



July-August 2011

### Cloud of God

by Lanny and Marilyn Johnson

During the family's daily devotion time, Mr. Jones was reading from the Bible about Moses and the Hebrew people fleeing from Egypt. "In Exodus 13, verses 21 and 22, we read: 'And the LORD went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: He took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.'"

"Dad, I don't understand. How can a pillow be a cloud and a fire?" questioned Billy. Mr. Jones smiled. "The word is pillar not pillow, Billy. It means a column or shaft. The pillar of cloud was a sign to the children of Israel that God was with them and guiding them out of Egypt to the Promised Land."

"I am really confused too," exclaimed Mary. "I thought we learned that God made the clouds for rain! And why did those people need a cloud for a sign anyway, Dad? Couldn't they see God?" asked Mary.

Mr. Jones answered, "Using a Bible Concordance, we see that the Bible talks a lot about clouds. In the King James Version the word 'cloud' is used 96 times and the word 'clouds' is used 53 times, for a total of 149 times. God did

make clouds to water the earth \*\* , but from these verses we see that God used clouds in many ways other than watering the earth."

"Mary, to answer your question about the people seeing God, let's read Exodus 13, verses 18 through 23. In verse 18 Moses is asking God to see His glory (face or appearance), but God answers in verse 20, '... Thou canst not see my face: for there shall no man see me, and live.' God was telling Moses that no one could look directly at Him or they would die."

"Why would people die?" asked Mary.

"God is so perfect, pure, strong and powerful that human beings could not survive looking directly at Him. In verses 22 and 23, God told Moses that He would put him in a crack of a rock, cover him with His hand as He passed by, and then take His hand away. Moses would be able to see the back of God, but not His face," explained Mr. Jones. "If we look directly at the sun, its brightness will burn our eyes. It seems that God's glory or countenance is so powerfully bright that it will actually kill people to look at Him. In this case, God protected Moses by allowing him to only look at his back, but usually God protected people by covering Himself with a cloud."

"All through the scriptures God was present in the clouds. In fact the cloud was indeed a sign of God's presence, His power, and His care over His people. When God took His chosen people, the Israelites out of Egypt, they were chased by the Egyptian army, who wanted to destroy them. He led them by a pillar of fire by night and a pillar of cloud during the day. When the Israelites were trapped

at the Red Sea, His cloud moved in behind them, protecting them and blocking them from the view of the Egyptian army."

Mr. Jones continued, "After God led the Israelites safely through the Red Sea and destroyed the army behind them, He continued to lead them through the wilderness in a cloud. God had the Israelites build a special tent (tabernacle) where He would meet with them (Numbers 9:15-23 and Exodus 40:36-38). The cloud of God covered the tabernacle during the day, and at night turned into a cloud of fire until the light of morning. Whenever the cloud rose above the tabernacle, the people of Israel would break camp and follow His cloud. If the cloud was not taken up, they did not move

the camp. Wherever and whenever the cloud moved, the people followed. The cloud showed the people that God was always with them wherever they went. Later when Moses went up on Mt. Sinai to meet with God, the mountain was covered with a cloud."

"God's presence and glory stayed with the Israelites and over time He made them a very strong and powerful nation. Yet all that time they disobeyed God again, and again, and again.

God finally ran out of patience – He sent the Babylonians to capture the Israelites and take them away from the land He had given them. At the same time, the cloud of God lifted up out of the temple, and He left His people (Ezekiel 10:18-19)."

"God left them for 400 years," Mr. Jones continued. "Finally, after 400 hundred years, God  
(continued on back)

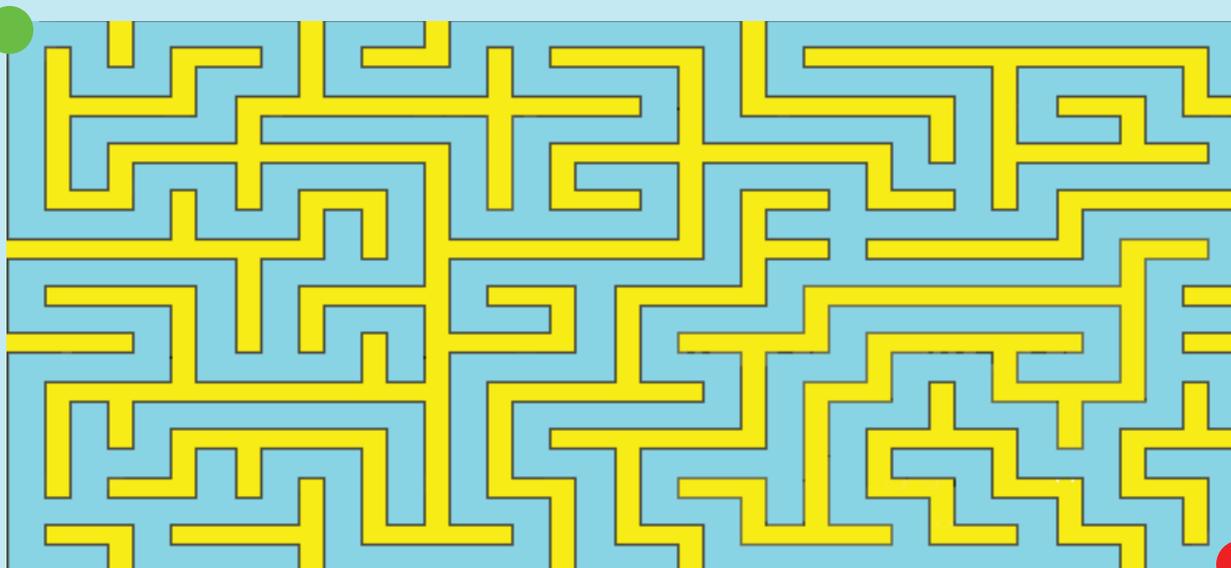


returned to them. This time, He came back not in a cloud but in a human form ... as Jesus Christ. After Jesus was crucified and died for our sins, He arose from the grave. He then spent 40 days with His disciples and after promising them the Holy Spirit, Jesus was taken up to heaven in a cloud. The real exciting news is that Jesus is coming again on or with the clouds! Even more exciting, *“Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”* (1 Thessalonians 4:17).”

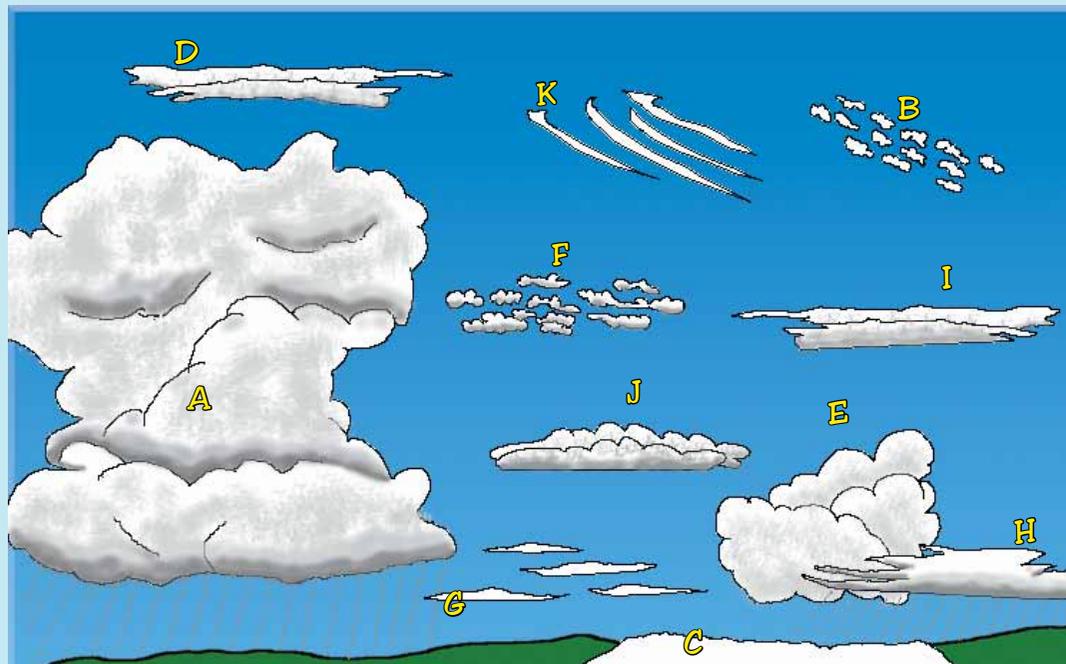
“So kids, the next time you are daydreaming about the clouds, think about what a fun ride that will be for all those who believe in Jesus Christ ... being lifted up into the clouds to meet Him and live with Him forever!”

\*\*Go to <http://www.discovercreation.org/kids/documents/SepandOct2008KTB.pdf> for how clouds are made and the Hydrologic Cycle.

Beginning at the green dot, find the way through the maze to the red dot. There is only one way.



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Match the Cloud's Letter with its Name using the Key below

(Answers Below)

- \_\_\_ ALTO-CUMULUS - Middle-level, medium-sized puffy clouds.
- \_\_\_ ALTO-STRATUS - Middle-level, layered clouds.
- \_\_\_ CIRRO-CUMULUS - High-altitude, small, wispy, patchy, puffy clouds.
- \_\_\_ CIRRO-STRATUS - High-altitude, thin, wispy clouds in layers.
- \_\_\_ CIRRUS - High-altitude, thin, wispy clouds.
- \_\_\_ CUMULO-NIMBUS - Large, dense, towering clouds that cause thunderstorms.
- \_\_\_ CUMULUS - Low, puffy clouds.
- \_\_\_ FOG - Ground-hugging clouds.
- \_\_\_ NIMBO-STRATUS - Low, dark, rain cloud.
- \_\_\_ STRATUS - Low, layered, horizontal, wispy clouds with a flat base.
- \_\_\_ STRATOCUMULUS - Low clouds, broad and flat on the bottom, puffy on top (lower than altocumulus and higher than cumulus).

ANSWERS

A. CUMULO-NIMBUS B. CIRRO-CUMULUS C. FOG D. CIRRO-STRATUS  
E. CUMULUS F. ALTO-CUMULUS G. STRATUS H. NIMBO-STRATUS  
I. ALTO-STRATUS J. STRATOCUMULUS K. CIRRUS

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