

The Berea Baptist Banner

"Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth" Ps. 60:4

The Earth's Great Jubilee

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

In Leviticus, chapter 25, we have the law stated of the Jubilee Year in Israel. The jubilee proper is treated in verses 8 to 12. The remainder of the chapter (vv. 13-55) deals with the practical application of this law of jubilee to various cases. In verses 13-28 we have the application of the law to the case of property in land; in verses 29-34, to sales of dwelling houses; and the remaining verses (vv. 35-55) deal with the application of this law to the institution of slavery.

The word jubilee as to its original meaning in the Hebrew Old Testament is of doubtful origin and signification. Some trace it to Jubal (Gen. 4:21), the inventor of musical instruments, and suppose that this year of mirth was named after him from its being a year



of mirth and joy. Some Jews say it had its name from the trumpet itself, which they suppose was made of a ram's horn. JOBEL in the Arabic language signifies a ram. The best scholars derive it from "to bring back, to restore, to return," because at this time bondmen were freed and mortgaged lands were restored to the original owners. Our English word "jubilee" means "an occasion or season of great joy." "Jubilant" means "to shout for joy." Certainly the time when land reverted to its original owner and when slaves were freed was a time of great rejoicing for many Israelites.

◊ (Continued on page 384)

The Dangers of Sin - A Seared Conscience

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia



"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth" (I Tim. 4:1-3).

Sin is dangerous. This passage teaches us there is a danger that the conscience of mankind can become seared. This seared conscience is no longer effective, nor is it able to prevent men from sin. In fact, it is participation in sin that sears the

consciences of men in the first place.

I think the Scriptures, history, and our present environment prove that sin will, eventually, sear the conscience of man. Sin is so dangerous, so

invasive, so permeating, that we cannot indulge it – or even tolerate its presence – without some affect on our own consciences and souls.

Now I want to talk about the dangers of sin – in particular the danger of a seared conscience. Now, I don't want you to think that this seared conscience is something that always happens immediately; nor do I want you to

◊ (Continued on page 382)

The Abandonment of Christ on the Cross

By Emil Wilhelm Krummacher
(1798 - 1886)

"Now from the sixth hour there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice, saying, Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani? that is to say, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:45-46).

Several times already had the great High Priest opened His mouth upon the cross. First had He turned the eye of His mercy upon those cruel mockers and tormenters, who, in that hour of agony, encompassed Him as ravens and roaring lions, and asked for their mercy and forgiveness: **"Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."** Oh! What a glimpse do these words give us into the inconceivable love which glowed in His heart! The next word He addressed to that dying penitent on His right hand, and it was a word of sweetest promise, a word of unutterable

consolation: **"Today shalt thou be with me in paradise."** And then he turned to His mother and to the disciple whom He loved, who lay in His bosom at the last supper, and bound them both in the bonds of filial and maternal love. And now was it the sixth hour. It was midday, but behold! **"there was darkness over all the land unto the ninth hour."** For three whole hours the Anointed hung upon the cross in unbroken silence; wrapped in darkness, without one single ray of light and peace. The bleeding Creator of the sun itself sees no light; the Helper of all must weep without help; but His cry of anguish arrests the course of nature! Surely here is a deep, an unfathomable mystery.

Yes, these terrors of Christ loudly declare that here is holy ground. Only in deepest adoration, only in the abasement of self-condemnation, can we venture to approach and gaze. Praying and trembling, we enter this holy of holies; in

◊ (Continued on page 385)

The Divinity of Christ

Those who reject the divinity and atonement of Christ, generally endeavour to undermine the divine authority of the Scriptures, by caviling about their authenticity, and denying their inspiration. This well accounts for the instability of principles and that skeptical turn of mind for which the Socinians are distinguished. For unless our minds are fully settled as to the authenticity and inspiration of Scripture, we can have no firm ground upon which to build our faith, and must be continually wavering in our religious views. On the other hand, if we are convinced that the Scriptures are a genuine revelation of the will of God, we must then admit them as an infallible standard of faith, and consider it our duty cordially to receive the truths which they reveal.

Considering the nature and design of a divine revelation, I am inclined to think we may lay it down as a sort of first principle, that such an interpretation of Scripture as suggests itself "most obviously" to a reader of plain common

sense, is, in general, the true one; for otherwise, the general usefulness of Scripture might fairly be called in question; the chances would be great against the mass of the people deriving any benefit from the perusal of them; and the tenet of popery would be established, that to obtain true knowledge and eternal life, the people must be placed under the infallible direction of superior spiritual guides. With this view, then, of the Scriptures, as being intended and adapted for the instruction and salvation of mankind "at large," let us see what impression they are likely to produce on the mind of a plain but intelligent reader, with regard to the "person of Christ," and "the work He came to accomplish."

You and I, my dear friend, both believe in the "divine mission" of Jesus Christ; that He was a divinely appointed teacher; that He exhibited a perfect example, and that, after a death undeserved, and to the last degree ignominious and painful, He rose from the dead, at once a pattern and

◊ (Continued on page 396)

A small cloud may hide the sun.

A little shortcoming, or an unnoticed transgression, may deprive us of joyous communion with God.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (I John 1:9-10).

August 5, 2010

Volume XXX, Number 8
Whole Number 373

Editor: Christopher Cockrell

Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia
Cockrell

THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER (UPS 546470) is published monthly for \$6.00 per year by the authority of the Berea Baptist Church, 3881 Highway 363, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855. Periodical Publication postage paid at Mantachie, Mississippi.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER, P.O. Box 39, Mantachie, Mississippi 38855-0039.

PUBLICATION POLICIES: All matter for publication should be sent to the editor. All manuscripts are to be typed and double spaced. All such material becomes the property of BBB and will not be returned unless requested by the writer. We reserve the right to edit and condense all materials sent to us for publication.

The publication of an article does not necessarily mean the editor is in complete agreement with the writer, nor does it mean he endorses all this person may have written on other subjects.

COPYING PRIVILEGES: Unless otherwise stated any article published in this paper may be copied by other publications, provided they give proper credit line stating that such was copied from this publication, and the date of publication; provided that such materials are not published for profit. If we are not on an exchange list with the publication copying, it is requested that a copy of the issue containing the article be sent to our address. All copyrighted materials may not be copied without written consent.

PUBLISHED MONTHLY with paid circulation in most states in the U.S.A. and some foreign countries.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - U.S.

One year.....\$6.00
Two years.....\$10.00
Five years.....\$24.00

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45

PLANNING TO MOVE? Notify us three weeks in advance. The post office will only forward periodical mail for 90 days. They charge us \$.70 for each "change of address" they have to send us. Please save us this expense and the post office time.

BUNDLES TO ONE ADDRESS: These are sent for \$4 per paper for a year. An example: 10 papers for one year at \$40 or 20 papers for one year at \$80.00.

LOCATION OF PUBLISHING CHURCH: Our church is located on state highway 363 about one mile south of Mantachie, Mississippi. Readers are always welcome to visit our services.

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

A PAPER WITHOUT SUBSCRIPTION: Some times people write to us and say that they did not subscribe for the BBB. They are receiving our paper because someone else has paid for their subscription.

We trust the BBB will be received as an outstretched hand to you. Take what you find helpful and discard what you cannot use. If you do not want to receive such a gift subscription, please write to us. We are happy to cancel such a subscription. We do not want to go where we are not wanted.

DISCLAIMER: The Editor assumes that the articles submitted for publication in the BBB are written by the person whose name they bear, unless otherwise indicated by a quote from another writer. However, the Editor cannot personally guarantee that this is the case in all articles which appear in the BBB.

Visit us on the World Wide Web at:

www.bereabaptistchurch.orgOur email address is: bbchurch@nexband.com

The purpose of the *Berea Baptist Banner* is as follows:

1. To honor God and to exalt the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To preach the gospel to lost sinners.
3. To spread the whole counsel of God's Word.
4. To encourage God's preachers and to strengthen His churches in the most holy faith.
5. To motivate God's children to a closer fellowship around His Word.
6. To inform people of world events in light of Bible prophecy.
7. To condemn and expose error wherever it may rear its ugly head.
8. To stimulate Christian growth in grace.
9. To make the Devil and his demons as mad as possible.

Planning a move?
Please let us know your
new address. The post
office charges us \$.50
for each returned wrong
address.

A Seared Conscience

(Continued from page 381) ♦

think that the conscience normally will become all at once ineffective. In fact, I believe that the seared conscience of men normally happens over a process of time, and is something that sin gradually accomplishes in the lives of men and women. In this sermon we will consider some of the stages of a man's life, in which his conscience is gradually seared. The three stages that we will notice are corruption, complacency, and complicity.

CORRUPTION

There is no doubt concerning the corruption that sin causes in the hearts and souls of men. We have previously noticed how that sin is so dangerous that it can, has, and will plunge men into damnation. When Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, their eyes were opened, and they were immediately changed. They died spiritually. And, from that time forward, all of mankind has been born into this world naturally depraved and foolish and wicked in mind and soul.

But, what I want us to consider, is how that in each of our lives there is a certain level of corruption that exists in the flesh. This corruption seeks an avenue to express itself. This corruption engages us in a battle for control of the flesh and mind and heart and soul. Very often we talk about the battle and the warfare that we are engaged in. And we talk about how we must fight against the devil and his minions. And we encourage one another to resist the world and the sin that is all around us. But, what we usually forget to consider is the fact that we are at war even with our own carnal nature. Sin is not just all around us, sin is within us.

If we forget that sin is dangerous, then we may succumb to the powers and lusts of sin. We read in II Peter 1:1-4, **"Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ, to them that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ: Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus our Lord, According as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue: Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust."** There is certainly corruption in the world all around us; but, there is also corruption within us. We have been promised an escape from this – and we all look forward to the day when we will be granted glorified bodies

without any taint of corruption. But, in this life, we have to deal with sin and corruption every day, even from within.

What I am trying to get across to each of us, is that sin is not just dangerous to the unsaved. But, sin is so dangerous that even the saved must be warned against its power and its corruption. I am not saying that any person once saved can be lost again; I am only saying that sin can cause corruption in our lives and in our service. Later on, Peter goes on to tell his readers about the wicked imposters that would seek to lead others into corruption and the power of sin. **"While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage"** (II Pet. 2:19). Even those who are saved, can, for a time, seem to be the servants of corruption. And, in the end, they must be chastised (as we have already spoken about) in order that they might be set apart again to the service of God.

The Apostle Paul warned the Galatians this way: **"Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting"** (Gal. 6:7-8). Sin has a very corruptive power. Sin will eventually sear the conscience. And, if we permit it, the corruption that has already affected our conscience, will affect it even more.

So, we must admit that we all struggle every day against the corrupt flesh that we inhabit. Paul wrote about this in **Romans 7:18-25, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."** If the apostle Paul recognized the frailty and the corrupt nature of his flesh, then how much more ought we to recognize these things? Without a doubt we would all fail, if it were not for the grace of God. But, this grace of God that is manifest in salvation is our rescue from the power of corruption in the flesh. What this proves to us is this: if we will only resist sin through the power of God, then sin cannot any further corrupt our lives and

service unto God. But, if we trust in our own selves, then sin will only corrupt us (and our consciences) more and more.

COMPLACENCY

Sin is always present with us in this corrupt flesh in which we dwell. But, we that are saved are aware of this condition. And, we have been warned by Paul and others that we must not yield to that corrupt and sinful nature. This is where my second point comes in. If we allow sin and our corrupt nature to have any measure of success in our lives, then we will, eventually, become complacent to sin. In fact, I believe that complacency towards sin is just another step down the road towards a completely seared conscience. Certainly we can notice a general complacency towards sin in the lives of the men and women of the world around us. This is to be expected, because they do not have the Holy Spirit dwelling within them. However, it is not to be expected (but it certainly happens) that we would see a general complacency towards sin in our own lives, or in the lives of others of the saints of God. After all, we have the Spirit of God within us. And, despite the corrupt nature and the corrupt environment in which we live, we have the opportunity and the right to call upon the power of God and the leadership of the Holy Spirit. But, so many times we fail to take advantage of the strength and grace of God.

Let me use King Solomon as an OT example: **"And Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt, and took Pharaoh's daughter, and brought her into the city of David, until he had made an end of building his own house, and the house of the LORD, and the wall of Jerusalem round about"** (I Kings 3:1). We could read more of the context surrounding this verse, but we all know the story. Solomon befriended Pharaoh and Egypt, and he loved the daughter of Pharaoh, and he took her to wife. Now, maybe in the beginning he might have considered this to be a strategic move on his part – to guarantee peace between Israel and Egypt. I don't really know Solomon's motivation, but I imagine his own lusts and desires and his love for Pharaoh's daughter were the primary motivation. However, in order for him to complete this alliance, he had to overlook the fact that Egypt did not worship God, neither were Israelites permitted to indulge in the sinfulness and idolatry of the Egyptians. Solomon, though, was willing to overlook these sins and these obstacles that ought to have kept Pharaoh's daughter from him.

The verse that we just read tells us that **"...Solomon made affinity with Pharaoh king of Egypt..."** I consider this verse to be telling me that, though Solomon did not actively indulge in the sins of Pharaoh and Egypt, he still was willing to permit and/or tolerate their sins in order

♦ (Continued on page 383)

A Seared Conscience

(Continued from page 382) ◊

to accomplish some other purpose, or indulge in some other desire. This is very dangerous. The corruption that exists in our flesh will drive us in the direction of complacency towards sin. Even though we may not indulge in a particular sin (such as Egyptian idolatry), we are still willing to permit it in our presence, or even approve of it in the lives of others.

Surely this is true in our world today. The Christians and even the members of the churches of Jesus Christ, have become very complacent towards sin. We acknowledge that sin exists, but we don't say much against it. We even have grown so accustomed to sins which we see on TV and in the news media and in our schools and businesses that we aren't even aroused against sin. If questioned, we might admit that there is sin, but in our day to day lives, we live as though these sins were not even wrong.

But, let's get back to the children of Israel. Centuries after Solomon, and after Israel had been destroyed and carried away captive, the Lord allowed a remnant to return unto the land of Israel. This remnant was led and taught by Ezra the priest. And, when Ezra saw the sins of the people, and their general complacency towards sin, he had this to say: **"And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments, Which thou hast commanded by thy servants the prophets, saying, The land, unto which ye go to possess it, is an unclean land with the filthiness of the people of the lands, with their abominations, which have filled it from one end to another with their uncleanness. Now therefore give not your daughters unto their sons, neither take their daughters unto your sons, nor seek their peace or their wealth for ever: that ye may be strong, and eat the good of the land, and leave it for an inheritance to your children for ever. And after all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou our God hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve, and hast given us such deliverance as this; Should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with the people of these abominations? wouldst not thou be angry with us till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant nor escaping? O LORD God of Israel, thou art righteous: for we remain yet escaped, as it is this day: behold, we are before thee in our trespasses: for we cannot stand before thee because of this"** (Ezra 9:10-15). I chose this passage of Scripture because it, too, uses the word **"affinity"**. To me, this is an apt description of complacency towards sin. Solomon began a trend when he took the

daughters of the wicked to be his wives. And, eventually, these sins (and others) led to Israel and Judah being led away captive. Now, after the Lord has granted the Israelites a reprieve, and after He has brought a remnant back to Israel, these Israelites were beginning to indulge in the same sins that had led to their captivity and destruction. How amazing is this? I am sure that the people thought that it was no big deal. Maybe they thought that they would take of the sons and daughters of the wicked and that they would convert them and save them through marriage and intermingling with them. But, this was obviously against the will and law of God.

Perhaps the people of Israel were just like the people of today. Maybe they thought (just as we) that if they themselves did not actively participate in the sins, then what could be the harm? Maybe they thought that it was OK to allow sin to go on around them, as long as they themselves did not participate. But, let me tell you what happens when we are complacent towards sin. Sin will multiply and grow by leaps and bounds all around us, if we do not cry out against it. And, in fact, we will make compromise after compromise until we have given up so much ground that we cannot ever hope to get it all back.

Sin should, in fact, make us angry. We should be filled with righteous indignation when we behold or witness sin. We read in **Jeremiah 15:15-17**, **"O LORD, thou knowest: remember me, and visit me, and revenge me of my persecutors; take me not away in thy longsuffering: know that for thy sake I have suffered rebuke. Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart: for I am called by thy name, O LORD God of hosts. I sat not in the assembly of the mockers, nor rejoiced; I sat alone because of thy hand: for thou hast filled me with indignation."** Now, maybe this passage isn't talking precisely about Jeremiah's indignation towards sin; and, maybe I am lifting this passage a little bit out of context, but, I think that it is a fair application if we will use this Scripture to teach us that we ought to be offended by sin, and we ought to be indignant towards it. There is such a thing as righteous anger and holy wrath. Now, we expect God Almighty to demonstrate anger and wrath; but, aren't we the children of God? And shouldn't sin anger us as well? In the case of Jeremiah we see he was willing to sit alone – either through his own desire, or through the will of God – and to be separate from sinners and **"mockers."**

COMPLICITY

The next step down the road to a seared conscience is complicity, or active participation in sin. I believe that complacency is just the name of the slippery slope that leads to complicity. You and I cannot be complacent about sin

and expect that we will not, eventually, be also complicit in sin. Corruption makes us complacent; and, without fail, complacency evolves into complicity.

Do not imagine that complicity towards sin happens only to those who are not yet saved. We have already noticed how that Solomon began to be complacent towards sin. Remember, he brought unto him a heathen woman for a wife. He might have thought that this was not too dangerous for him. He might have imagined that he, the wisest man alive, could not be tricked into sin. He apparently thought that it was OK to permit others to sin, as long as he himself did not indulge in sin. And, after that Solomon took Pharaoh's daughter to wife, he then took other heathen women as wives.

But, in the end, these things became a snare unto Solomon. And, he went from being complacent towards sin to becoming complicit in sin. Let me read to you a later account of Solomon's life: **"But king Solomon loved many strange women, together with the daughter of Pharaoh, women of the Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, Zidonians, and Hittites; Of the nations concerning which the LORD said unto the children of Israel, Ye shall not go in to them, neither shall they come in unto you: for surely they will turn away your heart after their gods: Solomon clave unto these in love. And he had seven hundred wives, princesses, and three hundred concubines: and his wives turned away his heart. For it came to pass, when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods: and his heart was not perfect with the LORD his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites. And Solomon did evil in the sight of the LORD, and went not fully after the LORD, as did David his father. Then did Solomon build a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods"** (I Kings 11:1-8). Solomon was led away by his corrupt nature; he became complacent towards sin; and then, finally, he became complicit – he actively participated in those sins that he had before condemned. At first he only married and loved these women. But then he began to build them altars and temples for their false gods. And, eventually, it appears that he even went into these places and he **"...went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom the abomination of the Ammonites"** (I Kings 11:5).

Now, I want to ask you: "If Solomon

– perhaps the wisest man that has ever lived with the exception of Jesus Christ – could be led away into sin, and have his conscience eventually so seared that he did not even recognize certain sins; then what about you and I?" Surely we must recognize the dangers of sin. Consider that sin is so dangerous it even seared the conscience of Solomon. Well, I should say that at least outwardly, in the life of Solomon, sin had this affect. We don't know: perhaps in secret, and in private, he cried out to God to forgive him for the path that he had taken, and the sins that he had plunged Israel into. However, there is no Scriptural evidence that he ever repented of these sins, or that he sought to undo what sin had accomplished in his life.

CONCLUSION

Sin is very dangerous. Sin has contaminated and seared the consciences of millions and billions of the members of the human race. Sin is so powerful and so dangerous, that it can even (and most certainly does) adversely affect the judgment and the sensibilities of those that are saved by the grace of God.

I suppose that I would like to close with this thought: examine your life. Is there sin in your life? Has your corrupt nature led you into sin? Have you become complacent towards sin? Does sin – even the sins of others – just not bother you the way that it used to? Have you even become complicit in sin? Do you actively participate in certain sins – sins that might have seemed evil to you once upon a time, but now they just don't seem so bad?

I hope these questions (and this sermon as a whole) will cause you to stop and think. If you are saved by the grace of God, then ask God for strength to resist the corrupt nature. Ask God for strength to purify your life, so that you might have a pure conscience in the sight of God. If you are not saved, then I pray that God would cause you to see your own wicked estate. You cannot depend upon your corrupt nature, or your tainted conscience to save you. But, you must first admit that God alone is good, and you are wicked and evil. If God will show these things to you, then I know that He will also show you Jesus Christ as your only and holy Saviour. Turn to Him. He will save you. He will also guide you through this life. And, if you will continue to depend upon Him, your conscience will not be seared, but you will abound in the goodness and righteousness of Jesus Christ.



Earth's Great Jubilee

(Continued from page 381) ♦

I. ISRAEL'S JUBILEE

The Jubilee Year in Israel was without parallel in any nation. Seven weeks of years, each terminating with the sabbatic year of solemn rest for the land, were numbered (49 full years of 360 days). **“And thou shalt number seven sabbaths of years unto thee, seven times seven years; and the space of the seven sabbaths of years shall be unto thee forty and nine years”** (Lev. 25:8). The 49th year was a sabbatic year which began with the feast of atonement in the 10th day of the seventh month (Tisri -- September). When it expired and the day of atonement came around again, at the beginning of the 50th year, was the Jubilee Year in Israel. Throughout the land the loud trumpet was sounded, proclaiming **“liberty throughout the land unto all the inhabitants thereof”** (vv. 8-12).

A TIME OF LIBERTY

This year was also called **“the year of liberty”** (Ezek. 46:17). The liberty thus proclaimed was threefold. First, there was liberty to the man, who through the reverses of life had become dispossessed from his family inheritance in the land, to return to it again. All property in fields and houses (except those in city walls) which the owner was obligated to sell due to poverty and had not been able to redeem, was to revert without payment to its original owner or his heirs. **“In the year of this jubilee ye shall return every man unto his possession”** (v. 13). (See also verses 23-28 and Nehemiah 5:1-13). There was no way the rightful heir in Israel could be permanently excluded from his estate (v. 23).

Second, there was liberty to every Hebrew slave. In the jubilee he became a free man. **“And if thy brother that dwelleth by thee be waxen poor, and be sold unto thee; thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bondservant: But as an hired servant, and as a sojourner, he shall be with thee, and shall serve thee unto the year of jubilee: And then shall he depart from thee, both he and his children with him, shall return unto his own family, and unto the possession of his fathers shall he return”** (vv. 39-41).

Third, there was liberty from the toil in the cultivation of the land: **“It is a year of rest unto the land”** (v. 5). This was a most remarkable feature, especially since one sabbatic year had just closed when the jubilee year immediately succeeded. Hence the 49th and 50th years were both sabbatic years.

A TIME OF ATONEMENT AND BLESSING

The jubilee trumpet was sounded in the close of the Day of Atonement: **“Then shalt thou cause the trumpet of the jubilee to sound on the tenth day**

of the seventh month, in the day of atonement shall ye make the trumpet sound throughout all your land” (v. 9). After they had been afflicting themselves they were to have joy and comfort. When atonement was made for all their sins, then they would hear the joyful sound of the trumpet of jubilee (Ps. 51:8).

As God forgave the Israelites of their sin debts, they were likewise to forgive their debtors. **“And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then thou shalt relieve him”** (v.35). All oppression ceased out of the land; brotherly love flourished (v.17). Peace and prosperity reigned everywhere: **“And the land shall yield her fruit, and ye shall eat your fill, and dwell therein in safety”** (v.19). This joyful time was the **“accepted time”** and the **“day of salvation”** to many in Israel. More than at any time in their life, the Israelites saw Jehovah alone as their Redeemer.

The Jubilee Year was designed to preserve the rights of free born Israelites as to their person and property. Jehovah said: **“The land shall not be sold for ever: for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me”** (v. 23). The jubilee prevented permanent alienation from one's family estate. It preserved genealogies unmixed until the Messiah came. It prevented the covetous from **“adding field to field.”** Also it cherished family associations with places, strengthening domestic feelings and the ties of kinship.

II. THE MILLENNIAL JUBILEE

Without question, the Jubilee Year in Israel foreshadowed the thousand-year reign of Christ on earth during which the Israelites shall all return to their own land. This will be the time of the Earth's Great Jubilee. The Jubilee Year followed the day of Atonement. Israel's enjoyment of the day of real atonement is yet future. As a nation she has never come to see that Christ made an end of her sins.

Forty-nine days separated the Passover from the Day of Pentecost (Lev. 23:15-22). The Jubilee Years were separated by 49 years (Lev. 25:8). The time between Israel's enjoyment of great national blessings and the Earth's Great Jubilee is 490 years (Dan. 9:24-27). The number 49 is involved in all of these.

ISRAEL RESTORED TO HER LAND

In the Millennial Jubilee Israel will be permanently restored to her homeland. In Genesis 13:15 God promised Abraham: **“For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever.”** The promise is repeated in Genesis 15:18 with the borders stipulated to be **“from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates.”** Israel has not yet occupied all this land as an everlasting possession. Since it is impossible for God to lie, we know that at some future time God will fulfill His unconditional promise to the seed of Abraham.

The Old Testament prophets often prophesied of this coming event. Ezekiel wrote: **“And I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel; and one king shall be king to them all; and they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all... And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant, wherein your fathers have dwelt; and they shall dwell therein, even they, and their children; and their children's children for ever...”** (Ezek. 37:22, 25). Amos foretold: **“And I will bring again the captivity of my people of Israel... And I will plant them upon their land, and they shall no more be pulled up out of their land which I have given them, saith the LORD the God”** (Amos 9:14-15). Isaiah predicted: **“Thy people also shall be all righteous: they shall inherit the land for ever...”** (Isa. 60:21).

FREEDOM FROM GENTILE OPPRESSION

The Millennial Jubilee is to be a time when Israel is freed from all Gentile oppression. Jesus Christ said Jerusalem would be trodden down by the Gentiles **“until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled”** (Luke 21:24). When Gentile overlordship of Jerusalem terminates with the Battle of Armageddon, the Lord shall make Israel **“the head, and not the tail”** of the nations on earth (Deut. 28:13). The state of Israel will be the greatest nation in the world because they are to have the greatest King, Jesus the King of the Jews (Matt. 27:37).

The Millennial Jubilee is to be the hour of Jewish supremacy--the finest hours in the history of God's national people. Isaiah so well described this coming day: **“Surely the isles shall wait for me, and the ships of Tarshish first, to bring thy sons from afar, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the LORD thy God, and to the Holy One of Israel, because he hath glorified thee. And the sons of strangers shall build up thy walls, and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favour have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night: that men may bring unto thee the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted...The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the LORD, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel. Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations. Thou shalt also**

suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast of kings: and thou shalt know that I the LORD am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty One of Jacob” (Isaiah 60:9-12; 14-16).

In this wonderful and joyful day of the Earth's Great Jubilee, the nation of Israel shall see Christ alone as their Redeemer. This is to be when Christ comes to the Mount of Olives with all His saints in power and great glory. The Apostle John said: **“Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him”** (Rev. 1:7). The Spirit of grace shall be poured out upon **“the inhabitants of Jerusalem”** as they look upon the One they crucified (Zech. 12:10). The whole nation shall afflict their souls and mourn for the Saviour they rejected and killed (Zech. 12:10-14). **“And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends”** (Zech. 13:6). In that great day of mourning **“there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness”** (Zech. 13:1). This is Israel's Day of Atonement--a thing yet future.

Jesus spoke of Israel's future jubilee in Matthew 24:29-31: **“Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.”**

This is not the gathering of the saints to meet Christ in the air at the end of the tribulation as post-tribblers assert. Nor is the trumpet here the Rapture trumpet as others suppose. This is the trumpet which sounds the jubilee for Israel. **“And it shall come to pass in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come, which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the LORD in the Holy Mount at Jerusalem”** (Isa. 27:13). (See also Isaiah 11:11-12 and Jeremiah 16:14-16). This regathering of the remnant of Israel takes place when Christ comes to earth.

THE SIN DEBT CANCELLED

The nation of Israel has some particular sins. She rejected her Messiah and crucified her King. His blood has been upon them ever since that day. But

♦ (Continued on page 385)

Earth's Great Jubilee

(Continued from page 384) ♦

at the end of 490 years their transgression is finished and an end is made of their sins (Dan. 9:24). Well did Jeremiah write of this coming day: **"Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgements and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS. Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that they shall no more say, The LORD liveth, which brought up the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt; But, the LORD liveth, which brought up and which led the seed of the house of Israel out of the north country, and from all countries whither I had driven them; and they shall dwell in their own land"** (Jer. 23:5-8).

Paul mentioned this Millennial Jubilee for Israel: **"And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins"** (Rom. 11:26-27). Paul spoke of his conversion on the Damascus road as **"one born out of due time"** (I Cor. 15:8). In the Millennial Jubilee the whole nation of Israel shall be born again in one day's time (Isa. 66:8).

A TIME OF GREAT BLESSING AND JOY

For Israel and the whole world liberty will be proclaimed. There shall be no hard labor, no regret for lost possessions, no bondage, no oppression, no poverty, no wars, limited crime, and plenty of food for all. The whole earth shall enjoy the glorious liberty of the children of God. When the year of His redeemed is come, the **"prisoners of hope"** shall hear **"the blowing of the trumpet"** of jubilee (Zech. 9:12, 14). This will be **"the times of the restitution of all things"** (Acts 3:21), the reversal of the fall, Paradise restored.

What a happy day shall be the time of Earth's Great Jubilee! The prophets described it thusly: **"and the ransomed of the LORD shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away"** (Isa. 35:10). Zephaniah wrote: **"Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem. The LORD hath taken away thy judgements, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the LORD, is in the midst of thee: thou shalt not see evil any more"** (Zeph. 3:14-15). (See also Joel 2:21-27).

III. THE GOSPEL JUBILEE

This Old Testament type has a

spiritual as well as a literal meaning. In this generation the gospel trumpet is to be sounded to the uttermost parts of the earth. It is to announce salvation by the blood atonement of Christ. It proclaims liberty to the captives of sin. It opens prison doors to them that are bound by sin and Satan. It announces the soul rest and forgiveness and peace in Jesus Christ (Luke 4:18-19). The gospel of Christ, when received, puts men right with God and with one another.

First, the jubilee trumpet was the sound of atonement (v. 9). Even so the gospel is the joyful sound of the blood atonement made by the cross of Christ. It says that Jesus died for our sins and rose for our justification. There is no more joyful sound to sinful man than the atoning blood of God's Son.

Second, it was the sound of liberty (v. 10). The gospel trumpet proclaims liberty to the slaves of sin--the liberty of grace and glory. A believer enjoys the liberty of Christ (Gal. 5:1; John 8:32), and he is **"the Lord's freeman"** (I Cor. 7:22). Just as the deliverance of the bond slave in Israel was immediate and complete on hearing and believing the tidings; even so of the believer of the gospel trumpet.

Third, it was the sound of forgiveness (v. 35). Even the debt and poverty of a man did not hinder him from enjoying the jubilee, but made him a more fit subject. Likewise, sin is no bar to God's saving grace. The gospel is for the very poorest of lost sinners. The gospel of grace forgives the very chiefest of sinners. Where sin abounds grace super abounds.

Fourth, the jubilee in Israel was **"a year of rest"** (v.5). The gospel trumpet proclaims rest to those heavy laden with sin and iniquity (Matt. 11:28). It tells them not to rest in their good works, but to rest in the finished work of Christ (Ps. 116:7). Those who believe the gospel enter into soul rest (Heb. 4:1-3).

Fifth, it was a time of restoration (v. 13). By the fall in Adam we lost our inheritance on earth, but the gospel tells us that Christ has regained it for His people (I Pet. 1:3-4). The Saviour of sinners restores our inheritance by adoption (Rom. 8:15-17). All we lost in Adam is restored by the Second Adam. Thank God for the gospel which declares all of this is so!

May this be the day that you will offer your soul because of sin. May the blessed Holy Spirit reveal Christ to your poor lost soul. May this be the day Christ shall become precious to you. **"Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation"** (II Cor. 6:2). May this be the day you will hear and obey the gospel trumpet. The psalmist said: **"Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound"** (Ps. 89:15). Thousands hear the gospel but only a few know its joyful sound. But blessed are those who understand the meaning of covenant promises and

recognize their own personal interest in them!

*Blest are the souls that hear and know
The gospel's joyful sound;
Peace shall attend the paths they go,
And light their steps surround.*

-- Watts



Abandonment of

(Continued from page 381) ♦

deepest reverence, supplicating for grace, we contemplate,

I. The forsaken One Himself.

II. The end of His being thus forsaken.

III. The fruit of this abandonment.

I. Who is this forsaken One? Behold Him, as He hangs upon the ignominious tree! Blood is flowing from His wounds--from His opened veins. The crimson stream flows down from His head, His hands, His feet, His sides. His face is marred more than any man's, and there is none to comfort, none to pity. A great multitude stand around the cross; among them are found the respected, the learned, the noble; chief priests, scribes, and elders; but their lips are like the lips of the rabble, full of bitter mockery and scorn--full of malice and blasphemy. Their cruel hands, indeed, can no longer reach the Man of Sorrows; but the tongue knows well how to twist the knotted scourge, to send forth the spear and the sharp arrow. One poisoned cup of mockery after another is presented. Unceasing are the torments of His body--inconceivable the agonies of His soul. Forsaken by the whole world--this He might have borne. Deserted by the little band that had "continued with Him in His temptation"---this was hard to bear. Alas! What pain even to us, faithless sinners, as we are, when, in the day of need, and of adversity, the friends whom we had fondly deemed true, turn from us coldly and faithlessly! And yet even this sorrow might be endured. But what is told us here? God Himself, that God who is love, who said, **"Thou art my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased"**; that God who has promised to those that

keep His covenant, that He will never leave them nor forsake them, the God of all grace and mercy, forsakes His Son! His Son? His only Son? Him whom He loves? Is it possible? Should not we rather say that this bleeding One, hanging upon the accursed tree, and crying amid the darkness, **"My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me,"** must be the vilest wretch that ever trod this earth? Is this the last end of the righteous? Is this the reward of innocence and spotless purity? Is this dealing justly to suffer the holy One to die as a felon? The martyrs counted not their lives to be dear unto them; for the sake of Jesus they joyfully exposed themselves to the most dreadful tortures, and were led to the stake and the pile of burning, rejoicing that they were thought worthy to suffer for His name; and, meek as the lamb before its slayer, they poured out their life-blood under the knife of their enemies. But they were not forsaken of God. We hear them praising Him amid the flames. The Father-heart of God is open to them; the everlasting arm of the great Deliverer is beneath them; the Son of God walks with them, even as of old with Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, in the fiery furnace; and though **"their heart and their flesh failed them, yet God was the strength of their heart and their portion forever."** But here all sources of comfort are dried up; here Satan, the power of darkness, seemed to have free course, and the life of this forsaken One is as the life of those that go down into the pit of inconceivable torment. Is this the fruit of His transgressions? The due reward of his misdeeds? Is the accusation brought against Him just? Was He indeed a blasphemer? Was He guilty of death? Was the rod justly broken upon Him?

But no! This be far from Him. **"He knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth."** He **"was holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners."** He glorified His Father; He was always about His Father's business; it was His meat and drink to do the will of his Father; He was in the Father, and the Father in Him. His whole life was a life of holiness; never had He, even in thought, transgressed

♦ (Continued on page 386)

Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	95.9	3,000 FM
WCCT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	680	5,000 AM
WFAM, Augusta, GA	Sunday 4:00 - 4:30 p.m.....	1050	5,000 AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.....	101.9.....	3,000 FM
WIJD, Mobile, AL.....	Sunday 8:00 - 8:30 p.m.....	1270.....	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.....	.550	5,000 AM
KXKS, Albuquerque, NM ..	Saturday 2:15 - 2:45 p.m.....	1190	10,000 AM
DXUM, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 2:30 - 3:00 p.m.....	819 Khz.....	10,000 AM
DXDS, Digos City, Philippines...	Sunday 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.....	1161 Khz	1,000 AM

Abandonment of

(Continued from page 385) ◊

the law of God; **“He was obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”** Zeal for the house of the Lord consumed Him; He went about doing good; to save, to help, to bless, was the element of His whole earthly life. Perfect was He, and perfect He remained, even as His Father in Heaven is perfect.

Such was He; and yet He exclaims in unutterable anguish **“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”** Oh, then, wonder not if I shrink in trembling awe from this abandonment by the Father! Blame me not if I own that here is an event which seems to involve in impenetrable obscurity all the attributes and all the dealings of God. Can the God of love thus forsake the Son of His love? Can almighty Justice thus deal with innocence? Does the omnipresent thus depart from Him who is faithful even unto death? Is it thus that the covenant-keeping God fulfills His own promise: **“I will never leave thee nor forsake thee. When thou passest through the waters I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou walkest through the fire thou shalt not be burned, neither shall the flames kindle upon them?”** Is this His faithfulness, that He yields up the faithful in all things, yea, the only faithful, a prey to the most fearful pains of the most painful death, and wholly withdraws from Him His presence, His consolation, the consciousness of His love and His favor? Is not godliness itself a mere dream, when the holy One is thus forsaken? Is not all trust in the covenant-keeping faithfulness of Jehovah a mere delusion, when God withdraws from His Son His love and His grace? Is not the question, **“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”** a question which, from everlasting to everlasting, must remain an unsolved mystery?

II. My beloved; through the mercy of God we have had this mystery revealed to us. In the painful judgment of self-condemnation, the wondrous enigma is solved. When once the blind eye of our spirit is opened, we discern, in the light of grace, the lofty end of the abandonment of the Son of God.

Wherefore, then, was the innocent Lamb of God thus utterly forsaken of God? Wherefore did His heavenly Father hide His face from Him? Wherefore must the almighty Jesus be so weak, the visage of the spotless One so marred, the Helper so helpless? Because He, as all the prophets of the old covenant and all the apostles of the new testify, was delivered up for our transgressions; because He, constrained by the compassion of His loving heart, suffered in our stead, and bore the punishment our sins deserved in His own body on the tree. And who

are we? Are we not all universally rebellious children---**“children that are corrupted”**---that have forsaken the Lord, the God and Creator of their lives, the supreme Good---the only good? Oh, yes! When sin allures, when gold and gain are to be won, when fleshly lusts are to be gratified, and earthly honors to be obtained, then do we eagerly go forward; then is there no road too long, no way too toilsome, no sacrifice too painful; but we inquire not after God: He is not in all our thoughts. Thus we go on in our natural state---God-denying, God forgetting men---following the dictates of a depraved will, following the counsel of a darkened understanding, speaking our own sinful words, and working our own works of darkness; and we think not that the holy presence of God is, as the air, around us and about us; and we glorify not the God **“in whose hand our breath is, and whose are all our ways.”** Far from our Father’s house, cut off from communion with Him, excluded from His grace, we are still at ease, and tremble not even for an instant before His awful majesty. Our idols, **“the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh, the pride of life,”** are sufficient for us; we feel no need of reconciliation with God---of reunion with God. Alas! There is not one among us all who has not, like the prodigal son, forsaken his God. Every sin which we commit is an abandonment of God; and as oft as we have thought, or spoken, or acted, without reference to Him, and fellowship with Him, so oft have we forsaken Him. And even those among us who, through the grace of God, have been born again, created anew in Jesus Christ, even they must acknowledge, in deep self-abasement, that ever since their conversion, they also have, daily and hourly, shamefully forsaken the Lord their God. And this desertion is a transgression that reaches unto the heavens---a sin of deepest dye, that calls for vengeance---an ingratitude so vile, that by it alone we have a thousand times deserved inexorable and everlasting banishment from the presence of the Lord. Is not this forsaking of our God the fruitful parent of all our countless transgressions?

When, therefore, the Son of God, as our Surety, exposed Himself for us to bear the penalty of God’s violated law, He must, when wrestling with death, be forsaken of God. Standing in our stead, He must feel the whole weight of the wrath of God, and in the judgment of God be regarded as one who has departed from God. He that defies the omnipotent God---that will not hear the all-wise God, that cares not for the omnipotent God, that makes the God of truth a liar, **“despising the riches of his goodness and mercy,”** and repaying His love with base ingratitude---surely he well deserves to be forsaken of the everlasting God---to be overwhelmed by the weight of the wrath of God, Who **“is not mocked.”** And, as such, did our Lord Jesus Christ,

as our Representative, stand before God, and therefore was He forsaken of God.

We cannot comprehend this desertion by God; it is beyond our every faculty, and every conception. Suffice it to say that the Son of God feels here the enormous weight of all that our sins deserved; the mercy of God is hidden from Him; He feels only His wrath, and naught of His grace and loving kindness. Though we comprehend not how it was possible for the holy, undefiled Son of God, thus to be loaded with that abominable sin which He hated, and thus to pay its full penalty, it is yet certain that He was here **“made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”**; that **“the deep waters”** of the terrors of God went even over His soul; that the thick clouds of deepest anguish were heaped up, one above another, till at last all the terrors of eternity, all the pains of Hell, all the wrath of divine justice, were concentrated in the agony that forced from Him the cry, **“My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?”**

Come hither, then, ye sinners, who would make of the living God a weak Eli, winking at the transgressions of his rebellious children! Come hither, ye impenitent sinners, who, with a few prayers and a little alms-giving, would purchase Heaven!---come hither, and learn in the abandonment by His Father of Christ on the cross, that the wrath of God, that His holy indignation against sin, is no empty threat! If the great God spared not His own Son, but suffered Him to feel the unutterable pangs of His avenging justice, how shall ye escape the threatened damnation of Hell?

But come hither, also, ye despisers of God and of His Word, who have turned from His ways to walk in your own way---that way whose end is death; come hither and see how ardently the loving heart of God desires the redemption of the most sinful, the most wretched. Behold in the hiding of His face from His beloved, a manifest proof that He is ready to lift up the light of His countenance upon you, and to blot out your unnumbered sins. Does He provide such a sin-offering as abundantly satisfies His justice? Oh, doubt not then His perfect willingness to receive you into the bosom of His compassionate love! Here, in this desertion by God of the Lord Jesus Christ, beams forth upon us not only the justice of God, but the fullness of His mercy in a divine radiance, sufficient to dispel every shade of doubt as to His desire **“to save to the uttermost them that come unto him.”** Now is the great gulf that separated condemned sinners from a holy God, henceforth and forever so filled up that we may, with joyful hearts, fearlessly pass over it into the arms of a reconciled God---a loving Father.

III. But this leads us to the third point we had proposed for consideration: a still further contemplation of the fruits of the abandonment of Christ.

These fruits are precious above all price; but they are only for the penitent sinner, for believing hearers, for the poor in spirit, for **“those that hunger and thirst after righteousness.”** We speak not now to you, proud sinners, who still turn your backs upon the Lord, and by presumptuous sins are still daily pouring contempt upon God and His laws. To you we must repeat the words of Christ, and may the Spirit of God re-echo them in thunder-tones in your ears. **“If these things be done in the green tree, what shall be done in the dry?”** Ye shall not see God, **“for your sins,”** as Isaiah saith, **“have hid his face from you.”** To you it is not said, nor, unless you repent, will it ever be said, **“Come, ye blessed of my Father.”** Alas! To you rather belongs, in all its terrors, **“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”** No; so long as your eyes are still unopened to see how **“your iniquities have separated between you and your God,”** so long as you come not to Jesus, self-condemned in contrition of heart, and in faith that He alone can save---He alone deliver---even so long the fruits of this abandonment of Christ belong not to you. Only when we are made to experience somewhat of being forsaken of God, as Christ was; only when we bitterly feel and humbly acknowledge that we well deserve, for our multiplied transgressions, to be forsaken of God; only when, in the conviction of that utter helplessness which self-knowledge brings with it, we turn from the broken cisterns of human consolation, and as wretched, hell-deserving sinners, prostrate ourselves at the lowest step of the throne of God---then only do we become partakers of the glorious fruits of this abandonment of Christ. But to you, who are thus self-condemned as vile sinners, to you, highly favored souls, who have been given to see in the desertion of Christ your merited curse, and whose heart’s conviction, through grace, it is, that only free, unmerited mercy could have plucked you as brands from the burning---to you belong the precious fruits of these death pangs of our Surety. Oh! Lay hold of them joyfully, and suffer neither Satan nor your own evil heart of unbelief to keep you back.

This abandonment of Christ on the cross is a bridge of God’s own construction; firm as the rock, never to be destroyed. It is the passage from the region of the shadow of death, into the abode of everlasting light and everlasting peace. We may tread it with firm step, confident, rejoicing in the name of the Lord; however the waves of our transgressions may roar, and rage, and swell, this bridge defies the roaring torrent and the swelling flood.

The abandonment on the cross is a deep gulf, an unfathomable abyss, into which we may cast all our anxieties, all

◊ (Continued on page 387)

Abandonment of

(Continued from page 386) ♦

our cares, all our sins---even those of deepest dye, even those that are grown up into the heavens---and they shall no more be found, but shall be hidden forever and ever.

In this abandonment of Christ, a pledge is given unto us by the eternal God Himself, that He will never more abandon those debtors for whom the surety thus paid all the debt. He may indeed, at times, hide His face from us, and appear as though He would never again manifest Himself to help and bless. But it is **"for a small moment"**; with great mercies will He gather us; His bowels are again **"troubled for Ephraim."** And He will surely have mercy upon him.

Again. This abandonment is a charter of our citizenship in Heaven---a passport thither---a privilege which we may plead before the judgment throne. The effectual power of this abandonment of our Surety and Propitiation is so infinite, that we may fearlessly stand in the judgment. We shall be judged, but shall not be condemned, for **"there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."** They have already been judged, have already borne the curse, already been forsaken of God in their Surety. Therefore, **"rejoice greatly, O Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; make a cheerful noise unto the God of Jacob, ye children of the living God"**; to you the great day of the Lord will be a welcome, a blessed day, when you shall pass into the kingdom of God, there forever to see, and love, and praise Him.

Still further. The abandonment of Christ on the cross is a key wherewith we may open to ourselves the secret chambers of communion with our God. No longer need we stand like slaves, trembling without; we are no more strangers, no longer afar off, but have been brought nigh to be fellow-citizens with the saints, and to receive the adoption of children. The high and holy One has become our Father, Who takes us into His arms, and to His heart, as dear children, and sends **"forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father."**

And does anyone ask how we dare draw near with such boldness, and hope in Him so confidently, and speak to Him so freely of all that is in our heart? We point to our crucified Surety, and reply, "Because He was forsaken for me, and in my stead." Here is my peace. **"The mountains may depart, and the hills be removed, but the covenant of peace,"** confirmed by the blood of the Lamb **"shall never be removed,"** but **"standeth fast forever and ever!"**

(Pulpit Eloquence of the Nineteenth Century, 1871).



- A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF HAGGAI -

God's Choice and the Promise of Triumph

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Haggai 2:20-23

We have here the final message which is recorded in God's Word which He gave through the prophet Haggai. Haggai preached and ministered in a time of great need, and a time of great opposition to the truth. He preached to God's people the message of repentance and revival. Many of the truths that were needed in Haggai's time are needed in our time. The Bible and its truths are not obsolete or out-of-date, but they are as fresh and as necessary to the spiritual lives of men, women, boys, and girls as ever. We live in a day when the majority of people do not read the Bible, nor do they go to a church where Bible truths are taught. Just because someone opens a Bible and reads from it does not mean that the truth is being proclaimed. We need to hear what God has to say, and we must have the Holy Spirit of God to lead us into all truth.

The majority of God's Word, the Bible, is written to God's people. The Bible is primarily written to saved people. Yes, the Bible tells lost people how to be saved; but the majority of the Bible is God's message to saved persons. Until you are saved, you are not going to understand the teachings of the Bible. You can understand the words on the page, because they are written in a language that you have been taught; but you cannot understand the meaning of the scriptures and the lessons they contain unless you have the Spirit of God dwelling in you as a born again child of God (I Cor. 2:14). If a person is lost, then he or she should read the Bible and hear the Bible preached and taught so that he or she can know how to be saved (II Tim. 3:15-17). If a person is saved by God's grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, then that person ought to read, study, and hear God's Word preached and taught so that he or she can know how to be in fellowship with God and serve Him acceptably. God reveals His will in His Word, and it is a sin not to know God's will.

We read here in our text tonight of God revealing His will. God was here speaking through the prophet Haggai, and He sent a message to Zerubbabel, the leader of the Jews at Jerusalem, concerning God's plan for the future. God has revealed some things in His Word that you and I otherwise would not know. You cannot know anything about God and what God is doing unless God reveals Himself and His will unto you. One of the greatest blessings that we who are saved have as children of God is that God tells us what



He is doing and what He is going to do (John 15:14-16). Jesus has some things that He wants us who are saved to do, He has some things that He wants us to know, and He has some

things that He wants us to accomplish to the honor and glory of God. You ought to be interested in the things that Jesus has for you. If you're saved, you should be interested in following the Lord in scriptural baptism and true gospel church membership, because that is His will. If you're saved, you should be interested in learning about the Lord and His will for your life. If you're saved, you should be interested in what God has in store for you, for His churches, and for this world, so that you can know how you ought to live and to please God. God does not tell us the truth merely for knowledge sake, but so that we might do those things which please Him.

Vs. 20 - **"And again the word of the LORD came unto Haggai in the four and twentieth day of the month."** Now Haggai had already delivered one message from the Lord on this day (Hag. 2:10-12). It would have been a shame if the people now had turned a deaf ear to Haggai, because he had already preached unto them one message on the twenty-fourth day of the month. Did you know that's how a lot of Baptists are? They go to church on Sunday morning, maybe even to Sunday school and preaching service; but they do not return to God's house for Sunday evening service or for mid-week prayer meeting. They have gotten in all the religion they care to take in. What if God had something else to say? What if God had another message? I suppose no one who is here tonight would openly say that God's message is unimportant. I suppose no one would want to tell God that what He has to say does not matter as much as something they had planned, or something that was on television, or something that was going on elsewhere in the world. I suppose no one would want to stand before God and say that the sports event or the family get-together they attended was more important than a message from Almighty God. Nevertheless that is exactly what people are saying today when they forsake the house of the Lord. They are not interested in what God has to say as much as they are in these other things. This was the last message recorded in the Bible that God gave to the prophet Haggai. This could be the last message I ever preach. This could be

the last message you ever hear.

Vs. 21,22 - **"Speak to Zerubbabel, governor of Judah, saying, I will shake the heavens and the earth."** Zerubbabel was the leader of the Jews at this time in history as they were rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem. The Babylonians had been permitted by God to invade Israel, to carry the people away captive, and to destroy the city of Jerusalem and the glorious temple which Solomon built for the Lord, because of the sins of Israel. They had forsaken the Lord, and God had for a little while forsaken them in punishment for their sins. Now a remnant of the people had returned, seventy years later, and had begun, according to the will of God, to rebuild the temple. Zerubbabel was the primary leader of this work. Here, in these verses, God sends Zerubbabel a message of encouragement to encourage him in the work, and to assure him that God was going to have and to give the victory. This message was in some respects a repeating and an amplifying of a previous message (Hag. 2:4-7). Sometimes God has to tell us the same things over and over again. Sometimes, God has to tell us a little first, and then more, and then more, so that we can understand and know the truth. Many of you have heard the truths of the Bible preached for many years, and yet you still do not know all the truth. You are never going to outgrow the Word of God. You are never going to come to the place where you do not need to hear what God has to say, even if He has to teach you some of the same truths over again, or build upon the truths you have already learned. Your job is to hear everything that God has to say.

God here reveals some things that He was going to do. We can be sure that what God says He will do, He performs. **"I will shake the heavens and the earth; And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms, and I will destroy the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen; and I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother."** God here speaks of the overthrow of many things. He speaks of things which in one respect have happened, but which in a far greater respect have not yet occurred. Now we know that God was speaking to the Jews, and that He was speaking to those who were at Jerusalem, and that He was speaking about great troubles and disturbances that were yet to come. These things are still going to take place one day. One day, the Jews will be restored to the land which God promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. One day, all the nations of the world that have opposed, oppressed, and withstood God and God's plan for Israel will be overthrown. One day, the Jews will return to God and will know Jesus

♦ (Continued on page 388)

Study in Haggai

(Continued from page 387) ♦

Christ as their Lord and Saviour. When will these things be? They will be when Jesus comes again to this earth (Zech. 14:1-15).

During the time of Haggai and Zerubbabel, there were many obstacles which stood in the way of the work of God. While the people were trying to rebuild the temple, and trying to worship and serve the Lord, many things sought to interfere. One who sought to interfere was the devil. He wanted to put a stop to God's plan for Israel, because it was through the nation of Israel that God was going to bring Jesus Christ, the only Saviour, into the world. The devil, the prince of the power of the air, the leader of the forces of "spiritual wickedness in high places [the heavenlies]," (Eph. 6:12), sought to stop them in their work for the Lord. The heathen Gentile nations of this earth wanted to stop Israel. On more than one occasion they hindered Israel in the rebuilding of the temple, either by fear or by force. God's message to Zerubbabel was a message of encouragement, that he needed not to fear either the forces of the heavens, as mighty fallen angels such as Satan and his legions, or the forces of the earth, as men and heathen nations; because God has the power to shake the heavens and the earth. One day, He says, "I will shake the heavens and the earth" (Matt. 24:1-8, 29-35). One day God will literally shake the heavens and the earth. He will disturb the natural order of creation (Rev. 6:12-17). One day, all the men, women, boys, and girls who have taken God's goodness for granted in ordaining the order of nature, day and night, summer, winter, springtime, and harvest, and have not thanked the God of heaven, nor repented of their sins, nor sought to know God through faith in His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, will shake in fear of His irresistible wrath.

We see here that one day God will overthrow the governments of this world. "And I will overthrow the throne of kingdoms." One day all the governments of this world will be removed and the everlasting kingdom of Jesus Christ will be set up. People today are looking to governors, presidents, prime ministers, and parliaments to solve their problems and give them peace; but these governments, which legalize the murder of unborn infants, and the committing of adultery, and the oppression of the poor, will one day be overthrown by the Prince of Peace, and then there will be peace. We see here that God will one day overthrow the economic system of this world. "And I will overthrow the strength of the kingdoms of the heathen." Did you know that the economic system of this world and the religious system of this world are joined together in an unholy

marriage? The religious organizations and so-called "churches" to which people belong are married to the economic system of this world. The banking system, the insurance system, and the real estate system all are influenced and participated in by the religions and denominations of this world. One day God will overthrow the economy and the false religions of this world, the very systems by which governments control their people (Luke 21:25-28,33-36). Men whose hearts are filled with the love of this world's money and economic systems will one day suffer spiritual heart attacks when they see God in judgment overthrowing the financial and religious systems of this world.

One day, God will defeat the armies of this world. We live in a country that has great armed forces. I thank the Lord that we live in this country. Nevertheless, if America continues to ignore and reject God and His truth, and does not repent of her wickedness, then all of the armed forces of this great nation will not be able to keep this country from being cast down. "And I will overthrow the chariots, and those that ride in them; and the horses and their riders shall come down, every one by the sword of his brother." I have heard of when the Arab nations sought to attack Israel back in 1967. They outnumbered Israel ten to one. When Israel fought back, those Arab forces ran over each other and killed each other trying to retreat. Beloved, that is nothing compared with the overthrow that will take place when Jesus comes back to this earth (Rev. 19:11-21). This sin-filled world and all the sinners in it will not be able to resist Jesus when He comes to rule and reign. They reject Him now, but they will not be able to resist Him then.

Vs. 23 – Why did God tell these things to Zerubbabel? Why does God tell these things to you and me? He tells us these things so that we may act aright. If you are lost and without Jesus Christ, and you know that one day God is going to put an end to this world and its ways, then you ought to repent of your sins and turn to God. You ought to seek the Lord while He may be found, and He will be merciful to your unrighteousnesses, and pardon your iniquities. You ought not to linger in your sins and your straying away from God. If you are saved tonight, then you ought to cease from sin and live for God. You ought to put away worldly lusts and desires, because you know that the fashion of this world passeth away (II Pet. 3:8-14). If you know that Jesus is going to come, and that He is going to put an end to all the worldliness, selfishness, greediness, pride, injustice, immodesty, adultery, homosexuality, fornication, drug abuse, alcoholism, lying, stealing, killing, extortion, disobeying parents, false religion and worship, disobeying of the Bible, and dishonoring of His holy

name in this world, then you ought to leave all of these things behind and go and serve the Lord. You ought not to live for the money, the stock portfolio, the popularity, the fashion, or the pleasures of this life, but you ought to live for the eternal glory of God's kingdom.

Now this message from the Lord was sent specifically to Zerubbabel. Why was Zerubbabel so important that God honored him with this singular message? "In that day, saith the LORD of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, saith the LORD, and will make thee as a signet: for I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts." God was going to honor Zerubbabel. He said, "I . . . will make thee as a signet." The signet was a symbol of royal authority. Zerubbabel was going to be like the ring with which a king seals his decrees into law, executing his royal power. Zerubbabel was honored by God, not only in that he was used of God to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, but in that he was used of God in the genealogy of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was one of the members of the tribe of Judah and one of the descendants of king David through whom God brought Jesus into the world to be the Saviour of men and the Prince of peace (Matt. 1:6-12). Jesus' foster father Joseph, who was not His real father as He was born of a virgin with no earthly father, was of the tribe of Judah and a descendant of David, giving Jesus legal right to the throne of Israel (Luke 3:23-27). Jesus' mother Mary was also of the tribe of Judah and a descendant of David, giving Jesus actual right to the throne of Israel, and fulfilling God's promise to extend the kingdom of David's house forever. The temple which Zerubbabel built was later destroyed; but several hundred years after Zerubbabel had died, One who was greater than the

temple stood in the temple at Jerusalem and taught men the only true way to God, and that One was Jesus Christ. One day that same One who is greater than the temple and all others will come again to this earth, and will set up His throne, and all men will come to Him and worship the only true and living God; and this One is He who came through the line of Zerubbabel, as God chose and decreed, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Beloved, everything God does, He does to honor His Son, and to exalt Him as the Prince of life and the Saviour of sinners. God separated the nation of Israel from all other nations on the earth to use them to bring into this world His only begotten Son. God is using this church to preach the gospel of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ, so that sinners will know that there is Saviour, and His name is Jesus. God will use whom He has chosen. "I have chosen thee, saith the LORD of hosts." No one can interfere with, or overturn, God's choice. God has chosen Jesus as the only Saviour. You cannot ignore God's choice and be saved. God has given all honor to the Son. You cannot bypass Jesus and be right with the Heavenly Father. God has chosen repentance from sin and faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as the way to be saved from sin and to receive spiritual life. You cannot circumvent or ignore God's choice. God will one day overthrow all things which He has not chosen, all things which ignore His will and His purpose, all things and all people which do not obey Him and honor His choice of Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me," (John 14:6). He is God's chosen Saviour, Redeemer, and King.



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



God's Ideal Woman

(Continued from last issue.)

GENEROUS AND UNSELFISH (V. 20)

"Caph---She stretcheth out her hand to the poor; yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy" (Prov. 31:20). In the expression: "She stretcheth out her hand to the poor," the word "hand" is the Hebrew word (*caph*) which means "the palm," evidently containing alms. God's ideal woman believes what the Scripture says about helping the poor: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again" (Prov. 19:17). She

does not neglect her husband and family who have prior claims, nor does she give to those too lazy to work, but she gladly and willingly gives to those who are really in want and unable to work. Like Dorcas, she is full of good works and almsdeeds (Acts 9:36).

"Yea, she reacheth forth her hands to the needy." The Hebrew word for "hand" (*yad*) means "with its nerves and sinews ready for exertion." The idea is that she uses her hands to minister to

♦ (Continued on page 389)

God's Ideal Woman

(Continued from page 388) ◊

the needy. She bathes their wounds and put ointment on them. She pats them on the shoulder and speaks words which bring comfort, hope, and cheer to them in their pilgrim way. Shut-ins are her best friends. The same hands put upon the distaff and spindle are the same hands which reach forth with a sister's love, a mother's solicitude, and a daughter's care.

Economy and generosity go hand in hand. This woman who toils late at night and rises early in the morning is ready to help the less fortunate (Prov. 31:15, 20). She does not shrink from the sight of suffering. The good woman comes into contact with the suffering and dying in order to relieve them. The hardest workers are the largest givers. The principle of labor is the spirit of benevolence: **"Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth"** (Eph. 4:28).

PREPARES FOR SEVERE WINTERS (V. 21)

The model matron makes sure her household is well clothed: **"Lamed---She is not afraid of the snow for all her household: for her household are clothed with scarlet"** (Prov. 31:21). There were snowy winters in Palestine. Beniah, one of David's mighty men, **"slew a lion in the midst of a pit in a time of snow"** (II Sam. 23:20). Earlier in Proverbs it speaks of **"the cold of snow in the time of harvest"** (Prov. 25:13). The virtuous woman has no fear even in the severest winter, for her family and servants are well fed and well clothed.

The word **"scarlet"** is in the margin "double garment." Some say the original word signifies "double." Therefore, some commentators say it means in winter she provided them with two garments to make sure they were warm. They wore a single garment in summer, and a double one in the snowy winter. The virtuous woman was more concerned with their comfort than their looks. Some mothers' character is flawed, for they dress their children for display. Comfort or no comfort, they must be fine and in fashion. If finery requires them to shiver and shake, they must.

The margin rendering is erroneous, for the Hebrew word is never translated in the Scriptures "double garment." The word used is the Hebrew word (*shanim*) which is derived from a verb meaning "to shine." It denotes a crimson or deep scarlet color. This color absorbed and retained heat, as white repels it. The reference is to the scarlet obtained from the Tola, a cochineal-like insect, which, being crushed, produces a fine red dye, much admired by the Orientals. It is the

worm to which Christ compares Himself in Psalm 22:6, pointing to how He would be bruised and slain to clothe us in white robes.

HER DRESS (V. 22)

Contrary to the opinions of some men, it is not a sin for a virtuous woman to be neatly and finely dressed: **"Mem---She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple"** (Prov. 31:22). **"Tapestry"** (*marbaddin*) means "pillows for the bed or cushions" (Prov. 7:16). **"Silk"** is better rendered "fine linen," which was of fine texture and costly. Purple garments came from the Phoenician cities and were highly-esteemed (S. of S. 3:10; Jer. 10:9). This woman was a princess and could afford good furniture and fine clothing. The passage does allow for some scope of finery, according to one's station in life and means. The primary thought is that a virtuous woman dresses herself in a way becoming her station in life, avoiding extremes. From the context, it appears these things were purchased by money which she had earned from her own labors.

But does not Peter condemn fine clothing and jewelry? I Peter 3:3-4: **"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or putting on of apparel: But let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price."** This passage does not prohibit the wearing of all gold and jewels for a virtuous woman. Note that it mentions also **"putting on of apparel."** Does this mean she is to go around naked? Hardly. Extremism in jewels and clothes is to be avoided by a godly woman. The main adorning is to be in her character---a meek and quiet spirit.

This fine clothing of the virtuous woman must not be indecent: **"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; But (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works"** (I Tim. 2:9-10). **"Modest apparel"** does not mean "modern apparel." The styles of Hollywood and Paris are not in keeping with the teachings of Holy Scripture. Some modern-day women do not wear enough clothes to make a Jay Bird a pair of socks. Some cows and horses are better clothed than some women.

We must not take this to mean that a virtuous woman is to dress in a way lacking beauty and in filth. Some men are as tight as bark on a tree. If their wives were to buy one new dress a year, they would have a spell with their heart. Such wives may be virtuous women, but they have tightwad for husbands. The Bible teaches that a Christian woman is to first

of all adorn her character. But it equally teaches that she should dress fine, clean, and neat. All of her dresses do not have to come from the dollar store or the rummage sale!

ADVANCES HER HUSBAND'S INTERESTS (V. 23)

"Nun---Her husband is known in the gates, when he sitteth among the elders of the land" (Prov. 31:23). **"The gates"** refers to the gates of the city where the courts of justice convened (Prov. 22:22; 24:7). **"The elders"** would probably be called by us today "the city fathers." These men were in a position of power and prestige. Her husband was honored by such men because of his virtuous wife. They knew that she cared for his domestic business so he could devote himself to his public business. He appeared before the elders clean and neat in his dress, showing he had a good wife at home that took care of his clothes. He was always cheerful and friendly. The happiness he enjoyed at home showed in his face. She was a credit to him, adding to the esteem in which he was held by the general public. Such a spouse is indeed "a helpmeet to him."

A wife should be jealous of her husband's honor. It is within her power to procure for him a great deal of respect. In honoring him she brings honor to herself. Behind every successful man is a virtuous woman. Her husband, relieved of care and worry at home, is able to do his proper work and succeed on his job. Phocion's wife, when asked about her jewels, said that her husband was her jewel. A man married to a virtuous woman possesses a crown as much as an earthly king: **"A virtuous woman is a crown to her husband"** (Prov. 12:4).

SHE MAKES THINGS TO SELL (V. 24)

In addition to providing for her house and her family, she provides fine linen and girdles to sell for a profit: **"Samech---She maketh fine linen, and selleth it; and delivereth girdles unto the merchant"** (Prov. 31:24). **"Fine linen"** (Heb. *sadin*) is not the same as in verse 22, but it denotes linen garments. Or, as Delitzsch says, "body-linen" (Jud. 14:12-13; Isa. 3:23). Some say it means linen sheets for night covering. Girdles were a necessary article with the flowing robes of Eastern dress. Girdles, though generally made of leather, were often made of linen curiously worked in gold and silver thread and studded with jewels and gold (II Sam. 18:11; Dan. 10:5). **"The merchant"** was probably Canaanite or Phoenician. These caravan-merchants would purchase the work of her hands to carry them to distant places. While other women impoverished their husbands by buying, she enriches her husband by selling valuable commodities which are in constant demand.

Ironside well says on verse 24: "The spiritual lesson is easily seen. She who

is faithful in ministering at home, and clothes herself in a garment of practical godliness and righteousness, will have enough to spare for the blessing of others in 'the regions beyond'" (*Notes on Proverbs*, p. 480).

GREATNESS OF SOUL (V. 25)

Although she is clothed with silk and purple, she has nobler ornaments: **"Ayin---Strength and honour are her clothing; and she shall rejoice in time to come"** (Prov. 31:25). The model matron is vested with a moral force and dignity which fortifies her against worry and care in old age. Strength and honor are her constant dress, and this ornament of grace gives her universal esteem among men. Trusting in the Lord, she is not afraid of evil tidings. The strength of her character comes from walking with God. Godliness and joyfulness are inseparable.

What is meant by **"she shall rejoice in time to come?"** As she grows old, she can look back on a life well spent. She did her duty to her husband and children to the utmost of her ability. Her children have grown up to be good and God-fearing. Her moral character rubbed off on them. She looks at them with a sense of pride for having brought them up in the nurture and the admonition of the Lord. When she is old and gray-headed, she has no fear of death or standing at the Judgment Seat of Christ. No doubt she will hear: **"She hath done what she could"** (Mark 14:8).

PRUDENT (V. 26)

The ideal wife opens her mouth with wisdom and kindness: **"Pe---She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness"** (Prov. 31:26). She does not just talk to make conversation. Richly endowed with **"the wisdom that is from above,"** she is gentle, and easy to be entreated; pitiful, courteous (Jas. 3:17). When she opens her mouth to guide her family it is with wisdom. All her words are expressions of that good sense which adorns her mind and regulates her conduct. Because of the pureness of her heart, her tongue delights to utter words of grace and truth. Her hearers are edified and refreshed. Her words are never sarcastic or venomous.

The words about her tongue having in it **"the law of kindness"** are most striking. They mean her language is regulated by kindness and love. Kindness in God's ideal woman operates with the uniformity and constancy of a law. This principle is at all times, in all places, and in all companies, the same. It never shifts and accommodates itself to persons or circumstances. The virtuous woman rules her tongue by **"the law of kindness."** If her husband is out of sorts, she brings him around by the law of kindness. By this same means she keeps her children in cheerful subjection.

I have known some women who
◊ (Continued on page 392)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. What are foolish and unlearned questions that are spoken of in II Timothy 2:23? - Mississippi

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Missionary of
West Jefferson Missionary
Baptist Mission
90 E. Main St.
West Jefferson, Ohio 43162



First I would like to thank the Berea Baptist Church for their considering me as a writer for the Banner's Forum Questions. And I thank the Lord for the opportunity to present the truth of His Word in the answers.

The word "foolish" has the meaning of sluggish and dull. Apparently our English word moron comes from it. I would not think it a good practice to go around calling someone a moron. The word "foolish" also comes (from a root *muh*, to be silly) according to Vine's Dictionary. The word "unlearned" is senseless, untrained, and undisciplined. I would have to agree with those who believe Paul was speaking of ignorant and useless debates or controversies, which many have and still do take pleasure in.

Let me give you a prime example of this. This happened to us at the mission the first few months we were in West Jefferson. We have a store front so we have these two big widows facing the sidewalk. On the one window we have Sovereign Grace, Independent, Landmark, Pretribulation, Premillennial, and Missionary Baptist in big white letters. On the other window we have West Jefferson Missionary Baptist Mission in white letters also. A man emailed me with this question; "How can you explain how you advertise, Sovereign Grace, and claim to be Missionary? Briefly explain the contradiction." I emailed the man back and told him this; "Very Simple, Matthew 28:18-20; Acts chapter 8, Romans 10:1-21; Romans 11:1-36, and many more. The Scriptures are very clear; there is no contradiction, except maybe on your part! If you truly are interested in the truth that is great, but I do not waste my time in frivolous debates, my time is too precious to waste on such who try too engage in such things. We are in West Jefferson to present the gospel to the lost and to serve and worship the only wise God who is all Sovereign and Holy, and to preach the truth, the whole counsel of God. To study His Word is one thing, to debate it is total foolishness and has been found to be of no effect!" He emailed me back "So much for brief with all due respect pastor. The historical view of Biblical Missionary

work and the limited atonement theory are not compatible."

To me this is the very thing Paul was telling Timothy. This was a foolish and unlearned question or to put in these terms, it was senseless, untrained, undisciplined, and most of all very silly. All this man wanted to do is ruffle my feathers and have a debate (argue) about an age old subject that has been debated to death down through the centuries and not giving me his name or at least introducing himself to me tells a lot about his intentions. The very fact that the man wanted a brief explanation kind of says it all, how can you answer a question of this type "briefly"? Oh, and by the way, I never answered him back and haven't heard from him since.

You know, these types of questions would never come about if a person was to follow one simple rule, "**Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth**" (II Tim. 2:15 KJV). God Bless!

ROGER REED

Mike DeWitt Sr.
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR 97477

Pastor
Parkway Landmark
Baptist Church
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR 97477



Foolish and unlearned questions are questions that really have no answer at all. They are philosophical questions that are of no spiritual usefulness to the edification of the saints. These topics of conjecture do not tend to faith, peace, or charity but gender (bring forth) strifes (a quarrel).

The reason they are unlearned and foolish we observe in the Scriptures, "**In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth**" (II Tim. 2:25) They have no knowledge of the truth and repentance has not been wrought in their hearts by God. Therefore by what we can gather from these Scriptures is that "**The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law**" (Deut. 29:29).

The very best way to not be ensnared into these discussions is to avoid them altogether. "**Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify**

another" (Rom. 14:19).

MIKE DEWITT

Matthew Stepp
Rt. 1 Box 1193
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor
Big Creek
Baptist Church
Rt. 1 Box 1193
Wayne, WV 25570



We would call them in today's vernacular "loaded questions". There is no correct way to answer, except 'their way'. In other words, they are questions that the 'asker' already knows HIS answer to, and he/she is just looking to argue. This is evidenced by the remainder of verse 23- "**But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.**"

We have an example in our Lord's life in Matthew 22:23: "**The same day came to him the Sadducees, which say that there is no resurrection, and asked him,**" a question about a man with seven wives and what would happen to them in a resurrection they did not even believe in! They had crafted a 'loaded' question with no answer they could see. Trying to gender strife! Our Lord answered bluntly and succinctly in verse 29- "**..Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, nor the power of God.**" And then He proceeded to develop a pertinent subject of His choice, the God of the living!

The context in II Timothy 2 shows that the questions themselves are not what is being warned against, but the "people" that ask them and the "manner" in which they ask them... "**Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart. ...In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves....**"

The Apostle is not rebuking the simple questions of the unlearned and young Christians in the Faith, but he is warning us to 'nip in the bud' any useless, strife-engendering debates with rascals or heretics. He sums up the chapter leaving such in God's hand, as we are helpless to go beyond the bounds of meek instructing into the realms of breaking stony hearts or imparting gifts of knowledge, faith and repentance. Verse 25- "**...if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth...**"

The opposite of "**foolish and unlearned**" questions are 'wise and educated' questions! This is the desired beneficial methods of those that are 1) gentle, 2) apt to teach, 3) patient and 4) meek. II Timothy 2:24-25: "**And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing....**"

May God bless these words, is our prayer...

MATTHEW STEPP

Tom Ross
6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH 45680

Pastor
Mt. Pleasant
Baptist Church
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH 45619



II Timothy 2:23 states: "**But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.**" There are two other verses in I Timothy that may help us to gain insight into the foolish and unlearned questions Paul warned the young preacher about. I Timothy 1:4 declares: "**Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith, so do.**" I Timothy 4:7 contains a similar warning: "**But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness.**"

The specific foolish and unlearned questions are not enumerated in the verses under consideration. However, from the general tone of warning contained in the epistles of First and Second Timothy we may discern that someone was trying to divert believers from the truth. The Judaizers who insisted that certain aspects of the law must be kept for salvation (works salvation) were famous for infecting people with error and heresy contrary to the doctrines of truth and godliness. They used myths, fables, and obscure genealogies to raise questions against the truth of the pure Gospel and the doctrines relating to it. The questions they raised produced division and strife rather than godliness.

The false teachers who raised the foolish and unlearned questions taught a form of works salvation based on lawkeeping (1:7-15) as opposed to faith in the Gospel. They were unfit to be teachers, elders, and deacons in the church which is why Paul set forth the qualifications for the office of a bishop and a deacon (I Tim. 3:1-13). The Spirit of God led Paul to label the myths and fables they taught involved abstaining from meats and marriage as doctrines of devils that caused some to depart from the faith (I Tim 4:1-3). Paul drew a sharp contrast between those who spoke wholesome words of truth according to the doctrine of Christ and those who were proud, ignorant, divisive, false accusers, and railers (I Tim. 6:3-5). Those raising the foolish questions desired to ruin and subvert their hearers with error rather than edify them with the truth of the Word of God (II Tim. 2:14-16). Their aim was infect rather than edify, causing strife and dissension rather than purity and godliness. The foolish and unlearned questions they raised and

◊ (Continued on page 392)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. What is an evangelist? (Eph. 4:11). What is the significance of its position being listed after a prophet, but before a pastor? - Mississippi

Matthew Stepp
Rt. 1 Box 1193
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor
Big Creek
Baptist Church
Rt. 1 Box 1193
Wayne, WV 25570



Simply put, an evangelist is a bearer or preacher of good news, particularly the Gospel. **"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"** (Isa. 52:7).

Five different gifts are listed in the text: Ephesians 4:11- **"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."** If the beloved reader will allow, I extrapolate that the question at hand is: Are these ranked in order of 1) importance? or 2) authority? To answer that, a (defined as authorized delegate of Jesus Christ) died with the Apostle John, as the last survivor of an elite appointment (Rev. 21:14). Clearly the most authoritative of the five gifts.

The prophet's office (defined as inspired authors or forthtellers) is also an office that has run its course (I Cor. 13:8-10) with the close of scriptural canon (Rev. 22:18-19). Also, a person of more than normal authority.

The last three, I believe, still exist for the purpose of **"...the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ"** as verse 12 tells us. Whether the evangelist has more authority or importance than the pastors and teachers is irrelevant. They are both to work under the authority of the church. I believe in modern terminology, the evangelist is the equivalent of a Baptist missionary, sent out by a church to bear good tidings of light to benighted areas of the globe, whether across town or the far ends of the earth.

The definition of a pastor (or bishop) is a shepherd or overseer. In other words, a more stationary office of tending to **"the perfecting of the saints"** and **"the edifying of the body of Christ."** A pastor is not even the primary evangelist even in his own congregation. The members are the ones that carry the good news to a multitude of lost folk in their daily lives.

Specifically, the gift of an evangelist that is given to some churches is a man of God that has been burdened with a

distinct ministry to a particular people in need of the Gospel. It is not unusual for that evangelist to eventually become a pastor or vice versa, a pastor to become an evangelist.

The purpose of the listing order of the last three gifts could suggest the Great Commission. Before they can be taught the **"all things"**, they must first be "discipled with the Gospel" and "baptized" into the fold. Thus the order of evangelist, pastor and teacher.

May God bless these words, is our prayer...

MATTHEW STEPP

Tom Ross
6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH 45680

Pastor
Mt. Pleasant
Baptist Church
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH 45619



Ephesians 4:11-12 states: **"And he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."**

There are only two other Scripture references where the word evangelist is found (Acts 21:8; II Tim. 4:5). Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words defines the word thusly:

"EUANGELISTES, lit., a messenger of good, denotes a preacher of the Gospel, Acts 21:8; Eph. 4:11, which makes clear distinctiveness of the function in the churches; II Tim. 4:5. Compare *euangelizo*, to proclaim glad tidings, and *euangelion*, good news, gospel. Missionaries are evangelists, as being essentially preachers of the Gospel." (p. 44)

Pastors are to do the work of an evangelist, meaning that they should preach the Gospel to the lost with a strong desire to see them saved. The work of an evangelist also would include teaching and preaching that edifies the church and brings spiritual maturity to the saints of God. This is what a pastor should be doing every time he preaches. It should also be the aim of every preacher who helps churches in Revival Meetings. So there is a real sense that the work of an evangelist may rightly be attributed to preachers, pastors, and missionaries as giving evidence of their call into the ministry.

The specific work of an evangelist

is what we would today identify as the work of a missionary. Every scriptural missionary/evangelist is sent out and authorized by the church to preach the Gospel to the lost, baptize converts, build up the saints, and organize missions into churches in time. May God be pleased to call men into this sacred ministry and fill them with the power of the Holy Spirit to execute their work.

I don't know what the significance of the order of the words are in the text other than the fact that the apostles and prophets were the first preachers in the early church. When the apostles died and the canon of Scripture was completed the office of apostle and prophet ceased. The work of evangelists, teachers, and pastors is still ongoing in the Lord's New Testament Baptist churches. May God grant all true God-called preachers, pastors, and missionaries the grace to consistently do the work of an evangelist.

TOM ROSS

Mike DeWitt Sr.
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR 97477

Pastor
Parkway Landmark
Baptist Church
PO Box 950
Springfield, OR 97477



"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers" (Eph. 4:11). The word evangelist denotes one who brings glad tidings, or a publisher of glad tidings. The name, as it has been said by others, is a work rather than an order.

We have Philip as an example of being named as an evangelist (Acts 21:8) and Timothy to do the **"work of an evangelist"** (II Tim. 4:5). Now whether or not Timothy is an evangelist we are not told. Philip is named as being an evangelist so I will write expressly about him. I just want to say that there were many other evangelists in the time of the early churches who filled the office, and others who were evangelists who filled other offices such as pastors and teachers.

Philip in the book of Acts chapter six was ordained by the Church of Jerusalem to fill the office of a deacon in order to tend the needs of the poor members of the church so that none of the members lacked. Along with Stephen and five others they served the church, and were as we recognize today as being missionary in regions beyond Jerusalem (Acts 8:5). This record we have of Philip is the miraculous work he was able to do for the confirmation of the gospel and the many souls saved for the glory and honor of God. This it would seem is the difference between the evangelist and the apostle, and the pastor. The apostle was chosen

by Christ and was given abilities and an office other disciples were not able to perform or fill. The evangelist, such as we see from the record of Philip, was chosen by the local church and some were given abilities that the apostles demonstrated for the confirmation of the gospel, while others who did the work of an evangelist may or may not have had these abilities that are enumerated in the books of Acts, all the while unable to fulfill the duties of the apostle. The pastor is a shepherd, a man of Go, set in a local visible church to perform the duties God has called him to perform. His work is to shepherd the flock, to establish and feed the lambs God has set in the churches. The pastor is a protector of the sheep from false doctrine and those who try to subvert the hearers and scatter the flock. I may be missing it, but the work of the pastor is much different than the two preceding.

I am not saying that the apostle could not be an evangelist or a pastor, or that an evangelist could not be a pastor, or a pastor could not be either of the three. As for the prophet by the record of God prophesied of events yet future while the evangelist spoke of events yet past as we do today.

MIKE DEWITT

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Missionary of
West Jefferson Missionary
Baptist Mission
90 E. Main St.
West Jefferson, Ohio 43162



The word **"evangelist"** only appears two times in the Bible (Acts 21:8) **"And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him."** And in II Timothy 4:5: **"But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry."** And the word **"evangelists"** (plural) is only found once, where the question has been taken from, (Ephesians 4:11) **"And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers."**

"Evangelists" are the Bearer of the Good News, preachers of the Gospel, traveling missionaries if you will as is the case with Philip in Acts chapter 8. And according to Acts 21:8 Paul had a company with him whom I believe were doing the work of evangelists, as was the case with Trophimus also: see Acts 20:4; 21:28-29; II Timothy 4:20.

I believe all ministers should **"do the work of an evangelist,"** but this does not mean that all ministers are evangelists (II Tim. 4:5). At this point I will bring

◊ (Continued on page 392)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 390) ♦

false doctrines they espoused were to be regarded as old wives' fables that had no basis in truth.

It would be wise for every true minister of the Gospel to take heed to the warnings in First and Second Timothy. Be faithful in preaching the Word at all times (II Tim. 4:1-5) with a desire to encourage and edify people with the truth. Teach doctrines and principles that lead to godly living. Provide an example of compassion and concern for the unsaved (II Tim. 2:10, 24-26). Don't try to impress people with philosophy or fancy speech. Speak the truth in love and live a life that is gracious and kind. Man of God, keep it simple! Preach truth, expose error, edify the saints, challenge ungodliness, live right, do right, and treat people right. Have a passion for the souls of men with a burning desire to see folks saved by sovereign grace.

TOM ROSS



Forum #2

(Continued from page 391) ♦

in the second half of the question, which is the significance of the position of the "evangelists" between the "prophet" and "pastor;" I will touch more on this a little later. The Apostles and Prophets laid the foundation of the church, and the Evangelists built on it by winning the lost to Christ. (And for clarification, I didn't say they saved the lost but won the lost to Christ). I believe we have many examples that those believers in the early church were witnesses for Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41-47; 11:19-21), as should be the case today but sad to say I am afraid that is not the case.

There are some people today that have a God given gift (or talent if you prefer) to evangelize. But just because we don't have the gift or talent does not excuse us from having a burden for lost souls and or witnessing to them, and this goes double for true Baptists. We, more so than any other Christian group, should be most concerned for the lost.

I believe there is a significance of the position in which an "evangelist" was placed between a "prophet" and "pastor." We can see by Scripture that a New Testament "prophet" is one who proclaims the Word of God. Acts 11:28: "And there stood up one of them named Agabus, and signified by the Spirit that there should be great dearth throughout all the world: which came to pass in the days of Claudius Caesar." And Ephesians 3:5: "Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the

Spirit." We have to remember that there were no Bibles in the early churches, that is, not the completed Bible as we have it today because the New Testament was not written and completed as yet.

So then in order for the people to know God's will, His Spirit would share God's truth with those possessing the gift of prophecy. I would have to agree with some writers that the purpose of prophecy is "edification, encouragement, and consolation" (I Cor. 14:3). I like the way The Amplified Bible captures the full meaning of this verse "...the one who prophesies—who interprets the divine will and purpose in inspired preaching and teaching— speaks to men for their upbuilding and constructive spiritual progress and encouragement and consolation."

Without dragging out the answer, let me just state this, it was a matter of authority and order to place these men the way it is stated in Ephesians 4:11. The "apostles" were invested with authority, "prophets" were instruments of divine revelation for the church, but did not have the governing power of the "apostles", "evangelist" were to announce the glad tidings that brings the needy soul to the Saviour. So the order was significant which is very well proven by I Corinthians 12:27-31: "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."

As for the "pastor" he was, and is, to feed, nourish, and lead the flock he was given; a grave responsibility (I Peter 5:1-4).

There must be order in the church and I believe the verses before the reader should be ample proof of that order, and with more study I'm sure the one who has asked such a needful question will come to see the reason for that order. "Let all things be done decently and in order" (I Cor. 14:40).

ROGER REED



God's Ideal Woman

(Continued from page 389) ♦

could put on a good front to the general public and the church. At the right time and place her language is cheerful, instructive, and appropriate to the season and company. It is soft, smiling, and sweet at church. Among the saints she engages in pharisaical and sanctimonious

pretensions. But at home with her husband and children her tongue has the venom of a serpent and the sting of a scorpion. At home her speech is filled with bitterness and rudeness. She is always complaining and scolding in a screaming voice. This keeps the nerves of her husband and kids on edge. Some men divorce their wives to be able to enjoy silence and peace. This is one of the great tragedies of our time.

KNOWS NO IDLENESS (V. 27)

The godly woman is greatly concerned about the actions and habits of her household: "Tsade---She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness" (Prov. 31:27). She exercises careful surveillance over all that goes on in her household. Evil speaking and immoral behavior are banished from every place where her influence extends. She takes care that nothing indecent or offensive stain the honor of her family. This is why Apostle Paul enjoined Christian women to be "keepers at home" (Tit. 2:5).

She "eateth not the bread of idleness." Her bread is well earned by her labor, and she eats it with a good appetite. The godly woman knows that a man's work is from sun to sun, but a woman's work is never done. Like the Apostle Paul, she is of the opinion "that if any would not work, neither should he eat" (II Thess. 3:10). She also knows if a woman has nothing to do the Devil will find her something to do.

Unlike the ideal woman of Proverbs 31, a good many women like to eat and drink in idleness. They cannot wash their dishes, clean their house, or make up the beds because they must watch their soap operas on the TV. They have time to go to clubs, worldly places, to fashionable entertainment, etc. They have time to gossip on the phone and get the latest rumors in the neighborhood, but they never find time to cook their husbands a decent meal. One husband was so disgusted that he once said, "I'm not going to ask my next wife if she can cook, but will she cook." Sad to say, but some young wives do not know how to boil water without scorching it! Such women are eating the bread of idleness.

LOVABLE (V. 28)

The model wife enjoys the esteem of those whom she loves: "Kuph---Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her" (Prov. 31:28). Here are children united in love to one another and in great commendation of their mother. They ascribe their well being and blessing to her godly training and instruction. Her tender guidance, her wise advice, her loving discipline, her godly example, are ever before them. They pray for her, honor her, praise her, and bless God that they had such a good mother. They grow up into life a credit to her early care and concern. What an enviable scene is this!

"Charles Haddon Spurgeon of London once said to his students: 'When I am gone all sorts of people will write my life. They will have some difficulty in accounting for the position God has given me. I can tell you two reasons why I am what I am.' He paused and then slowly and thoughtfully added, 'My mother and the truth of my message.' And so has it been with great men and women of affairs back through the history of Christendom---they were mother-made" (Oscar Lowry in *A Virtuous Woman*, pp. 154-155).

"If I had all the mothers I ever saw to choose from, I would have chosen you," said Thomas Carlyle, in a letter to his mother. "All that I am, all that I hope to be, I owe to my angel mother---blessings on her memory! I remember my mother's prayers. They have always followed me. They have clung to me all my life," said Abraham Lincoln. (*Ibid.*, p. 155).

On all occasions her husband speaks well of her. He praises God for giving to him the best woman on earth. He cannot refrain from bestowing praise on the one who has sweetened all his cares, comforted him in every distress, and given him good advice in his perplexities. Such a woman is his joy and crown. It is no wonder that on all occasion his praise of her is most eloquent.

EXCELS IN VIRTUE (V. 29)

A virtuous woman has no equal: "Resh---Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all" (Prov. 31:29). Many daughters of their father's house and godly women in the world have done virtuously, but the virtuous woman of Proverbs 31 excels them all. There is nothing wrong with having the ambition to excel others, if it is in the things of the Lord.

GOD-FEARING (V. 30)

The crown of her character is completed by the words: "Shin---Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain: but a woman that feareth the LORD shall be praised" (Prov. 31:30). Beauty recommends none to God, nor is it any certain indication of wisdom and goodness. Natural beauty has governed many a man in his choice of a wife. Sadly, he discovers that outward looks often hide a deformed soul and a depraved mind. Loveliness of form is a flower which fades in a day, and the lusts produced by it are but transient passions (Isa. 28:1). Years filled with sin and iniquity will cause it "to consume away like a moth" (Ps. 39:11). The passing of the years and the grave take away physical beauty. The psalmist wrote: "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them. . .and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling" (Ps. 49:14).

More important than fleshly beauty is the fear of God reigning in the heart. This beauty of soul never fades but improves with the years. It is the secret

♦ (Continued on page 393)

God's Ideal Woman

(Continued from page 392) ♦

of a virtuous life. The ways of a virtuous woman, her words, her dress, and her discipline of the children, are all ordered as in the presence of a holy God. The woman who has beauty of character shall always have the praise of good people and God.

The fear of the Lord is the most essential part of the character of a model mother. It sanctifies every part of her and makes her all glorious within. A meek and quiet spirit excels all outward features as much as Heaven is higher than earth and eternity is longer than time. In the sight of God it is of great price. Good character will last for ever and safely carry one through the valley of the shadow of death to the Savior's waiting arms. Death consumes the beauty of the body, but not the beauty of the soul!

REWARDED (V. 31)

The godly woman must enjoy the blessings which her zeal and prudence have obtained for her: **"Tau---Give her the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates"** (Prov. 31:31; cf. Ps. 128:2). The fruit of her hands is a well ordered house, godly children, a happy husband, and a beauty in her character. One day she shall receive from the Lord the crowns she has won on earth by being a good wife and a faithful mother of children. For enduring some husbands and kids some women may have a train-load of crowns!

Wherever men congregate on earth, wherever the elders gather in solemn assembly, there her praise is sung. Her lifelong actions have spoken to all, and their unanimous verdict is to assign to her the highest honor. She does not seek such praise, but her actions are so praiseworthy that men cannot hold their peace (Rom. 13:3). Boaz said of Ruth that **"all the city of my people doth know thou art a virtuous woman"** (Ruth 3:11). Her works will follow her to the Judgment Seat of Christ. There she will be publicly praised by Christ Himself (Matt. 25:21,34-40; II Cor. 4:5; I Pet. 1:7; Rev. 14:13).

CONCLUSION

1. There is no book like the Bible. Where in any other book, old or new, can you find such a splendid ideal of womanhood? Books written by fallible men and women do not compare with the inspired words of Lemuel's mother in Proverbs 31. Here in these verses is a looking glass for Christian women to dress themselves by in all ages.

2. Young man, read and study Proverbs 31 carefully. Look for a wife who is like the virtuous woman in Proverbs 31. This is the kind of woman you must have to share your sorrows and joys, your triumphs and tragedies, in this earthly life. Be encouraged in your search, seeing "a

prudent wife is from the LORD" (Prov. 19:14). Proverbs 18:22 says: **"Whoso findeth a wife findeth a good thing, and obtaineth favour of the LORD."**

The Bible does not teach that women in Old Testament times were idle ornaments of the harem. Women in Bible times worked willingly with their hands in the home. The idea that work is degrading to a woman does not come from the Bible. Young girls should have more to do than to pretty up and lay in bed, talking on the phone, or listening to the record player. Idleness is degrading to young girls and married women.

4. Behold the vanity of natural beauty. The bloom of beauty fades with youth. Beauty of face may have no corresponding mental and moral merit. Solomon said: **"As a jewel of gold in a swine's snout, so is a fair woman which is without discretion"** (Prov. 11:22). A pretty face has deluded many a young man and caused him to neglect more important considerations in his choice for a wife. Bad temper may be taken for strength and softness of disposition for love. But the passing of the years will dispel these mistakes when it is too late to be of any use. Young man, remember beauty fades; goodness endures. Beauty of character is the beauty of holiness, and this is more important than bodily form and skin complexion.

5. It is the fear of God that gives worth and morality to character! Only God knows what a debt the world owes to virtuous and unselfish women. Heaven be praised for the toils and prayers of good women! Those who had the priceless advantage of a mother possessed of Christian virtues have more to thank God for than if they had inherited titles and lands. The world can never praise God-fearing women enough, for the hand that rocks the cradle rules the world. An ideal woman, like the one in Proverbs 31, is the best thing this side of Heaven---the purest character on earth---the corner stone of Christian civilization.

Aristotle once said, "If women be good, the half of the commonwealth may be happy where they are." Martin Luther, the Reformer, said, "The greatest gift of God is a pious, amiable spouse, who fears God, loves His house, and with whom one can live in perfect confidence."

"Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies" (Prov. 31:10).



Anguish of Parents at the Perverseness of Children

By Edward Payson
(1783 - 1827)

"And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept; and as he went, thus he said, O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!" (II Sam. 18:33).

With the character of Absalom, his unnatural rebellion, and his untimely, but merited fate, you are all I presume acquainted. You doubtless recollect, that, being defeated in a battle which he fought, with a view to dethrone his father David, he was entangled in his flight among the boughs of an oak, and there, suspended between the heavens and the earth, was slain by his pursuers. In our text, we have an account of the manner in which his father was affected, by the tidings of his death. He was much moved, and retired to his chamber weeping, and exclaiming as he went, **"O Absalom, my son, my son Absalom! Would God I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!"**

It cannot I think be doubted, at least no pious parent will doubt, that the grief which David felt on this occasion, was caused principally, though not solely, by an apprehension that his son was unprepared for death, and that of course his soul was lost forever. He knew what had been his character and conduct; he knew that he was suddenly cut off in the midst of his sins, with little or no opportunity for repentance; and he knew, for he tells us in one of his psalms, that all the wicked, and all that forget God, shall be turned into Hell. He could not, therefore, but greatly fear, or rather feel almost certain, that this was the portion of his son.

It is probable, also, that the anguish occasioned by this heartrending thought, was aggravated by the inflection, that in consequence of having neglected to restrain and correct his son, in early life, he had been indirectly the occasion of his ruin. Hence his bitter cries; hence especially his wish that he had died in his son's stead. He was himself prepared for death; and, therefore, it would have been to him a comparatively trifling evil, and he hoped, that, had Absalom lived, he might have repented of his sins, and become prepared for death. Now, all such hopes were blasted at once, and forever.

My hearers, there are two classes of persons in this assembly, to whom some reflections on the subject before us may be profitable. They may be so to the irreligious children of pious parents; and to pious parents themselves.

I. I would call to this subject the



attention of every sinner present, who has a pious parent, or parents, still living. I wish to show such persons how much anguish they occasion their parents, by neglecting to prepare for death.

Of this anguish such persons think, because they know, very little. It is desirable that they should know more of it because this knowledge may lead them to serious reflection, and perhaps to repentance.

Permit me then to remind those of you, whom I am addressing, that the hearts or feelings of all truly pious persons are very much alike. Every Christian parent in David's situation would feel, in some measure, as David felt. Every Christian parent feels a similar concern for the souls, the eternal interests of his children. Your parents feel this concern for you. Consequently, your remaining in an irreligious state occasions them much unhappiness; for it is not only over a dead child that such parents weep. No, they are distressed for you now, while you are in the full enjoyment of health.

In the first place, they are distressed by apprehensions that you may be led astray by vicious companions, or become the slaves of some vicious habit, or embrace false and destructive sentiments respecting religion. They have cause to entertain such apprehensions. They have often seen the children of even pious parents fall a prey to these evils; they have seen those who in their youth were amiable, correct, and full of respect for religion, afterwards become enslaved by dissipation, intemperance, and infidelity; they know that your hearts resemble theirs, and that you are exposed to similar temptations. How can they then but be distressed for you? It will be in vain to attempt to relieve their distress by assuring them, that you will never forsake the path of rectitude. They know too well, how little human resolutions and promises are worth. They have witnessed the failure of the strongest resolutions, and they have reason to fear that yours will be broken in a similar manner. They know that there is but one being who can hold you up; but one Shepherd who can keep you from wandering, and to this Shepherd they cannot persuade you to come. They have, therefore, no security that you will not become the vilest of the vile. This being the case, their anxiety must be as great as the affection which they feel for you, and as their desire to see you happy. Were these however the only

♦ (Continued on page 394)

Anguish of Parents

(Continued from page 393) ♦

dangers to which you are exposed; were you not immortal, accountable creatures, the distress which your parents feel for you would be comparatively small.

But, in the second place, they are much more distressed by fears that you will perish forever. They believe what God has said respecting the future state of those who die in their sins. They know the terrors of the Lord. They know that unless you repent, you will perish. They know that unless you are born again you cannot see the kingdom of God. They know that God is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell, where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched; and that he will thus destroy you, should death come and find you unprepared. Knowing these things, and loving you as they do, how great must be their anguish! How must they feel when such reflections as these crowd into their minds: Perhaps this child, whom I have so often caressed and nourished, over whom I have so often wept, and for whom I have cared and labored so much, will continue an enemy of the God Who made him; will live only to fill up the measure of his iniquities, and to treasure up wrath; then die unprepared, and be miserable forever. Hence they often think of you, and weep and pray for you, when you are quietly sleeping. Hence, the more careless and thoughtless you appear, the greater is their anxiety. Hence they earnestly look and wait for some appearances of religious sensibility, notice all such appearances with delight, and feel the most painful disappointment when they vanish.

In short, could you know all the sorrows which your parents have suffered since your birth, you would find that a great part of them have been occasioned by anxiety for you, for your immortal interests; and that to the same cause is to be ascribed, a great part of their daily sorrows. You can in some measure conceive what would have been the feelings of Noah, when he saw the flood approaching, had one of his sons, in defiance of all warnings and entreaties, refused to believe its approach, and enter the ark. What then must be the feelings of your parents, how greatly must it diminish the joy which their own safety occasions, to see you out of Christ, and hourly exposed to the wrath, which, as a deluge, will come upon the world of the ungodly; to see that all their warnings and entreaties cannot persuade you to

fly from this wrath.

The distress which you thus occasion them is further aggravated by the reflection, that if you perish, your doom will be peculiarly terrible. You have enjoyed peculiar privileges. You have been dedicated to God, you were early taught to know His will, you have often been entreated, admonished, and warned, you have enjoyed the benefits of religious example, and have been preserved from many temptations to which the children of irreligious parents are exposed. Now if notwithstanding all these privileges, you live and die without religion, how aggravated will be your guilt! ---how terrible your condemnation! Yours will be the doom of one who knew his Lord's will and did it not, and who is therefore deservedly beaten with many stripes; and it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah, in the day of judgment, than for you. All this, your parents well know,

progress from infancy up to manhood, and the hopes which they had often indulged that he would prove a comfort to them, in their old age. And now what was the end of all these pleasures and hopes? That son, the son of his affections, his joys, his hopes, endeared to him by all these tender recollections, was dead; and, what was ten thousand times worse had died in his sins. His mangled body lay buried under a heap of stones, and his soul---O where was his immortal soul? ---what was it even then suffering!

But this reflection was too terrible. As often as the agonized father's thoughts attempted to follow his son into the world of spirits, they were met and driven back by horrors of which he shuddered to think, but which he could not banish from his mind. He felt that he should never meet his son again, never---never. They were not only separated, but separated forever. And O how did

by dying before me. True; but should it be so, your neglect of religion will give additional sharpness to their dying pangs. Could they leave you safe in the love of a Heavenly Father, they might leave you without a tear. But to leave you in such a world as this without a protector, to leave you in the broad road to destruction, in that road which leads directly away from the heaven to which they are going; to leave you uncertain whether you will ever follow them to glory, ---O this will be painful indeed. Some present have already occasioned this pain to a dying parent. Yes, the last moments of that father, that mother, whom you still perhaps remember, at times with a sign or a tear, were embittered by the thought that they left you without God in the world, and of course without hope. And O how much more would their last moments have been embittered, could they have foreseen that their dying counsels, prayers, and tears would produce no more effect upon you, and be so soon forgotten. Will you not from this time begin to cry, God of my parents, forgive me that I have neglected thee so long; forgive me that I have paid no more regard to the parting advice of those whom Thou hast taken to Thyself.

But to return to those whose parents are still living. You have heard a little, and words can tell but little, of the distress which you occasion your parents by neglecting religion. And now permit me to ask, will you continue to occasion them this distress? Will you expose them to the additional anguish of seeing you die, or of dying and leaving you without hope? Is this the only return which they deserve from you for all

that they have done and suffered for your good? Will you compel them, after they have spent the day in laboring for your support, to retire at night, sorrowful, and almost broken-hearted, and water their pillow with tears? Are any so hardened as to reply, we do not wish our parents thus to distress themselves on our account; we see no occasion for all this anxiety. True, you do not see it, and for this very reason they are the more anxious. And as long as they love you, they cannot cease to be anxious. To wish them not to feel distressed on your account is to wish them not to love you. Or will any reply, we see nothing in our parent's conduct which leads us to believe that we occasion them so much unhappiness. Alas, they dare not tell you all their feelings, nor dare they speak to you on religious subjects as often as they wish, lest it should disgust and harden you. They are aware that

♦ (Continued on page 395)



and they are sometimes almost afraid to address you on religious subjects, lest all their attempts to effect your salvation, should only serve, in consequence of your neglecting them, to aggravate your guilt and wretchedness.

In the third place, if you persist in neglecting religion, the distress which your parents now feel may be raised to the highest pitch, by seeing you die without hope. Then they will feel as David felt, and wish, like him that they could have died for you. Conceive if you can what his feelings were. He probably recollected the joy which was occasioned by his son's birth, the delight with which the fond parents contemplated his uncommon beauty; the pleasure which they felt, when, with tottering steps he first ventured to pass from one to the other, and which was renewed when he began to lisp their names; the deep interest with which they had watched his

the father's heart sicken with anguish, while these thoughts swiftly passed and repassed through his mind! And can any of you think, with calmness, of wringing your parent's hearts with such anguish? Yet such anguish they would feel, should they see you die unprepared. To see you die would be a sore trial to them, even though you should die the death of the righteous. It would be a trial under which they would need strong consolation. But this would be nothing; I may say rather, it would be transport, compared with the misery of seeing you die the death of the wicked; of seeing you, like him, driven away in your wickedness.

Will you then by continuing to neglect religion, prepare for that hour, the most painful hour which a parent's heart can know, this additional pang? Will you infuse new bitterness into that cup, which is of itself sufficiently bitter? Do you reply, perhaps my parents will escape this trial

Anguish of Parents

(Continued from page 394) ♦

you do not love such subjects, and that if they are pressed upon you too frequently, the effect may be hurtful, rather than salutary. Let me then beseech you to lay these things seriously to heart. And O that the God at whose feet those prayers have been poured out, may render these considerations efficacious to your salvation, and save your parents from the anguish of seeing you die in despair, and from pouring forth fruitless wishes over your remains, that they had been permitted to die in your stead.

II. I proceed now, as was proposed, to press the subject upon the attention of pious parents; for such parents may learn from it many important truths. In the first place, you may learn from it that no parent, whose children are not all pious, can be certain that they will ever become so, or certain that he shall not be called to weep over some of them, wishing that he had died in their stead. Perhaps most religious parents, when distressed with apprehensions respecting the fate of their children, endeavor to quiet these apprehensions, by hoping that, sooner or later, they will become the subjects of conversion. And some times they seem to take it for granted that this will actually be the case. They know that many will perish, but none of their children are to be of that number. We readily allow that if parents are conscious of doing every thing in their power to promote the salvation of their children; if they educate them, watch over them, pray for them, as they ought, they may, with propriety hope, though they cannot be certain, that they will be converted. But perhaps those parents are most ready to indulge such hopes, who have the least right to entertain them; those I mean, who are most negligent of the souls of their children, and whose religion is in a declining state. The hopes which such parents entertain respecting the future conversion of their children are of precisely the same nature, with the hope that every impenitent sinner entertains respecting himself. He hopes, though he has no reason for such a hope, that if conversion be necessary, he shall, sometime or other, be converted. And so these parents hope that their children will be converted, though like the sinner, they neglect their duty. But let such parents look at David, and learn that not only good men, but men eminently good, may be called to weep in anguish over a child who has died impenitent. And if this is not sufficient to convince them, let them look at the children of Eli, who were wicked to a proverb; at the sons of Samuel who walked not in his ways, and at the many other instances, mentioned in Scripture, of eminently pious parents whose children proved most abandoned

characters. Surely, these instances, as well as daily observation, must convince all, that no parent can be certain that he shall not be called on to weep as David wept.

From this subject, Christian parents may learn, in the second place, the fatal consequences of neglecting their duty to their children. David, though a great man, was guilty of this neglect. It is said of Adonijah, another of his sons, that his father had not at any time displeased him, saying, why hast thou done so? And there seems to be abundant reason to believe that he indulged his other children in the same injudicious and sinful manner. Doubtless he prayed for them, and gave them religious instruction, but he did not restrain and reprove them as he ought to have done. Hence the foul sins which stained his family. Hence the conduct and fate of Absalom. While he indulged, he ruined him, and prepared bitterness for himself. See pious Eli, scourged in an equally terrible manner for the same fault. His sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not, and therefore God says, I will judge his house forever, nor shall the iniquity of his house be purged by sacrifice or burnt-offering. Christian parents, think often of these instances; for they stand as a pillar of salt, to warn you not to neglect the duty which you owe to your children. Yet as it respects many, they seem to stand and warn almost in vain. A neglect of parental duties, or an injudicious manner of performing them, are among the most prevalent and threatening evils which are to be found among us. There is perhaps no evil which threatens more danger to the cause of religion, and I may add, to the prosperity of our country. Unless the hearts of children shall be soon turned to their parents, and the hearts of parents to their children, God will certainly come and smite the land with a curse. Do you ask, what is to be done? I answer, the root of the evil, I conceive, lies here. Christian parents do not pray sufficiently for wisdom and grace, to enable them to perform their duty. They pray indeed for these blessings, but they do not pray sufficiently. They feel that ministers ought to be men of prayer; but they do not consider that to educate a family is little if any less difficult, than to perform the duty of a minister. Nay, in some respects, it is more so; for many men have been useful ministers, and yet failed greatly as parents. Even David, though he has for centuries instructed us by his writings, failed, you perceive, in this respect. Parents, then, who would avoid this failure, must not only pray, but pray frequently and fervently, for wisdom and grace from on high, as well as for a blessing on their endeavors. If this is neglected, all the anxiety and distress which you may feel for your children will be vain, and you may see them perish.

Can you bear the thought? Look at

those of them who are yet infants or in the early part of childhood. See how they depend on you, how they cling to you, in how many engaging, endearing ways, they twine themselves around your hearts. And can you bear to think of their growing up to be vicious or abandoned, to fall a prey to dissipation, debauchery, and intemperance, to live without God, and die without hope, and to become fiends hereafter? In a word, can you bear to think of being in David's situation, when he heard of Absalom's death? If not, O awake seasonably, and exert yourselves diligently. Be assured that you will find it much less difficult and painful to perform your duty, than to bear the consequences of neglecting it. But perhaps religion is in a declining state in your own heart, and therefore you have little faith or disposition to pray. And is it so? So you remember, it once was with David. He declined, at length he fell openly, and his fall was chastised by a declaration from Jehovah, that the sword should never depart from his house. In a similar manner, your religious declensions may be punished. You may be made to suffer in the persons of your children, and to feel that remorse which David felt, when in the ruin of his son, he saw the consequences of his own folly. Believe me, believe me, Christians, or rather, believe God, you cannot become negligent in religion, without suffering for it; and if the thoughts of your own sufferings are not sufficient to rouse you, O think of your children, and be roused.

I shall conclude with a word to those parents who feel no concern for the conversion or for the souls of their children. Permit me to ask such parents, why they are thus unconcerned? Our Saviour was distressed for the Jews and wept over them. Paul felt great heaviness and continual sorrow of heart, for his unconverted countrymen. The Psalmist could say, I beheld the transgressors, and was grieved; rivers of waters ran down mine eyes, because men keep not thy law. Yet you do not feel for your own children, as they felt even for strangers. And does not this prove conclusively that you do not resemble the Saviour and His disciples, that you have no particle of the spirit which glowed in their breasts? Yes, if any thing can prove this, if any thing can prove that you do not believe the Scriptures, it is your indifference respecting the spiritual, eternal interests of your children. While you feel thus unconcerned respecting their souls, it is evident that you cannot have learned the worth of your own, nor have taken any measures to secure its salvation. But surely, if children at any time, or in any place, need the counsels, example and prayers of pious parents, they need them at such a time, and in such a town, as this. You see what multitudes of children are here growing up. You see what courses many

of your youth pursue, what a pitch of wickedness many of them have already reached. Yet you cannot even pray that your children may be preserved from such courses, and the reason is, you have never learned to pray for yourselves. O, then, if you love your own souls, or the souls of your children, learn to pray, that you may go before them in the path to Heaven, and perhaps they will follow.



A Dose of Reality

"Common Sense Comments"

by Joseph Harris
Chairman of Biblical Studies
Southeastern Baptist
College, Laurel, Mississippi
www.miniedition.net



Mother Government

As government continues to grow by leaps and bounds, more demands of ownership are exercised, whether on the national or state level. This is being seen more and more in some schools around the nation as they shut out parental influence and claim ownership of the students. One event that has contributed to this usurpation was a 9th Circuit Court of Appeals decision back in 2005, which stated that parents no longer have exclusive rights concerning the education of their children. A group of parents sued a certain school district because of a sex survey given to their first graders (coming soon to a school near you, so don't be shocked). In response, the court stated that parents not only have no voice in what schools teach, but they also wrote "parents have no due process or privacy right to override the determinations of public schools as to the information to which their children will be exposed while enrolled as students." That should make you feel warm and fuzzy inside, if you are a parent. If you are a good parent, it should burn you up.

On the other hand, look at the flip side. Government schools are just laying claim to their "deserved" parental authority. Take note of how many children today are supported by government. Since government pays for their pre-natal care, birth, medical insurance, food, etc., why wouldn't the government be considered their mother? Government, through its many and varied give-away welfare programs, is the parent of millions of children in this country. It is only natural that government, through its educational arm would assert its parental authority.

Mother government began conceiving children back in the days of FDR and has remained fertile to the present. We are well into over 70 years of a government

♦ (Continued on page 396)

A Dose of Reality

(Continued from page 395) ◊

dependent mentality. People think the government is supposed to handle their retirement through Social Security, additional retirement benefits through Medicaid, provide their daily bread through food stamp programs, supply insurance through Medicare, and now Obamacare, provide housing through government subsidies, and that's just naming some of the more well known programs.

The parental government has become a mainstream part of society. Even some law abiding, tax soaked citizens who work and play by the rules, will try to siphon into government programs to "get back" all they have paid in; after all it's their money. This type of thinking, at least in part, is derived from the parental government philosophy. However, the government does not owe social services to we the people. Two generations have had an umbilical connection for so long, they cannot begin to live and think independently. However, the teat has dried up.

So when I hear of government schools trying to usurp parental authority, I am not surprised. Government has been playing parent for so long, it is natural for her to lay claim to that in which she has invested.



Divinity of Christ

(Continued from page 381) ◊

pledge of our resurrection at the last day. But in reading the Scriptures I am led to entertain other views also of Christ, and to consider Him as sustaining a higher character, and if possible, more important offices than these. There is one circumstance by which Christ "appears wonderfully distinguished from all prophets and divinely commissioned teachers that had gone before him, and that is, "His having existed before His appearance in our world," in a state inconceivably glorious and happy. I think you will acknowledge that such an idea is very fairly deduced from the following passages, and that they must be greatly strained and forced to admit of any other interpretation. What other idea than that of Christ's pre-existence can we attach to the following language? **"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God; and the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. ---No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man, which is in heaven. What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before? I came forth from the Father, and am come into the**

world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father. Father, glorify thou me with. . .the glory which I had with thee before the world was. Before Abraham was, I am."

There are other passages in the apostolic writings not less conclusive than those already mentioned. Take the following, "Ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though he was rich, for our sakes became poor. This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners." In this latter passage, the salvation of sinners is said to have been Christ's "design" in coming into the world. This of necessity implies His pre-existence.

All those passages are conclusive on this point, which declare or suppose Christ to have been the Creator of the world. Of these there are many: I will here notice but one, **"He (i.e. Christ) was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not."** I will mention but one other passage that appears to me most decisive on the pre-existence of Christ. This is the celebrated one of the apostle Paul, in his epistle to the Philippians: and of which I may observe, that no translation that has ever been given of it, at all weakens its force, in this view. **"Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men."**

Now the question is, whether on reading the above passages ever so frequently, the impression would not be, on a plain, intelligent, and unbiased mind, that Jesus Christ had certainly existed before His appearance in our world, and that in a state inconceivably glorious and blessed. If this would be the general impression, we may, I think, consider the pre-existence of Christ as an established truth. In this view then, Christ rises far above all prophets and teachers that ever preceded Him, and must be supposed to have very powerful claims on our reverence and regard.

But you will perceive that although Christ's pre-existence proves the folly of supposing Him to be no more than a mere man, it yet does not necessarily prove His divinity. I feel, however, no doubt of Christ being truly and properly God; and I shall devote the remainder of this letter to a consideration of what appears to be the testimony of Scripture upon this subject.

If we look at the life and miracles of Christ Himself, we shall find that He displayed in the whole course of His ministry the attributes of divinity, and that in His conversations with his disciples and with the multitude, He made those declarations respecting Himself that could not, consistently with truth, be applicable to any other than a divine

being. The language of the prophets and apostles also goes to establish the same truth. Let us therefore look at the life and miracles of Christ, in connection with His own declarations, and the testimony of apostles and prophets, and we shall, I think, find satisfactory proof of the Godhead of Christ.

The miracles of Christ were of the most magnificent and benevolent kind. At the same time that they displayed His power, they showed forth His mercy. He gave eyes to the blind, and ears to the deaf; he made the dumb to speak, and the lame to walk; and He raised the dead to life again by the word of His mouth. He shewed Himself to have an uncontrolled dominion over the whole creation; for the same divine power that caused Lazarus to come forth from the tomb, multiplied the loaves and fishes to feed the multitude, and preserved His disciples in the midst of the sea, when He said to the winds and the waves, **"Peace, be still,"** and they obeyed Him. If it be objected to our conclusion from the miracles of Christ, that Moses and the apostles wrought miracles also, in support of their mission, and that, therefore, by the same reasoning they might claim equality with God; it may be remarked, in reply, that Moses wrought his miracles by the special command and direction of God, at the time that he wrought them: and with regard to the apostles, they were so far from professing to perform miracles in their "own name," that they ascribe all their miraculous powers to Christ. But Christ, in His miracles, displayed "independent" power and authority. Besides this, He formally endued His apostles with miraculous powers. It is recorded by the evangelist, that Christ called His twelve disciples together, "and gave them power and authority" to cure all diseases---and again, at His last interview with them after His resurrection, Christ says, **"these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; and they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."** And accordingly we find, that expressing their regard to His authority, and their entire dependence on power communicated from Him, they performed all their miracles **"in the name of Jesus of Nazareth."**

But Christ not only displayed in His miracles a "power" and "benevolence" truly divine; but He also, on many occasions, displayed the "omniscience" and "omnipresence" of God. It is evident, on many occasions, that He knew the thoughts of His friends and enemies; while they **"reasoned among themselves"** He was acquainted with all that was passing in their minds. When Christ declared to Nathaniel that when he was under the fig tree He saw him, Nathaniel, impressed with a sense of His omnipresence, answered, **"Rabbi, thou art the Son of God, the King of Israel."**

Where do we see "divine sovereignty," if not in the instance of forgiving sin? Now our Lord said to the man sick of the palsy, **"Thy sins be forgiven thee."** The Jews, considering Him as a mere man, said, **"within themselves"** this man blasphemeth; for who can forgive sins, but God only. But Christ, knowing their thoughts, said, "Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee; or to say, rise up and walk?" On this part of the Saviour's history, I would remark two things, first, that He showed His omniscience, for He knew "their thoughts," and secondly, that it was to Him a matter of equal ease, or that it was equally His prerogative to forgive sin, or to work miracles. But if so, He must have been God. Nothing is more true than the remark which the Jews made, that none can forgive sin, but God only. He is the being offended, and it must therefore rest with Him to pronounce forgiveness. I am aware it may be said, that God may empower a creature to "pronounce" that pardon which God alone can grant. But it may be replied, that if Christ had been invested only with a "ministerial" authority, it became Him to have said so, in which case He would not have been accused of blasphemy; for the blasphemy consisted, in the opinion of the Jews, not in "pronouncing" forgiveness by divine commission, but in His appearing to exercise forgiveness as a prerogative of His own. Certainly the impression made on the minds of the Jews from our Lord's conduct in this instance, was perfectly natural; viz. that He made Himself equal to God.

Let me now turn your attention to a few striking declarations of our Lord and His apostles, and we shall, I think, be compelled to acknowledge them as conclusive upon this great point. Now, I consider that declaration as not merely importing pre-existence, (with which view I quoted it before,) but also "divinity," **"Before Abraham was, I am."** Here is that awful name, by which Jehovah declared Himself when He appeared in the burning bush in Moses. It seems evidently to have been Christ's intention to bring that circumstance to the recollection of the Jews; and to intimate that it was He who appeared to Moses by the name, **"I am;"** which whatever else it may import, seems at least to express self-existence and eternity. Again, our Lord says, after having quoted a part of the sixth chapter of Isaiah's prophecies, that these things Isaiah said, when he saw the Messiah's glory, and spake of Him. It was then His glory that so overwhelmed the Seraphim, and of Him they spake when they cried, "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God of Hosts, the whole earth is filled with his glory." Nothing, I think, can be more conclusive than this, of the Godhead of Christ. Again, our Lord said, **"As the Father knoweth**

◊ (Continued on page 397)

Divinity of Christ

(Continued from page 396) ◊

me, so know I the Father. Can this be the language of a mere man, or of a creature, however exalted? Could any "creature" affirm that he knew God, even as God knew him? Can any thing finite comprehend what is infinite? Again, Christ declared to His servant John in Patmos, that He was **"the first and last."** If this was intended to express any thing, it was the "eternity" of Jesus Christ, and, consequently, His divinity. This was the very language that Jehovah had used to employ, to express His own eternity and Godhead, in opposition to the gods of the heathen. If therefore Christ were not truly and properly God, nothing could be more presumptuous than His use of such language, and nothing more calculated to lead John, and indeed the whole Christian church into a gross and fatal error.

Once more, can any thing be more majestic and godlike than the following language, spoken by Christ. "All the churches shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and the hearts, and giveth to every man according to his work." What could God say more when asserting one of the most awful attributes of His nature? Again, how can Christ be acquitted of presumption and blasphemy if He really was not divine? Did He not receive the humblest and devotest worship, as though it were His right? If He had been a mere creature, ought He not to have reprieved, or at least to have set Thomas right, when he exclaimed **"my Lord and my God?"** When John began to worship the angel in Patmos, he refused his homage, saying, **"I am thy fellowservant, worship God."** And if Christ were a mere man, or a creature of the most exalted rank, what but presumption would it be in His associating Himself in the baptismal form of words, with the Father, and the Holy Spirit? **"Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."** And how, if He were not God, could He have encouraged the apostles in the execution of their commission, by promising them His presence to the end of the world. Without the attribute of omnipresence, this promise could not have been fulfilled.

The prophets and the apostles taught the same truth---by the prophets, the Messiah was predicted under the following titles, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, Immanuel, God with us, and Jehovah our righteousness. The apostles style Him, The true God, God over all blessed for ever, God manifest in the flesh, The great God and our Saviour. You will find by examining the connection in which these expressions occur, that they cannot be made to apply to any one but to Christ, and I think your candour will force you to acknowledge

that they can import nothing less than His divinity.

The apostle John, whose writings are full of this truth, declares, in the beginning of his gospel, that the word that "was" God was "made flesh," and dwelt among us. In the account of the creation, it is said, that **"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."** John informs us that all things were made by the "word" that was "made flesh," and the apostle informs us that all things were made "for" Him. What, from such statements, can we infer less, than that Christ was God---God over all, blessed for ever? Especially when we add, that all the angels are commanded to worship Him, and that the following language was addressed to Him. **"Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever."** The Socinians say, that Christ died a martyr to the truth. But the charge, upon which He was arraigned, tried and condemned, was that of blasphemy; and this crime consisted in His "making himself equal with God." With their views of Christ, therefore, as a "mere man," they ought to agree with the Jews in considering Him as a "blasphemer." How can they consider Him as a martyr to the "truth," while they deny that very doctrine, the open confession of which cost Him His life?

But, my dear friend, I have not room to enlarge. These are a few of the many proofs of the divinity of Christ, with which the Scriptures abound---and the more carefully you study them, the more strongly I am persuaded they will appear to establish this truth. The Divinity of Christ, is, I am convinced, the impression that the "multitude" would receive from reading them. I think that from this brief and necessarily imperfect sketch, you will be disposed to agree with me, that if, in embracing the divinity of Christ, we embrace an error, it is an error into which, from reading the Scriptures, and especially the New Testament, we may very naturally slide.

(Baptist Magazine, April 1815).



On Women Speaking In the Church

Mr. Editor,

Having lately been led to question the propriety of sisters speaking in the church of Christ; I beg through your Miscellany to state my reasons for this; in order, that if these are unscriptural, I may be corrected by some of your numerous readers: but if, on the other hand, they appear to be founded in the will of Christ, that His wisdom and will may correct the past, and influence the future practice of those who, heretofore, have been in the habit of judging and acting otherwise.

I begin then by assuring your

readers, that my change of mind upon this subject, has not been owing to any cross or disgust I have received by that practice, which I now disapprove; but so far as I know, owing to what I consider as the plain meaning of the luminous language of the law of Christ. I once thought that to prevent their speaking would, in some instances, lead to lording it over their consciences; at which my heart revolted; and, I trust, I would no less dread it still. At that time also, when I gave countenance to this practice, I was willing to think that its prohibition in I Corinthians 14:34 referred only to their teaching in the church; but believing, as I now do, that the prohibition is "unlimited," I conceive it to be unscriptural for them to speak in the church "at all," not only by teaching, or by prayer, leading the devotions of the church, but by professing their repentance toward God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, or their future contrition and confidence: by imparting necessary information on any matter: in giving testimony to confirm any fact: in asking or answering any question: or by verbally assenting to, or dissenting from, any proposition "there." Having thus candidly stated my convictions, I now request to refer your readers to that source of divine authority, whence they arise, in I Corinthians 14:34-35. **"Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for a woman to speak in the church."**

"Let your women KEEP silence, in the churches." This prohibition seems fitted to make the most persuaded and determined upon the other side, pause and ponder whether they possess evidence of sufficient weight to overbalance this, and to draw them in an opposite direction; and especially, as it is forbidden in another still more peremptory, **"for it is not permitted for them to speak;"** and followed up by a third, **"but they are commanded to be under obedience,"** and all these riveted on our consciences by a confirming reference to the Old Testament revelation, **"as also saith the law."** To attempt any comment upon these expressions of the authority of Christ, would be more likely to throw dark over them, than light upon them, and deprive them of their edge, rather than to give them efficacy. But some are willing to believe from Paul's having just been speaking of prophesying, that women are hereby only prohibited from teaching. I confess there might have been some shadow of reason for limiting it to this, had not the apostle extended it, by adding in verse 35, **"And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home."**

Here Paul does not represent the

woman as "designing to teach," but as "desiring to learn," and still he continues the prohibition. Surely in a more humble and submissive situation, our sisters cannot be seen; yet their desire to learn, however urgent and devout, cannot be gratified at present, if in order thereunto, it be necessary for them to make any verbal enquiry in the church of God; this is not treating a female, or her case, with lightness; nor saying, "If any woman be ignorant, let her be ignorant." No, it is the very reverse; for while the wisdom and authority of God "for her own sake," shuts one door upon her in public, he opens a more suitable one for her in private, and enjoins upon her to improve it, **"Let her ask her husband AT HOME."**

This appears to me to be a wise, generous, and condescending, provision, for the satisfaction of sisters, in connection with kind attention to female diffidence and modesty, and at the same time a salutary check upon that forwardness which is seldom useful, and never amiable, or engaging, in females. Indeed the chief object of the interdict seems to be the preservation of the honour and reputation of the female character; **"For it is a shame for a woman TO SPEAK IN THE CHURCH."** Publicity is not her sphere of action, or influence, it is contrary to her nature, and for her to speak in the church is indelicate, for as it comports not with her make as a creature, so neither with that shamefacedness, which she must cultivate as a Christian; but is a violation of that modesty which is the ornament of the sex, and especially of **"women professing godliness."** Such seems to me to be the decision of Him, Who has purchased them with His blood, converted them by His grace, claims them as His own, and commands them to be conformed to His will.

Upon no subject in the Word of God does there seem to be such a combination of evidence and authority, in so small a compass, nor is the applications with which it is enforced less worthy of attention; doubtless it was necessary, in order to check the evil, therefore he asks, **"What! came the word of God out from you? Or came it unto you only?"** Hereby he seems to put them in mind that they were not the patterns to other churches; But ought to be followers of the churches which in Judea were in Christ, to whom God had first revealed His will, how they were to behave themselves in the house of God, and **"who had no such custom;"** and then adds, **"If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."**

But if these principles are just, it may be asked, "How is the mind of the woman to be obtained? If they do indeed exhibit the mind of Christ, we must find means to follow them; and here, as in

◊ (Continued on page 400)

THE BIBLE NEWS PAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

REPUBLICAN LEADER SEEKS ANSWERS FROM PRESIDENT OBAMA

(EP News)--House Minority Leader John Boehner asked President Obama for a progress report on how the administration was implementing the executive order banning taxpayer funding of abortion. The request came during a meeting with President Obama and other congressional leaders. Michael Steel, spokesman for Boehner's office, said the president was noncommittal. "The president indicated that he would provide some kind of an update on the implementation of the executive order," Steel said. Boehner brought up the same topic with Health and Human Services Secretary Kathleen Sebelius in a May letter and was even less encouraged by the lack of response. "There is no indication that they are moving in any way to implement the executive order in an effective way or a meaningful way," said Steel. "What I fear is that the effect is as we suspected at the time, that there is no effect at all of this executive order."

ILLINOIS STATE TREASURER DEFIES MARRIAGE LAW WITH DOMESTIC-PARTNER BENEFITS

(EP News)--The Illinois State Treasurer is allowing his employees to access even more domestic-partner benefits. Sandy Rios, president of the Culture Campaign, said Treasurer Alexi Giannoulias is disrespecting people in the state who strongly support traditional marriage. "They don't have any opportunity to vote on this," she said, "and it is wrong for some elected official, not even the governor, to issue such an executive order." The move goes against the Legislature's enactment of a Defense of Marriage Act. "We believe that marriage in Illinois is between one man and one woman," Rios said. Rios said she is convinced Giannoulias' action is a political statement in his run for U.S. Senate. "The bad news," she said, "is he's not going to endear himself to the people of Illinois by attacking marriage."

BANNING TEXT DEEMED 'RELIGIOUS' IN IDAHO SCHOOLS GETS CHALLENGED

(EP News)--The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) is asking the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals to take up a case involving the Idaho Public Charter School Commission's ban on the use of texts and documents interpreted as "religious." A federal judge had dismissed the lawsuit challenging the ban. "It goes to the heart of not only education, but the

teaching of the history of our country and in fact western civilization indeed," said David Cortman, senior legal counsel with ADF. "Does that mean students can no longer study the documents from our Founding Fathers? Many of these writings have religious basis to them." The Nampa (Idaho) Classical Academy had included the Bible — along with dozens of other religious and secular writings — as resources in its curriculum. "Schools have been doing this throughout American history," Cortman explained, "We're hoping the court will prohibit the state defendants from enforcing this broad-based ban on textbooks."

ANTI-DISCRIMINATION TRIAL AGAINST PHILADELPHIA BOY SCOUTS BEGINS

(EP News)--Jury selection begins this month in the case of a Boy Scouts of America chapter in Philadelphia fighting for the right to continue renting the office space it has occupied for more than 70 years. In 1928, the city made a deal with The Cradle of Liberty Council. The chapter would be given land to build its headquarters, which would then be given back to the city in exchange for an endless \$1 rent. The city contends the dollar rent is a violation of its antidiscrimination policy, because the Boy Scouts do not allow homosexual leaders. The Cradle of Liberty Chapter, which has been fighting the court battle for years, got a respite in 2000, when the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Scouts. Jason Gosselin, an attorney for the Boy Scouts, said the case is a First Amendment issue. "Because the Scouts can decide who their members are," he told the Philadelphia Inquirer, "the city's effort to take that benefit away...is a violation of free speech."

GOP EFFORTS TO REPEAL PROVISION IN HEALTH CARE LAW FALL SHORT

(EP News)--House Republicans used a parliamentary tactic June 15 to get Democrats on record again supporting a law mandating all Americans to purchase health care insurance. "The federal government has never required its citizens to purchase a particular product before," said Rep. Dave Camp, R-Mich. "And doing so with health insurance violates the basic principles of freedom and individual choice." Camp, the top Republican on the Ways and Means Committee, called for a "motion to recommit" — a parliamentary effort often employed by the minority party to change bills on the House floor — knowing he didn't

have the votes. It failed 187-230, but with 21 Democrats voting for repeal. Rep. Tom Price, R-Ga., said the vote needs to be a clarion call. "The most important thing to do right now across this country is to demonstrate to the American people that there are folks who are interested in governing responsibly and (in) a fiscally responsible manner."

FLORIDA LAW OFFERS FIRST AMENDMENT PROTECTIONS

(EP News)--Florida Gov. Charlie Crist has signed into law a measure designed to protect First Amendment rights of teachers, staff and students. House Bill 31 will give school boards the tools needed to resist the demands of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and other groups like it. A case involving the Santa Rosa County School District found the ACLU had drafted a decree that prohibited students from saying "God bless..." and banned teachers from participating in privately sponsored off-campus religious events or baccalaureate services. Mat Staver, founder of Liberty Counsel and dean of Liberty University School of Law, said, "The Florida Legislature saw what was happening, and they sent a strong message that they will not allow their schools to be religion-free zones."

LAWSUITS CHALLENGE OBAMACARE

(EP News)--The American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ) has filed a friend-of-the-court brief on behalf of 28 members of Congress and 70,000 Americans in support of a lawsuit brought by the Commonwealth of Virginia challenging health care reform. The ACLJ said the law forces Americans to purchase health insurance and violates the Commerce Clause of the Constitution. Colby May, senior counsel and director of the Washington office of the ACLJ, said the idea behind the suit is to bring down the entire bill. "If the court were to find that mandating the purchase of health insurance was a violation of the Constitution," May said, "then you couldn't otherwise actually implement any other portions of the health care bill." The ACLJ is also representing 70,000 Americans who make up the Constitutional Committee to Challenge the President & Congress on Health Care. Attorneys General from 14 states filed the suit challenging the constitutionality of the health care reform law just minutes after the bill was signed. Dozens of other states joined in the following weeks. Virginia filed a separate suit.

BACK ROOM DEALS ON DISCLOSE THREATEN FIRST AMENDMENT RIGHTS

(EP News)--H.R. 5175 is an attempt by Democrats to overturn a recent Supreme Court decision that found portions of the McCain-Feingold Campaign Finance Law to be unconstitutional. The bill would negatively affect grassroots organizations that inform voters on ballot issues. Many groups had stood in opposition to the bill, including the National Rifle Association (NRA), which

fears it would be muzzled by the measure. Reports from Capitol Hill reveal the NRA has struck a deal with lawmakers to exclude the organization from compliance along with some corporations. A letter from the National Right to Life Committee outlines the potential harm of the legislation. "(The bill) has been carefully crafted to maximize short-term political benefits for the dominant faction of one political party," the statement reads, "while running roughshod over the First Amendment protections for political speech that have been clearly and forcefully articulated by the U.S. Supreme Court."

HAWAII CIVIL UNIONS ON GOVERNOR'S VETO LIST

(EP News)--Hawaii Gov. Linda Lingle has published a list of legislation she may soon veto, including the recently passed civil unions bill. The bill would give special rights to gay couples in the state, without the name "marriage." Historically, most bills on such a list have been vetoed. Lingle has until July 6 to make her decision. Francis Oda, chairman of the Hawaii Family Forum, said his group will keep up the pressure on Lingle until she vetoes the measure. "We're gratified," he told The Associated Press, "and hopeful for an eventual veto."

FLORIDA GOVERNOR VETOES PRO-LIFE BILL

(EP News)--Gov. Charlie Crist vetoed an ultrasound bill in June that would have allowed abortion-minded women in Florida the chance to see an image of their preborn child. HB 1143 would have also banned taxpayer funding of abortion. This is the fourth time an ultrasound bill has been defeated. More than 63,000 people contacted the governor's office in the days leading up to the veto, with 36,104 of them asking him to please sign the measure. John Stemberger, president and general counsel of the Florida Family Policy Council, said, "[Crist] has lost all credibility as a public official. With this veto he demonstrates to Floridians that his representations on policy issues mean little to nothing. Even his often-stated commitment as a populist for 'the people' is apparently meaningless, as the majority of Floridians are pro-life and support the bill as evidenced by the overwhelming show of support." Crist's website was purged of all mentions of his stand on life issues. The Republican is running for the U.S. Senate as an independent.

FATHERS IN HOMES HELP PREVENT POVERTY

(EP News)—A new study from the Heritage Foundation says kids raised in a home with a married mother and father are much less likely to live in poverty, to be arrested or expelled, treated for emotional problems or drop out of school. Robert Rector, senior research fellow for domestic policy studies at Heritage, wrote the report. He said, "Marriage is a powerful weapon in fighting poverty. Being married has the same effect in reducing poverty as adding five to six

♦ (Continued on page 399)

Bible & The Newspaper

(Continued from page 398) ♦

years to a parent's education level." Each year the government spends 300 billion taxpayer dollars on low-income single moms.

"But if any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel" (I Tim. 5:8).

EXPANSION OF GAY BENEFITS THREATENS PRIVATE SECTOR

(EP News)--The Labor Department announced that the government will extend benefits to gay couples under the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA). FMLA allows private and public employees to take extended absences for serious medical conditions, including pregnancy, or to care for family members. The move is significant, because to date, the administration has only looked at benefits for federal employees. Peter Sprigg, senior fellow for policy studies at the Family Research Council, said the latest plan may cause trouble for private employers. "This action with the Family and Medical Leave Act is a huge leap beyond anything he's done before because he is imposing an obligation upon private employers," he said. "He's not the chief executive of every private employer in the country, and yet, he is telling them that they have to offer benefits to homosexual couples."

OBAMA HOLDS WHITE HOUSE RECEPTION FOR GAY PRIDE MONTH

(EP News)--During a White House reception held June 21 to celebrate "Gay Pride" month, President Obama reiterated his administration's accomplishments and commitment to aggressively implement this powerful donor block's priorities. "We've got a lot of hard work that we still have to do, but we can already point to extraordinary progress that we've made over the past year on behalf of Americans who are gay and lesbian, bisexual and transgender (GLBT)," Obama said. Also on that day, the secretary of state and of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced policy shifts affirming homosexuality. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, speaking to more than a thousand GLBT federal employees, said, "Human rights are gay rights and gay rights are human rights. Here at the State Department, we will continue to advance a comprehensive human rights agenda that includes the elimination of violence and discrimination based sexual orientation and gender identity."

OBAMA'S FATHER'S DAY PROCLAMATION HIGHLIGHTS HOMOSEXUAL DEBATE

(EP News)--The month of June is normally celebrated as the beginning of summer, a season where a bride joins her groom in matrimonial bliss, as well as a time for honoring our fathers. The president chose to highlight homosexual parenting in this

year's Father's Day proclamation. "Nurturing families come in many forms," Obama said, "and children may be raised by a father and mother, a single father, two fathers, a stepfather, a grandfather, or caring guardian." The president made a similar proclamation regarding "two mothers" for Mother's Day last month. Austin R. Nimocks, senior legal counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF), said the proclamations highlight the national debate. He said it hinges on the question: "Do you need the two great halves of humanity to have the ideal family and setting for children?"

CONGRESSIONAL LEADERS SET TO INTRODUCE "ANTI-BULLYING" BILL

(EP News)--A version of the Safe Schools Improvement Act, which supporters are calling anti-bullying legislation, was introduced before the July 4 recess by Sen. Bob Casey, D-Pa. Rep. Linda Sanchez, D-Calif., introduced similar legislation in the House last year. Kevin Smith, executive director of Cornerstone Action in New Hampshire, added the legislation chips away at the local control of schools. "This is the big hand of government in Washington telling the local school districts and the individual states how to do their job," said Smith, "and that is something that should be left up to the individual communities and for the states to decide."

RHODE ISLAND GOVERNOR VETOES EXPANSION OF HATE CRIMES

(EP News)--Rhode Island Gov. Don Carcieri vetoed a bill June 30 designed to expand the state's definition of a hate crime to include "gender identity" and "gender expression." The governor said the state's existing law already addresses actions "motivated by racial, religious, sexual orientation, gender and disability prejudice," therefore, the measure was not required. Caleb H. Price, an analyst for CitizenLink, commended Carcieri for seeing beyond politics and for understanding the long-term implications not only for marriage, but also for those struggling with gender confusion. "Those who struggle with gender confusion," Price said, "deserve our compassion and understanding - not laws that cement them into an identity which denies biological and objective reality." Gov. Carcieri's term ends in January 2011. Attorney General Patrick Lynch, a strong gay-advocate is vying for his seat.

WISCONSIN'S HIGHEST COURT RULES IN FAVOR OF MARRIAGE

(EP News)--The Wisconsin Supreme Court unanimously rejected on June 30 a challenge to the state's 2006 marriage amendment. Wisconsin voters approved the amendment 59.4 percent to 40.6 percent to define marriage "as a union between one man and one woman and prohibit recognition of any legal status similar to marriage for people of the same sex or different sexes." Gay

activists immediately challenged the voters' decision, claiming the amendment was unconstitutional, because the amendment dealt with two subjects rather than one. Circuit Judge Richard Niess agreed and upheld the marriage amendment, as "the preservation of the unique and historical status of marriage." People for the American Way and gay-activist groups vowed to challenge the decision.

"... let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband" (I Cor. 7:2).

ILLINOIS 'ANTI-BULLYING' BILL SIGNED INTO LAW, ERODES PARENTAL RIGHTS

(EP News)--Gov. Pat Quinn signed into law an "anti-bullying" bill for Illinois that threatens parental rights and makes it easier to promote homosexuality in classrooms. Quinn signed the bill in a school on Sunday prior to marching in the Illinois Gay Rights parade. While the concept of protecting children from "bullies" sounds logical, "anti-bullying" laws are being used across the country as tools to promote homosexuality in the classroom. To date, at least a dozen states have passed bills similar to the one in Illinois.

PASTOR YANKED FROM CAPITOL OVER "JESUS" PRAYER

(FOX News -Todd Starnes) A North Carolina pastor was relieved of his duties as an honorary chaplain of the state house of representatives after he closed a prayer by invoking the name of Jesus.

"I got fired," said Ron Baity, pastor of Berea Baptist Church in Winston-Salem. He had been invited to lead prayer for an entire week but his tenure was cut short when he refused to remove the name Jesus from his invocation.

Baity's troubles began during the week of May 31. He said a House clerk asked to see his prayer. The invocation including prayers for our military, state lawmakers and a petition to God asking Him to bless North Carolina.

"When I handed it to the lady, I watched her eyes and they immediately went right to the bottom of the page and the word Jesus," he told FOX News Radio. "She said 'We would prefer that you not use the name Jesus. We have some people here that can be offended.'"

When Baity protested, she brought the matter to the attention of House Speaker Joe Hackney. "I told her I was highly offended when she asked me not to pray in the name of Jesus because that does constitute my faith," Baity said. "My faith requires that I pray in His name. The Bible is very clear."

When the clerk returned, Baity said he was told that he would be allowed to deliver the day's prayer - but after that - his services would no longer be needed.

Hackney, a Democrat, and House Republican Leader Paul Stam released a joint statement to FOX News Radio: "It has been our practice in the North Carolina House of Representatives for many years to request, but not require, that our guest chaplains deliver

♦ (Continued on page 400)

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 6-1-2010 to 6-30-2010

Beginning Balance.....	\$10,241.20
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	1,200.00
.....	1,575.00
TOTAL.....	11,816.20
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	1,480.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,480.00
.....	\$10,336.20
Interest	+ .85
.....	10,337.05
Less Corbin, KY des.	-1,723.72
ENDING BALANCE	\$8,613.33

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance.....	\$763.72
RECEIPTS:	
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	1,000.00
TOTAL.....	1,763.72
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT	40.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,723.72

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 6-1-2010 to 6-30-2010

Beginning Balance.....	\$1,808.46
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX.....	25.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	26.49
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	1,051.50
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN	150.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	100.00
Bible Believer's B. C., Naples, ID	100.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR.....	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	200.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL.....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....	35.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Lord's Ch. at Beverly Hills, Goose Ck, SC ..	100.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....	100.00
New Testament B. C., Wake Forest, NC	20.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
New Testament B. C., Leivasy, WV	125.00
Orlando Cruz, Hunlock Creek, PA	15.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumersville, AR.....	50.00
Rose Young, Senatobia, MS	1.00
South Park M. B. C., Seattle, WA	25.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C. Silsbee, TX	30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C. Warren, OH.....	75.00
Timothy Hille, Ashland, IL	2.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	64.00
Dividing checks	150.00
Anonymous	1,350.00
Sub Total	\$5,079.99
TOTAL.....	\$6,888.45

EXPENDITURES:	
Printing.....	581.00
Postage	923.01
Supplies	127.17
Wages	2,300.00
Wages*	791.00
FICA	211.85
Dividing checks	150.00
Total Expenditures	5,084.03
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,804.42

*Extra wages were for extra help on several projects we are working on. These funds reimbursed by Berea Baptist Church.

Bible & The Newspaper

(Continued from page 399) ♦

a nonsectarian prayer. This is intended as a show of respect for all the religions practiced by the members of the House and the people we represent.”

“In this instance, we allowed Pastor Baity to deliver his prayer, without interference, even though it was sectarian in nature. Nonetheless, we will review our procedures and guidelines concerning guest chaplains, and we will make sure we abide by applicable constitutional procedures. The House will adjourn within the next few days, but the results of this review will be publicly available whenever it is complete.”

Baity said he’s not happy with the way he was treated. “When the state tells you how to pray, that you cannot use the name of Jesus – that’s mandating a state religion,” he said. “They talk about not offending other people but at the same time, if they are telling me how to pray – that’s the very thing our forefathers left England for.”

The Christian Law Association helped Baity draft a letter asking for an apology and an opportunity to return to the state capitol and finish his tenure.

“The First Amendment promises all Americans the free exercise of their religion, which includes the right to pray as their faith requires, even when they are invited to open state legislative sessions with prayer,” stated attorney David Gibbs. “We trust that the North Carolina House of Representatives will realize its mistake and will offer Pastor Baity another opportunity to pray without requiring him to use a prayer that is mandated by government.”

Baity said he is still stunned by what happened. “You would expect this somewhere else – Cuba, Saudi Arabia, you would never anticipate this happening in the United States of America.”

In a word – the pastor said – the decision is “anti-Christian.”

“... and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name” (Rev. 3:8).



On Women Speaking

(Continued from page 397) ♦

many other things in the house of God, “wisdom is profitable to direct.” Only let me suggest, that as she is directed to obtain information in “private” because **“it is a shame for her to speak in the church,”** should we not, for the same reason, receive information from her in private also, “in all things,” in which it is necessary to know her mind, and let that be faithfully reported to the church? This is giving her an opportunity more suited to her, fully to state her mind; and in the issue, for the church more fully to know it. And in assenting to, or dissenting from, any proposition, she may unite with the

church, in the usual method “of lifting up the hand,” which, by the way, seems to have been the primitive practice in such cases, see II Corinthians 8:19, when the word chosen, in the original, signifies, to stretch out, or to lift up the hand.

If Christ has thus made His commandment to accord with the nature of the woman, then let neither male nor female, promote “discord” between them.

(Baptist Magazine, April 1815).



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Northside Baptist Church, Elkton, KY and Pastor Irving Cummins would like to announce their Bible conference this year will be August 5th thru August 7th.

Services on Thursday night will be at 7:00 p.m., Friday morning at 9:30 a.m. followed by a noon meal, Friday afternoon 2:00 p.m. followed by an evening meal at 5:00 p.m., Friday night 7:00 p.m. and Saturday morning at 10:00 a.m. followed by a noon meal.

Scheduled speakers are: Elders Jerry Asberry, Gordon Downs, Dan Gordon, Lee Hammel, Chris Horn, Jeff Lawrence, Chris Page, Jeff Short, Randy Titus and Shaun Trescott.

Anyone needing more information can contact Pastor Cummins at 270-265-9665 or 270-791-8474 or by e-mail at cumminsi@bellsouth.net.

The New Testament Baptist Church of Burton, OH is seeking a pastor.

For further information please contact the church at PO Box 840, Burton, OH 44021, or you can email your inquiry to ctiber@hughes.net.

If you would like to know more about the church, please visit their website at www.newtestamentbaptistchurchoh.com.

The Grace Baptist Church in Fredericktown, OH is currently seeking a pastor, and also guest speakers.

Our current services: Sunday school at 10:00 a.m., Worship service at 11:00 followed by lunch, and an afternoon service at 1:00 p.m. Wednesdays at 7:00 p.m.

Any brethren that may be interested in filling in to help our ministry can contact Bro. Tory Smith at (614) 205-0729 or by email toremup@columbus.rr.com.

The Bethel Bible Baptist Church, PO Box 85, Mansfield, LA is in need of a pastor.

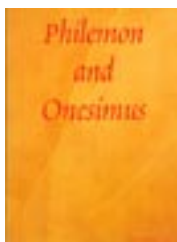
Any interested Elder should call Connie McMellon at 318-872-1647.

The Landmark Baptist Church of Collinsville, IL is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elders may call (618) 288-4236 for more information.

Any church that is without a pastor, please feel free to send your information in regards to the pastoral position for publication in these announcements.

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Elder Paul Stepp has written a book on the Epistle to Philemon. The book is based on a series of sermons he preached.

Much meaning and knowledge that is to be discovered in the Epistle to Philemon can be uncovered through an examination of the relationship that existed between Philemon and Onesimus (and also the relationships of these two men with the Apostle Paul). Retail \$9.95

Book Series

by John G. Butler

These books by John G. Butler are expository, analytical, alliterated, plain and practical. They are extensively organized and outlined, filled with practical applications of Scripture to every day life, written in easy to understand laymen’s language, and theologically and morally they take a strong, old-fashioned, fundamentalist position which is increasingly unpopular but greatly needed in our day.

Bible Biography Series

The Bible Biography Series is a study of major characters of the Bible.

Each of these books has a dark blue hardback cover with gold stamping.

- 1-Joseph: The Patriarch of Character\$17
- 2-Jonah: The Parochial Prophet\$17
- 3-Elijah: The Prophet of Confrontation\$19
- 4-Elisha: The Miracle Prophet\$21
- 5-Gideon: The Mighty Man of Valor\$17
- 6-Samson: The Weak Strong Man\$17
- 7-John the Baptist: The Herald of Christ\$17
- 8-Peter: The Illustrious Disciple\$22
- 9-Abraham: The Father of the Jews\$22
- 10-Lot: The Worldly Christian\$18
- 11-Paul: The Missionary Apostle\$32
- 12-Moses: The Emancipator of Israel\$32
- 13-Joshua: The Conqueror of Canaan\$21
- 14-Samuel: The Prophet of Transition\$19
- 15-David: The King of Israel\$37
- 16-Nehemiah: The Wall Builder\$21
- 17-Jacob: The Sower and Reaper\$23
- 18-Hezekiah: he King of Survival\$19
- 19-Mordecai: The Defender of the Jews\$19
- 20-Ruth: The Ancestress of Christ\$17
- 21-Daniel: The Man of Loyalty\$25
- 23-Noah: The Ark Builder\$18
- 24-Job: The Suffering Saint\$27
- 25-Isaac: The Promised Son\$20
- 26-Saul: The Rejected King\$25
- 27-Heroes: Biography of Faith\$18

Studies of the Savior Series

This ten-volume series is a comprehensive study of Jesus Christ focusing especially on the

four Gospels.

Each of these books has a dark red hardback cover with gold stamping.

- 1-Jesus Christ: His Incarnation.....\$25
- 2-Jesus Christ: His Miracles\$32
- 3-Jesus Christ: His Parables.....\$32
- 4-Jesus Christ: His Encounters\$25
- 5-Jesus Christ: His Disciples\$21
- 6-Jesus Christ: His Praying.....\$21
- 7-Jesus Christ: His Sermon on the Mount.....\$25
- 8-Jesus Christ: His Crucifixion\$23
- 9-Jesus Christ: His Resurrection\$21
- 10-Jesus Christ: His Return.....\$23

Daily Bible Reading Series

Each of these books has a dark brown hardback cover with gold stamping.

Daily Bible Reading 1:Synopsis.....\$15

The page for each day of this unique devotional book contains a synopsis of that day’s Scripture reading. These synopses will help the reader to get a good overview of the Bible.

Daily Bible Reading 2:Sermonettes\$15

The page for each day has a sermonette based on one verse from the reading for that day. These sermonettes will also make good sermon starters and aids for those giving a devotional.

Daily Bible Reading 3:Sermonettes\$15

The page for each day has a sermonette based on one verse from the reading for that day. These sermonettes will also make good sermon starters and aids for those giving a devotional.

Daily Bible Reading 4:Study Questions\$15

Ten study questions are given for each day’s reading. Answers to the questions are given in the back of the book.

Analytical Bible Expositor Series

This series of books is a chapter by chapter exposition/study of the Scriptures. Features of this series is Analyzation (Every chapter of the Bible is treated as a unit and is a separate chapter in the books. The chapters are outlined into main and sub-points and often many sub-sub points.), Alliteration (All outlines are alliterated.), and Annotation (The comments within the outline are the meat of the books and consist of explanations, clarifications, interpretations, and exhortations.)

Each of these books has a dark green hardback cover with gold stamping.

- 10-Matthew-Mark\$35
- 11-Luke-John\$35
- 12-Acts- II Corinthians\$35
- 13-Galatians-Philemon.....\$25
- 14-Hebrews-Revelation.....\$25

Books are listed at retail price. On orders of \$20 or more you may take a 20% discount.		
Shipping Chart		
Order Value		Add
Minimum		\$5.00
\$25.00-49.99		\$6.00
\$50.00-74.99		\$7.00
\$75.00-99.99		\$8.00
\$100.00 and Up		FREE

ARTICLE INDEX

- A Dose of Reality p. 395
- A Study in the Book of Haggai (Part 5) by Timothy Hille p. 387
- The Abandonment of Christ on the Cross by Emil W. Krummacher p. 381
- Anguish of Parents at the Perverseness of Children by Edward Payson p. 393
- Bible and the Newspaper p. 398
- The Dangers of Sin - A Seared Conscience by Paul Stepp p. 381
- The Divinity of Christ p. 381
- The Earth’s Great Jubilee by Milburn Cockrell p. 381
- Forum pp. 390-391
- God’s Ideal Woman - Part 2 by Milburn Cockrell p. 388
- On Women Speaking in Church p. 397

.... In the next issue

The Beginning of Sorrows by Philip Parks
The Myth of Old Testament, Porselyte Baptism by Douglas Newell IV