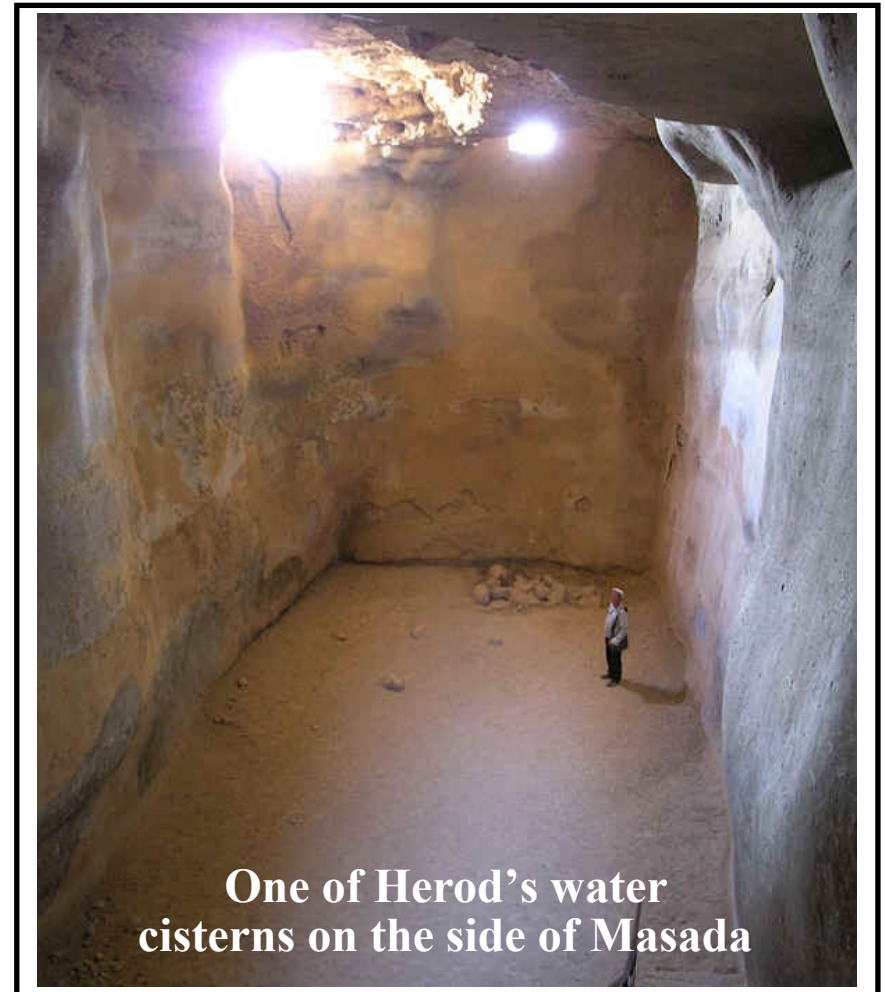
"Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Pet. 5.8). When the lion roars, who doesn't fear (Amos 3.8)? In our crashing culture, it seems the devil is letting out one constant crescendo of a roar. The headlines that scare you to death—that seem worse with each passing day—are the devil roaring. His RAWOOMP means to paralyze us, control us by fear, and keep us from obedience, worship, prayer, etc. long enough to enable him to close in for the kill.

Peter tells us to not be afraid (1 Pet. 3.14). Being courageous, unafraid is the first step in surviving a hungry lion.

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# Gibson City church of Christ

Highway 47 South, Gibson City, IL



One of Herod's water  
cisterns on the side of Masada

Sermon: 1 Peter 4.12–17

## A theology of suffering

3 December 2023

## *The glory of the low*

**Rejoice . . . O daughter of Zion! Shout, O daughter of Jerusalem! Behold, your King is coming to you; He is just and having salvation, Lowly and riding on a donkey.**

**Zechariah 9.9**

Christ's entry into Jerusalem is often called "the triumphal entry," but no one who actually saw it probably thought of it that way. But there was triumph in it, and glory, too.

**The triumph of condescension.** "Your King is coming to you." God, said Stanley Jones, "is not to be found at the topmost rung of the ladder," to which we climb "by a process of self-purification, self-discipline, and worthiness. We cannot get to God by our own efforts. But in the gospel, God isn't found at the topmost rung but the bottommost. We do not get to God; He comes to us. He meets us where we are and takes us to where He is." Matthew 9.12 may be the most original thing Christ ever said; so original, it's worthy of being called the *gospel*, the good news.

**The triumph of justice.** "He is just." "What does the Lord require of you but to do justly" (Mic. 6.8). Israel was a society full of social injustice, where double-standards unfairness were the rule. (Sound familiar?) When Christ came, however, He set up a kingdom that sets all things right (1 Pet. 2.14).

**The triumph of salvation.** "Having salvation" (victory/deliverance). When Caesar return to Rome from his victory in Gaul, his parade lasted three days; but three days was all Christ needed to gain the greatest victory ever won by destroying him who had the power of death (Heb. 2.14).

**The triumph of humility.** "Lowly and riding on a donkey." The Lord's triumph was a parade of poverty, a triumph won through humility and the humiliation of a cross. By the cross, He disarmed His foes without destroying them and commanded His subjects without coercing them. His scepter was truth; His force was love. Greatness is always humble, always lowly (10.35–45).

*Glory to God in the Lowest  
The spout of the stars in spate—  
Where the thunderbolt thinks to be slowest  
And the lightning fears to be late.*  
G. K. Chesterton

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## *Herodian Masada, 4*

In the desert, the greatest necessity is water. Herod's engineers, aided by thousands of slaves, managed to make the citadel of Masada into a spot that sparkled with water.

It rarely rains on the Judean desert, but when it does, it comes down in torrents. Violent flash floods result, sending massive amounts of water cascading through the desert *wadis* (a desert river channel that is dry except when it rains).

Herod's engineers knew about these flash floods. They also noticed that two wadis were situated north and south of Masada. A dam was built across each one. Aqueducts—long channels cut out of the rock or supported by a series of stone arches—were built out from each dam and came to a point about 500 feet below the summit of Masada. Where they ended on the west side of the mountain, Herod's engineers cut two enormous cisterns—one above the other—out of solid rock. These cisterns were cut so that water would flow from them by gravity. Whenever a rainstorm struck the desert, the water trapped by the dams was guided along the aqueducts and poured into the cisterns. Slaves then carried the water in clay jars up to the summit of Masada, where it was enjoyed by Herod and his entourage.

Roman bath houses dotted the top of Masada, including a very large, elaborate one in the main part of the citadel, not far from the hanging palace. Each bathhouse was equipped with cold rooms, warm rooms, and steam rooms. Water was heated by pipes set in the walls and under the floors. The walls, ceilings, and floors of the bathhouses were adorned with rich paintings and mosaics.

In order to keep the water flowing, great numbers of slaves toiled endlessly, carrying full jars from the cisterns up to the summit, emptying them into large reservoirs atop Masada, then carrying the empty jars back down to be filled again. Tanks were also built atop Masada to catch rainwater directly.

Today, this marvelously engineered system lies in ruins.

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## *News about us*

- We all rejoice at Gavin's baptism into Christ last Sunday. Let's all do what we can to encourage him in the great decision he made.
- Jerry is have a go of it. Keep him and Carolyn in prayer.