

# The Berea Baptist Banner

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

## Some "Christians" That We Have Met

By Roy Mason

(1894-1978)

**"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away"** (II Tim. 3:5).

There are Christians and there are other Christians. Not all Christians are alike, nor do they all belong to the same class by any means. The same is true of church members. There are church members who are so worthless that if all members were just like them, the churches over the land would rot down and the worship of God would entirely cease. If all church members were like some church members, then the church would be a mighty power in this world. When I think of some church members that I have known it almost throws me into a fit of the blues; when I think of others, I thank God and take courage. I have an idea that the devil grins with diabolical satisfaction when he takes a look at some folks who claim to be Christians. No doubt he gnashes his teeth in rage when he sees others and takes note of their faithfulness.

Now, of course not all of those that claim to be Christians are genuine by any means. Many of them are Christians in name only. But among those whom we



Roy Mason

may well believe to be genuine Christians, we see a number of classes represented, and we see various stages of development. And the same thing is true with reference to other things. I took a trip once up into Northwestern New Mexico, near the Arizona and Colorado line. In the beautiful irrigated valley where I went they

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## Studies in Esther 7:1-10

By Jeff Short

Mantachie, Mississippi

In the previous chapter, God had providentially taken sleep away from King Ahasuerus' eyes. He had his chamberlain to come in and read to him the chronicles of his life and notable events. During the reading of the chronicles, the king's chamberlain read the account of the conspiracy to murder the king, which conspiracy was



Jeff Short  
his valiant loyalty.

Mordecai had been content to have an answer of a good conscience toward God and man. He did what he believed was right without any respect to human rewards. He even appeared content though he was not rewarded. He was of a very different character than was Haman. Haman could have no joy in life unless everyone bowed and revered him. Haman had to be served; he had to receive honor from men. Mordecai did not seek such superficial reverence in life but was content to do right by God and man.



Arthur W. Pink  
Negation"—is accepted as a good workable definition of the Devil. He is regarded as a mere abstract principle of evil. As someone has quaintly put it, "They spell Devil without a 'd,' as they spell God with two 'o's.' Good

Devil there is is the devil within you," is the last word of "modern thought." The words which Goethe puts into the mouth of Mephistopholes—"I am the Spirit of

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discovered by Mordecai and revealed to the king by Esther. The wicked plot was foiled and the perpetrators punished. However, there had been no reward bestowed upon Mordecai for

Mordecai's integrity reminds us of the confession of Paul before Felix: "**And herein do I exercise myself, to have always a conscience void of offence toward God, and toward men**" (Acts 24:16). Paul did not earn the applause of

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## The Personality of Satan

By Arthur W. Pink

(1886-1952)

Is the Devil a living reality, or is he nothing more than a figment of the imagination? Is the word "Satan" merely a synonym for wickedness, or does it stand for a concrete entity? In cultured circles it has become the custom to return a negative answer to these questions, and to flatly deny the existence of the Tempter. Among such people it is regarded as a mark of intellectual superiority to repudiate the personality of the Devil. By many, Satan is now looked upon as a product of priestcraft, a relic of superstition, the myth of a bygone age. With others, Satan is simply an abstraction, a mere negation, the opposite of good. "All the

## The Wrath of God Revealed

By Edwin B. Fountain

Mims, Florida

**"For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written. The just shall live by faith. For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them"** (Rom. 1:17-19).

In these three verses, we come face to face with the fact that the "wrath" of God is constantly being revealed from heaven and we see the limit of nature's revelation.

How are these, the wrath of God and the limit of nature's revelation tied together? By the character of God which is known to man. First, let us consider the wrath of God, i.e. the knowledge and the awful Majesty of God that man keeps buried deep under his sinful acts. Though this knowledge is still alive it has to be held down, away from daily thoughts, if sin is to rule.

An early American preacher named Abbot stated, "The truth of God's wrath can no more be eliminated from Scripture without

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## A Man-Made God

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941-2002)

**"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me"**



Milburn Cockrell

think of a heathen bowing before some stone image in the jungle. But idolatry is putting any object in the place of God or before God. At this season I fear that many people are guilty of worshipping a

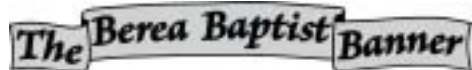
(Ex. 20:3-5).

**"Little children, keep yourselves from idols"** (I John 5:21).

The Holy Scriptures prohibit us from worshipping any man-made God.

When you mention an idol most people

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## Some "Christians"

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raised the finest apples that I ever saw grow anywhere. I watched people pack those fine apples into boxes for shipment. They divided them into different classes. Into this box they would pack the finest apples, into that the next best, and so on, until out there they would pile the "culls," as I called them. Now all of them were apples, and apples of the same variety, but some were fine apples, some medium good apples, and some of them were just "culls."

I am going to mention some of the classes of Christians that have come under my observation. If you don't recognize some folks that you have seen in the description that I shall give, I shall be greatly surprised. It may be that some of you will classify yourselves in one of the classes that I shall indicate, if you are real honest with yourself. If so, and you find out that you are in an undesirable class, I hope that you will try to make a change for the better.

The FIRST Christian representative of a type that I shall mention is the ARRESTED GROWTH CHRISTIAN. And the person that I have in mind here is the person who is converted, baptized, joins the church, and begins to grow in the Christian life, but soon, for one reason or another, drops out of regular church attendance, quits taking any active part in anything pertaining to his religion, and just remains at a standstill for years. It is pitiful to see a case of arrested growth in a physical or mental sense. I have seen cases where the body of a child ceased to grow and it increased in years without making a corresponding development in body. I have also seen cases where people ceased to grow mentally and went through life with the mind of an immature child. I have seen illustrations of what I am speaking of in the plant world. I remember seeing a field of corn and watching its growth once. The corn came up and started to grow in fine shape, but when it had grown about so high it seemed to quit growing. There it stood day after day, seemingly making no progress save that here and there was a stalk that had developed normally. I asked the farmer what was the matter, and he told me that if one pulled up a stalk of the corn and looked closely he could see that the roots were literally covered with parasites. These parasites were sapping the vitality of the corn and keeping it from growing. Often that is the case with the "Arrested Growth Christian." If you search carefully enough you will find that there is something that is sapping the vitality and preventing growth. It is about the most common thing in the world to find an "Arrested Growth Christian." I have seen old men, frequent attendants at church, too, that hadn't from all appearances, grown an inch spiritually in twenty years. They prayed the same monotonous prayer, listened to the preaching just as sleepily, and were just as non-progressive as they were years before. A clear case of arrested growth!

ANOTHER Christian, representative of another class, is the MAL-NOURISHED CHRISTIAN. The food that we eat has a lot to do with us. Just take a look at a badly nourished person, and you can tell immediately that something is the matter. Their complexion and their physique will indicate that much. There is a tribe of Indians in the West that are called "Digger Indians." They eat a certain kind of clay that they dig in the country that they inhabit. This dirt, of course, contains very little nourishment, and this tribe of Indians shows it. They are little, dried-up, insignificant-looking people—victims of mal-nutrition. I remember that a very badly nourished dog strayed to our door once. He was so weak that he could hardly go. In fact, he was so weak that when he barked he fell down. Lack of proper nourishment was what was the matter with him. Mal-nutrition is what is the matter

with a lot of Christians. The truth of the Word of God is the divinely appointed food to stimulate Christian growth. The Christian that fails to feed upon these truths, or that gets these truths served up to him in a perverted form, will show himself to be a poorly nourished Christian. You can't grow physically without food; neither can you grow spiritually without food.

Now, a mal-nourished person may be eating a lot, but the food that he eats may not contain the proper elements, or else he may not be properly assimilating what he eats. The Christian may be feeding off of that which is either doing him no good or else positive harm. He may be subsisting on heresy. I have come across some who were taking broken doses of the Bible along with large portions of Pastor Russell's teachings. I have seen others who mixed Mrs. Eddie's heresies with the Truth of God. Is it any wonder that the spiritual digestion of such folks get out of shape and that they become the victims of mal-nutrition? And let me say that the person that spends his Sunday's between the pages of the Sunday newspaper will not very likely be in a healthy spiritual condition. Nor is there sufficient nourishment in much of the light literature of the day to develop a strong Christian character. I knew a woman in Oklahoma that just seemed to delight to feast on heresy of various kinds. She had more heretical notions than I thought could have been contained in the head of one person. She had taken a bite of Catholicism, a large slice of Holy Rollerism, a taste of sanctification, peppered the conglomeration with Methodism, and salted it with a solution of Baptist doctrine. If she didn't have a case of religious dyspepsia, I never saw one.

And it is largely either mal-nutrition or else lack of nourishment that is the matter with many of the people of our country churches. Many country churches have preaching only one Sunday in the month. If everything isn't highly auspicious, part of the membership stay away from church that one Sunday. There isn't any earthly reason why they should not go to other neighboring churches the other three Sundays in the month, but the truth is very few of them do so. Missing the one Sunday on which there is preaching at their church, maybe it is a whole month, or sometimes it is for two or three months, before they are ever in the church house again. When there is the neglect in the matter of Bible reading and study that there is today, don't you see that those who do not study the Word of God and do not hear it preached are likely, yes, more than likely, are certain, to suffer from lack of nourishment?

A THIRD kind of Christian that is very commonly met up with is THE SUPERFICIAL or "GRAVELLY SOIL" CHRISTIAN. When I think of the Christian of this type I always think of

the parable of the Sower given by our Lord, and recorded in the 13th chapter of Matthew. You will remember that Jesus told of a sower who went out to sow, and scattered seeds broadcast, but they fell on soils that differed very widely. Some of the seeds fell by the wayside and were devoured by the birds, while some fell upon stony or gravelly soil. The seeds that fell upon this kind of soil of course had no covering and immediately sprang up, but having no depth of earth, as soon as the sun came up they were scorched. Now, there are Christians just like that. Lacking any depth, they are not able to stand adversity. The Bible speaks of being "Rooted and grounded in the Truth," and the Christian who is not, is not a very stable character. In New Mexico and Oklahoma I was continually having trouble with certain members who were about to be led off after some other sect or denomination. They were superficial Christians who were not grounded in the truth. A Baptist that is grounded in the New Testament teachings, and that knows thoroughly why he is a Baptist, cannot be drawn aside or induced to depart from his faith, no matter what comes or goes.

And in many cases the superficial Christian is the most pious talker to be found in the whole church. Many times a preacher will take a new pastorate, and when he goes on the field he will meet persons who, because of their fluent tongues and pious manner, impress him very favorably. "My, that is a fine Christian man," or "My, that is a splendid woman," he thinks, "I surely can depend upon them." But later he finds that they are all on the surface—that they are entirely superficial. They talk piously, but when it comes to actual doing they are not there, while some more unobtrusive, less assuming Christian, who had little to say, proves to be his real standby and the helper upon whom he is able to rely in emergency. I remember an experience that I had along this line myself: When I took the pastorate in a certain town in New Mexico, there was a deacon in the church who appeared to be a very religious man. His conversation impressed me that he was very devout. For the first few services he was right in the front of the church, occupying one of the front pews, but the first time that his business rendered it inconvenient for him to attend church he failed to show up. When we had a round-up of the 75-Million Campaign fund, he was one of the first to plead that he was unable to pay his pledge, and he was foremost in condoning others in their failure to pay theirs. He was strong on doctrine so long as it made no encroachments on his pocketbook, and he enjoyed a sermon dealing with baptism much more than one dealing with the Scriptures' teaching about tithing. I soon learned that if, in our business meetings, we needed someone to talk, someone to

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make a motion, or someone ready to help run the business of the church, he was the very man, but if I wanted to see something done involving work or sacrifice I could count him out.

If there is anything that is a discouragement, it is a superficial Christian. I don't like a superficial anything. I like to see people with some depth to them. If a person is a Christian, he ought to be one willing to stand for his religion at any cost. He ought to have convictions about his religion and about the doctrines that they hold on it, as strong as life itself.

But I must pass on. The NEXT Christian, the representative of a distinct type much in evidence today, is one that I will term THE BUTTON PRESSER. He is the mechanical Christian or organization fiend, and he thinks to do everything by means of organization. If any problem presents itself, he "hollers" *organize*? I believe as truly as I live that Baptists, and other churches as well, are cursed by the organization craze as by nothing else today. From the local church clear on to the Southern Baptist Convention we are organized until there is little room for the working of our much-boasted democracy. There is nothing to be said, of course, against a reasonable amount of organization, it is the over-emphasis of the thing that I object to so strenuously. Some people, if they wish to have a revival, just think that all that they have to do is to organize in a certain way and they can have one. All that they need to do is to press a button and souls will be saved. But the Holy Spirit doesn't work always according to the plans and organizations of men. One can't organize souls into the Kingdom of God. A church can have a meeting, and by skillful manipulation of the crowd, especially the children, and by appeal to the emotions, they can get a number of people to join the church, but what does it amount to? Six months later, and how many of those organized into the church are of any value to the church in any way?

In many cases organization promotes a sense of self-sufficiency, and Christians come to depend upon their machinery more than upon the Lord. I say to you that I would rather have one revival promoted by the Spirit of the Lord, and in which there was a mighty sense of dependence upon God, than a dozen of these man-made revivals run by men who depend more upon crowd psychology than upon the Holy Spirit. And I had rather see a Christian give five dollars out of love for God and a lost world, than fifty dollars that was organized out of him. Organization will not cure all of the ills of Christendom or even begin to do so. The thing that Christians need today worse than anything else is *power*. You can put together a number of pieces of machin-

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WFTA, Tupelo, MS .....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. ....	101.9 .....	3,000 FM
WLZA, Starkville, MS .....	Sunday 1:00 - 1:30 p.m. ....	710 .....	2,500 AM
WCNA, Myrtle, MS .....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. ....	95.9 .....	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY .....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m. ....	680 .....	5,000 AM
KARI, Blaine, WA .....	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m. ....	550 .....	5,000 AM
KORE, Springfield, OR ....	Sunday 8:00 - 8:30 a.m. ....	1050 .....	5,000 AM
DXRA, Davao City, Philippines	Sunday 8:15 - 8:45 a.m. ....	783 Khz...	10,000 AM
DWSS, Manila, Philippines	Sunday 5:30 - 6:00 p.m. ....	1494 .....	16,000 AM

ery until you have an engine all perfectly assembled and organized, but unless you have some gasoline to furnish the power the thing won't run. Machinery without power is useless. Power for the Christian life comes from the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit comes to the Christian's aid in response to prayer and waiting upon the Lord.

A FIFTH Christian, representative of a type that is sometimes found, is the RULE OR RUIN CHRISTIAN. Did you ever see a Christian of this type? Many a church has been broken up by him. He is the sort of character who has for his motto, "My way or bust." I have seen folks of this type, and it doesn't matter what the will of the church is; they are just bound to have their own way. Often they will pull off from the church if everything doesn't go to suit them, and it is a blessing to the church that they do. I have known preachers of the rule-or-ruin type who were bound to have their way or else they sought to tear the church to pieces. I was pastor of one church that had been torn up by a character of this sort, and I came to have a thorough distaste for him and for all of those of his type. The rule-or-ruin Christian is one of the most dangerous individuals, so far as the peace and well being of a church is concerned, that any church can have among its membership. And if you will observe, you will find that the rule-or-ruin Christian seldom if ever wants to run the church along Scriptural lines. I always feel sorry for a church that seems to be under the dominion of some character who is determined to enforce his will or wreck things.

But let us pass from this unlovely character to another one fully as unlovely: THE CHURCH DRONE. You know among bees there are those classes, the queen, the workers and the drones. The drones are a class that gather no honey; they just hang around the hive and consume that which is provided by the other bees. I remember to have witnessed the work-bees' way of handling the drone situation once. I was sitting near a hive watching the bees come and go when I saw quite a commotion arise. Out of the hive came two worker-bees dragging between them a larger bee, which I immediately recognized as a drone. When they got the big, lazy looking fellow outside the hive a little ways, they stung him to death and went back into the hive. But churches cannot solve the drone problem in any

such drastic way as this, of course, so that year in and year out the church is afflicted with drones whose names are on the church roll but who are of no earthly use to the church in any way, shape, form or fashion.

I have mentioned six different kinds of Christians, who represent as many types. Now let us consider the SEVENTH. This is what I call the JUVENILE CHRISTIAN. This is the Christian who never gets out of the knickerbockers stage. Sometimes they have gray hair and wear beards, but still retain the characteristics of spiritual childhood. Paul had these kinds of folks in the church at Corinth, and it was to them that he wrote, "**I have fed you on milk and not strong meat, for hitherto you were not able to bear it.**" Childish Christians always make for trouble in the church, every time, and when you see a church that is always having trouble among the members rest assured that the members of that church are in the juvenile stage. You have all observed children at play, and you have seen one of them become disgruntled about some little trifling thing and pull off from the rest of his playmates to pout and nurse his feelings. Sometimes children will become offended if they can't have all of the playthings just when they want them, or if one of their playmates has a larger apple than the one that is given them. Now, juvenile Christians are just like that. Often they will quit coming to church because they fancy that someone has slighted them; the preacher failed to shake their hand, or he preached too plainly, or something else has ruffled their feelings. The juvenile Christian is contrary, jealous, gossipy, critical, and usually has his feelings sticking out just ready for someone to bump into them. And about the most discouraging feature about the Christian of this type is that he seems to want to stay in the juvenile class. He is always weak on doctrine and usually doesn't seem to want to know anything more about the doctrines of his faith. I have had some experience with these immature Christians, and have had studies in doctrines at the church and have preached on doctrinal subjects, hoping to help them, but just as certain as they heard that I was going to deal with subjects of a doctrinal nature, they avoided the church until it was over. They had their juvenile opinions, and they didn't want to run the risk of having them

changed.

I am quite sure that, as I have rapidly sketched these different characters, you have thought, "I know people just like that. I have seen church members who would fit into those classes exactly." Now, the thing that I want you to do is to examine yourself very honestly, and with the willingness to see your own faults, you ask yourself the question, "Am I absolutely sure that I myself am not in any of these classes that have been enumerated?" It does us a lot of good to take a sort of inventory of ourselves sometimes. We are, most of us, very slow to see our own faults and failings, hence we are inclined to think that we are considerably freer from objectionable things than most other people. But listen! We are just as liable to be lacking as anyone else. And so I say, let us look ourselves over in an attempt to see if we are in the same class with those whom we in our hearts have an aversion and contempt for.

Now, I would not have anyone get the idea from the things that I have said that all, or even nearly all, Christians are to be classed among those whom I have mentioned. There are many Christians who are well balanced, conscientious, and thoroughly worthy in every respect. The best, the most sacrificial people in the world are Christian people. And I feel that I have been privileged to know some of the very choicest of God's elect. Just now there comes to my mind the picture of a young man, a hopeless paralytic, with a normal mind but with a body that was terribly twisted and deformed. I can see him now as he is half led, half carried into the church. I see him as he sits there listening intently throughout the whole service. And let me tell you that while I was pastor in that little New Mexico town, there were very few persons who attended more regularly or who gave me any closer attention while I preached than that paralyzed boy. And when I think of that paralytic coming four miles to church very Sunday and often to the mid-week services, and then when I think of the miserable excuses that I often hear strong, healthy people make for not attending church once or twice a month, I feel ashamed in their behalf. And again, as I think of Christian sacrifice I think of one of my members who, in order to see a new and much needed addition built to the church, gave his work free of charge for six months and in addition to this hired a man and furnished a team for most of the time. And that man did not give out of his abundance, either, but out of his poverty. I think of others also who gave far over and above a tithe of their income in order that their Lord's work might go forward, and in some cases they gave when it hurt to give. No, all do not belong to the drones or the juveniles. And if we had more of such Christians as those whom I have just been speaking of, the

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cause of our Lord would advance with greater strides than it does at present.

The kind of Christian that God wants you to be is the kind that puts Him first in everything. And if you put Him first, you won't work at home or about your business rain or shine, and then on Sunday stay away from church because it looks a bit cloudy or sprinkles rain. If you put Him first, you won't spend more for chewing tobacco or coffee than you spend to help bring a lost world to Christ. God wants you to be a dependable sort of Christian, one whom the church can count on, one who is progressive, and one who is always in for everything that is right. God wants you to so conduct your business affairs that you will be regarded as honest and on the square in the community where you live. God wants you to so live and so serve that you will not only have a good name among men, but that your reward may be great in heaven, and that He may be able to say to you in the last great day, **“Well done, thou good and faithful servant. . . enter thou into the joys of thy Lord.”**

## Studies in Esther

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men, nor did he seek it. Even some lost men can appreciate this sort of integrity. As the king pondered the actions of Mordecai, he determined that some good thing must be done to requite his faithful service.

About that time, Haman came into the king's room. He was on an urgent mission, for his anger had been stirred when he met Mordecai previously. Haman had gone out from the first banquet and through the counsel of his friends and family, had built a gallows to hang Mordecai on. He had come to the king that very night to obtain the authority to execute his enemy.

Providentially, the king also had a serious matter pressing on his mind. He interrupted Haman, telling him how he wanted to honor a man that he delighted in and that man was Mordecai. Haman's plan was preempted and he was even made to be the instrument through which Mordecai was honored, which greatly added to his distress.

The current chapter opens with Haman and Ahasuerus coming to Esther's second banquet. It appears from the fourteenth verse of chapter six that Haman is in no hurry for this banquet. He had been elated over the first banquet, feeling sure he was an exalted person in the kingdom. Now though, his future seems unsure. He has discovered that the king has a decided favor for Mordecai. He wondered what would become of his plan to destroy Mordecai and the Jewish

people.

**Verses 1-2 – “So the king and Haman came to banquet with Esther the queen. And the king said again unto Esther on the second day at the banquet of wine, What is thy petition, queen Esther? and it shall be granted thee: and what is thy request? and it shall be performed, even to the half of the kingdom”** (Est. 7:1-2). From all indication, the king appears to be in a very good mood. He had remembered Mordecai very favorably and had been gracious to him. Esther's banquet in his honor seemed also to please him. He was in a good frame of mind.

However, Haman had come hesitantly to the banquet and his mood was not good. He seemed to have no mind for feasting and merriment. So many things seemed now to be working against him.

After they had eaten, they were sitting at the banquet of wine. I understand that this banquet was a time when the men and women would sit together and drink wine after the meal. It was probably the customary time of conversation and relaxing. It was likely a casual and light-hearted time.

At this time, the king showed favor to his queen. He prompted her to relate her request to him and assured her that it would be done **“even to the half of the kingdom.”** Esther's requests had always been humble—a thing that further endeared her to him. There is no doubt she continued to hold the affection she had won through her gracious manner from the beginning.

Separate from this mutual affection sat the brooding Haman. He had come from the first banquet rejoicing. He had interpreted the invitation to such an intimate banquet to signal great favor. He was not so optimistic about this banquet, with circumstances seeming to turn against him.

Haman was a very unstable man; he was circumstance-centered. He was blown about by every wind. When things went his way, he was elated. When the circumstance was contrary to him, he was dejected. He went from being overjoyed to furious within seconds of seeing Mordecai. He had boasted much about what he planned to do in the future. Fitting are the wise words of Solomon, who wrote, **“Boast not thyself of to morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth”** (Pro. 27:1). We must be very careful of taking our joys and boasting ourselves of tomorrow as Haman had done. We certainly do not know **“what a day may bring forth.”**

**Verses 3-4 – “Then Esther the queen answered and said, If I have found favour in thy sight, O king, and if it please the king, let my life be given me at my petition, and my people at my request: For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. But if we had been sold for**

**bondmen and bondwomen, I had held my tongue, although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage”** (Est. 7:3-4). Esther did choose to petition the king at that time. She had at least two prior opportunities but had delayed her real request until the time of this second banquet.

It appears that she exercised wisdom in seeking the appropriate time. It is reasonable to believe that she was seeking God's guidance for the order of events. In this extra time, she had endeared herself to the king even more. As we study the account, we can see things providentially “falling into place” making it the perfect time to address Ahasuerus with her problem.

Ahasuerus was a powerful king and was used to being asked for things by people, but it seemed that his queen had asked very little from his hand. He was interested to know what it was she wanted. She asked that her life would be given to her and the life of her people—the Jewish nation. You will recall that Mordecai had counseled her to keep her ethnicity concealed (Est. 2:10). It was not widely known that she was a Jew, nor was it known that she had any familial relation to the king's guard Mordecai. This fact fits perfectly with the providential circumstances.

Note how well ordered her request was. She was as the wise preacher who **“sought to find out acceptable words”** (Ecc. 12:10). Her words were chosen carefully and she explained her request saying, **“For we are sold, I and my people, to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish.”** She actually quoted from Haman's decree, which was **“to destroy, to kill, and to cause to perish, all Jews, both young and old, little children and women, in one day”** (Est. 3:13). She said that she and her people were **“sold,”** not into slavery, but unto certain death.

She confessed that had they been sold into slavery she would have held her tongue, **“although the enemy could not countervail the king's damage.”** This last phrase seems hard to understand. The word **“countervail”** means to equalize. She stated that there was a decree to kill all her people and once it was executed, it could not be undone. There was no way to set it right. If they were sold into slavery, the king could have seen the wrong in it and made reparations. They could have been restored though they suffered wrong. However, if they were destroyed, that would be the end.

**Verses 5-6 – “Then the king Ahasuerus answered and said unto Esther the queen, Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so? And Esther said, The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and the queen”** (Est. 7:5-6). Once Esther made her request, the king's wrath was kindled. He had dealt harshly, yet

judiciously against the conspirators that sought to take his life. How would he deal with one who conspired against the life of his beloved queen?

This event reminds us of King David when the prophet came to him and told him the story of the confiscated sheep. David's anger was kindled. He wanted to know who the man was and vowed that he would be dealt with harshly. Interestingly though, the prophet had to confess to David, **“Thou art the man”** (II Sam. 12:7).

Though perhaps somewhat unwittingly, Ahasuerus had played a part in the doing of this very thing. He asked, **“Who is he, and where is he, that durst presume in his heart to do so?”** He wanted to know who would do something so wicked and bold against the king and his queen. Who would dare to conspire against them so?

It does not seem that the king had made the connection at that time. He did not realize that Haman was the offender. Esther answered his question, **“The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman.”** Suddenly, the light went on in the king's mind. He remembered the exchange between himself and Haman. The king probably remembered that he never did know whom the people were that Haman wanted to kill but he made a good case against them.

Esther used the words **“we are sold.”** She referenced the fact that Haman promised to pay all the silver into the treasury of the king in order to execute this destruction against the people he hated. The king's wrath was intensified by his own shame.

The king was not the only one to realize what had been done. Haman also had a revelation and was **“afraid before the king and the queen.”** He had first thought he was being honored by being invited to these banquets. Now he realized that Esther had brought him there to make the accusations to his face. He was also given an opportunity to answer for himself, if there was anything he could say. It does not seem that he tried to say anything to the king to justify or rationalize his actions. He who once rode on a high horse is now quivering in fear.

**Verses 7-10 – “And the king arising from the banquet of wine in his wrath went in to the palace garden: and Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king”** (Est. 7:7). The king moved quickly. He was extremely angry. He left the banquet on urgent business. He likely went to check the decree and to confer with some of his other attendants to verify that this was indeed what had happened by the writing of Haman's decree. We do not know what all he may have had in mind to do, but he left Haman

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## Mini-Edition

By Joseph Harris  
Chairman of Biblical Studies  
Southeastern Baptist College, Laurel, Mississippi



### The Obvious Media Bias

Does anyone in their right mind doubt the obvious media bias toward liberalism? Anyone, liberal or conservative, who is fairly objective, can see the truth with closed eyes. For those with their heads in the sand, this previous Presidential election should have been an eye opener.

(1) First, look at the Dan Rather fiasco. Rather was caught red handed. Period. He reported and initially defended a lie. His liberal agenda helped him to convince himself the National Guard story about President Bush was true. So much for "reporting" the news.

(2) Next, look at the pre-election polls and their prediction of a Kerry win. The "polls" showed the race as razor thin or with Kerry having an edge. Of course, they were dead wrong. Is anyone going to question why? Does the media care? The news people care only as long as it promotes their agenda, or man. As I said the entire previous week, it was nothing more than propaganda hype.

(3) Then, the scandalous exit polls were introduced, with the obvious purpose of influencing voters. These "polls" showed Kerry winning with a wide margin. Obviously, those polled after leaving the booths, lied about who they voted for . . . or maybe, just maybe, those polled were target groups in certain geographical areas. *And the answer is . . .* the majority of those polled were women from metropolitan areas, which means it was a manipulated poll. Case closed. Whether those in the news media were responsible for or involved in these polls is not the issue. They were all too eager to accept the skewed results and happily report them.

(4) There is also the matter of the media jumping on the munitions looting story in Iraq, which by the way, was all a bunch of hooey (pronounced whooey). No matter. It helped to cast doubt on the President's leadership and try to achieve their goal: stop Bush at any cost, even the cost of the truth.

(5) Notice also the pass given to the darling Kerry on his senate and Vietnam record. This obvious traitor to America was always handled with kid gloves on these issues. The ones treated as traitors were the many honorable Vets who dared to question the golden boy and his patriotic Purple Hearts.

(6) Did anyone also notice how reluctant the networks were to call a victory for President Bush? At the beginning of the night, when it didn't matter, they were calling states right and left for George Bush. But when the

number of electoral votes got within range of the magic "270", suddenly the declarations stopped. Answer: obvious media bias.

If they were not so biased, they might begin to understand the people of this country. If they would stop shoving their Godless agenda down America's throat, and begin to listen to the average person, they would realize THEY are out of step with reality. The message sent on homosexual marriage was loud and clear. Notice all the marriage amendments that were passed in the 11 states on election night. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." The average person in this country does not want perversion exalted, condoned and endorsed. Wake up ABC, NBC, CBS and CNN (and all others including print media). Come back to reality. The political conservative revolution has just begun.

### Studies in Esther

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and Esther alone.

Haman did not say anything to Ahasuerus before he left. He revealed his desperation in appealing to Esther. **"Haman stood up to make request for his life to Esther the queen; for he saw that there was evil determined against him by the king."** Haman knew that he was had. He did not try to appeal to the king at all, but he tried to plead with Esther to have his life spared. Haman had been so exalted in pride that he thought the whole world had to bow down before him. He wanted to kill anyone that was not going to do it. Now he himself would gladly bow down to Mordecai had it meant that his life would be spared.

Haman had rejoiced and been so happy with all of the good things that he had in life. He had been promoted and received power and authority. He had come to the king deceitfully succeeding in getting the king's ring to seal his decree of personal revenge. He had riches. His house had been blessed with many children. Haman had all those things and what good were they? Haman would gladly give them all up, if it meant that his life could be spared, but his time was up. He pleaded with Esther. He threw himself on her mercy.

**"Then the king returned out of the palace garden into the place of the banquet of wine; and Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was. Then said the king, Will he force the queen also before me in the house? As**

**the word went out of the king's mouth, they covered Haman's face"** (Est. 7:8). The king returned with some chamberlains. The king knew he had been tricked by Haman, and this probably made his anger hotter. The king found that **"Haman was fallen upon the bed whereon Esther was."** This bed was probably like a couch, which is where they would often recline after their meal and drink wine. He was begging Queen Esther to entreat for him.

Haman's market value reached an all-time low with Ahasuerus. The king came in and found Haman with Esther and asked, **"Will he force the queen also before me in the house?"** Haman had already committed other heinous, criminal acts. The fact is, when someone does commit some criminal act, they show a lack of integrity and character that opens them up to all sorts of suspicions. Whether the king really thought Haman was going to try to do this thing or not, is uncertain, but it appears it was on his mind. Now looking at Haman, he did not think he could put anything past him. Once someone has proven himself untrustworthy in some area, it usually extends to all realms of their character. It throws great doubt upon them. The king was now taking no chances with Haman.

As Ahasuerus was speaking, **"they covered Haman's face."** In the eastern kingdoms, when one was convicted of a very serious crime, they would cover his face as a signal that they were no longer worthy to look upon the king because of his crimes. Haman's shame and guilt were clear and he was taken out to be justly punished.

**"And Harbonah, one of the chamberlains, said before the king, Behold also, the gallows fifty cubits high, which Haman had made for Mordecai, who had spoken good for the king, standeth in the house of Haman. Then the king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai. Then was the king's wrath pacified"** (Est. 7:9-10). Once Haman had been exposed as a scoundrel, this chamberlain spoke up. He told the king what else Haman had done. He told them that Haman prepared the gallows in his own house to hang Mordecai—the king's loyal guard. In prideful presumption, Haman constructed the gallows before he had even made the request to hang Mordecai. Haman's wickedness was completely revealed. The king's anger was growing by the minute.

The king responded to the news of the gallows by saying, **"Hang him thereon."** The very gallows he had constructed to be the end of Mordecai turned out to be Haman's own end instead. Of a truth did the Psalmist declare, **"The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the**

**work of his own hands"** (Psa. 9:16). This verse of Scripture aptly applies to the book of Esther. God's name is not mentioned there. No direct reference to God is found in the book. It was the work of Haman's own hand that snared him. He built the very instrument that killed him. Clearly, the Lord is seen and known here **"by the judgment which he executeth."** The wicked, the enemy of His people, was snared by the work of his own hands. God makes himself known in the book of Esther but he does it in an unusual way, by the unfolding of providential events.

Further testimony is given to the truth of the wicked making trouble for themselves by Solomon: **"The wicked is snared by the transgression of his lips: but the just shall come out of trouble"** (Pro. 12:13). Many times the wicked shall be judged out of things that proceeded out of their own mouth. Those that are caught, found guilty, and punished have messed up along the way and it is their own doing that is their undoing. That was the case with Haman. It is certainly possible that the chamberlains knew the gallows was built for Mordecai because Haman had bragged of it. Though he seemed to ride high for a time and God's people were cast down, yet Haman himself was destroyed and God's people were marvelously delivered and exalted over their enemy.

When they hanged Haman, **"the king's wrath pacified."** He felt that this was adequate justice to Haman. Haman died in disgrace, defeat, and in his own wickedness. He had built this gallows with his own hand to hang Mordecai and he himself was hanged thereon. The king was satisfied at the judgment that was performed.

**Conclusion** – In conclusion, we see that God brings His revenge upon His enemy. The Bible teaches us: **"Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil"** (Ecc. 8:11). Men are hardened because they do evil and they seem to get away with it. They are lifted up in pride because they seem to go unpunished.

A very good example of this would be the previous President of the United States. He had gotten away with many things in his career. As a result, he was hardened through pride and did worse things, becoming bolder in wickedness. He has still gotten away with many things he has done in life . . . for now.

Sometimes God does not execute speedy judgment. God was long suffering with Haman. He allowed him to triumph and oppress His people, yet God had his judgment in store and his day of reckoning in this life did come. God says of the wicked in Deuteronomy 32:35, **"their foot shall slide in due time."** Haman's time was up. God moved against

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## Studies in Esther

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him and used his own words to bring revenge on his head.

There are many notable events of providence in this chapter. Consider for a moment how these events unfolded. Haman was so upset about what had happened with Mordecai that he came home and almost forgot about the second banquet. He was lingering at home and the king had to send chamberlains to go and get him. It was then that the chamberlains saw the gallows that Haman had constructed and found out that it was intended for Mordecai.

This event proved important later when the chamberlain told Ahasuerus of the gallows and Haman's intention with it. Had they not had to go to Haman's house, they would not have known about his plans. Providentially, everything came together and Haman's demise was facilitated without any miraculous intervention. God's people did not have to avenge themselves unlawfully, as David had sought to do against Nabal. They just simply had to trust in the Lord who says, **"Vengeance is mine; I will repay"** (Rom. 12:19).

## The Personality

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and evil is their scheme."

But the more general conception of Satan is different from the above. The popular idea, the one that prevails among the masses, may be gathered from the pictorial representations of him which appear on the street posters, which are to be met with in our illustrated magazines, and which are displayed upon the stage—where he is pictured as a grotesque monster in human form, having horns, hoofs and forked tail. Such a conception is an insult to intelligent people, and in consequence, the Devil has come to be regarded either as a bogey with which to frighten naughty children, or as a fit subject for jest and joke.

It need hardly be said that both of the above conceptions are far from the truth. The fact that they have gained such wide credence is due largely to ignorance—ignorance concerning the teaching of God's Word, ignorance concerning the Satan of Holy Scripture. But it is to Satan's interests to keep people in such ignorance.

An intelligent enemy always keeps in the background and remains hidden out of sight. It is an important consideration with him that his identity should be concealed. Many an evil enterprise owes its success to its perpetrator remaining secreted. The assassin who plunges a knife into the back of his victim is usually hired for the purpose. The one who throws the bomb is merely a tool, the mastermind that planned the deed is unseen and un-

suspected. Therefore, it need not surprise us to find that the masses do not believe in the existence of a personal Devil. It serves his purpose well to keep his dupes in ignorance concerning his real existence. The Devil has always worked secretly and sought to hide his true identity. When he beguiled Eve he did so through a serpent. When he appeared before God to accuse Job, he waited until a day when **"the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, and Satan came also among them"** (Job 1:6). When he sowed his **"tares,"** he did so secretly, *in the night*—**"while men slept"** (Matt. 13:25). When he betrayed the Lord Jesus Christ into the hands of His enemies, he worked through Judas! Satan is an adept at disguising himself: he comes to us not as a Dragon of Darkness but **"is transformed into an angel of light"** (II Cor. 11:14).

1. *Personal Names are ascribed to him.*

Thirty-five times he is denominated **"The Devil,"** which means "The Accuser: or "Slanderer"—accusing the saints before God and traducing the character of God before men. Fifty-two times he is called **"Satan,"** which means "Enemy" or "Adversary." He is God's enemy and man's adversary. "Satan" refers to his *character*: the malignant Adversary of all good—in God or His creatures. "Devil" refers to his *mode* of carrying out his evil designs: by lying slanders, false accusations, evil traducings. He is termed **"The Prince of this world"** (John 14:30), which defines his position in relation to our earth. He is named **"Beelzebub"** (Matt. 12:27), which regards him as the head of the demons. He is spoken of as the **"Wicked One"** (Matt. 13:19), which refers to him as the prime mover of *all* wickedness. He is styled **"Apollyon,"** that is "Destroyer" (Rev. 9:11), which links him with the Bottomless Pit. He is referred to as **"The Prince of the power of the air"** (Eph. 2:2), which points to his present home and sphere of operations—cf. Eph. 6:12. He is termed **"Lucifer"** which means "Morning Star" (Isa. 14:12), a title which seems to have belonged to him before his apostasy. He is called **"The god of this world"** (II Cor. 4:4) because he is the inspirer and director of all spurious religion. He is termed a **"Liar, and the father of it"** (John 8:44) because he is the inveterate opposer of the truth. These and other titles of Satan are meaningless unless he is a personal being.

2. *Personal Characteristics are predicated of him.*

*Intelligence:* his temptations are spoken of as **"the wiles of the Devil"** (Eph. 6:11); while in Rev. 2:24 we read of **"The depths of Satan"** (Greek, "deep things"). Further, in Rev. 12:9 he is termed **"That old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world."** To deceive implies design, and design is the product of intelligence, and intelligence is inseparable from personality.

*Memory:* in his conflict with our Lord

he *quoted* from the Old Testament Scriptures (Matt. 4:6). A mere abstraction could not do this.

*Knowledge:* in Rev. 12:12 we are told he has **"great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time."** But that which is impersonal cannot be said to "know."

*Will:* **"that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will"** (II Tim. 2:26). **"How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation"** (Isa. 14:12, 13). That Satan possesses a will or the power of choice, is further proof that he is a personal being.

*Moral character:* Satan is spoken of as a **"deceiver," "liar," "murderer," "tempter,"** all of which are terms implying moral character—i.e., that of which duty or obligation, and right and wrong may be predicted.

*Speech:* he is represented as talking with God (Job 1:9, 10), arguing with our Lord, and as **"accusing"** the brethren. This is a further indication that Satan possesses the same characteristics as ourselves.

*Emotions:* he desired Peter that he might sift him as wheat (Luke 22:31). *Pride* is spoken of as **"the condemnation of the Devil"** (I Tim. 3:6). While in Rev. 12:12 we read, **"Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the Devil is come down unto you, having great wrath."** But pride and anger cannot be predicated of the law of gravitation—they are inseparable from personality.

*Executive and organizing ability:* **"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels"** (Rev. 12:7). **"Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle"** (Rev. 20:7, 8). Here we find Satan marshalling his legions to engage in warfare. Ephesians 6:12 more than hints that he is the head of graduated and organized forces.

3. *Personal Acts are attributed to him.*

*He tempts.* The first time this mysterious being is introduced to us in the Word of God he appears in this capacity, inciting our first parents to disobey their Maker. In Matthew 4:3 he is expressly termed **"The Tempter."** And again, in I Cor. 7:5 and I Thess. 3:5, the saints are warned against his machinations. To tempt implies design and argues intelligence and moral qualities, and these are inseparable from personality.

*He accuses.* To "accuse" unquestionably argues a conscious and rational entity. **"And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and**

**strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night"** (Rev. 12:10). This verse affords us a glimpse into the Unseen, and presents our Enemy maliciously impugning the saints before God. Two striking illustrations of this part of his work are furnished in Scripture. In Job 1:9-11 we find him charging the old patriarch, and in Zechariah 3:1-5 he is seen standing before God to resist Joshua the high priest. Upon these interesting passages we cannot now comment. Blessed it is to know that Satan's efforts in this direction are all in vain—**"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth"** (Rom. 8:33).

*He makes war.* We have already quoted Rev. 12:7, and 20:8-9 in another connection. We do not comment further on them now except to say that they furnish another proof that Satan is an intelligent, and albeit, malignant being.

*He performs miracles.* This opens up a wide subject in itself, into which we cannot now enter at length. We content ourselves with two scripture references. When Moses and Aaron wrought their miracles before Pharaoh as credentials of their Divine commission, we read that **"Pharaoh also called the wise men and the sorcerers: now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments"** (Ex. 7:11, etc.). And again we read concerning the "Man of Sin" (Antichrist) that his coming shall be **"After the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders"** (II Thess. 2:9).

*He causes bodily sufferings.* The first two chapters of the book of Job clearly intimate that all the trials and afflictions which came upon Job were directly caused by the malignant assaults of the Devil. When vindicating Himself for healing a sufferer on the Sabbath day our Lord said, **"Ought not this woman, being a daughter of Abraham, whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?"** (Luke 13:16). Again; after the apostle Paul had been caught up to the third heaven, an affliction was sent him lest he should be exalted above measure at the abundance of the revelations, which he had received, and this affliction is described as **"a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan"** (II Cor. 12:7).

*He works in and through the wicked.* Just as we read that **"It is God which worketh in you (the believer) both to will and to do of his good pleasure"** (Phil. 2:13), so, also, we read that Satan is **"The spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"** (Eph. 2:2). Another evidence of his activities is furnished in Matt. 13. In imitation of our Lord who scattered the "good seed" in the field, Satan went and sowed tares.

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## Outlines for Country Preachers by a Country Preacher

Sermon Outlines by Milburn Cockrell

### THE VALUE OF TRUTH

Prov. 23:23

When describing the pilgrims passing through Vanity Fair, Mr. Bunyan says: "That which did not a little amuse the merchandisers was that these pilgrims set very light by all their wares; they cared not so much as to look upon them; and if they called upon them to buy, they would put their fingers in their ears and cry, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity"; and look upwards, signifying that their traffic was in Heaven.

Once chanced, mockingly, beholding the carriage of the men, to say unto them, "What will ye buy?" But they, looking gravely upon him, said, "We buy the truth."

What is truth? It is the representation of things as they are. It is conformity to facts or reality; the opposite of error or falsehood. Our text tells us what to do with the truth. We are to buy it at any price and sell it at no price!

#### I. THE COMMODITY—"THE TRUTH."

1. God is truth (John 14:6). The Father is the "God of truth" (Isa. 65:16). The Son is "full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). The Holy Spirit is "the Spirit of truth" (John 16:13).
2. The Bible contains all spiritual truth man needs (Dan. 10:21; John 17:17).
3. The gospel contains the truth of salvation—ruin, redemption, and regeneration. Reject all counterfeits such as—
  - (1) Salvation without Christ as God.
  - (2) Pardon without an atoning sacrifice.
  - (3) Life without the new birth.
  - (4) Regeneration without faith.
  - (5) Faith without works.
  - (6) Safety without perseverance in holiness.
4. The gospel buyer must beware of all counterfeits (II Cor. 11:3, 13-15).

#### II. THE PURCHASE—"BUY THE TRUTH."

1. In the absolute sense truth cannot be either bought or sold. It can only be obtained at great effort (Isa. 55:1; Rev. 3:18).
2. It can be bought by meditating upon it (Phil. 4:8).
3. By rejoicing in it (I Cor. 13:6). Both shining and scorching.
4. By rightly dividing it (II Tim. 2:15; II Pet. 1:20).
5. By obeying it (Gal. 3:1). We must not attempt to change it to fit our sinful ways (John 10:35).

#### III. THE PRICE TO BE PAID IS IMPLIED.

1. We must be ready to give up every sin, fulfill all righteousness, and give all that we have, if such were the price (Matt. 13:45-46).
2. We must be ready to endure every test, make every search, to run every risk, bear every cross, give up every worldly pleasure to know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.
3. Time and earnest attention are required—seek as men who hunt for hidden treasure (Prov. 2:4). Burn midnight oil. I used my lunch money to buy books in college!
4. An unprejudiced mind. If there is prejudice against the truth there is a huge barrier in the way of gaining it. We must be willing to be taught, to have a readiness to receive the truth, no matter what it is, nor how strange it may be (Isa. 55:8; II Pet. 3:16). "Speak, LORD; for thy servant heareth." Examples: Election, church, woman's place, heathen holidays, closed communion, premillennialism, etc.
5. We must not be content to bid on it or make an offer for it. We should not rest content just to hear it, or know it, or wish for it. "Buy it."
6. We should live with it or die for it.

#### IV. THE PROHIBITION—"SELL IT NOT."

1. Buy it at any price; sell it at no price.
2. Our forefathers bought the truth with their blood (Rev. 12:11; Acts 20:23-24).
3. To sell the truth is to sell our souls to the devil. It shows we have never "received the truth in the love of it" (II Thess. 2:10; I John 2:19).
4. Esau, Judas, Demas, sold the truth at a cheap price!
5. Don't sell it for a livelihood—respectability—to gratify a friend—the plea-

sure of sin.

6. It is too precious to sell—it only can make us free (John 8:32). You will need it in time and eternity. You are lost without it.

#### V. HOW THE TRUTH IS SOLD.

1. The truth can be given up, and thus sold in a figurative sense.
2. Undervaluing the truth is the first step toward giving it up (Isa. 59:14).
3. The truth is given up when it is compromised with error (I Cor. 5:6). \$10.00 is not \$1,000.00! (I John 2:21).
4. A feeble hold on the truth makes it easy to give it up. We must not give it up under pressure or even upon pains of death. (See John 8:40, 45).

#### CONCLUSION.

1. Some men will not receive it ever (II Thess. 2:10-12; II Tim. 3:7; II Peter 2:2).
2. Some will receive (II Thess. 2:13-14) and love (John 3:21) and walk in it (III John 4, 8).
3. It will be evil spoken of (II Pet. 2:1-3).
4. Had Paul been offered all the kingdoms of the world, and all the glories of them, for one article of truth, he would have said, "I have suffered the loss of all things already for Christ, yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss and dung for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord."
5. Give up your life, but never, never, never give up the truth!!!

### The Personality

Continued from page 466

4. The temptation of our Lord by Satan proves him to be a personal being.

No unbiased mind can read carefully the fourth chapter of Matthew without coming to the conclusion that we have recorded there a real conflict between two persons—our Lord Jesus Christ and Satan. If we deny that the latter is there definitely brought before us as a person, we must logically affirm the same of the former. To say, in reply, We admit that Christ there is a real person but that "the Devil" must be regarded as a personification of evil, is blasphemy, for it impugns the character of our blessed Lord.

Unlike every fallen son of Adam who is shapen in iniquity and conceived in sin, the Lord Jesus Christ was *sinless*. He is "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. 7:26). "In him is no sin" (I John 3:5). He "knew no sin" (II Cor. 5:21). He is "the Holy One of God" (Mark 1:24). He declared, "The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me" (John 14:30). As then there was no evil in our blessed Saviour, the one who tempted Him must have been external and personal.

To deny that Matthew 4 presents Satan as a personal entity is either to traduce our Lord's character, or, it is to reduce the entire narrative to meaningless jargon. Everything that is said of Satan in this chapter indicates and intimates that he is as real and actual a person as the Lord Jesus Himself. The tempter "came to him." He spoke, yea, reasoned and argued. He took Christ up into the holy city. He quoted to Him from the Psalms. He showed Him all the kingdoms of the world. He sought worship from the Saviour. At His word "he departed from him for a season." All of which is proof posi-

tive—to one that believes in the Divine inspiration of the Scriptures—that Satan is a living person.

5. Finally, the fact that the Word of God announces that Satan shall yet be cast into the Bottomless Pit, and afterwards into the Lake of Fire, argues that he is an accountable being.

A mere abstraction cannot be punished. That which is nothing more than a negation could not be tormented. That which was incorporeal and intangible could not be "cast" into the "Lake of Fire." The fact that the Scriptures declare that Satan shall be punished is conclusive evidence that he is a person, and a person endowed with moral responsibility.

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## The Wrath of God

*Continued from page 461*

unraveling the whole texture than can the truth of His love. Love has its wrath, and the intensity of the indignation against evil and falsehood, will and must be exactly proportioned to the intensity of the love for goodness and truth."

Matthew Arnold, in his writings, wrote that "there is an eternal Power, not ourselves, which makes for righteousness." The Psalmist exclaims, **"The face of the LORD is against them that do evil."** Both men understood the truth that **"the wrath of God is revealed from heaven."** The **"wrath of God"** is constantly being revealed.

First, let us consider human conscience. Think of the book of Proverbs and consider that it was nothing less than the power of conscience that was the actual revealer of that Holy wrath when we read, "The wicked trembleth at the shaking of a leaf;" or when the author wrote again, in Proverbs 28:1, concerning the wicked, that they **"flee when no man pursueth."**

Just turn your mind back to Adam and Eve, why did they flee from the face of God? Only one reason, their consciences had already revealed the coming of the wrath of God. They knew what God had said. Disobedience to God always brings the wrath of God. Where His elect are concerned it may be some chastisement but if the disobedience is severe enough, let's say that a believer refuses to be properly baptized into one of His churches, saved he may be, but there is the wrath of God to contend with for being disobedient. That wrath can be the loss of rewards when one stands before God. Only wood, hay, and stubble. And there will be no precious stones or gold or silver mixed in with those flammable gifts. We bring one or the other.

Look at another example from the Old Testament, that was given to us for our example, and our preachers would do well to use them rather than themselves and their family or church members.

Think of those ten strong men that stood together and trembled in that treasure city of Egypt in Genesis 42:21 where we read, **"And they said one to another. We are verily guilty concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us."**

Conscience had done its work over the years and now it comes into the open for the wrath of God is staring them in the face.

Then there is that very sad man in the New Testament who is begging the priests to take back the thirty pieces of silver. And, when they refuse, he throws it at their feet and rushes out to face the wrath of God. He rushed out to hang himself.

I suspect that many men and women

have revealed the deepest secrets of their lives not because of torture or money but because their conscience gnawed so incessantly at their hearts and minds that they simply had to speak out.

In the general moral sentiments of mankind—or at least as those sentiments are exercised when referring to men and women who have broken the reasons and laws of mankind, the penal laws and all the instruments of man's punishment of mankind become the mediums through which the wrath of God is revealed against all ungodliness and unrighteousness in men and women.

Let us be sure that in the course of God's administration of His plan and purpose concerning His creation, and everything in it, the conscience of man will recognize the wrath of God when it falls on him or her.

Now, let us look at nature's revelation. The character of God is not hidden from man. Nature proclaims the very existence of God. But concerning what God is to us, nature is completely silent.

Nature tells us there is a God and it tells us that that God is full of great wisdom and even great benevolence. His constant control of not only our world, but all creation, tell us of His great power and wisdom and the fact that He feeds us, through His goodness, from those very things that His wisdom controls. But those things in nature that speak of God do not tell us that He will pardon sin.

The course of God's plan and purpose is the course of His providence, where both men and angels are concerned. Before the foundation of the world, He instituted His plan and His purpose and then, for His own honor and glory, established the vessels of His mercy and the vessels of His wrath.

Nature gives us intimations from our conscience that God is just and that justice is in His hands and in His nature. Nature can tell us much and often about the wisdom and benevolence of God; but conscience, while it tells us that He is just, also tells us that He is Holy, and so tells us in despairing tones that there will be no change in Him, His wisdom, His Justice, or His benevolence. We know within ourselves that God does not change. **"I am God, I change not."** He is holy, we are miserable, fallen, guilty sinners.

If we only look to nature to instruct us about God then we will certainly spend our lives asking through man's philosophy, "How can God be just if He justifies the ungodly?" Or asking man's psychology, with all it's so called human understanding, "Will God forgive me of my sins?"

Then there is astronomy and all of man's discoveries of world upon world and sun after sun. "Is there a God who is just and yet a Savior?"

Where such ideas are concerned, they must stand dumb. Only God in His Word

to His people can answer. Every one of us must needs have the answer to this question before our time comes to lie on our death-bed.

Knowing that God is there, that He is just, is not enough to give us the peace that God has promised and so we must turn to His Word: there we find the Savior, the One Who came to save His people, His vessels of mercy. Here we find that gentle Savior, the Great Shepherd, the Mighty Counselor, the Prince of Peace. Conscience and nature can only go so far then we must turn to His Wonderful Words of Life. **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one"** (John 10: 27-31).

A final note: a sheep is always a sheep and a goat is always a goat. There is no evolution that can turn a sheep into a goat or a goat into a sheep. The wheat is always the wheat and the tares are always tares. A vessel of mercy can never be a vessel of wrath nor vice versa. All things are fixed in His plan, purpose, power and everything is for His honor and glory.

Bishop Hall wrote, "The obstinate have nothing to do with God; the title of all converts (the author prefers "the elect of God") is, a willing people."



### Are The Heathen Lost Without The Gospel?

By Arthur W. Pink

Has God more than one way of salvation? Are some saved by faith, and others by works? Will some enter Heaven on the ground of sovereign grace, and others because they lived up to the light that they had?

Perhaps these questions may seem needless to my readers. But in view of certain things which are frequently coming under the writer's notice, they are, in his judgment, timely. If a certain theory which receives wide credence today could be established, then would God have TWO ways of salvation: one, salvation by grace through faith, and the other, salvation by character through works. We refer to a view concerning THE STATE OF

THOSE WHO DIE IN HEATHEN-DOM.

It is estimated that there are fifteen hundred million people on the earth at the present time, and that more than half of these are entirely in the dark concerning the true Way of Life. Probably seven hundred million heathen, at least, now alive on earth today, will die in utter ignorance of the "only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent." And this, in the face of the authoritative command of our Saviour and Lord who said of old and who says to us TODAY, **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to EVERY creature"** (Mark 16:15)? O, dear Christian Reader, are we not PLAYING at missions? No, that is the wrong way to put it; Have we not BETRAYED our trust? **"We were allowed of God to be PUT IN TRUST WITH THE GOSPEL"** (I Thess. 2:4). God has not permitted the angels to be **"put in trust with the gospel,"** but He has ENTRUSTED it to US, and we have basely BETRAYED our "trust." We heartily sing, "Amazing Grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like ME." And we continue singing it, seeming to care little or nothing whether our fellow in heathen lands hears the "sweet sound" of saving grace, or not. O what abominable selfishness! God have mercy on our brutal callousness and indifference to the eternal destiny of the poor heathen.

But the point of this appeal is blunted for many, for they do not really believe the heathen ARE lost without the gospel. They prefer to listen to the sentiments of their own hearts, rather than to the pointed declarations of the Holy Scripture. The belief that seven hundred millions of our fellow men, now on earth, will be tormented in the Lake of Fire FOREVER AND FOREVER, is too dreadful to be entertained. People will say, and people who are considered as sound in the faith, that, if the heathen who have never heard of Christ do the best that they can, if they will live up to the light they have through nature, and conscience, they shall be saved. But this, dear friends, is a lie of the devil. For it, there is not a single plain passage of Scripture. Against it stands every passage in the Bible which defines God's way of salvation.

What saith the Scriptures? Hear them: **"Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved"** (Acts 4:12). If then, there is **"NONE other name"** through which salvation comes, it follows with absolute certainty, that for all in heathendom who knows nothing of that Name, which is above every name, THERE IS NO SALVATION.

But, says an objector, "Some of the heathen are very religious; they worship their own gods. It is true that they are woefully ignorant; but will not the One who

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## Are The Heathen

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looks not on the outward appearance but on the heart, accept the sacrifices they make unto their idols?" Again, we ask, What saith the Scriptures? Hear them: **"The things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, AND NOT TO GOD"** (I Cor. 10:20).

Listen again: **"As many as have sinned without the law,"** shall what? Be saved if they have lived up to the light they had by nature, and have followed the dictates of their conscience? No, **"as many as have sinned without the law, SHALL ALSO PERISH without the law"** (Rom. 2:12). Once more: **"It is written, There is none righteous, no not one"** (Rom. 3:10). The word "righteous" means "up to the required standard." And the Holy Spirit says, **"There is NONE righteous."** This means that no heathen measures up to the required standard. As the next verse goes on to say, **"They are ALL gone out of the way."**

Let each reader settle it in his or her mind once for all, that EVERY soul out of Christ IS LOST NOW, and will remain lost for all eternity, if they believe not on the Name of the only begotten Son of God. And, asks the Holy Spirit, **"How shall they believe in Him of WHOM THEY HAVE NOT HEARD? And how shall they hear without a preacher"** (Rom. 10:14).

And WHAT will be the fate of all in heathendom who die without Christ? They shall be cast **"into a furnace of fire, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth"** (Matt. 13:42). They shall be consigned to that fearful place **"where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"** (Mark 9:44). They shall be **"punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord"** (II Thess. 1:9). Nor is this the worst: **"The smoke of their TORMENT ascendeth up FOR EVER AND EVER: and they have NO REST day nor night"** (Rev. 14:11). What think ye, dear reader, of these awful passages, which describe the eternal doom of those who die out of Christ? Can you read them unmoved? Can you read them without your heart being deeply stirred and moved to pity? If so, there is grave reason to believe that you yourself are a STRANGER to the saving grace of God.

And now, Christian reader, what will be your response to this message? You are one of those who have been **"put in trust with the gospel."** Have you been TRUE to your "trust"? Will you, right now, look to God earnestly seeking His will, and ask Him what He would have you do, in the matter of carrying or sending the gospel to the heathen? May the Lord enlarge your narrow hearts and fill them with the COMPASSION of Christ towards a lost world.

## A Man-Made God

*Continued from page 461*

man-made god, either knowingly or unknowingly. Santa Claus has become a God-substitute. Although people say they are celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, it is a known fact that Santa Claus is mentioned more in most homes than Jesus Christ.

At this season of the year little children are told Santa Claus is coming to town. We see images of him with his white beard, dressed in a red suit, riding in his sleigh drawn by eight reindeer. Parents and grandparents say it would be wrong to rob little children of their belief in Santa Claus. The observant Christian can see that it is Santa Claus the myth, not Christ the reality, who is the center of attraction at this time of the year. Christmas could not survive without Santa Claus.

### ORIGIN OF SANTA CLAUS

The origin of Santa Claus grew out of legends and superstitions of the ancient nations. The pagan German deities before the time of Christ were believed to come down the chimney to give rewards and punishments to people. They were gods of fire and solar gods, called hearth spirits. In China each year this fire god, dressed in a fiery red cap and jacket, traveled from the distant heavens to visit homes and distribute favors or punishments.

The image of Santa Claus in its more modern form began in the fourth century. A Roman Catholic bishop named Nicholas is said to have lived in what is now Turkey about 1,700 years ago. *The World Book Encyclopedia* says of St. Nicholas: "The beloved legend of Santa Claus, who brings gifts to all good children at Christmas time, is connected with Saint Nicholas, who was an actual person. . . . The stories about Saint Nicholas say that he lived during the A.D. 300's. . . . One story is told that on three nights in a row he tossed bags of gold into the window of three girls who did not have the money for a dowry and so could not get married. This story may have started the custom of giving gifts at Christmas" (Vol. 12, p. 5680).

After Saint Nicholas died mothers told children that good Nicholas might visit them again at Christ's mass. This idea supposed that this bishop had died and rose from the dead, for he could not have brought gifts after his death without rising from the dead. At first most European people celebrated December 6, the date of Saint Nicholas' death, as a special holiday. As the years past the 6th of December gave place to December 25th. This is why Santa Claus is sometimes called even today Saint Nicholas. In Holland Christmas is still celebrated on December 6, the day of Saint Nicholas' death.

Santa Claus has many different names in various countries of the world. Saint Nicholas in America is now called Santa

Claus. The Dutch children shortened "Nicholas" to "Claus," and the Spanish influence in the Netherlands changed "Saint" to "Santa." In Germany he is called Kris Kringle and in France Pere Noel (Father Christmas).

"In Holland St. Nicholas appeared, as he still does today, in the colorful regalia of a medieval bishop, including the red miter upon his head and the long cape draped from his shoulders. In America the miter and cape became the colorful cap and suit of our Santa Claus, both bright red and trimmed with fur. Instead of the serious mien of a bishop, he became a fat, jovial figure with white beard and ruddy nose and cheeks, a mixture of human and supernatural attributes" (*Colliers Encyclopedia*, Vol. 20, pp. 414-415).

Santa Claus in its modern form came from a poem in 1822 written by Clement C. Moore *A Visit from St. Nicholas*, which gives a picture of the saint as we know him today. But even this poem, which begins with the familiar line "Twas the night before Christmas," the name of Santa Claus does not appear. Thomas Nast, the cartoonist, gave the first picture of Santa Claus as he is imagined today in a cartoon, in 1863. Later his famous drawing *Santa Claus and His Works*, which appeared as a Christmas picture in *Harper's Weekly* in 1866, showed Santa Claus in his workshop with his record of the good and bad deeds of all children. The drawing also showed the sleigh with reindeer, the pack of toys, the stockings hung at the fire-place, and the Christmas tree (See *World Book Encyclopedia*, Vol. 15, pp. 7211-7212).

The modern Santa Claus myth originated with St. Nicholas, a Roman Catholic monk who is believed to have lived in the fourth century in what is now called Turkey about 1,700 years ago. After his death mothers told their children that though he was dead yet he lived again and would visit them on the night of the mass of Christ and give them gifts if they had been good. Although the name has changed sometimes from country to country, the myth is still being told unto this very day. In America Santa Claus is a mixture of human and supernatural attributes. In his sleigh drawn by eight reindeer he flies miraculously over the house tops of the world in one single night, leaving gifts to all.

### SANTA CLAUS, AN ANTICHRIST

The average person would have us to believe that the Santa Claus myth is just clean, wholesome fun for little children. They say it is a thing to develop the imagination of children. But this is hardly the case. In truth Santa Claus is an antichrist, a God-substitute, a man-made god, a working of the spirit of iniquity. If you move the "n" in "Santa" to the last "a" you have "Satan."

Consider the popular Christmas song that we hear at this time of the year:

*You better watch out, you better not cry,*

*Better not pout, I'm telling you why—  
Santa Claus is coming to town!  
He's making a list and checking it twice,  
Gonna find out who's naughty and  
nice—*

*Santa Claus is coming to town!  
He sees you when you're sleeping,  
He knows when you're awake,  
He knows if you've been bad or good—  
So be good for goodness sake!  
Oh! You better watch out, you better not  
cry,*

*Better not pout, I'm telling you why—  
Santa Claus is coming to town!*

If you will take the time to examine what is being said here about Santa Claus, you will see that he has the attributes of Jesus Christ. There is nothing in the universe like Christ. But Santa Claus is just as unique as Jesus Christ.

Christ is eternal (John 1:1-3). So is Santa Claus. He was never born and no one knows who his parents were. It would also seem that he has no end.

Christ is unchangeable (Heb. 13:8). Santa Claus has not aged in 1,700 years. He is no older now than when I was a little child. He still looks the same today as he did a hundred years ago.

Christ is omniscient (John 21:17). So is Santa Claus. The popular song says: "He sees you when you're sleeping, He knows when you're awake, He knows if you've been bad or good. . ." Santa Claus can see all over the world, and he knows the good or bad conduct of little children.

Christ is omnipotent (Matt. 28:18), but so is Santa Claus. At Christmas time Santa can do anything. Poor parents may live in the slums and not have a dime to their name, but Santa Claus can bring their children almost any present. Nothing is too hard for him.

Christ is omnipresent (Matt. 28:20), but so is St. Nick. He can be in every department store in the city, on TV, in the supermarkets, on the street corners, in churches, at Christmas parties—all at the same time. On Christmas Eve he leaves the North Pole and travels over the whole world, going down everybody's chimney, leaving gifts in just one single night!

Christ is sovereign (John 5:21). So is Santa. Who has authority over him? In what court can he be tried? To whom is he responsible? He is over all.

Christ is good (Acts 10:38). So is Santa Claus. He is very good to children who have behaved very well. He is the giver of good gifts to all at Christmas time.

Christ is righteous (I John 2:1). But Christ has nothing on Santa Claus, for Santa has no moral imperfections. Has he ever done any wrong to any person? Has he ever confessed his sins?

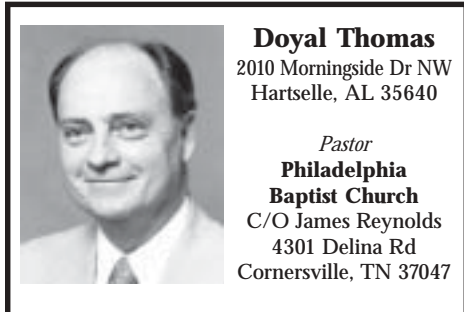
Christ is just (I Peter 3:18), but so is Santa Claus his mythical substitute. "You better watch out, you better not cry, better not pout, I'm telling you why—Santa Claus is coming to town." Santa is coming in the character of a judge to examine the

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# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

The Forum is a regular feature of this publication where readers' questions are answered by a panel of writers. The views expressed herein are the views of the writer to whom they are attributed. They do not necessarily represent the views of the editor, the sponsor, or the readers of this paper. Readers are encouraged to submit questions on any Bible topic to: The Berea Baptist Banner, P. O. Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855.

## 1. What is meant by the "sides of the north" in Isaiah 14:13? — Alabama



**Doyal Thomas**  
2010 Morningside Dr NW  
Hartselle, AL 35640

*Pastor*  
**Philadelphia Baptist Church**  
C/O James Reynolds  
4301 Delina Rd  
Cornersville, TN 37047

Please read Isaiah 14:12-17 in order to grasp the context in which this expression is found.

Lucifer, called the son of the morning, has originated sin and is now fallen, as is clearly stated here, and what follows is relative to his aspirations and his actions accordingly.

**"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will..."** is God's denunciation of him, and of his intentions to corrupt God's creation and to elevate himself to an exalted position equal to, yea, even above the position that God occupies.

The **"sides of the north"** of verse 13 appears to be in distinct and meaningful contrast with **"the sides of the pit"** of verse 15, and is the position that Lucifer aspires to attain by self-exaltation, as opposed to the lowest position of the pit to which he will surely be assigned, and in which eternity will find him.

The **"sides of the north"** is from the Hebrew *tzahpholn*, and is indicative of its meaning, which is "hidden; obscure." North has been used in many places to refer to the regions of darkness and uncertainty, as are all regions apart from the light of God and of His glory. It is both literal and figurative, for the **"north"** is furthest from, and obscure from the source of literal light, thus the "emptiness" is designated. And apart from the Light of God, the creation and the creature are in darkness, as exemplified by the darkness of the heart of unregenerate, sinful man.

Now Lucifer makes claim that he will ascend to a position above that which God occupies, and his **"light"** will brighten the **"sides of the north"** above and beyond that which God's glory and presence will be able to do. Oh, what dastardly presumption is this specific claim that Lucifer makes, and how heinously sinful is his intent. He claims that his light and glory will exceed the Light and Glory of God Himself.

But God is not deceived, nor is He conquered or even challenged by this usurper, and He declares the end of this matter as Lucifer (Satan) is to be

consigned to **"the sides of the pit"**, which is the lowest position of the pit, even more severe than the positions that will be occupied by Satan's henchmen, fallen angels, and unregenerate men.

DOYAL THOMAS



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

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

Isaiah 14:13-14 states: **"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High."**

The context of this passage takes us back in time when Lucifer (Satan) exercised his free will as a mutable angelic being in an attempt to usurp the throne and authority of God. This vain attempt was immediately thwarted by the Most High and Satan was cast out of the immediate presence of God in the third Heaven.

The **"sides of the north"** is said to be **"above the heights of the clouds"** and **"upon the mount of the congregation"** in Heaven. It must have been the place where the angels and hosts of Heaven congregated to worship and serve the God who created them. I take this to mean it is the place where God dwells and where His throne is located.

TOM ROSS



**Matt James**  
3756 Pendent Ln.  
Columbus, OH 43207

*Pastor*  
**Sovereign Grace Baptist Church**  
6041 Africa Road  
Galena, OH 43021

**"How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the**

**mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north"** (Isaiah 14:12-13).

The **"sides of the north"** is said to be the location of mount Zion. Psalm 48:1-2 reads, **"Great is the LORD, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."**

In Isaiah 14:13-14 we read about one who wanted to exalt himself and **"be like the most High."** This stands in contrast to Psalm 48:1-2, which speaks of the true and living most High God who is praised in mount Zion. Lucifer in pride wanted to exalt his throne and take God's place in this mount.

I know of no further significance to the phrase **"sides of the north"** than that it is simply the location of **"mount Zion"** and **"the city of our God."**

MATT JAMES



**Todd Bryant**  
3000 Hillswood Circle  
Northport, AL 35473

*Pastor*  
**Sovereign Grace Baptist Church**  
12859 Martin Road  
Spur  
Northport, AL 35473

**"For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north"** (Isa. 14:13).

This is a difficult question at best. You can get about as many answers to this question as you have commentaries. There are two opinions that I think are worth considering.

First, there is a reference to Psa. 48:2, which reads, **"Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King."** Some think this is a reference to Mount Zion specifically. However, it was Jerusalem which lay to the "north" of Zion and it is the **"city of the great King"**. That is, Jerusalem is the place that Christ will reign from during the Millennium. So, as this passage contains a similar statement as Isa. 14:13, many believe this statement references either Mount Zion specifically or Jerusalem which is to the north of it.

Secondly, some say that Psa. 48:2 has no link to Isa. 14:13 and therefore some

other meaning must be sought. These would say that the passage is obviously a reference to a higher place than on Earth and consequently refer to the "northern lights" in the heavenlies. These say that Satan is here quoted as telling the Lord that he was going to ascend above all that He rules over.

Which of these is accurate, I am not prepared to say. I do believe one of these two would be the right interpretation of this passage, but, this is one of those passages which we cannot be dogmatic on.

TODD BRYANT



## Redeeming The Time

By Bill James

**"See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil."** (Eph. 5:15-16)

According to W.E. Vine, the Greek word (*Kairos*), translated **"time"** in this passage, speaks of seasonable opportunities rather than a space or duration of time (*Chronos*). James Strong, in his concordance, says the word speaks of an occasion, or set or proper time, opportunity or due season, a fixed or definite period. When you see how the same word is used elsewhere in the New Testament this fact becomes apparent. For example, Christ spoke of the **"time of harvest"** and **"the time of fruit"** (Matt. 13:30, 21:34). This, of course, is a definite period or proper season. You will find this particular word for **"time"** and interesting study using Strong's Concordance.

One passage of real significance would be Galatians 6:9-10. **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith."** Our word here (*Kairos*), is translated **"season"** in verse nine and **"opportunity"** in verse ten. According to these verses we should seize every occasion to invest spiritually, in a serious and systematic way, because a spiritual harvest season will certainly come. Our text admonishes us to be buying up all the opportunities that present themselves. Otherwise, instead of walking circumspectly we are actually walking carelessly. Instead of being wise we are being wasteful.

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown gives our text this accurate rendering: "Buying up for yourselves the seasonable time." Wuest has it, "Buy up for one's self or one's advantage." This kind of diligence honors God by submitting to His will. It also

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# The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

The Forum is a regular feature of this publication where readers' questions are answered by a panel of writers. The views expressed herein are the views of the writer to whom they are attributed. They do not necessarily represent the views of the editor, the sponsor, or the readers of this paper. Readers are encouraged to submit questions on any Bible topic to: The Berea Baptist Banner, P. O. Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855.

## 2. Does Satan currently have access to God as he did in the book of Job? — Kentucky



**Doyal Thomas**  
2010 Morningside Dr NW  
Hartselle, AL 35640

*Pastor*  
**Philadelphia Baptist Church**  
C/O James Reynolds  
4301 Delina Rd  
Cornersville, TN 37047

No. Satan is the ever present accuser in this age, and he exercises himself in that matter constantly. He is always alert to opportunity to bring charge (accusation) against God's children, even when he often times fabricates the charge. And to that end, he does have access.

The key to this excellent question is, I believe, found in this part of the question, "...AS HE DID..." To be sure, in the case of Job, God did allow a particular, specific, and I believe a most unique dispensation to Satan that allowed him to afflict and trouble Job in so many grievous ways; but always within God ordered limitations (see Job 1:12)

Does Satan have the desire and the capacity to afflict God's people today? I think that there is no doubt that he does, and that he exercises himself in doing so. But is he afflicting and troubling "...as he did..." in Job's case? Is there evidence that God has also granted him the same dispensation to afflict others as was the case with Job? I think not.

Consider this, so far as the expression "as he did..." or "...as it was..." is concerned.

In the book of Genesis we read in chapter 6, verse 5, **"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually."**

In this passage, the depraved nature, which produces the sin of man, is seen. And that fallen nature is the producer of **"every imagination"; "only evil"; "continually"**. It is depravity that dictates **"every", "only", "continually"**. Clearly, man sins ever, only, and continually. There is no debate on this issue. It is scripturally and practically factual.

Now, with this established fact, move forward from Noah's day that we read of here in Genesis 6 to the time when the Lord Jesus Christ shall return. How will depravity control the thoughts and actions of men at that time?

Matt. 24:37, 38: **"But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days**

**that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark."**

Clearly, the teaching is that when Jesus comes back, mankind will have been, and will be at that time continuing as they were in the days of Noe. And how were they then? Look again to Genesis 6 for your answer. Depravity has not changed. Sinful man has not changed. So, "as it was" is now seen as "as it shall be."

Surely Satan would like to afflict men "as he did" in the case of Job, for his sinful nature has not changed, and he is still depraved.

Remember that God allowed him to trouble Job in unique ways and to unique degrees of affliction. But I know of no other case, as was Job's case.

DOYAL THOMAS



**Todd Bryant**  
3000 Hillswood Circle  
Northport, AL 35473

*Pastor*  
**Sovereign Grace Baptist Church**  
12859 Martin Road  
Spur  
Northport, AL 35473

**"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them."** (Job 1:6)

As we read this familiar passage from the book of Job, we find that Satan had access to God in such a way as to accuse the elect. I see nothing in Scripture which would lead me to believe that this has changed. Satan will be cast out of Heaven and will therefore lose his access to God around the middle of the Tribulation period (Rev. 12:9). Satan is said to be at this present time **"the accuser of our brethren"** (Rev. 12:10).

Now, having stated that Satan does still possess access to God, we must plainly state that this in no way hints to Satan having any ability greater than that which God allows. Though God cannot be charged with the sins of Satan (or any human being for that matter), he cannot do anything without God allowing it. God is ultimately in charge. This can be seen by the restrictions that God put on Satan when He allowed him to bring Job's trial on him (Job 1:10, 12).

Satan is at this present time accusing you and me. This should urge us to be careful concerning our reputation. We

must understand that our position in Christ will not change according to anything Satan says. Still yet, we should be concerned with giving him the opportunity to accuse us. He is going to do it, but, we surely shouldn't give him fuel for the fire.

TODD BRYANT



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

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

According to Job chapters one and two, Satan and other angelic beings presented themselves before God in the heavenlies. It appears that the angels, elect and non-elect, were required by God to report their activities in an accountability exercise. We know that the particular instances recorded in the book of Job took place after the fall of Satan and the fall of man. So we know that in the time frame of the book of Job (oldest book of the Bible) that Satan appeared before God from time to time for accountability purposes. It also appears from the context that Satan came into and went from the presence of the Lord by Divine appointment when summoned by the Almighty.

Satan is referred to as **"the prince of the power of the air"** (Eph. 2:2) who has access to the heavenlies. The saints of God are admonished to put on the whole armor of God so that they may stand against the wiles of the devil, **"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"** (Eph. 6:12). It is obvious that Satan and his demonic minions have a real sphere of influence in the heavenlies. I assume that God still requires them to report their activities in an accountability exercise similar to what is recorded in the book of Job.

There is coming a day when Satan and his demonic host will be entirely cast out of the heavenlies at the mid point of the Tribulation Period. Revelation 12:7-9 declares: **"And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither**

**was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him."**

They will wreak havoc on the earth until Jesus comes again. At which time Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit for a thousand years (Rev. 20), after which he will be released only to meet his final doom.

TOM ROSS



**Matt James**  
3756 Pendent Ln.  
Columbus, OH 43207

*Pastor*  
**Sovereign Grace Baptist Church**  
6041 Africa Road  
Galena, OH 43021

In Job 1:6 we read, **"Now there was a day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the LORD, and Satan came also among them."** When God asked Satan what he had been doing, Satan replied in verse seven, **"From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."**

In the Old Testament times Satan was roaming the earth and was able to present himself to God, and in Matthew 4:1-11, he also met with Jesus Christ to tempt Him.

Now that we are living under the New Covenant it appears that Satan is still roaming the earth as he has been, because I Peter 5:8 says, **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."** Therefore, it appears that Satan would still have access to God as he had before if God allows it.

MATT JAMES

## Gleanings

*Continued from page 470*

benefits us personally and spiritually and in turn, enriches the lives of other.

Matthew Henry has an interesting comment on our text. He says this is "a metaphor taken from merchants and traders who diligently observe and improve the seasons for merchandise and trade." A present case in point is the merchandiser's Friday after Thanksgiving Day sale. They scrupulously and promptly capture the golden moment. Jesus said, **"the children of this world are in their generation wiser than the children of light"** (Luke 16:8). In other words, if Christians invested spiritually with the kind of diligence with which the world invests materially what a profound effect it would have on our society. We all know how ladies love to shop. They

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## Gleanings

Continued from page 471

seem to be always in the market for bargains. They seek opportunities to make the very best of what they have to purchase with. As children of light we should seize the moment and capitalize on the opportunities Providence affords us, remembering the days are evil.

We all, in the space and duration of time, have opportunities to prepare for specific seasons and events. For example, the lumberjack wastes no time sharpening his ax. He is actually redeeming the time. We, as Christians, would not be wasting our time to sit down and evaluate our present use of time. Time is a precious gift from God. Poor management of time will translate into the loss of opportunity.

I read once, many years ago, of a statement about a godly man. The person said, "He knew the value of a quarter of an hour." That has stuck with me. Do you and I know the value of fifteen minutes? Do we constantly squander the precious commodity as though we were sure we had an abundance of it? **"Boast not thyself of to-morrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth"** (Pro. 27:1). Do we, like Felix, imagine we will always have a more convenient season for weighty matters?

When I hear people talk about "killing time" I almost cringe. That is a horrible expression and certainly a practice to be repented of. We desperately need to learn afresh the extreme value of this wonderful gift. Once learned, we would not spend numerous hours before a TV set, but rather more time in the Scriptures and reading good books and in fellowship with the saints and prayer. We could not just take a vacation from God nor could

we engage in foolish and unwholesome activities. We could not just hang out shooting the breeze with the guys. That's not to say there's no time for recreation or relaxation, but we are saying there should be priorities. Otherwise we'll spend our time majoring on the minors.

Once, years ago, the grandchildren were over and wanted to watch the Mr. Roger's program. I'll never forget what he said and it has been of tremendous help to me. He said "Do something while you are waiting." This is good advice. Instead of just standing around, possibly frustrated because our plans have been interrupted, we should have other plans ready to be implemented. This requires some forethought and prior planning. We should have a work list of options when something falls through. When plan A is impossible there can be plan B and C and so on. Try to have good reading material handy in case you have to wait. Visits could be made or letters could be written in those intervals. These are things that we often seem to have so little time for ordinarily. Providentially the Lord closes some doors while others are fully open. Being time conscious will prepare us to grasp the opportunities that come to us.

Consider the fullness of Christ's schedule and how tirelessly He went about the work appointed. He went about teaching and doing good. How did He accomplish so much in so short a time? He redeemed the time and in due time died for the ungodly! Jesus said, **"I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work."** We would be wise and do well to remember these words. Brethren, let us redeem the time!

## A Man-Made God

Continued from page 469

conduct of little children. He is a rewarder and punisher like Christ. Boys and girls must live to please him if they want their stockings filled.

Christ is forgiving (Mark 2:10), but so is the imaginary Santa Claus. Although children are not always good, Santa still fills their stockings with candy and puts them presents under the Christmas tree. So Santa is forgiving just like Christ! Most children learn that you do not have to be good to get your present each Christmas.

This should be enough to convince any person that Santa Claus is a substitute for Jesus Christ. Saint Nicholas died, but after he died mothers told their children that good Nicholas might visit them again at the mass of Christ. This would have meant that Saint Nicholas rose from the dead—an imitation of the resurrection of Christ. The Bible says that Christ will come again to reward His servants as to their being good or bad (II Cor. 5:9-11; Rev. 22:11). Santa comes every year to reward the good and bad—a cheap imitation of the second coming of Jesus Christ.

### SANTA CLAUS HARMFUL TO CHILDREN

Santa Claus is a lie. There is no such person. It is to be seriously doubted that the man Saint Nicholas ever existed. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* (Vol. 16, p. 477) says that "his existence is not attested by any historical document, so nothing certain is known of his life." There is not now, nor has there ever been, a man who lives at the North Pole and works all year to make toys to give to children on Christmas Eve. There is no such thing as a man who rides in a sleigh up in the sky which is pulled by eight reindeer. Reindeer might pull a sleigh on the ground, but never in the air.

How sad that little children fight with their playmates to prove there is a Santa Claus and that mother and father are telling the truth. The Santa Claus myth is a system of perpetual lying to little children. Their little bright eyes ask with all seriousness: "Is there really a Santa Claus? Can Santa's reindeer really fly? Does Rudolph have a red nose?" When parents answer these trusting little hearts in the affirmative they are lending their personal authority to a big lie! The lie becomes a truth to the child.

Should a Christian lie? The Bible answer is plain. Exodus 20:16 says: **"Thou shalt not bear false witness."** God says of His people in Isaiah 63:8: **"Surely they are my people, children that will not lie..."** How can parents who lie to their children about Santa Claus fit this description? Ephesians 4:25 commands us to put **"away lying."**

Parents punish their children for lying to them about things, but then they turn around and lie to the children about Santa

Claus. How inconsistent and foolish. No wonder there is a generation gap! No wonder children grow up to believe Christ is a myth. Such lies destroy the child's faith in his parents. He finds out that Santa, a man with God-like attributes, is a fake. He then thinks that Santa is for little kids and Christ is for big kids!

Henry Work, M.D., a Bethesda, Maryland, child psychiatrist and former chairman of the department of child psychiatry of UCLA, made some interesting comments about the Santa Claus lie: "Is it smart to use the image of an all-seeing, all-knowing Santa Claus to influence a child's behavior? You know the line—'You'd better be good or Santa won't leave any presents under the tree!' It's often used as an effective, if harsh, way to bring an unruly youngster back into line at this time of the year. The answer to the question is no" (*Better Homes and Gardens*, Dec. 1984, p. 45).

The Santa Claus lie destroys the child's faith in his parents. It is quite a shock when he discovers his parents have been lying and laughing behind his back all these years. He was a fool for fighting to prove them right at school. Credibility is gone. Doubts and suspicions linger long in his mind. He begins to doubt what mom and dad have said about the Bible, God, morals, and his country! One little boy who had learned the truth about Santa Claus was heard to say to his classmate: "Now that I know that there is no Santa Claus I intend to check into this Jesus Christ thing also!"

This myth tends to teach children salvation by good works. The song says: "He's making a list and checking it twice, Gonna find out who's naughty and nice." This gives the impression to a child that the way of acceptance is being "nice." This is not true. Salvation is in one trusting in the blood and righteousness of Christ. It is not any kind of good works performed by man. Santa Claus is just another form of Arminianism!

Santa Claus is preparing the way for the Antichrist. He is presently a Christ-substitute. The final Antichrist will be a man who will give gifts to all and solve all the problems of the world. He will promise to make every day one big Christmas for all (Rev. 11:9-10)! No wonder the world will gladly receive him and worship him!

Santa Claus is a false Christ. He should have no place in the homes and churches of real Christians. Don't tell your children the Santa Claus lie. Tell them about Jesus Christ. Tell them to pay homage to the ever-living Christ born of a virgin, and forget the "visions of sugarplums" in your head! Tell them of how Christ shed His red blood for sinners, not about some fat man in a red suit who does not exist.

I wish to conclude this message by reading a letter that a young mother

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## A Man-Made God

Continued from page 472

wrote to Santa Claus:

"Dear Santa Claus:

"You'll probably be surprised to receive this letter from an adult. You may be even more surprised as you read it to find that the writer is neither a maiden aunt nor a disgruntled bachelor. I'm a young mother. "It isn't my intention, Santa, to hurt your feelings. You see, my family has paid tribute to you for many past Christmases: my husband and I when we were in our childhood; now our children who are 6, 4, and 2. They still care for you. How much they care has really proved a problem in recent years. It is threatening to happen again this holiday season.

"Our children worship you. They speak of you constantly. They watch diligently for your December 25 appearance. Can you tell us, Santa, what you have done to deserve this faithfulness from two generations? Can you promise any future consideration in exchange for past loyalties?"

"During a family crisis, have you ever told us, "Lo, I am with you alway"? Were you ever with us during sorrow to comfort us with these words: "But your sorrow will be turned into joy"? And, Santa, there have been doubtful times. Where were you? We didn't hear from you the calming message, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

"We have come to the conclusion that you have been even less than a friend should be. And we have been short-changed. My three children have stood on a windy, cold mainstreet just to get a glimpse of your jolly face. They have written heartfelt yearly letters. They have gone to department stores to whisper in your ear. They have worked hard at being good in anticipation of your Christmas Eve visit. Yes, they've done all this—as their father and I did before them.

"But there's going to be a change this Christmas. There isn't going to be any Santa Claus worship in our home. We've decided to focus our attention and adoration on another Being—One who has stood by us the other 364 days this past year; One who has comforted us during the sorrowful and doubtful times—and yes, the times of crisis also.

It's true that your name will probably be mentioned around our house, Santa. Old habits are hard to break abruptly. But Someone Else's name will be mentioned much more often. The children will probably work just as hard at being good, but I hope they will do it for another inducement—one that will last the whole year long—to bring glory to Another's name. That other One has given us so much more—and not just on Christmas Eve!

"You may call our family fickle, Santa, but we won't mind. On this December 25, and all through the year, we want a Comforter, a Healer, a strengthening King. We

don't want a myth any longer.

"We've talked it over. This year we've decided to give tribute, honor, and worship to Someone who really deserves them—to the True Giver—Our God and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Farewell,  
A Young Mother"

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Beginning Balance .....	\$2,408.86
RECEIPTS:	
Berea M.B. C., Westpoint, TN .....	50.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....	100.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	200.00
.....	450.00
TOTAL .....	2,858.86
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time .....	687.00
Tapes .....	610.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....	1,297.00
Bank Charge .....	-10.00
Interest .....	0.19
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$1,552.05

### CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance .....	\$2,331.52
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT .....	160.00
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$2,171.52

### BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 10-1-2004 to 10-31-2004

Beginning Balance .....	\$2,444.23
RECEIPTS:	
Arthur D. Richardson, Cedarville, WV .....	100.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL .....	26.37
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	2,000.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL .....	60.00
Berea M. B.C., Mansfield, OH .....	50.00
Berea M. B. C., Westpoint, TN .....	150.00
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Anon. ....	380.00
Dividing Checks .....	170.00
Sub Total .....	\$5,871.37
TOTAL .....	\$8,315.60
EXPENDITURES:	
Wages .....	3,680.00
Printing (2 Months) .....	1,035.72
Postage .....	798.15
FICA taxes .....	299.83
Dividing checks .....	150.00
Total Expenditures .....	5,963.70
.....	2,351.90
Bank charge .....	-21.03
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$2,330.60



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# THE BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

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.

## ELEVEN CHRISTIANS ARRESTED, JAILED, AND CHARGED UNDER HATE CRIMES LEGISLATION

**PHILADELPHIA** - On Sunday, October 10, 2004, eleven Christians with the Philadelphia-based Repent America were arrested, jailed, and charged under hate crimes legislation during an evangelistic outreach at the annual "OutFest" homosexual pride event held in the public streets of Philadelphia.

The six men and five women representing Repent America approached the event and were immediately confronted with unlawful opposition by a group of homosexuals. This group, the "Pink Angels," was formed by homosexual attorney Chuck Volz, a senior adviser to Philly Pride Presents, organizers of the annual OutFest event which receives \$22,500 yearly from the City of Philadelphia. The "Pink Angels" blocked access to Repent America by forming a human chain, refusing to allow the Christians to walk down the public sidewalk. Police intervened shortly thereafter, escorting Repent America through the human blockade.

While on the public sidewalk and street inside the event, Repent America began to open-air preach with the use of Scripture banners, and to distribute Gospel literature, as members of the "Pink Angels" blew loud whistles and carried large signs alongside the Christians to block their message and their access to the event attendees, while others screamed obscenities. The police refused to take action as the Christians were continuously followed, obstructed, and harassed.

Repent America obeyed all laws, and even the unlawful requests, to move by the Philadelphia Civil Affairs police officers in an effort of cooperation. Regardless of Repent America's compliance, Chief James Tiano, head of the Civil Affairs Unit, without warning, ordered the arrests of the Christians and hauled them off to jail, where they spent 21 hours, before being released the following day. Ten Christians were individually charged with three felonies and five misdemeanors, while a teenager with the group was charged with a misdemeanor.

"This is one of the most remarkable and unlawful actions by police that I have ever witnessed. Their blatant disregard of the law by allowing hecklers to impede our way, block our message, and then arrest us, is inexcusable, especially by police officers who are specially trained to protect civil rights," stated Michael Marcavage, director of Repent America. "Christians are now being labeled as 'haters' and any speech that homosexuals

perceive to be intimidating, such as our Christian witness at OutFest, makes them a prime target for 'hate crimes legislation,' Marcavage continued.

The three felonies and five misdemeanors include: Criminal Conspiracy (Felony), Possession of Instruments of Crime (Misdemeanor), Reckless Endangerment of Another Person (Misdemeanor), Ethnic Intimidation (Felony), Riot (Felony), Failure to Disperse (Misdemeanor), Disorderly Conduct (Misdemeanor), and Obstructing Highways (Misdemeanor). "We are clearly 'not guilty' of these crimes, and with the help of our video footage, we shall be vindicated of these trumped up charges," Marcavage concluded.

The Christians are scheduled to be arraigned on October 18, 2004 at 8:00AM in the Philadelphia Criminal Justice Center.

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## WICCANS SUPPORT TEN COMMANDMENTS

Clay County, West Virginia - In a strange twist on the most recent Ten Commandments display case, the "Widen's Own Wiccans," the local witches group in Clay County, West Virginia, announced that they support the display in the county courthouse and oppose the ACLU's threat of a lawsuit. The American Family Association Center for Law & Policy (CLP), which is defending the County, has stated that they believe the display meets constitutional requirements. The display consists of a framed plaque of the Ten Commandments and a copy of the U.S. Constitution on one side and the Declaration of Independence on the other.

According to a press release issued by the Wiccans, they believe Clay County "is being bullied by the ACLU," and that the Ten Commandments "are, and have always been, an integral part of Clay's unique, one-of-a-kind culture." The Wiccans pledged to support the Clay County Commission "in its quest to maintain our Christian/Appalachian heritage and Culture." The press release concluded: "We want the '10 Commands' to STAY ON THE WALL."

Stephen Crampton, Chief Counsel for the CLP, said, "While we were surprised by the public comments of the Wiccans, we appreciate their recognition of the contribution of the Ten Commandments to the culture of Clay County. It is a shame that virtually everyone but the ACLU acknowledges the integral role of the Ten Commandments both in Clay County and in our nation."

The Center for Law & Policy is a division of the American Family Association, Inc.

The CLP restricts its practice to constitutional litigation in state and federal courts.

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## PRO-LIFE GROUPS WORK TO BLOCK SEN. ARLEN SPECTER'S APPOINTMENT TO CHAIR OF SENATE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

(EP) - Days after the Nov. 2 election, Sen. Arlen Specter remained at the center of a political firestorm of his own making. The Republican senator from Pennsylvania raised the ire of conservatives across the country with comments that he made about pro-life judicial nominees the day after President Bush's re-election.

Specter - who had been expected to chair the Senate Judiciary Committee next year - sent a message to the newly re-elected president about the prospect of pro-life Supreme Court nominees: Not so fast.

In an interview with the press on Nov. 3, Specter - who is not pro-life - warned the president against nominating justices who would seek to overturn Roe v. Wade or are otherwise "too conservative" for a nomination. "When you talk about judges who would change the right of a woman to choose, overturn Roe v. Wade, I think that is unlikely," he said. "And I have said that bluntly during the course of the campaign, that Roe versus Wade was inviolate."

Specter's comments angered many conservatives, who say Republicans should support justices with pro-life convictions, and that Specter should be ready to support the justices that the president nominates.

The American Family Association started an online petition to block Specter's chairmanship, and within days nearly 200,000 people had signed it. Focus on the Family encouraged its supporters to call the members of the judiciary committee, as well as Republican senators, to object to Specter's promotion.

Other pro-family groups voiced their objections to Specter, including the Family Research Council, the Center for Reclaiming America, and the Campaign for Working Families.

Weekly conservative magazines, including "The National Review," and "WORLD," also called for the judiciary committee to block Specter's appointment to the chair.

In the wake of an avalanche of criticism, Specter quickly backtracked on his comments, saying that he wasn't trying to "warn" the president with his comments, and that he had consistently supported all of the Bush's judicial nominees to date. Specter said his comments reflected his concern to see the president nominate justices who would not become stalled in a Democratic filibuster.

The senator's explanation seemed to do little to quell the opposition mounting against him. Dr. James Dobson, president of Focus on the Family, appeared on ABC's "This Week" to explain why he thinks evangelicals should work against Specter's chairmanship. Dobson cited Specter's support for both abortion and embryonic stem cell research.

"Senator Specter is a big time problem for us," Dobson said. "And he must be de-railed."

It remains unclear whether the public outcry will affect Specter's chances of obtaining the chairmanship. Karl Rove, the president's top political advisor, has voiced his support for the senator, saying that he has consistently backed Bush's nominees so far, and that Specter is "entitled to his opinions."

Specter, a self-proclaimed moderate has experience thwarting conservative justices: In the 1980's he helped kill President Reagan's nomination of Robert Bork to the Supreme Court and of Jeff Sessions to a federal judgeship.

Another Republican on the judiciary panel, Sen. John Cornyn of Texas, hinted at the possibility of thwarting Specter's chairmanship, saying, "We'll have to see where he stands."

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## DAY OF RETAIL: CHRISTIAN COMPANIES DIVIDED OVER WHETHER TO OPEN ON SUNDAYS

(EP) - Ty Mosler walked away from his management position at the Family Christian Bookstore in Asheville, N.C., after eight years because of a quandary he never thought he'd face: A change in the Christian store's operating hours meant Mosler would have to miss going to church at least half of the year.

Family Christian Bookstores, the largest Christian retail chain in the country, announced a year ago that it would open its doors for business on Sundays for the first time in its history. President and CEO Dan Browne called the move a "ministry decision," saying in a press release that the company wanted to "reach people when ministry is at the forefront of their hearts and minds." Browne also said the company wanted to "meet the needs" of the growing number of Christians who shop on Sundays.

Now, each of the 326 stores in the Family Christian Bookstore (FCB) chain is open on Sundays from noon until five. FCB spokeswoman Tara Powers said the company has received "dozens and dozens" of letters and e-mails from customers pleased with the new hours, and that the number of complaints from customers and employees has been "very minimal."

And yet, Mosler said about a dozen other employees at his store quit because of the Sunday hours. Brian Hanley, a New Jersey resident and former FCB customer, started an online petition asking Family Christian Bookstores to "uphold the Fourth Commandment," and charged the company with "breaking God's law" by opening on the Sabbath. Christian business owners and Christian customers are in two camps: those who say Christian companies can legitimately remain open on the Sabbath, and those who say the commandment binds Christians to refrain from working on Sundays.

Mosler said he saw his job as bookstore manager as a ministry, but said helping customers at work didn't trump the need to be in church each Sunday morning. Mosler, 42, was on vacation with his wife and two teenage children last July when he received a call

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## Bible & The Newspaper

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with the news that FCB would soon open on Sundays, and that managers would be required to work two Sundays each month. "I looked at my wife and told her that this was it," he said. Mosler said he knew the noon-to-five hours on Sunday would make it impossible for him to go to church in the morning and make it to work on time. "It just did not make sense to miss worship," he said. Mosler said his superiors were sympathetic to his predicament, but accepted his resignation. He left FCB in August of last year and now works at a local bank.

Powers said Family Christian Bookstores decided on the noon-to-five Sunday operating hours so employees wouldn't have to miss church, and that the company tried to honor employees' requests not to work on Sundays. She said she was not aware of Mosler's case or of the dozen other employees Mosler said left the store because of the Sunday hours.

Powers also hadn't heard about Hanley's online protest of FCB. Hanley is a seminary student and an elder at Grace Presbyterian Church in Danville, N.J. He said he recently noticed a sign in the window of the local Family Christian Bookstore that read "Now open on Sunday." "It really bothered me that a Christian store would stay open on the Christian Sabbath," he said. After writing a complaint letter, Hanley launched a website with a petition urging Family Christian Bookstores to close its doors on Sundays. "Christian bookstores are a business, not a church," he said. "They should be closed on Sunday." Two weeks after launching the website, Hanley said about 25 people had signed the petition.

Family Christian Bookstores is not the only Christian retailer open on Sundays. Berean Christian Stores, a small, Ohio-based retail chain with 19 stores in eight states, also opens its doors on Sundays. The company's VP of store operations, Greg Moore, said Berean began opening on Sundays three years ago because "customers indicated they needed to be served on Sundays." Moore said Berean views itself as a ministry with products people might need to buy on Sundays: "There is more value in saving a lost soul than in adhering to an Old Testament custom that later became a commandment."

Hundreds of independent Christian bookstores also operate in the United States, and at least some are open on Sundays, according to Nancy Guthrie, spokeswoman for the Christian Booksellers Association (CBA). Guthrie said the CBA, however, does not have statistics on the exact number of Christian bookstores open on Sundays.

John Cully is the owner of one of the largest independent Christian bookstores in the country. He has operated Evangelical Bible Bookstore in San Diego for 34 years, but has never opened his doors on a Sunday. "It's simply breaking God's law to be open on Sundays," Cully said. "I don't work on Sunday because God says not to in His Word. The Fourth Commandment says, 'Six days you

shall labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath of the Lord your God; in it you shall do no work."

Powers said the leadership of Family Christian Bookstores considered the commandment when deciding whether or not to open on Sundays. Since FCB leaders view the company as a ministry as well as a business, Powers said they felt justified in opening on Sundays, but said the potential for increased revenue was not a factor in the decision.

Lifeway Christian Stores, the second-largest Christian retail chain in the country, also views itself as a ministry, but has no plans to open on Sundays, according to Bill Nielsen, vice president of marketing: "Our conviction is that our employees and customers are better served by reserving Sunday as a day of worship and rest."

At least two large secular corporations have closed their doors on Sundays for biblical reasons as well. Chick-fil-A, the second-largest chicken fast-food restaurant in the country, has never opened on a Sunday. Chick-fil-A spokesman Jerry Johnston said Truett Cathy, the company's founder, decided to remain closed on Sundays because "he believes you can apply biblical principles in the workplace and be successful." Johnston said Chick-fil-A, with an estimated \$1 billion in sales last year, does not calculate how much money it could make by opening on Sundays: "We don't view being closed on Sundays in terms of revenue loss; we view it as an investment in the business."

Hobby Lobby, an arts-and-crafts chain with 335 stores in 27 states, does know how much it cost its corporation to begin closing its doors on Sundays six years ago. Spokesman Bill Hane said Hobby Lobby stores were open on Sundays until 1998 when the owner decided "it would be more pleasing to the Lord to close on Sundays." Since Sunday was the stores' second-biggest shopping day, closing meant big financial losses—about \$100 million the first year, according to Hane. "On paper the decision was hard to justify, but we were convinced we were doing the right thing," he said. Hane said customers adjusted their shopping habits to the new schedule, the company continued to grow, and Hobby Lobby projects sales of \$1.4 billion this year.

FCB President Dan Browne told the Associated Press that his company's decision on whether to remain open on Sundays was different than a chain like Chick-fil-A because FCB sells "ministry products." "No one's going to go to hell for not eating a chicken sandwich," Browne said.

Powers said Family Christian Bookstores polled its customer base before opening on Sundays. The results: Eighty percent said they shopped on Sundays, and 89 percent said they would shop in FCB if it were open on Sundays. Evangelical Bible Bookstore's Cully said there is nothing in his bookstore or any other Christian bookstore that can't wait until Monday, and that FCB's customer survey reveals "a weakness in the church."

Cully also said that Christian bookstores opening on Sundays "reflect the quality of the literature they are selling." A call to the Fam-

ily Christian Bookstores national customer-service center revealed the number of books in its inventory specifically about the Sabbath—zero.

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### GEORGIA TEXTBOOKS TELL STUDENTS THAT EVOLUTION IS A THEORY; ACLU SUES SCHOOL BOARD FOR DISCRIMINATION

(EP) – A sticker inside science textbooks in Cobb County, Georgia, tells students that evolution is "a theory, not a fact." The sticker also tells students that the material on evolution should be approached with "an open mind, studied carefully and critically considered." The disclaimer, which makes no mention of creationism or religion, may sound simple enough, but the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is suing the school system, saying the sticker promotes the teaching of creationism and discriminates against particular religions.

Cobb County school officials adopted the disclaimer in 2002 after a sizable group of parents criticized its science textbooks for presenting the theory of evolution as fact. More than 2,000 people signed a petition opposing the biology textbooks because they did not discuss alternative theories, including creationism. The school system struck a compromise by approving the stickers, which informed students of the fact that evolution is a theory. The school board also approved a policy that "under no circumstances" should a school employee teach personal religious beliefs.

Despite the fact that the sticker doesn't mention religion, a small group of parents banded together to sue the school system, saying the board was implicitly endorsing religion. The ACLU has filed a lawsuit on behalf of the parents, and a trial began Nov. 8.

A lawyer for the school district, Linwood Gunn, said it was silly to consider the stickers a promotion of religion.

"It doesn't say anything about faith. It doesn't say anything about religion," he told the court.

The parent who led a petition drive that pushed for the stickers, Marjorie Rogers, testified that the stickers were needed because science books discriminate against people who believe men were created by God, not through evolution.

"My problem is that only Darwinian evolution is presented. None of the criticism is presented," Rogers said.

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### THOUSANDS EXPECTED AT 'COVENANT MARRIAGE' CEREMONY IN ARKANSAS

(EP) – More than 1,000 couples are expected to convert their nuptial vows into a covenant marriage during a mass ceremony in Little Rock, Ark., on Valentine's Day 2005.

Gov. Mike Huckabee and his wife – both evangelical Christians – plan to join the couples, and hope to give a public push to the movement that seeks to strengthen marital ties and make it harder to get divorced.

Covenant marriages, which also are an

option in Louisiana and Arizona, usually require pre-wedding counseling and allow divorce only in cases of adultery, imprisonment, abandonment, abuse and after a substantial waiting period, according to the Associated Press.

Arkansas' marriage rate is nearly double the national average – 15.1 per 1,000 population compared to the national rate of 8.3, but the state's divorce rate is among the highest in the nation at 6.5 per 1,000 population, according to the governor's office. The national average is 4.2.

Huckabee said too few couples have taken advantage of the covenant marriage option since he signed a 2001 law creating it. About 600 such unions were created in three years out of about 40,000 marriages that occur annually in the state.

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### BUSH AIDE PROMISES A 'ROBUST SECOND ADMINISTRATION'

**A special assistant to the president says Bush will keep fighting pro-life battles — and will nominate solid conservative judges — over the next four years**

(EP) – The results of the 2004 election have surprised more than a few political pundits who failed to see the huge impact "values voters" would have on the outcome.

Many in the media have been playing catch-up since the election, spending thousands of pages and hours of airtime assessing just who these "values voters" are and what they expect in terms of policy now that they've helped elect President Bush and other social conservatives.

In an interview with "The New York Times," Focus on the Family president Dr. James Dobson characterized the results of the election as "a reprieve" God has granted America despite cultural and political forces that have for decades mocked and weakened the traditional family and traditional family values.

"But I believe it is a short reprieve," Dobson said. "I believe that the Bush administration now needs to be more aggressive in pursuing those values, and if they don't do it they will pay a price in four years."

Tim Goeglein, special assistant to the president and deputy director of the White House Office of Public Liaison, recently sat down to describe what he thinks the president's priorities will be over the next four years, and how values will shape his goals.

Q. The media's been talking a lot about the "values voter." What are the administration's plans to address some of the issues that are important to those folks?

A. The president has said that he is committed to spending political capital for the agenda that he campaigned on. A very important part of that agenda is the federal judiciary, and the kind of nominees who we will send up to the Senate. This is an extremely important area to all Americans, because long after a president is in office, the men and women who are appointed to the bench by a president remain. And it is a foundational part of any president's legacy.

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Q. For proof of that, we only have to look to the stories about the illness of Chief Justice Rehnquist — he was appointed by Nixon more than 30 years ago.

A. Yes, that's right. And when the president has been asked, in the debates and on the trail, about the Supreme Court — although he has incredibly high regard for the chief justice of the United States — the president has consistently said that the sort of models that he respects are those of Justice (Antonin) Scalia and Justice (Clarence) Thomas.

Q. So we can expect more judges like Miguel Estrada, more judges like Charles Pickering, being nominated?

A. The president has been clear and consistent, dating from the first presidential campaign and carried over into the second presidential campaign: The president does not have a litmus test. What the president has is a very high bar for outstanding men and women to the federal judiciary.

Q. He's used the phrase "strict constructionist."

A. Exactly. The president wants to make sure that the nominees he sends to the Senate are men and women of impeccable professional integrity who have a judicial philosophy rooted in a principle. And that principle is that the job of a judge is not to legislate from the bench, but rather to interpret the law. And so the president is looking for highly competent men and women of unquestioned integrity whose judicial philosophy is the one rooted in the Constitution.

Q. Is it safe to say that anyone who likes the kind of judges who were sent up in the first term, will like the kind of judges sent up in the second term?

A. There is going to be no change in the unquestioned integrity, character and competence in the second Bush administration.

Q. Another thing — big news story on Election Day — were the 11 state marriage amendments that passed.

A. On the campaign trail, the president routinely talked about a series of values-related issues: Human cloning, embryonic stem-cell research, the centrality of marriage, the culture of life. And I think that this sort of question is not unrelated to the question of the kinds of men and women who will go into the federal judiciary.

Q. There was a story in "Newsweek" which made passing reference to how the president allegedly had to be dragged to support the federal marriage amendment. Can we expect to see — if the federal marriage amendment comes back up — the president will throw his support behind it?

A. It is categorically incorrect to say or suggest that the president has hesitated with regard to his endorsement and strong support for the federal marriage amendment. We want presidents who are considered when it comes to deciding about the support of an amendment to the U.S. Constitution.

And George W. Bush understands that prudence is an extremely important virtue in a president.

So it is incorrect to say that there was any hesitancy with regard to an endorsement of a federal marriage amendment. Quite the opposite. The president wanted to consider the constitutional options and made it very clear that advocating for the amendment of the Constitution was done in a prudent and fully considered matter — with top constitutional scholars and experts to make sure that this was not politics, but that this was the best policy.

Q. Dr. James Dobson made a comment that with the election results, the chemistry has changed in the Senate to being much more strongly pro-life. Are there any things on the administration's radar screen as it pertains to abortion?

A. There are any number of issues that potentially will come up in the Senate. There are, as you well know, a couple of pieces of legislation that may be in the drafting stage. But I think we have already seen that the president is the most pro-life president in American history. This is a man who came to office and the first thing he did was restore the Mexico City agreement (prohibiting U.S. tax dollars being used to pay for overseas abortions). And since that time has expanded it.

He has put a lid on UNFPA funding, he has categorically said that he is in opposition to the cloning of human beings. He is in opposition to embryonic stem-cell research. He is a president who signed a ban on partial-birth abortion, a president who signed the Unborn Victims of Violence Act, a president who signed the Born Alive Infant Protection Act and a president who has talked about the culture of life as it relates to the family, which he has called the unseen pillar of civilization.

I think it's safe to say we have not had an administration or personnel in the international institutions who have been more consistently pro-life than in this administration. So the culture of life will continue in the second Bush administration.

Q. One last question: From a policy perspective, not a political one, is there anything you'd like to say to our readers about what they can expect for the next four years?

A. I think two things. First, we want to make it very clear to the 57 million-plus voters who gave this president more votes than any other U.S. president how deeply and how sincerely we thank them for their support. We know that people came out in historic numbers and that there are people all across this country, in all 50 states, who invested an enormous amount of sweat equity in the election of the president — and we are fundamentally and sincerely grateful to all of them.

The second thing we want them to know is that it is going to be a robust second administration. The president did not want to have a lonely victory — and he didn't have one. We have 55 Republican senators, we have a significant increase in the House of Representatives, and it is full-steam ahead on very central issues. That's the direction we're

going.

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### STUDY FINDS TEENS SKEPTICAL ABOUT PARANORMAL

(EP) — A national study of teenagers and their religious practices found that Mormon youths are least likely to believe in psychics and fortune tellers, while Catholic or nonreligious teens are most willing to believe in them.

According to the National Study on Youth and Religion (NSYR), Catholic and nonreligious teens also show higher rates of belief in astrology and communication with the dead than do other religious denominations.

The data were culled from a survey of 3,000 Americans between ages 13 and 17, and is part of a four-year research project at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, based at the Odum Institute for Research in Social Science.

The report was based on the following questions from a NSYR telephone survey: "Do you believe in astrology, that stars and planets affect people's fates, definitely, maybe, or not at all," "Do you believe in the possibility of communicating with the dead directly or through séances, definitely, maybe, or not at all," and "Do you believe in the power of psychics and fortunetellers, definitely, maybe, or not at all?"

Overall few teens, regardless of religious background, said they "definitely" believe in the paranormal. Only nine percent reported that they definitely believe in astrology or communicating with the dead, while six percent believed in fortune-tellers. However, 31 percent said astrology was possible, while 30 percent said communication with the dead might be possible. Youths were more skeptical about soothsayers, with only 21 percent of survey respondents believed in fortunetellers.

"Most American teens are at least somewhat skeptical of paranormal beliefs; very few of them say they definitely believe in these phenomena," said Dr. Phil Schwadel, a postdoctoral researcher with NSYR. "Despite their skepticism, however, many of them are open to the possibility of paranormal phenomena."

However, when teens' beliefs are compared based on their churchgoing habits, those who regularly attend religious services are less likely to believe in the paranormal.

"For instance, 44 percent of teens who never attend religious services say they maybe or definitely believe in communicating with the dead, compared to 23 percent of teens who attend more than once a week," NSYR reported. "Likewise, 49 percent of teens who never attend religious services report maybe or definitely believing in astrology, while 35 percent of teens who attend weekly and 22 percent of teens who attend more than once a week say the same."

Across religions and Christian denominations, only 12 percent of Mormon youths said they definitely or might believe in psychics and fortune-tellers, least among all groups measured. At the other extreme, 38 percent of nonreligious teens responded similarly.

Among Christianity-based religions, 32 percent of Catholic teen-agers said they may or definitely believe in fortune-tellers and psychics; 26 percent of mainline Protestant youths responded similarly, while 21 percent each of conservative Protestant and black Protestant youths believed in seers.

Fortune-telling, divination, and sorcery are found throughout the Bible, but are condemned practices.

Twenty-eight percent of Jewish teens and 33 percent of teens in other religions reported that they at least might believe in psychics and fortune-tellers.

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### NEW STUDY REVEALS WEB SEARCHES FOR PORNOGRAPHY ARE DOWN, BUT MORE PEOPLE ARE ACCESSING IT ONLINE

(EP) — A new study spotlights good and bad news in the effort to curtail Internet pornography.

The report, co-authored by professor Amanda Spink of the University of Pittsburgh, indicates that pornography searches represent only five percent of all online searches, but Spink said there's more to the story.

"Based on looking at all the data we've had from different Web companies, we can say the proportion of sexual searches has gone down," she said. "In raw numbers, it's probably gone up."

The reason for the percentage going down is that there are more people on the Web, many of them more interested in shopping than searching for smut.

"A lot of the searches today," Spink said, "are for business information, job information, information on computing, information on people, information on products."

Maryam Kubasek, director of communications for the National Coalition for the Protection of Children and Families, thinks there's another reason for the percentage decline.

"A lot of folks, unfortunately, may not need search engines any more," Kubasek said. "If they know where to get the porn, they can go straight there. They don't need to search for it. Pornographers in many ways have done the search job for them, by sending it to them in their mailboxes."

According to Kubasek, it's especially a growing problem for children.

"Kids are now getting free porn," she said, "which, of course, just increases their appetite for more and increases their interest in more."

Kubasek said good filtering software coupled with parental supervision is the best weapon against porn on the Internet.

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### MAINLINE PRESBYTERIAN GROUP MEETS WITH TERRORIST GROUP, CALLS FOR DIVESTMENT FROM ISRAEL

(EP) — Officials of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are scrambling to do damage control. At issue are two actions that have angered Jewish groups and disrupted

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Broadbent, E. H. .... 37.99

It ought to be obvious to even the casual observer of history that the real story of the church is not the one recorded in secular history. Here is a book that documents from apostolic days those groups of persecuted believers who just wanted to follow the Lamb and His Word. Also includes eight pages of full-color maps, a subject index and timeline.

### Memorials of the Baptist Martyrs

Brown, John Newton ..... 12.00

### Baptists and their Doctrines

Carroll, B. H. .... 19.99

In this book, Timothy and Denise George bring the practical teaching style of B. H. Carroll to contemporary Christians with a collection of 14 essays and sermons from his voluminous writings.

### Baptist Encyclopaedia, The (3 Vol. Set) (ND)

Cathcart, William ..... 60.00

"Dr. Cathcart has made the Baptist denomination his debtor by his patient investigations and literary contributions. His scholarly attainments and tireless industry have fitted him to do an order of literary work which no Baptist had done, in giving the world his 'Baptist Encyclopaedia'... Having known Dr. Cathcart in intimate friendship for a full generation, his habits of study, his unflagging perseverance, and his uncompromising integrity, the writer is free to express

the belief that no truer man lives in our Baptist brotherhood." DR. THOMAS ARMITAGE. Volume 2, Pages 870-871. A History of the Baptists: Traced By Their Vital Principles and Practices, &c. (New York: Bryan, Taylor & Co., 1890).

### A History of the Baptists (Vol. 1)

Christian, John T. .... 9.95  
This is volume one of a two-volume set of the complete history of Baptists, bringing the Baptist lineage from the church's origin up to the twentieth century.

### A History of the Baptists (Vol. 2)

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Cramp, J. M. .... 25.00

### A History of the English Baptist (4 Vols) (ND)

Crosby, Thomas ..... 85.00

### Baptist Heritage Abandoned

Cross, I. K. .... 2.50

A documented study showing that Southern Baptists' move to Protestantism has led them to abandon many historic Baptist principles.

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Cross, I. K. .... 1.00

A new examination of the principles of Landmark Baptists. Designed to acquaint a new generation with the importance of those principles and to identify with them.

### Reformation and Baptist Compromise, The

Cross, I. K. .... 1.50

Examines the nature and history of the church and its change to a Protestant concept.

### This Day In Baptist History

Cummins, David L.; Thompson, E. Wayne ..... 29.95

A collection of 366 sketches of people and events from Baptist history, accompanied by a passage from the Bible to read each day.

### This Day In Baptist History 2

Cummins, David L.; Thompson, E. Wayne ..... 29.95

The definitive characteristics of Baptists have been gained at great price, and the authors reaffirm those distinctives for the present generation in devotionals that spotlight men and women whose lives challenge and inspire.

### Christianity and the Constitution

Eidsmoe, John ..... 26.99

Using the writings of the founders and records of their conversations and activities, John Eidsmoe demonstrates the influence of Christianity on the political convictions of the founding fathers.

### Anabaptist Story, The

Estep, William R. .... 22.00

Four hundred seventy years ago the Anabaptist movement was launched with the inauguration of believer's baptism and the formation of the first congregation of the Swiss Brethren in Zurich, Switzerland. This standard introduction to the history of Anabaptism by noted church historian William R. Estep offers a vivid chronicle of the rise and spread of teachings and heritage of this important stream in Christianity.

### Early English Baptist, The (2 Vols)

Evans, Benjamin ..... 24.00

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Ford, S. H. .... 3.95

Beginning in Virginia in the eighteenth century, the author traces Baptists back to their origin during the time of Christ.

### Foxe's Book of Martyrs

Foxe, John ..... 9.95

This best-selling classic is a must for every Christian's library. The accounts of believers who stood triumphantly in the face of torture and death create

courage in anyone facing the trials of life. The faithfulness of such historical figures as William Tyndale and Martin Luther will inspire you to live for Christ today.

### New Foxe's Book of Martyrs (2001)

Foxe, John ..... 13.99

This is the most complete Foxe's Book of Martyrs ever published. It is essential reading for the study of Christian persecution in Foxe's day and in ours, having been brought up to date with accounts of modern-day martyrdoms throughout the world.

### Baptist Why And Why Not

George, Timothy F. .... 19.99

The essays in this volume were published originally in 1900 — edited by J. M. Frost, founding president (then, executive secretary) of The Sunday School Board of the Southern Baptist Convention. They present a slice of Southern Baptist life at the close of the 19th-century.

While Baptists recognized that they held much in common with other Christian believers, they were concerned to articulate clearly their distinctives and to teach those distinctives to their children.

### Baptist Doctrine

Gillentine, E. C. .... 1.50

Fifteen lessons with questions, setting forth the truths that have distinguished Baptists in all ages.

### Minutes of the Philadelphia Baptist Association (ND)

Gillette, A. D. .... 18.00

### British Particular Baptist, The (1638-1910) (Vol.1)

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### British Particular Baptist, The (1638-1910) (Vol.2)

Haykin, Michael A. G. .... 23.50

Each volume of this three volume set contains professionally written biographical sketches of the British Particular Baptists from 1638 - 1910. This set is edited by Dr. Michael Haykin of the Heritage Baptist College and Seminary in Ontario.

### British Particular Baptist, The (1638-1910) (Vol.3)

Haykin, Michael A. G. .... 24.59

Each volume of this three volume set contains professionally written biographical sketches of the British Particular Baptists from 1638 - 1910. This set is edited by Dr. Michael Haykin of the Heritage Baptist College and Seminary in Ontario.

### Directory of New Testament Churches

Heading, John ..... 8.99

### By Their Blood

Hefley, James & Marti ..... 17.99

Their amazing stories are told in By Their Blood, a modern continuation of the classic Foxe's Book of Martyrs. Some stories are well known: John and Betty Stam were beheaded by an anti-foreign mob; Jim Elliot and four others were slain by Auca Indians in Ecuador.

### Baptist, The (OP) 3-available

Hoad, Jack ..... 14.95

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Jarrel, W. A. .... 22.00

### Baptist Confessions of Faith

Lumpkin, William L. .... 20.00

Contains every important Baptist confession of faith since the early seventeenth century, reevaluated in light of contemporary research and related to Christian life today.

### Myth of the Universal, Invisible, Church Theory Exploded, The

Mason, Roy ..... 3.95

One of the most widespread theories of today is the universal, invisible church theory. This theory teaches that all believers belong to this invisible church and they were made a part of it through Holy Spirit baptism. The author of this book shows the fallacy of such a theory. He discusses all passages used to support a universal church theory, refutes them, and uses those same passages of Scripture to show how the Bible teaches a local church.

### Baptist Heritage, The

McBeth, H. Leon ..... 49.99

H. Leon McBeth's 'The Baptist heritage' is a definitive, fresh interpretation of Baptist history. Based on primary source research, the book combines the best features of chronological and topical history to bring alive the story of Baptists around the world.

### A Sourcebook for Baptist Heritage

McBeth, H. Leon ..... 39.99

This companion volume to McBeth's "The Baptist Heritage: Four Centuries of Baptist Witness," introduces the reader to the major figures and documents of Baptist

history.

### Handbook of Denominations

Mead, Frank S. .... 20.00

The new, revised edition of a perennial reference favorite! The Handbook of Denominations is widely recognized as the most accurate, objective, and comprehensive source of information on America's religious denominations.

### Handbook of Denominations

Mead, Frank S.; Hill, Samuel S. .... 16.00

New Tenth Edition Features: More than 200 religious groups in the United States. Introductory article: A "walking tour" through the religion pages of the newspaper. Headquarters of denominations Glossary.

### History of the Evangelical Churches of the Valleys of Piedmont, The (2 Vols)

Morland, Samuel ..... 28.00

### History of Baptist

Orchard, G. H. .... 9.95

Gives indisputable evidence of churches, now called Baptists, in many countries through all ages prior to the Reformation and into the nineteenth century.

### Strict Communion

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### Three Witnesses for the Baptists

Pugh, Curtis ..... 7.95

### Early Indian Missions

Roustio, Edward ..... 35.50

### Complete Writings of Menno Simons, The

Simons, Menno ..... 64.99

This new English edition of Menno Simon's writings contains all the known writings of Menno, including several tracts, letters, and hymns never previously translated. This new edition represents a faithful modern English rendering of what Menno taught and wrote in the sixteenth century.

### Early Baptist in Philadelphia (ND)

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Stanley, John ..... 4.95

### History of the Baptists

Torbet, Robert G. .... 20.00

An essential standard reference work detailing the history of Baptists around the world.

### Baptist Are More Than Evangelicals

Tulga, Chester E. .... 3.95

The title of this book speaks for itself. Some subjects covered include: the Bible and society, our permissive society, characteristic words and the permissive society.

### Case for Separation in These Times, The

Tulga, Chester H. .... 3.95

This book is a call for a restoration of biblical separation which has been ignored today for the sake of cooperation and so-called unity. Dr. Tulga says, "The Bible doctrine of separation is based upon the fundamental necessity for separating right from wrong, to preserve right; to separate truth from error, to preserve truth; to separate the true Christ, that He might not be confused with the false Christs of men."

### Short History of the Baptist

Vedder, Henry C. .... 20.00

This classic in the field of Baptist history up to 1900 traces the development of Baptist principles and the history of the Baptist churches from their beginnings through times of tremendous growth.

### New Encyclopedia of Christian Martyrs, The

Water, Mark ..... 29.99

The New Encyclopedia of Christian Martyrs is a definitive, comprehensive resource that records Christian martyrdom over the last two thousand years. Contents are arranged chronologically and divided into five parts: Bible martyrs, martyrs under the Roman Empire, martyrs from the fifth to the fifteenth centuries, martyrs from the Reformation era, and martyrs from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries.

### Church of Rome At The Bar of History, The

Webster, William ..... 14.99

By a straight appeal to the very area where the Church of Rome believes her case is strongest, the facts of history, Webster refutes her claims.

### An Anthology of Early Baptist In New Hampshire

Wolever, Terry ..... 36.00

This book inaugurates our 'Anthology Series,' focusing on the Regular Baptist heritage of the Early Republic period in the United States. It was during that time that the Particular, later designated Regular, Baptists represented the mainstream current of Baptist life in America. It was a time of tremendous growth and associational expansion, marked by leaders of conspicuous ability.



## Bible & The Newspaper

Continued from page 476

PCUSA-Jewish relations: proposed financial recriminations by the PCUSA targeting Israel, and a meeting of 24 PCUSA representatives with the Palestinian terrorist group Hezbollah in Lebanon where some of them criticized Israel.

Delegates to the PCUSA general assembly adopted a resolution last summer calling on the denomination to dump its share holdings in selective companies doing business with Israel. Proponents said it was aimed ostensibly at prodding Israel to move toward reconciliation with the Palestinians. Critics claimed the divestment measure was passed hurriedly with little study or discussion — or thought.

Many PCUSA clergy and other leaders now call the action a disastrous mistake and are clamoring for it to be rescinded. Among other things, it disrupted years of good ecumenical relations between the PCUSA and Jewish groups and raised allegations of anti-Semitism. PCUSA top executive Clifton Kirkpatrick and other church executives have sought to patch the rift but have been unsuccessful.

Inspired by the PCUSA, other denominations now are considering similar action, including the Episcopal Church. Kirkpatrick cautioned them to discuss the issues thoroughly with American Jewish leaders before making any decisions, something the PCUSA failed to do.

"Divestment is wrong and skewed," Mr. William Harter, a PCUSA pastor who heads Presbyterians Concerned for Jewish-Christian Relations, said. "It won't accomplish what they say they want to accomplish. And it will be the Palestinians who suffer the most." He cited published financial data to back up his contentions.

No decision to start divesting can be made until the 2006 general assembly. The PCUSA reportedly has about \$7 billion in pension and trust funds, much of it invested in stocks. Analysts say "fiduciary responsibility" considerations will make it difficult for stock-portfolio managers and trustees to agree to move funds out of profitable companies.

One targeted company is Caterpillar. The PCUSA owns \$2.7 million of its stock. Prodivestment activists say the firm sells armor-shielded bulldozers to Israel that are used to level Palestinian homes and build security fences. They want the company to stop selling to Israel.

Members of the PCUSA Advisory Committee on Social Witness helped to shape the divestment resolution. Members of the same committee met on Oct. 17 with Hezbollah leaders. During a news conference with Palestinian TV reporters following talks, committee member Ronald Stone, a retired Pittsburgh Seminary professor, said: "Relations and conversations with Islamic leaders are a lot easier than dealing and dialogue with Jewish leaders."

Committee chairman Nile Harper said the fence Israel is building defensively to seal

off the border is "unhelpful." He said products made by U.S. companies "are being used destructively against the Palestinians. The occupation by Israel in the West Bank and Gaza must end because it is oppressive and destructive for the Palestinian people."

Outraged by the meeting with what American government officials call "the 'A-Team' of global terrorists," some Jewish and Christian groups protested loudly. The American Jewish Congress called the meeting and remarks "a blow to peace efforts in the region."

PCUSA chief executive Kirkpatrick immediately fired off a news release. It said the statements by committee members "do not reflect the official position of the [PCUSA] on peace in the Middle East." Kirkpatrick earlier had asked the committee to call off the meeting. (PCUSA church funds, however, paid for the committee's trip.)

PCUSA spokesman Jerry Marter said the Stone and Harper statements "cannot help but worsen relations between the [PCUSA] and Jewish groups."

### JERRY FALWELL FORMS NEW EVANGELICAL COALITION

(EP) – Jerry Falwell announced Nov. 10 that he plans to lead an "evangelical revolution" over the next four years. Falwell will step down from the day-to-day operations of Liberty University and Thomas Road Baptist Church to form the Faith and Values Coalition, an evangelical lobbying group. The coalition plans to lobby for pro-life justices, a constitutional amendment banning same-sex marriage, and the election of another "George-Bush-type conservative" in 2008. Matthew Staver, founder of the Liberty Counsel, will serve as vice chairman, and Left Behind co-author Tim LaHaye will be board chairman. Falwell said the new group will be a "21st century resurrection of the Moral Majority," the organization he founded in 1979.

### TENNESSEE BAPTISTS DEBATING PULLING KIDS OUT OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

(EP) – Southern Baptists in Tennessee will consider a motion at their state convention to remove their children from public schools. The group will meet in Knoxville, Tenn., in November. A proposal calling on Southern Baptists to pull their children out of "godless" public schools was never formally considered in June at the national convention in Indianapolis. But 10 state Baptist conventions – including Tennessee's – are reconsidering the idea, according to Exodus Mandate, a Columbia, S.C.-based organization that advocates private, Christian and home school education over public schools.

### JOHN KERRY HINTS AT 2008 PRESIDENTIAL RUN

(EP) – John Kerry may be down, but he apparently doesn't consider himself out. The senator hinted recently that he's considering another run for the presidency. Kerry, reminding a crowd of supporters that Ronald

Reagan twice sought the Republican nomination for president before winning it in 1980, said: "Sometimes God tests you. I'm a fighter, and I've come back before."

### PERSECUTED PASTOR RELEASED FROM INDONESIAN PRISON

(EP) – Open Doors USA reported that Pastor Rinaldy Damanik, imprisoned on what many believe were false charges, was released from an Indonesian prison in early November. Damanik, a prominent figure in peace negotiations between warring Muslim and Christian communities on the island of Sulawesi, was convicted on charges of "illegal weapons possession" in June 2003 and sentenced to three years' imprisonment, but was released early. Many observers believed Damanik was innocent. Witnesses in court said they were tortured by police and forced to give false evidence. Judge Somanada admitted that many irregularities had occurred during the alleged discovery of the weapons and during the trial, but he still delivered a guilty verdict. "The release of Pastor Damanik is really an answer to the prayers of thousands of Christians around the world," said Open Doors USA President Dr. Carl Moeller. "His release comes just days before the International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church Nov. 14. We need to keep on praying for other Christians in prison and all those who are being persecuted for their faith in Jesus Christ. The prayers of His people are so powerful!"



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Conferences and Special Meetings

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS and Pastor Ray Sexton will be hosting a Bible conference Friday through Sunday, December 3-5. The preachers for the meeting will be Bros. Daniel Pope, David O'Neal, Arthur Blevins, Larry Wilson, Jack Dupelchain, and others. For more information, contact Pastor Sexton at the church phone number, 620-845-2461.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Northport, AL and Pastor Todd Bryant will be hosting a fellowship meeting on Saturday December 11th. The meeting will begin at 10:00 am with Bros. Doyal Thomas and Steve Martin preaching. Lunch will be served at the church building. In the afternoon service, Bros. Jeff Short and Troy McGahan will be preaching. For more information, contact Pastor Bryant at 205-333-8449, or via email at toddbryant@juno.com.

### Churches in Need of a Pastor

The Landmark Baptist Church of Tulsa, OK is currently in need of a pastor. Any interested preacher that is not currently pastoring may contact Sis. Katie Wilson at 918-437-3904 for more information.

The Unity Missionary Baptist Church of Paron, AR is currently in need of a pastor. Any interested preacher that is strong in the doctrines of God's sovereign grace and not currently pastoring may contact Anthony Johnson at 501-594-5218 for more information.

The Calvary Baptist Church of Ashland, KY is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elders should send resume and church covenant to the church or contact Mike Sherman at home at 606-928-0306, at work at 740-532-4223, or at mobile number 606-923-9443.

### The 23rd Year of The Voice In The Wilderness

The October 2004 issue of **The Voice in the Wilderness**, will mark the beginning of our twenty-third year of printed ministry. We praise our Great God, Who has made all of this possible. He alone is worthy of all honour and glory, both now and forever.

As with any accomplishment, whether great or small, this printed ministry had to have a beginning. It began as a burden upon the heart of the late pastor of the Dessie Baptist Church, Elder Rodney C. Minney (1920-1983). He desired to exalt the name of Jesus Christ and His Word through the printed page. Because of this burden, God gave him a vision of a publication going forth bearing the precious truths of God's Word. He had felt this burden for many years, and had tried to begin this work several years before, but it was not to be, for it was not the Lord's time. Many years later, still feeling the burden to spread God's Word on the printed page, he shared his burden and his vision with the Dessie Baptist Church, Clem, WV, which being only a handful of people, prayed to seek God's will and faith for this great undertaking. They authorized the publication and God blessed the desire and the effort.

The first copy of the Voice in the Wilderness rolled off the presses and into the mail in October 1982. It was an humble beginning of less than one hundred copies being mailed, but God continually blessed with more subscriptions, until at present there are about three thousand copies being printed each month, of which more than half of them are being sent out as singles and the rest as packages to various churches and individuals, both in the States and to different countries. Praise God! Although this may not seem like many to a lot of people, we praise God for allowing us the privilege of sending forth the truth to as many folks as pleases Him.

There is no way, humanly speaking, this could have happened without the support of

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our readers. Many churches and individuals have so faithfully helped with the financial means to keep this paper going forth. Although we have a personal acquaintance with many of these churches and individuals, and from the depths of our hearts have appreciated all their sacrifice and faithful support, we again want to praise God that He has made provision through them.

I want to thank all who have helped in any way to keep this publication going forth. My mother, who so faithfully has proofed each copy. Who, even though she is shut in, and not well at all, still desires to proof all she can. My brother Randy, and his wife Linda, who for several years prepared the paper for mailing, when it all had to be done the hard way, without computers and accompanying equipment. For some of the ladies in the church who have helped to get the paper

ready for the mail. Last, but not least, my wife Marlene, who has worked so hard to do the bulk of the work of keeping up with and getting most of the paper ready for the mail. I thank and praise my God for His kindness and provision in allowing us to be used for such a ministry.

Because this is the beginning of the twenty third year of this ministry, we would like to offer a free one-year subscription to anyone in the States who would like to receive **The Voice in the Wilderness**. All you have to do is send your complete name and address to: Voice in The Wilderness, HC 70 Box 33, Perkins, WV 26636.

We want to thank everyone again who has helped with this ministry, and we want to continue to praise our God for giving us this privilege. — Mark C. Minney-Editor

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