

The Berea Baptist Banner

Displaying Biblical truth for twenty-six years in the printed page.

Sins of the Saints

By Arthur W. Pink
(1886 - 1952)

(Continued from the last issue)

I. HIS COMMUNION WITH GOD IS BROKEN

The first consequence of Adam's sin was a breaking of his fellowship with the Lord. When in the cool of the day Jehovah walked through the garden, Adam sought to flee from His presence by hiding away among the trees. His conscience convicted him; he had no longer any relish for spiritual things: communion was broken. Such is always the case. How can two walk together except they be agreed? God cannot tolerate the indulgence of known sin. Once sin is allowed a place in the life, fellowship with God becomes impossible.



Sometimes for days together the clouds will come in between and hide the sun from the earth. It is no longer visible; its genial warmth is no longer enjoyed through its position in relation to the earth remains the same. Presently the dark vapor disappears, and once more King Sol gladdens the hearts of men by his welcome rays. In like manner, the sins of the believer come in between his soul and God, until the smile of His countenance is hidden, and His perfections are no longer enjoyed. Yet His relation to the believer remains unchanged. But it is not until he confesses and forsakes these sins that the cloud is removed and communion is restored.

Let no one think that the interruption of Divine communion is a light matter. It is deeply serious. Not only does it mean the loss of peace and joy and the cessation

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The Great Work

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

"And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" (Neh. 6:3). The work that Nehemiah had was a great work. The work that he had before him was given unto him by God.

I would like for us to think about the great work that was given unto Nehemiah, and I want us to consider the fact that, we too, are given a work by God Almighty---and our work is just as great as was Nehemiah's.

WHY IS THE WORK GREAT?

Let's examine some reasons why the work is great. And in giving some reasons why the work is described as "great." I want to basically give you three synonyms for the word "great": *important, large, and glorious.*

It is important. First of all, we must



notice that the work of God is great because it is important. Surely what Nehemiah was doing in building up the walls of the city of Jerusalem was very im-

portant. I mean, what Nehemiah was doing was far more important than what those folks that were left behind in the cities of Persia were doing. When King Artaxerxes asked Nehemiah what he desired of him, Nehemiah replied, **"If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favour in thy sight, that thou wouldest send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers' sepulchres, that I may build it"** (Neh. 2:5). Surely this was a great and important work that Nehemiah

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Preparation For the Pulpit

By Thomas Armitage
(1819 - 1896)

(Continued from the last issue)

III. *Lay all your mental and emotional nature under contribution to accomplish this holy labor.* Thus fortified, you cannot allow yourself to think of saying anything in your discourse but that (1) which is highly *manly*. Nothing makes a man so noble and high-minded, as when he is imbued fully with the Spirit of God. His first thought is anent the holy grandeur of his work and its vast claims upon him. He feels in his heart of hearts that he is a worker together with the Holy Father, the Holy Son, and the Holy Spirit. And then, every feeling of petty meanness and unmanliness must take its flight from his heart. God's work must be done by His own power, and so, in a God-like way. Secure this holy impulse, and (2) it will endow you with a proper conviction of your *responsibility to God*, to man, and to yourself. It will (3) give both firmness and flexibility to your *will*; and so, through your will as the regnant attribute, uniqueness to your whole work; for that will must control your whole nature. Then (4) you will shake off all narrow restrictions also, upon your *range of thought and stores of knowledge*; and be drawn under the Spirit of wisdom to meddle with all truth under the sun. You will rise above all low commonplaces and unmeaning indirectness. It is sure to give maturity and sacredness to your thought, genial freshness to your expression, and personal strength to hold your mind under a full sympathy with the laws of truth. This illumination of the Spirit will (5) lay bare to you *the hidden sense of Scripture*. You will (6) find yourself impelled to repress all tendencies to every form of *personal vanity*; not being likely to preach yourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord. The law of adaptation will assert itself over you at once. Your

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Songs in the Night

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"But none saith, Where is God my maker, who giveth songs in the night" (Job 35:10).

This is the language of Elihu by which he shows the miserable state of the wicked who in trouble do not repent of their sins or turn to God. They are wholly taken up with their afflictive condition.

It is otherwise with the righteous. God provides him with inward joy under his outward trials. He imparts such a view of Himself and His providence as to cause the afflicted to ever rejoice in His dealings. In affliction the righteous can sing a song of praise when all external things are sad and gloomy. The Lord turns his sorrows into singing.



God our Maker gives us songs in the night of **SPIRITUAL ALARM.**

When the Holy Spirit uses the moral law of God to convict a sinner he passes through a terrible ordeal: **"The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me: I found trouble and sorrow"** (Ps. 116:3). Such a person is brought to see himself as suspended over the abyss of eternal perdition only by a thread of life which may snap through weakness. Every tick of the clock puts

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*To improve one's self, One's self has to be removed.
"I can of mine own self do nothing:" John 5:30*

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

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

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Preparation For the

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chief concern will be to know how to bless mankind; and the temptation will be broken, to please the ear instead of winning the heart. A man who bows before Jehovah in his study, till he is filled with the Holy Spirit, cannot comfortably get it into his head, that he may pride himself on his pulpit composition and make a great parade of his labor, learning, or fastidiousness of style. He will make it in all respects the best that he can command; but he cannot be vain of the result when he remembers what has passed between him and the Holy Spirit in the study; for in an important sense he is not the author of the production. And this companionship with God will save him (7) from dawdling away his time on empty moral essays for the pulpit; and deliver him from mere sentimentalities, and an aesthetic taste thrown forth in loose poetic scraps. The same must be true (8) concerning those "men of straw," so commonly set up in the pulpit to be thoroughly whipped before the congregation; in the shape of German negations and abstruse theories, which nobody cares a straw about when the preacher is through. Such speculations remind you of the poor pilloried sinner, who in olden times sat upon the "cutty stool" before the Scotch pulpits to be laughed at. Or they call to mind the hanging of Judas in Spain, on Good Friday. A suit of clothes is stuffed with straw and hung by the neck in the market place; but is let down at noon and night, to be well thrashed by the infuriated populace, and at last is publicly burnt. Thus, like his pulpit antitype, Judas ends in froth and smoke. Nor can a preacher while under that influence of the Spirit which has cost his soul so dear a struggle (9) spend his time on tinsel trickery, effeminate ornamentation, and finical glitter; all the time blunting the sword which the Spirit has put into his hands, by gilding its edge.

No, my brethren, when you seek the Spirit's guidance, He will lead you into the depths of thought, and save you from the yeast on the crest of the waves. A perfect sailor is afraid of the coast, it is so full of rocks; he craves plenty of sea-room. If he feels the least ripple of air, he spreads every sail for the breeze to take him out quickly to mid-ocean. So the true preacher waits in the calm for the first breath of wind that "bloweth where it listeth," till it freshens and carries him out into deep sea-soundings, in unexplored latitudes of gospel thought. And what is quite as important (10) a preacher's soul imbued with the Holy Spirit will be delivered from all that ignorant impudence which is brazen enough to insult God and man, by going into the pulpit to stand there in "Christ's

stead," without the most thoughtful preparation. Besides (11) if the Spirit of God is enshrined in your hearts, you cannot conveniently put into your sermon any vulgar claptrap, or clownish levity. Your heart will be full; and your words and conduct will be those of a Christian gentleman. When the pulpit preparation of the heart is from the Lord in the study, so will be the answer of the tongue before the congregation.

The Spirit secured in the study, will give (12) *concentration and unity* to your sermons. Our Lord never attempted to teach more than one thing at one time. And in this respect your preaching will become like His. He avowed a great truth, and then opened it fully. What a marked example you have of this in the thirteenth chapter of Matthew, where His one theme is "the kingdom of God," but set forth in so many parables. After the proclamation, came the parable. Like Jacob, He drove the sheep and lambs as they were able to bear it, lest if overdriven they should faint. Straight, clear, deep work marked His teaching; giving one thing at a time as men could bear it. He announced a great principle, and then went on to perfection in its treatment. Concentration and unity marked both His methods and topics.

And yet another thing (13). When your sermons are prepared under the influence of the Holy Spirit, a stamp of *reality*, which cannot be counterfeited, will rest upon your productions. One of the greatest elements of pulpit power is that *animus* which tells the hearer that the preacher believes every word which he says. And if he does not, he cannot make the people believe him. Generally, his best answer to all sorts of skepticism is felt in the fact that the people discover a flame upon the altar of his soul, which they cannot mistake for a cloud of smoke. His zeal is so pure that there is no faint nor equivocal conviction behind it, and men feel its heat as no rule or rhetoric can supply it artificially. There is depth and weight in such words. Empty art may trammel you and make you one-sided and lead you to the hollow iteration of stock phrases; but the people will see that your higher faculties are not employed in the realms of conviction. James Hamilton beautifully says, "A chemist may analyze the wine of Lebanon, and he may tell you that it contains so many salts and alkalies; and you may combine all these, you may mix them in just proportions, but chemistry will never create what the vintage yielded. To make the wine of Lebanon needs Lebanon itself--the mountain with its gushing heart and aromatic springs." And so here. When the Spirit of God is in you all subterfuges for reality will be abandoned as lying mockeries, because your conscience will be quickened against all false dependencies.

And, last of all, on this point (14), you

will sacredly guard all your *interpretations of Scripture*. The Spirit never leads a preacher into that fanaticism which forces the letter of Scripture to contradict its spirit; or its spirit to invalidate its letter. He prompts him to reach its sense by the use of great principles, impartially and fairly used. Close scrutiny will prevent random interpretations, and all orders of pious stretching to make the Bible mean what it never intended. It is a scandal and a pious fraud to distort Scripture in that way. No man would dare to ill-treat any author but the Holy Spirit, or any book but the Bible, by isolating the sense of passages from all their natural connections. Who spake or wrote these words? To whom were they addressed? What called them forth? And what did they express to those who heard them at the time? These are the questions that an honest man will put in reaching the sense of the Sacred Books, and answers to these questions will settle their sense and use now.

IV. *This order of pulpit preparation will infuse through your own spirit that only gentle temper which the pulpit will allow, and which Jesus Himself threw into all His preaching.* The Spirit of God in a preacher's heart celebrates the bands of wedlock between his heart and lips, by the passion of holy love. Christ and His Apostles showed their love to their hearers in little things as well as great; even in the deferential manner in which they addressed them.

See the loving refinement of Paul when he spoke to them through their honoured nationality as, "Men of Israel," "Men of Judah," "Men of Athens," Or, when he addressed them officially, as, "Elders of the people," "Rulers of the people." Or, through their manhood, as, "Sirs," "Men, brethren, and fathers." Whatever the provocation might be, they never gave the slightest sign of ill-temper or peevishness. Ill-temper and crossness are out of place anywhere; but in the pulpit they are intolerable. A scolding minister in the pulpit loses all the weight of his moral judgment. He foolishly dreams that his terrible rebuke confounds the sons of men. Under the idle supposition, perhaps, that he is very faithful and very dauntless, men detect his strange fire as readily as they see a painted ship rocking upon a painted ocean. His anger may blister his own tongue and singe his own reputation; but it burns nobody else, much less does it melt them. A sinner never feels that his lost condition is the cause of the preacher's anger; consequently, he rightly counts it all "sound and fury, signifying nothing," except that its author did not trouble the throne of grace much in his study. No man ever dared to pray to the Lord to make him ill-tempered in the pulpit; so that it never comes in answer to prayer. The chief effect that it produces

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From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Restoration of Israel Part One

As in no other portion of the Word of God, the Apostle Paul presents in Romans chapter 11 the strongest arguments for the future restoration of Israel. Spiritualizers have labored in vain for centuries to explain away the plain meaning of what Paul wrote. But to those who use the golden rule of Bible interpretation ("When the words of the Scripture make good sense in the literal sense, seek no other sense.") the truth of God's reclaiming the nation of Israel abides fast.

HAS GOD CAST OFF HIS PEOPLE?

The subject being dealt with in Romans 11 is introduced by the question raised in verse 1: "I say then, Hath God cast away his people?" Many expositors take it upon themselves to answer Paul's question in the affirmative. A millennialist always do this. Even some who profess to be premillennialists would join with them. At least one of our brethren has written an article which says: "My position is that Israel of Old has been cast away forever and replaced with the Body of Christ, the gospel church which is the New Israel, the Spiritual Nation. I hold that fleshly Israel is reprobated before God and their only hope is in the gospel church." It is noteworthy that our brother preached Israel's hope upon the gospel church instead of Jesus Christ.

Some might have assumed God had cast off Israel for ever because of what Paul had said in Romans chapter 10. But such an idea was far removed from the apostle's mind. Paul answered his own question with: "God forbid." Even in New Testament times God saved some from among the Jews as well as the Gentiles, and in the future it is God's purpose to call the whole nation to Himself.

The Scripture nowhere teaches that God has reprobated national Israel for ever. We must not teach the promises made to the patriarchs and to Israel must now be altered. We must not spiritualize away the plain meaning of the prophetic Word to suit those who are "slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken" (Luke 24:25). If God's promises in the Old Testament to Israel were not literally fulfilled, are we to assume His promises in the New Testament are going to be fulfilled in the same way? Are we to take those promises in the New Testament addressed to the gospel church and spiritualize them

away and apply them to the Jews? "God forbid." The mighty God of Jacob has not forgotten His unfilled promises made to Israel through His holy prophets.

In the latter part of verse 1 Paul proves that God has not reprobated all Israelites forever. He writes: "For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin." The writer of the Book of Romans was an Israelite and refers to himself as evidence that the Jewish people are not cast away.

The experience of the apostle Paul had a deep prophetic revelation. In I Timothy 1:16 he wrote: "Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all long suffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting." Again in I Corinthians 15:8 he tells how he saw the Lord as one born before time. His conversion is a pattern of the future conversion of his nation. What God did in Paul's case He will do for Israel in a future day. His untimely birth foreshadowed the time when "a nation" shall "be born at once" (Isa. 66:8).

A. C. Gaebelein says: "The comparison of Saul's conversion with the future conversion of Israel as revealed in the prophetic Word is extremely striking. The delineation is perfect.

"1. Saul of Tarsus in unbelief typifies the state of Israel as a nation throughout this present age. He was a learned Pharisee, a fierce persecutor, breathing out threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, blind and unbelieving. Such is Israel, another unbelieving Saul, and, like him, zealous for God without knowledge.

"2. The opening heavens, the vision and voice of the glorified Jesus, by which Saul of Tarsus was arrested in his career, are typical of the coming day when the heavens will be opened again and the Lord Jesus Christ will be manifested in power and glory. At His second visible and glorious coming the remnant of Israel will behold Him and learn by His glorious appearing that Jesus is their Messiah and King (Zech. 12:10-14; Matt. 24:29-30; Rev. 1:7). The opened heavens, the great light flashing forth, the vision and voice of Jesus, the prostrate Saul there on the road to Damascus, was but a little sample of what God will do for the remnant of His earthly people and of how they will

at last know Him and receive Him.

"3. Paul's service to nations and kings foreshadows Israel's coming ministry to the nations of the earth. All nations are yet to know the glory of the Lord, but world conversion is possible only after Israel is converted. Through Israel all the nations of the earth will at last be blessed" (Words spoken at the Prophetic Conference in Chicago, 1914).

AN OLD TESTAMENT REMNANT

"God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal" (Rom. 11:2-4).

In these words Paul shows how that God has preserved an elect remnant in Israel in the worst times of apostasy. The apostasy of Israel was never complete and final. The Lord always had a remnant that was faithful to Him and the covenants. In the awful days of the reign of Ahab (I Kings 19:18) God reserved 7,000 men who had not bowed the knee to Baal. Elijah was not the only prophet left, for Obadiah hid "a hundred prophets" in a cave to save their lives (I Kings 18:4).

AN ELECT JEWISH REMNANT IN PAUL'S DAY

"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work" (vv. 5-6).

There has never been a time when God did not have an elect remnant among Israel. The first members of the New Testament church were Israelites. The three thousand added to this number on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ were Israelites. About five thousand men of Israel were added to this number later (Acts 4). Multitudes through the centuries have believed and been saved. Such could not have been the case if God in the New Testament times reprobated the Jews forever.

Some Gentiles seem to forget that some of God's elect in this age are among the Israelites (Rom. 9:22-29) and in the gospel church (Eph. 3:6). Perish the thought that God would ever cast away the people He loved and chose before the foundation of the world. This elect remnant was found in the New Testament church of which Paul was a member. There will be a future Jewish remnant in the tribulation period after the saints are raptured.

ISRAEL NOT COMPLETELY CAST AWAY

"What then? Israel hath not

obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompense unto them: Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back alway" (Rom. 11:7-10). The elect remnant of Israel obtained eternal life by Christ while the rest were sovereignly and judicially blinded.

Some men have a strange way of interpreting the Scriptures. They argue the Israel not cast away in verses 1-2 means the spiritual Israel, Gentile believers in the gospel church. Then when they come to these verses before us, they contend it is literal Israel. But Paul speaks in Romans 11 of some elect who were of the nation of Israel; they were not Gentiles in the gospel church. When Paul speaks of the elect in our chapter, he means the remnant of the past, the believing remnant of his day, and the remnant of the future---all who are both national and spiritual Israelites.

THE PARTIAL FALL OF ISRAEL

"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy" (Rom. 11:11).

The purpose of the fall of Israel was twofold. First, the temporary fall of Israel was the occasion of salvation to the Gentiles. Paul does not affirm national Israel is reprobated forever. Nor does he assert that God's plans and purposes for national Israel are now annulled. To all such thinking he says: "God forbid."

Romans 11:11 discloses God's deep counsels and eternal purpose. Next to God, we Gentiles owe our salvation to the fall of Israel because they rejected their Messiah. The end, which God had in mind in permitting the Jews to stumble and fall, was not their eternal destruction, but rather the salvation of the Gentiles. Israel's sin opened up the way for the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles.

Second, the fall of Israel was in order to provoke them to jealousy. God's blessings upon the Gentiles was designed to arouse the careless, self-satisfied Jew to awake to see the Gentiles enjoying the things which he thought he had a monopoly upon by his covenant relation to Jehovah. The changed life of the Gentile is to make the Jew desire for that same experience to take place in his life. Here is the key to Jewish evangelism.

The gospel is to be preached to every creature---even to Israelites in this age! Yet instead of provoking the Jews to jealousy, that they might be saved,

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The Restoration

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the Gentiles have hated and bitterly persecuted the Jews. By this un-Christian, inhuman cruel treatment of the Jews, the Jews instead of being moved to jealousy have become more hardened and their afflictions have been increased. The barbaric treatment they have received in Europe and the so-called "Christian" countries have driven the Jews farther from the gospel of Christ. For this awful treatment of the Israelites the Gentile nations will be judged by the King of the Jews (Matt. 25:31; Joel 3:1-3).

Notice the word "fall" occurs twice in verse 11, and that each is translated from a different Greek word. In the question "Did they stumble that they might fall?" the word "fall" in the Greek means "to fall dead, to become null and void." The second Greek word means "a false step, a trespass, a transgression." By the question Paul shows that some might assume Israel had fallen without any hope of recovery, but in his answer he used the word which shows he knew it was only partial and temporary. He is saying that Israel's sin did not make Israel's fall final or fatal, but rather her fall created an opportunity for God to bring salvation to the Gentiles.

In verse 11 again we see God has not cast away His people, for if He had cast Israel away, why should He wish to provoke them to jealousy? Since His design was to provoke His national people to jealousy by having extended salvation to the Gentiles, we have evidence that He still has future plans for Israel.

THE FULNESS OF ISRAEL

"Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead?" (Rom. 11:12-15).

Paul had just said the fall of Israel resulted in the salvation of the Gentiles. He had also spoken of Israel's future conversion. Some Gentiles might have assumed when Israel recovered from their fall the Gentiles would be cast off forever. To this Paul answers that if the fall of the Israelites be the riches of the world, much more their restoration. The diminishing of them to a small remnant at the time he wrote had resulted in "the riches of the Gentiles," much more their fulness (Isa. 11:9; Hab. 2:14; Deut. 32:43). In Romans 11 Paul writes of "the fulness of the Gentiles" (Rom. 11:25) and the fulness of Israel.

The casting away of the majority of Israel resulted in the reconciliation of the world. The word "world" in verse 15 does not mean every single individual is reconciled to God, but rather that the elect world of Gentiles, as contrasted with the elect world of Israelites, are reconciled. Please observe how the word "world" is used in Romans 11:15. It does not mean every single individual in the world without exception. Let Arminians take heed to this fact.

"The receiving of them" in the Greek means "to take to one's self as a helper and partner." When Israel is restored to her proper position (Ex. 19:5-6), she will become the helper of God (Isa. 61:6-11; 66:18-23; Zech. 8:18-23).

The expression in verse 15 of "life from the dead" does not refer to what some call the general resurrection and final judgment. The reference is to a national resurrection of Israel and not a physical one. Such a national resurrection was taught by Ezekiel in the Old Testament. In Ezekiel 37:12 the dry bones are said to be the whole house of Israel. These dry bones typify Israel's death spiritually and nationally as the bones are said to speak. Literal dry bones do not speak. So the meaning in Ezekiel as well as Romans 11:15 is that God is going to bring His people back from their graves among the nations where they are buried nationally. "Life from the dead" is the spiritual and national resurrection of Israel.

The resurrection of Israel in Romans 11:15 is twofold. First, it means Israel's reception will be to them spiritual and national life; they will live spiritually and as a nation. Life from the dead is taken in a spiritual sense sometimes in the Bible (John 5:24; Luke 15:24, 32; Rom. 6:13). In the second place, the expression means as a result of Israel's reception there will be for the world at large "life from the dead." Jesus referred to this time as "the regeneration" (Matt. 19:28). The restoration and regeneration of Israel to Christ is destined to bring a great revival to the world. There will never be a world-wide revival until Israel is reconciled to God and their Messiah.

We shall end our study at this part of the chapter and shall discuss the rest of it next month, beginning with the parable of the olive tree.



Preparation For the

(Continued from page 222) ◊

upon unregenerate men is to make them wonder how a servant of God can let a bad spirit howl through him so much like the tantrums of a demon. Preachers may easily fall into this snare, especially when they are dealing out the terrible threatenings of the Bible. But it is an easily besetting sin for some preachers. They are sour in their godliness, and

morose in their preaching; generally sarcastic, snappish sharp and vinegarish in the pulpit. It is said of a distinguished preacher, that in an able sermon he "scolded his congregation for an hour and a quarter about the love of Christ." Yet, it is not at all likely that he was angry because our Lord loved them. But he acted as if he were. And here again we can go back to the example of the Lord.

He was the perfect model of that inner temper which gives tone to all gospel preaching. Deep love with Him was a fashion of speech as well as an affection of soul. He was so uniformly patient, hopeful, and cheerful in His heart-temper, that He has never had a preacher in His church, whose preaching showed so little of the harsh, hard, and gloomy as His own. It was always fresh, genial, and delightful. At times He chided His hearers, warned and rebuked them even; but never scolded. As the heavenly type of preaching, He could not indulge in that spirit. Only those of His servants who have the adequate wisdom to be angry "and sin not" in the pulpit, can afford to do that. How shocking would the thought be, that He could degrade Himself by assailing men's petty faults, much less lay aside His delicacy and benevolence, to play the personal scold.

He knew the terrors of the Lord; gathered and launched them like a thunderbolt; but His spirit melted into love while He did so. At times, when in contact with masked hypocrites, whose spirits He read infallibly, His sternness bordered on severity; but you feel a loving spirit beneath His words. We cannot mistake His vehemence for violence. He could brave the wrath of inveterate hate; and yet weep in pure sympathy. He hurled indignation at arrant hypocrisy; and insinuated consolation like sunbeams into penitent hearts. His rebukes were accompanied by a tender exhortation to "repent," and an earnest appeal to "flee from the wrath to come." He wished to save them. The fearful thought that men should perish, threw the great deep of His soul into commotion as He looked down on Jerusalem, till grief sobbed down His cheeks in tears.

Analyze His most abrupt sentences, and you find that loving conviction which makes every word speak volumes. It was a concentrated force, which convulsed men's consciences with guilty fears. Sin that was curable stirred all His compassions: malignity that was incurable He cast aside with indignation. You find every element in His words but that of crude, violent address under the pretence of fidelity. The structure of His words shows their spirit, as well as the connecting circumstances. He combined what Socrates requires in a perfect character, the greatest possible gentleness towards the curable, with the most high-souled indignation against the incorrigible. Then, we do not know

how overpoweringly touching were His tones and gestures when He made His most impassioned utterances; accompaniments which often affect the heart more than their attendant words. He alarmed Peter out of His ambition, with a lofty "Get thee behind me, Satan;" and He dissolved him into compunction by a look. A remark will be particularly in place here, upon a very grave point.

It is more than questionable, whether any minister is in the right frame of mind to preach about eternal punishment, till love melts his heart and voice and eye into pleading tenderness. The preacher's work is not to threaten men, nor to upbraid them for being bad, but to persuade them to be better. Harsh, hard argument, censorship and satire, denunciation and declamation, will not do this. Fenelon pierced this subject through and through, when he said: "Under the pretense of Apostolical preaching there are some persons, who imagine that they need only bawl and speak often of hell and the devil. Without doubt, a preacher ought to affect people by strong, and sometimes even by terrible images. But it is from the Scriptures he should learn to make strong and powerful impressions. For want of this knowledge, a preacher oftentimes doth but stun and frighten people; so that they remember but few clear notions; and even the impressions of terror they receive are not lasting. This mistaken simplicity that some affect is often a cloak for ignorance; and at best it is such an unedifying manner of address, as can not be acceptable either to God or man."

Constantly we hear the allegation that the purely Scriptural doctrine of eternal retribution drives men into infidelity. Nor can we wonder, if we examine the spirit and style in which it is commonly preached. Can you think of anything so offensive, as that flourish of triumph seen in the flaming eye, the violent gesture, and felt in the boastful voice, which so often attends what is regarded as a crushing logical thunder-storm, in defense of this fearful truth? It reminds you of the brandish and gloat of a savage over a fallen foe and his agonies; rather than of a broken-hearted brother who would die to save him. Brethren, it is simply repulsive and disgraceful. When our Lord treated of such themes, He did it with a grandeur of pitying force, and a holy dignity of self-control, which left the impress of the solemn truth so deep that no man gainsaid Him or His doctrine on this subject. It is unjust to hide from ourselves the fatal possibility of launching out the threatenings of the Lord in a wrathful manner; which carries the impression of ungovernable revenge and resentful feelings on the part of the declaimer, more than of soul-moving compassion. Deep feeling, even when it is good is powerful only as

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it is restrained and thrown back upon the will, till the will forces the springs of the heart to the deepest pathos and lamentation. Unrestrained feeling is the weakest of all things; and when it is ill-feeling, it exposes its victim to ridicule and jeer. When a prisoner stands at the bar tried for his life, he cares little for the passionate noisy advocate who pleads against him. It is the calm passionless summing up and sentence of the judge which falls like a mill-stone on his soul. When Chief Justice Shaw pronounced sentence of death upon Professor Webster, the murderer of Dr. Parkman in Boston, he burst into tears because he must doom the culprit to death. The moral effect upon the criminal was the same as the look of Christ upon Peter; up to that hour he had denied his crime, he now confessed his sin, went out "and wept bitterly." A bad spirit in the pulpit will soon work the ruin of any minister, and it is but right that it should. How far such wickedness has arrayed the so-called genius and spirit of Christianity against the revealed truth of an eternal retribution, is worthy of our profound consideration.

My Young Brethren: All these guards and helps furnished by Christ through the Holy Spirit, to aid you in preaching Jesus, exhibit His wonderful foresight and goodness to His ministers, in anticipating every want of the ministry, and providing for it by sending the Spirit to fill His place in the church. "**Be ye filled with the Spirit.**" He will give you a flattering lip, a weeping love, and a compassionate heart toward the lost. When the multitude see you "**moved with compassion,**" as your Master was, their souls will melt with yours. Your temper and style so softened, will silence all that is flippant and boisterous; and instead of your hearers saying, "Almost thou makest me an infidel," they will ask you to lead them to the Saviour's feet.

Besides this, the indwelling Spirit will save you from every form of that contemptible, whining softness which affects deep sensibility while destitute thereof. This is truly the proper class of that whimpering emptiness which could not shed a real tear to save a soul; but which will still insist on telling the sharp-eyed world, principally through the nose, that the heart is as dry as Jacob's well. I can account in no other way for that hateful, pious, twanging style of talking, which is so popular with large classes of preachers, go where you will. Such specimens are piping reeds, dry and cured, and shaken with their own wind. One of the greatest sins of the modern pulpit is simulated pathos, for heart-felt fervour. Sweet temper and deep tenderness must be caught from

the Holy Spirit, and enshrined in your breasts with their native Deity.*

*The lecturer has often been asked, and by devout brethren too, "How we may possess the Holy Spirit?" Note: (1.) That our Redeemer evinced His holy intensity by praying all night: Luke 6:12. (2.) He promised the Spirit to that three-fold faith which "asks," "seeks," and "knocks:" Luke 11:9-13. (3.) In this way only the Apostles received the promised Spirit: Acts 1:14; 2:1.



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of any further spiritual growth, but what is infinitely sadder, it means *the grieving of the Saviour's heart*. What He desires almost above everything else is fellowship with His own blood-bought people. One of the most pathetic pictures presented in the Bible is that found in Revelation 3:20---"**Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.**" It is not here a question of salvation but of communion "Supping" is always the symbol and expression of fellowship. It is for this the Saviour craves, and sinning denies it Him!

II. HIS JOY OF SALVATION IS LOST

One of the results of David's terrible fall was the loss of his joy of God's salvation. "**Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation**" (Ps. 51:12), was his heart-broken cry. Note, he does not say, "Restore unto me Thy salvation," but "**Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation.**" By his wicked conduct he had lost the enjoyment of it. In proposition that the believer allows sin a place in his daily life, he loses his relish for spiritual things; his love for the Word diminishes, his delight in prayer vanishes, his heart is empty and dissatisfied. Not only so, he is miserable. "**O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?**" (Rom. 7:24), becomes, more and more, his plaint. When Peter had denied the Lord, we read that he went out and "**wept**"---wept not profusely but bitterly, showing his joyless and miserable condition.

III. HIS POWER FOR SERVICE IS DESTROYED

Sad, unspeakably sad, is this. Appreciation of the salvation which is ours, gratitude to the One Who has done so much for us, compassion for the souls of the lost, obedience to the Saviour's commands; all demand that we should publish abroad the glad tidings of Divine grace. But how can I bear the vessels of the Lord if my own hands are unclean? How can I tell others of Christ's power to deliver from sin if I am living in it myself? How can I speak of the joy of salvation if I have lost it? How can I talk of the unspeakable blessedness of walking with God if I am out of communion with Him? We cannot serve God and mammon. We cannot live a life which is displeasing to God and be used in the service of Christ.

IV. HIS WITNESS FOR CHRIST IS NULLIFIED

Believers are living epistles read and known of all men and in proportion that sin is allowed in the life we misrepresent Christ before the world. Nay more, in proportion as sin is allowed by us Christ is dishonored and put to an open shame. O that we reflected more upon this? The Church is the Body of Christ. What is a body for? My body provides me with a home in this world. My body is a medium of communication, enabling me to come into contact with other people. My body is a vehicle of transportation. It is that which carries me from one place to another. My body is the instrument and organ through which I express and reveal myself; my eyes are the windows of my soul, my language is an index to the condition of my heart, my countenance reflects my character. And all that the body is to me and does for me, the Church is to Christ and does for Christ. And what is true of the Church collectively is true of the saints individually. Every believer is a member of the Body of Christ. Yea, every believer is himself a miniature body of Christ. I am to reflect Christ, reveal Christ, communicate Christ to others. Am I doing this? Not if I am giving sin a place in my life. Selfishness, worldliness, the lying tongue, the unforgiving spirit---were any of these seen in me I am misrepresenting Christ before the world.

V. HIS POSITION IN GLORY IS AFFECTED

A place in glory is due solely to the grace of God, but the believer's position in glory is determined by his works, service, obedience as a believer. Every act performed in the name of Christ, every

service which was constrained by the love of Christ, every thing done for the glory of Christ, will in the coming day, receive its due reward. In proportion as we have failed to use our talents in the service of our Master, and instead, have indulged in self-pleasing and carnal gratification, we shall be losers in the world to come. We sometimes sing, "Will there be any stars in my crown?" It might be well for us to inquire whether we shall have any crown at all. There are crowns referred to in the New Testament, and each is a reward. If there has been no daily taking up of the cross there will be no eternal wearing of the crown.

In the next world, believers will no more be all on one common level than they are now. The Lord Jesus said, "**But many that are first shall be last; and the last shall be first**" (Matt. 19:30). "**There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars: for one star differeth from another star in glory; so also is the resurrection of the dead**" (I Cor. 15:41-42). In proportion as we now enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season shall we be losers in the next world.

The figure which our Lord used at the close of the Sermon on the Mount---the building of a house---is amplified by the Apostle in First Corinthians 3:11-15. "**For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.**" Every Christian is a builder. The foundation upon which he builds is Christ Himself. The materials he uses are the deeds and acts of his everyday life. The testing of our handiwork will take place at the second coming of Christ. The works which will be destroyed are those that were wrought in the energy of the flesh. The works which abide and receive a reward were those that were energized by the Holy Spirit and done out of loving gratitude to Christ. There will be a class who will "suffer loss" (of reward), whose works will be burned up but who will be saved "**yet so as by fire.**" We have a striking and solemn illustration of this class in the case of Lot. Lot was a "**righteous**" man (II Pet. 2:6-7). But his life did not count for God. Self filled his horizon. He was a worldling occupied solely with the things of time and sense. Instead of living as a stranger and pilgrim on earth, he went and dwelt in the wicked city of Sodom. The time came when God determined to destroy this sink of iniquity. Because

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Lot was one of His children God sent an angel and delivered him. But all Lot's possessions perished, were burned up in Sodom. Personally, he was saved, but he "suffered loss." So will it be in the future. Lot was a pattern case. Those who are putting into their life nothing but wood, hay, stubble---dead works---will be the losers throughout eternity.

VI. HIS CONDUCT WILL BRING CHASTISEMENT FROM THE LORD

God is holy and sin must be punished. The sins of the believer must receive "a just recompense of reward" equally as much as the sins of the unbeliever. The difference between them is not in the fact of punishment but in the time of punishment. The sins of the unbeliever will be punished in the world to come; the sins of the believer are punished in this world, here and now. Such was the experience of Jacob, of Moses, of David. They were chastised severely.

This is a Scripture which very clearly sets forth the consequence of a believer's sinning---"If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod. . . Nevertheless my loving kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail" (Ps. 89:31-33). If God's children walk disorderly and disobediently they are not cast off or disinherited, but they are chastised with the rod of Divine justice. If we sin we shall suffer---suffer in our bodies, in our souls, in our circumstances.

VII. HIS PHYSICAL LIFE IS ENDANGERED

But suppose the Divine chastisement does not have the desired effect, then what? Suppose that instead of the transgressor humbling himself beneath the mighty hand of God, he hardens his heart? Suppose that instead of confessing and forsaking his sins he deliberately continues therein? In that case God will remove him by the stroke of death. In the first part of this article, we referred to the fact that the Corinthian believers though guilty of the most awful sins, yet, were still indwelt by the Holy Spirit. But mark now the other side. Referring to other desecration of the Lord's Table, the Apostle says, "For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep" (had died), (I Cor. 11:30). Dealing with the same solemn subject the Lord Jesus said, "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away" (John 15:2). That is, removeth it from the earth. The believer is to be a fruit-bearer, but if he fails to fulfill the purpose of his calling then God will not permit him to cumber the ground. It is

to this the Apostle John refers when he says, "There is a sin unto death" (I John 5:16). This is physical death, and the sin referred to is committed by a believer---see context. We understand this Scripture to mean: there is a limit to God's forbearance: after the believer has reached a certain point, he then "sins unto death." We have an illustration of this in the case of Moses. For his sin of striking the rock the Lord cut him off out of the land of the living, refusing to allow him to enter Canaan. But that he was not lost is proven by the fact that he appeared with Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. For a Christian to continue in known sin, and especially to remain unaffected by the chastening of the Lord, is to endanger and imperil his life.

Hear now the conclusion of the whole matter: "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (Gal. 6:7-8). May the Lord give both writer and reader a greater hatred of sin, a greater fear of displeasing Him, a greater desire to cleave to Him more closely.



It Does Matter How We Treat Others

By Grover Laird
Dorsey, MS

"Whoso diggeth a pit shall fall therein: and he that rolleth a stone, it will return upon him" (Prov. 26:27).

Many mistreat others without realizing that this could determine how God deals with them. Many Scriptures teach this.

The Bible tells us that if we ignore the cry of the poor in their need, we can expect God to ignore our prayer for help---"Whoso stoppeth his ears at the cry of the poor, he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard" (Prov. 21:13). This verse could explain why our prayers may not bring us the help we ask for.

God will be merciful to us and will deal with us in an upright, pure manner. That is, if we show this kindness to others. But God will deal with us differently if we are stubborn and contrary to others---"With the merciful thou wilt shew thyself merciful; with an upright man thou wilt shew thyself upright; With the pure thou wilt shew thyself pure; and with the froward thou shalt shew thyself froward" (Ps. 18:25-26).

Sometimes a person will devise a

plan to hurt another they dislike, only to find that what they had schemed for others come to themselves---"He made a pit, and digged it, and is fallen into the ditch which he made. His mischief shall return upon his own head, and his violent dealing shall come down upon his own pate" (Ps. 7:15-16, Look again at our text and also Eccl. 10:8). When we plan trouble for others, we are planning trouble for ourselves.

On the other hand, if we are determined not to criticize and condemn others, we save ourselves of some of this unfair abuse---"Judge not, that ye be not judged" (Matt. 7:1). If we therefore want our Heavenly Father to forgive our sins and remember them against us no more, we will need to do the same for others---"Judge not, and ye shall not be judged: condemn not, and ye shall not be forgiven" (Luke 6:37. See also Matt. 6:14-15; Mark 11:25).

Actually, forgiving others should be easy, after having been forgiven of God. For you see, the sins of others against us is nothing, when compared with our sins against God (Matt. 18:23-35).

We cannot survive in this sinful world without the mercy of God. And by failing to be merciful to others, we hold back much of the mercy of God we so badly need. Jesus preached, "Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy" (Matt. 5:7). This sounds like we must find a way to be merciful to others.

The truth of this study shows up in another area. When we give liberally to the Cause of the Lord, God gives bountifully to us---"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom, For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again" (Luke 6:38. See also Prov. 11:24-25; 19:17; II Cor. 9:6). There is probably nothing that determines the material blessings that Christians have and enjoy, more than how much we give "to the Lord."

When we put all of these Scriptures together it is clear to see: one of the best ways to be good to ourselves is to be good to others. But there is another truth that is more important than being good to others---loving the Lord, (Mark 12:29-31) obeying the Lord, (I Sam. 15:22) and delighting in the Lord (Ps. 37:4).



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The Great Work

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was about to take up. Those other Jews, scattered around the world were busy taking care of their families, growing crops, doing business, and various other activities that consumed all of their time and effort. But here, in the land of Judah, and in the city of Jerusalem, Nehemiah was doing the great and important work of building up the walls of the city of Jerusalem.

If we translate this line of thinking into our day to day service unto God, I believe we will find that what we are doing in the cause of Christ is also very great and very important. Our work too, is great and important. While others are busy about the affairs of this life and of this world, we, the people of God are about the important work of serving the Lord Jesus Christ. There is nothing more important in this life! Sure, Nehemiah had an important job when he was the cupbearer before one of the mightiest kings on the face of the earth. (See Neh. 1:1, 11-2:1) However, his job as the overseer of the building of the wall of the city of Jerusalem was far more important. You and I might occasionally occupy some very important secular job. But even if one of us were to be called upon to take up the job of being the president of the United States, even that job could not be as important as the job that we already have of serving the Lord Jesus. Indeed, to serve Him is to be a part of a great and important work.

It is Large. Second, we should see that the work of God is great in that it is very large. Surely, in the case of Nehemiah and the Jews it was a daunting task, especially when they were so few in number to consider building up a wall around the entire city of Jerusalem---and yet they set themselves to the task. In fact, Nehemiah admitted that this work was great and large. We read in Nehemiah 4:19, "And I said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, The work is great and large, and we are separated upon the wall, one far from another." The wall around the city of Jerusalem was large, and therefore, the work to repair it was a great and a large work. In the case of the Christian servants of God today, we too, must see that the work that God has set for us is a very large work. During His earthly ministry, the Lord Jesus Christ told those that He sent out before His face, "The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth labourers into his harvest" (Luke 10:2). And then, after the Lord had arisen from the grave, and just before He ascended into Heaven, He told His first Church, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every

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The Great Work

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creature” (Mark 16:15). If you think about it, Nehemiah had only to encircle the city of Jerusalem with a wall of stone and wood. We have to encircle the entire globe with the gospel of Jesus Christ! This is indeed a great and a large work!

It is Glorious. Third, we ought to also see that the work of God is great because of its inherent glory. Consider that the work of Nehemiah and the Jews was to build up the wall of the city of God, which is the city of Jerusalem. Remember at the beginning of this particular great work of the building of the wall of Jerusalem, Nehemiah had said these words in a prayer that he offered up to the Lord: **“Remember, I beseech thee, the word that thou commandest thy servant Moses, saying, If ye transgress, I will scatter you abroad among the nations: But if ye turn unto me, and keep my commandments, and do them; though there were of you cast out unto the uttermost part of the heaven, yet will I gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there”** (Neh. 1:8-9). You see, out of all the cities of the earth, the Lord had chosen to set His name upon, and in, the city of Jerusalem. We read the words of Solomon as he addressed the people of Israel in II Chronicles 6:6: **“But I have chosen Jerusalem, that my name might be there; and have chosen David to be over my people Israel.”** Solomon is making reference to the fact that God had previously chosen David to be the King, and Jerusalem to be the place where the Lord God would set His name. So, as we return to the time of Nehemiah, we must realize that the wall that he is building up is a wall that surrounds the very city that was chosen of God.

Let’s make application to our day and time, and to our great work which we are laboring in. We, too, are concerned about the name of God. In fact, the city of Jerusalem is not just the place that glorifies the name of the Lord God of Israel; but the city of Jerusalem is the city where Jesus Christ shall reign! And the city of Jerusalem is involved, also, in glorifying the name of Christ. From thence came the Apostles and the first Church! And from Jerusalem was spread the gospel of Christ to every corner of the world!

Notice something interesting about the history of Jerusalem: Just as the world sought to destroy Nehemiah and the Jews as they labored in the city of God, even so, some centuries later the Jews would seek to destroy the Apostles and the first Church as they labored in the city of God. We read in Acts 5:26-28, **“Then went the captain with the officers, and brought them without violence: for they feared the people, lest they**

should have been stoned. And when they had brought them, they set them before the council: and the high priest asked them, Saying, Did not we straitly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrines, and intend to bring this man’s blood upon us.” The world sought to keep the Jews and Nehemiah from building the wall of Jerusalem to the glory of the name of God. Centuries later, the Jews sought to keep Peter, the Apostles and the first Church from filling Jerusalem with the name of Christ. In Nehemiah’s time, it was a great and a glorious work to build up the walls of the city of Jerusalem. In the time of the Apostles, it was a great and a glorious work to fill that same city with the name of Jesus Christ and the gospel of salvation. Now in our time, it is a great and glorious work to fill our place and time with the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The great work continues!

THE WORK SHOULD OCCUPY OUR TIME AND ATTENTION

We have just noticed some ways in which the work of Nehemiah was great, and we have noticed how that the same word could be used to describe the work that we are involved in today. Next, I want to notice the “practical application” of that great work.

In the verses that surround our text verse, we notice that Nehemiah and those that worked with him were very diligent about the great work that they were involved in. In fact, it seems that the great work that they were employed in served to occupy their time and attention. We read about the diligence of Nehemiah and his fellow-laborers in Nehemiah 4:6: **“So built we the wall; and all the wall was joined together unto the half thereof: for the people had a mind to work.”** These folks in the time of Nehemiah were willing and diligent workers upon the wall of the city of Jerusalem! I only pray that the Lord would make all of us that serve Him today, to be just as willing and diligent as they were---that the people today would also have **“a mind to work”**---as we perform the great work that must be accomplished in the cause of Christ!

Consider, that though there were dangers; still the great work of the wall of Jerusalem went on. We read in Nehemiah 4:7-8, 14-18, **“But it came to pass, that when Sanballat, and Tobiah, and the Arabians, and the Ammonites, and the Ashdodites, heard that the walls of Jerusalem were made up, and that the breaches began to be stopped, then they were very wroth, And conspired all of them together to come and to fight against Jerusalem, and to hinder it. . . And I looked, and rose up, and said unto the nobles, and to the rulers, and to the rest of the people, Be not ye afraid of them: remember the Lord,**

which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons, and your daughters, your wives, and your houses. And it came to pass, when our enemies heard that it was known unto us, and God had brought their counsel to nought, that we returned all of us to the wall, every one unto his work. And it came to pass from that time forth, that the half of my servants wrought in the work, and the other half of them held both the spears, the shields, and the bows, and the habergeons; and the rulers were behind all the house of Judah. They which builded on the wall, and they that bare burdens, with those that laded, every one with one of his hands wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon. For the builders, every one had his sword girded by his side, and so builded. And he that sounded the trumpet was by me.” Now, I suppose that I could spend a lot of time here talking about how these laborers in the great work of the wall, labored all in one accord. They worked together, and they each performed their duty. Of course, it would be appropriate if we would do so today in the churches of Jesus Christ. However, in this article, I want us to mainly notice that these laborers were willing to commit themselves to the cause of the great work, without concern for their own well-being. I mean, no matter what the danger, and no matter what the opposition, they were going to perform the great work. Again, I pray unto God that you and I today; and, indeed, all of those in the churches of Jesus Christ, would be willing and able and diligent to work in the cause of Christ. Oh, if God would only lead us and guide us so that the great work of God would occupy all of our time and attention!

WHO WILL DO THE WORK IF WE CEASE?

Next, I want us to notice the importance of the laborers in the great work of the time of Nehemiah. Now, I do not mean to glorify any man or group of persons; but I do want us to notice that God has ordained that men and women are necessary in the working out of the accomplishment of His will and purpose. Certainly, in the time of Nehemiah, if Nehemiah and the Jews were to quit, there would be no one else to do the great work of the building of the wall of Jerusalem.

Now, in the conclusion of this message, I will point out to you that if we do not do the work, then God will raise up someone else from amongst His people to do that great work. However, the point that I want to make here is this: If the people of God do not have a desire to do the great work of God, then who from amongst the children of men will do it? Certainly the world of men does not desire to perform the great work of God. And if we are to cease, we can only expect that the great work will suffer harm.

Listen to what Nehemiah told the Jews in Jerusalem when he first spoke to them about the great work: **“Then said I unto them, Ye see the distress that we are in, how Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates thereof are burned with fire: come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem, that we be no more a reproach. Then I told them of the hand of my God which was good upon me; as also the king’s words that he had spoken unto me. And they said, Let us rise up and build. So they strengthened their hands for this good work”** (Neh. 2:17-18). These folks did not set back and wait for someone else to accomplish the great and good work which must be done. Instead, first Nehemiah said, **“come, and let us build up the wall of Jerusalem.”** And then, the people said, **“Let us rise up and build.”** You see, Nehemiah and these others knew that the wall of Jerusalem would not build itself! They knew that God would use them in the great and good work, and they knew that workers and laborers were necessary so that the great work could be accomplished.

Again, I hope and pray that all of us would be reminded of this very same principle. The great work is meant to be performed and worked out by men. God will use us and others, just as He has throughout history, to accomplish His purpose and His great work. Let us respond just as these Jews responded by saying, **“Let us rise up and build.”**

THOSE THAT DISTRACT US WOULD ONLY SEEK TO BRING US DOWN

Finally, at the end of our text verse we read these words: **“why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?”** Nehemiah understood that those enemies of the Lord that sought to distract him from the work of the Lord, only desired to bring him down to their level. You see, the workers of darkness hate the workers of light. And those that follow the darkness hate the light. And the more that we seek to be about the great work of God the more that the world will oppose us and distract us. We read the words of the Lord Jesus Christ in John 3:18-21, **“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.”** When the evil men that surrounded Nehemiah and the other Jews saw what a good and glorious work that they did, they sought

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The Great Work

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to discourage and distract these workers of God, because they did not want the Light to succeed. They fought against that great work, and they sought to bring it to nought.

The same thing is true in our lives today. The more we seek to do the work of God; and the more we seek to glorify our God; and the more the evil men and women of this world can behold our works of light; then, the more the world of men will seek to distract us and discourage us from doing this work of God. Why is this so? This is so because, even today, the world still hates God and all the light that He has brought into this world. You see, it wasn't just that Sanballat and the others hated the Jews; in reality, they hated God. And the same is still true today. Those who are in the world hate God and the things of God. Therefore, it is no wonder that the world will hate the servants of God who labor in His great work. And the world, with Satan as its prince, would like nothing more than to bring the workers of light down to the level of the workers of darkness. For this reason, the evil men that surrounded Nehemiah and the Jews sought to bring them down. And for the same reason, the evil world that surrounds you and me today, if we shall be faithful to God, will constantly and forever seek to bring us down. The world wants to blot out the light of God! The world hates the light and cannot tolerate it without seeking to destroy it! It is no wonder that the people of the land sought to destroy Nehemiah and the Jews. Remember they had done the same thing to Zerubbabel and the other Jews who had previously returned from captivity---which Jews, by the grace of God, had built up the temple. And now they would fight against Nehemiah and the great work of the building of the wall of Jerusalem.

CONCLUSION

Let us not forget that our work which we are doing in the cause of Christ is a great work. It is important, it is large, and it is glorious. However, at the same time, let us remember that though it is our work, if we fail, or if we fall by the side, then the work will continue and the Lord will raise up someone else to do the work. You see, the great work will continue---with or without our participation. Remember the words of wisdom which Mordecai had for Queen Esther when he had asked for her help in defeating the plan of wicked Haman to destroy all of the Jews: **"Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews**

from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"

(Esther 4:13-14). The Lord would deliver the Jews from the hand of Haman---if not Esther, then He would use someone else. His great work would be done, but from Esther's perspective, it remained to be seen whether she would be a willing participant in that great work, or not.

To bring this point home to all of us, let me say this: the Lord will deliver His children from the hand of Satan and from the bondage of sin---if not you and me, then He will use someone else. Just as Joseph was sold into Egypt, so he could be the savior of his father's house and of all Israel---so Esther was raised up and set up as queen, so that she could deliver all of the Jews. Remember, Mordecai said unto Esther, **"and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"** Well, in our case, "Who knoweth? Perhaps you and I are set here, in this place and *time*, to do the work of God in the saving of souls, and in the work of the church?" I believe this is the case and that we have this great work before us. But, do not forget, if we do not do the great work, God will use someone else to perform it---for His great work shall be accomplished.



China as Scapegoat

By Dr. Mark W. Hendrickson

Recently ("Exchange-Rate Politics," July 23), I warned that U.S. senators were playing with fire by trying to strong-arm China into speeding up the rate at which the yuan strengthens vis-à-vis the dollar. On August 8, the Chinese responded. In dignified terms (a stark contrast to our senators' crass public denunciations of China) a senior Chinese official indicated that new U.S. tariffs might impel the Chinese to liquidate \$900 billion of Uncle Sam's debt that they own. In this high-stakes political poker game, they have called the Senate's bluff and raised them.

This dangerous situation is primarily our side's fault. Essentially, we are trying to make the Chinese scapegoats for our own deficiencies.

Before I elaborate, let me share a few criticisms of China so that nobody accuses me of being a pro-China apologist. Despite selective liberalizations, China is still a one-party state that brutally suppresses individual rights when it suits the Communist Party rulers. Air pollution kills 750,000 Chinese per year. Piracy of U.S. intellectual property persists. And I don't know about you, but after recent incidents involving contaminated pet food, tooth paste, etc.,

I'm not about to put anything in my mouth that says "Made in China." (The immorality underlying such heartless actions, contrasted with the higher ethical standards that he believed were the key to America's prosperity, reportedly caused the late Chinese leader, Zhao Ziyang, to wish that Christianity were China's state religion.)

Despite China's considerable flaws, China should not be made the scapegoat for our economic problems. The senators currently demanding that China alter its monetary policy are blaming China for our trade deficit. But think how much lower the trade deficit would be if Uncle Sam hadn't suppressed the development of domestic energy for decades, forcing us to import massive quantities of oil instead. As for the large trade deficit we have with China, is it the Chinese government's fault that Americans are spend-a-holics while the average Chinese citizen saves over 30 percent of his much smaller income?

The trade deficit issue is just one aspect of an overall anxiety many Americans have about the rise of China. It gives me no pleasure to say this, but China's economic growth prospects are brighter than ours. Why? Because it has an abundance of the two key factors that generate prosperity---impressive capital formation, resulting from their exceptional thrift, and a large, talented, motivated labor pool.

The Chinese have always been gifted entrepreneurs, and now that the Communist Party is allowing---nay, encouraging---them to get rich, they are flourishing. Chinese college students may work full-time while going to school, postponing dating until after graduation. For admission into college, they must first learn English. Are our young people this committed?

Thrift and hard work were what made the United States of America the global economic superstar for over a century. We excelled economically in the past, and the Chinese excel today. Instead of resenting China's growth, we should get our own house in order.

Publicly denouncing the Chinese and threatening them with punitive tariffs was a huge tactical blunder by the Senate. Saving "face" is central to oriental culture. The Chinese would never humiliate themselves by kowtowing to the Senate's demands; in fact, those demands virtually guaranteed this month's ominous response about possibly dumping U.S. debt.

What would be the consequences of such massive selling? One possible outcome would be a huge Chinese spending spree, buying up American assets. Then there is the problem of who would assume ownership of what the Chinese sell. Who else has an extra \$900 billion lying around? And who would even want to make a major investment

in a depreciating currency? The most likely buyer, I think, would be the Federal Reserve System. It would monetize the debt, thereby igniting domestic inflation. Ouch.

How did we get into this precarious predicament? Don't blame the Chinese. The massive federal debt which now gives the Chinese such powerful leverage over us is the result of chronic overspending by our own government. The federal debt was 100 percent "made in America." Of course, it's a lot easier for politicians to scapegoat foreigners than to accept responsibility for the results of their own policies, so expect to hear about how mean the Chinese are---the very Chinese who have been willing to finance our government's profligacy.

Historically, the U.S. stock market often has swooned when antitrade legislation has been brewing in Washington. Combine congressional threats of punitive tariffs against the Chinese with the ongoing subprime financial shakeout, and you have a potentially devastating one-two punch. Politically, this is perfect for the Democrats. In pushing for tariffs against China, they present themselves as true friends of American workers. If they succeed, and the stock market tanks as a result, George Bush will be blamed, paving the way for a Democratic landslide in 2008. Amazingly, some Republican senators want these tariffs, too, raising the question of whether they are brain-dead or simply have a death-wish for their party.

For the record, I'm not sure that the Chinese would retaliate against U.S. tariffs with the "nuclear" (their term) monetary option of mass-dumping dollars, because the resulting financial fallout could derail their own economy, as well as ours. Right now, both sides are playing "chicken." Let's hope that a few dozen grandstanding senators have the wisdom to back down before they trigger a chain of events that would hurt millions of innocent people.

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Songs in the Night

(Continued from page 221) ♦

him nearer to the everlasting fire. The Spirit brings him to realize no loss is as great as the loss of the Divine favor and no danger is to be more dreaded than the danger of final condemnation. There is great alarm to such an unconverted person.

Spiritual alarm is the first step in conversion. There is hope for a person who sees he has 10,000 sins as black as Hell---sees Divine justice ready to seize him---sees he has one foot in Hell and the other sliding in. The deeper the conviction of sin, the more hopeful is his condition. When the Holy Spirit brings a sinner to faith in Christ He makes him see his miserable condition by reason of sin and wrath. Till this time of spiritual alarm, he will not come to Christ.

When the Philippian jailor was under Holy Spirit conviction he ran unto Paul and Silas trembling (Acts 16:29) and asked: "**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**" Paul told the jailor to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and the jailor did. Then we see how the jailor "**rejoiced, believing in God**" (Acts 16:34). When a person is brought by the Holy Spirit to lay hold on Christ he rejoices with "**joy unspeakable and full of glory**" (I Pet. 1:8). This song in the night is abiding (John 16:22). It is a blossom of eternity, a pledge and earnest of the rivers of pleasure which run at God's right hand for evermore.

The salvation experience brings great joy; it puts a song in the heart of the converted sinner. The psalmist wrote: "**He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: my mouth shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD**" (Ps. 40:2-3).

Phillip Doddridge wrote in his famous hymn:

*O happy day that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God;
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad.
Happy day, happy day,
When Jesus washed my sins away!
He taught me how to watch and pray,
And live rejoicing every day.*

God our Maker gives us songs in the night of

HUMILIATION.

Perhaps few men were ever more cruelly treated than Paul and Silas in the city of Philippi. They preached the gospel in that city and some sinners were converted. They even cast out a fortune-teller. Their enemies had the city officials to lay hold on them and punish them. The city officials laid many stripes upon Paul and Silas and cast them into the

inner prison, charging the jailor to keep them safely (Acts 16:12-23). The jailor did what he was told and put their feet in the stocks.

What great humiliation these two missionaries suffered. They were arrested and beaten with many stripes for preaching the gospel to Adam's fallen race. They were hooted and reviled by the rabble of the city. They were imprisoned in the lowest, darkest, and filthiest cell in the jail. Their feet were put in the stocks to add to their misery. Their clothes were torn and tattered about their backs---their backs bleeding from open, unwashed wounds in the cold, damp, chilling night air. Surely having been subjected to such humiliation they must be sad, sorrowful and nearly wild.

But was this the case? Do we hear them cursing the lectors, or uttering murmurings against Heaven? Being physically exhausted from the beatings, are they fast asleep at the midnight hour? No! No! Instead they are singing a duet without a church building or a piano. Those old prison walls, which were so accustomed to echo groans and sighs, vibrated with a sacred concert that is destined to bring the house down. There is dark midnight without, but heavenly sunlight within. Paul and Silas' bodies were in chains, but their souls were free as a bird. Their faith in a sovereign God who does all things well gave them songs in the night. They gloried in tribulation and found a paradise in a prison!

Here is seen a great lesson. There is not a saint, however feeble and frail, that may not chant in the darkest night of trouble a psalm of holy confidence in God his Maker. The psalmist wrote: "**Yet the LORD will command his lovingkindness in the daytime, and in the night his song shall be with me, and my prayer unto the God of my life**" (Ps. 42:8).

Well did G. A. Young pen these words:

*God leads His dear children along
Some thru the waters,
Some thru the flood,
Some thru the fire,
But all thru the blood;
Some thru great sorrows,
But God gives a song,
In the night season and all the day
long.*

God our Maker gives us a song in the night of

ADVERSITY.

"**Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; and the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the LORD, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The LORD God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high**

places" (Hab. 3:17-19).

In the scene before us Judah was suffering under a Babylonian invasion. The orchards, the vineyards, the cultivated land and cattle had been destroyed by the invading hordes. There was total collapse of the economy. Many Judeans may have been given over to fret and fear, worry and wonder, but Habakkuk rejoiced in the Jehovah. He cast all his cares upon the One who cares for His people. He viewed the seeming evil events as things for his good and God's glory (I Sam. 3:18; Rom. 8:28). The Lord was the same to him, whether He was opening His hand in blessing, or stretching it out to blister.

No earthly change should shake our confidence in God, nor should we murmur and complain when our sunshine has been turned to shadow and our blessings into burdens. God's spiritual favors are not dispensed according to our worldly prosperity. Let us rejoice in the Lord when we give alms or receive alms. May we delight ourselves in the fact that we live under God's providential care in sickness or in health---on the bride bed or on the death bed.

David was driven from his palace and people, his tabernacle and treasures, his friends and family, yet he could write: "**Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance**" (Ps. 32:7).

Listen to him again as he describes his terrible plight. "**Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying; my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty**" (Ps. 69:1-4). Despite all of these troubles, he still went on to write: "**I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify him with thanksgiving**" (Ps. 69:30).

What will you do when your job plays out? When your health is gone? When the economy of the nation goes into ruin? When all your old and trusted friends have forsaken you? When a storm destroys your home? These things should not shake your faith in God. In such a dark night He will give you a song of praise. Take fresh courage and never fail, a harp of gold, a crown of glory, a tree of life, and a city with gates of pearls. The sufferings of this present time are only for a season. "**Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning**" (Ps. 30:5). "**They that sow in tears shall reap in joy**" (Ps. 126:5).

The Baptist hymn writer, B. B. McKinney, wrote:

Have faith in God though all else fail about you,

Have faith in God, He provides for His own;

He cannot fail though all kingdoms shall perish,

He rules, He reigns upon His throne.

God our Maker gives us songs in the night of

SICKNESS.

Sickness is the common lot of man that is born of woman. Christians are not exempt from sickness and the infirmities of the flesh (Jas. 5:14). Sickness may be caused by many things like germs in the system, from decay and old age, or from what we call accidents. Oftentimes it is caused by sinful living. At times it may come from Satan (Luke 13:16). Sometimes the Lord imposes it as chastisement for disobedience (Deut. 28:22, 61; Ps. 107:17-18; Jas. 5:15).

A number of things causes us to feel the frailty of flesh and blood. Long periods of hospital confinement, severe aches and pains, failing vision, decaying teeth, and the gray color in our hair. Indeed this earthly tabernacle shakes and shivers. Extreme sickness brings us near the brink of the grave. We realize that soon we must trade the chamber of life for the chamber of death. Deep shadows gather around us. The nights become dreary and long.

The Christian must not allow his sickness to exasperate him. Only a graceless heart when under the rod would challenge God's sovereignty, or question His justice, or distrust His goodness, or arraign His wisdom. Rather than murmur and complain of his lot in life, the Christian should engage in prayer and praise (Jas. 5:13). This is the best medicine in sickness. If he does this God will give him a song in the night of his sickness.

What can give us light in the night of severe sickness? Not friends, or society, or worldly pleasure! Nothing but a living faith in Christ. The Apostle Paul said: "**And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions in distresses for Christ's sake. . .**" (II Cor. 12:7-10). Paul suffered much in the flesh, but God gave him a song in the night.

Some are brought near the gates of death. Hezekiah was "**sick unto death.**" The Prophet Isaiah came to him and said: "**Thus saith the LORD, Set thine**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. If someone commits suicide and the Lord permitted it to happen, but it wasn't His will, is this considered shortening his days and is it considered that person's time to go? Also, will they be in Heaven? -Tennessee

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There are tremendous ramifications to this question. I attempt an answer with fear and trembling. We are delving into things and judgments that belong to God, not us. John 21:22: **"Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me."** (Italics mine) Romans 14:4: **"Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up."**

Contemplating suicide is understandable to this writer. We've been there, done that. My heart goes out to the one asking this question, or the loved one the question is asked about. One must ask four poignant questions! 1. Is suicide sin, i.e.: murder? 2. Is suicide ever the Lord's will, permitted or not, especially for believers? 3. May suicide ever be considered a valid consideration for those suffering painful terminal illness? 4. Is the person a believer or not?

Among those suffering from some forms of mental illness, suicide often becomes the only option they can see. Those of us who care for mental health patients must always be on the lookout for the telltale signs of a potential suicide. Even for those of us who are not suffering with mental illness, the loss of a special loved one, fear of losing a special loved one, discouragement and continual frustration can lead to contemplating suicide. When one has done his or her best, thinking they were satisfying those they love or serve, but seem to continually be told they are wrong, he may get so discouraged that suicide seems the only relief.

To these I offer the relief of David in I Samuel Chapters 29 and 30. Even though he knew the promises of God, David had despaired of his life. He and his men, tired of fighting and running, had aligned themselves with the Philistines but even they didn't trust him. Upon returning to Ziklag they found the city burned and their wives taken captive. David even lost the trust of those whom he had trusted as faithful followers. They were about to stone him. But David **"encouraged himself in the Lord."** **"And David was greatly distressed; for the people spake**

of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the LORD his God" (I Sam. 30:6).

In more direct answer to your question, suicide was common among the heathen, but these were not the people of God. See, for instance, the Philippian jailer in Acts 16:27, who would have killed himself rather than face the feared judgment, shame and punishment of losing his prisoners.

But we cannot use the practices of the heathen, in that culture or ours today, to justify our own actions as children of God!

It may be debatable whether King Saul actually committed suicide or if the Amalekite killed him, but we know for sure that Saul's intention was to take his own life. His armor bearer also took his own life (I Sam. 31:4-5). Although we do see Biblical record of suicide in God's people we may not use that to justify suicide either.

In a state of fatigue and discouragement, Elijah feared for his life and fled (I Kings 19:1-18). Even though he fled to keep from getting killed, in depression under the Juniper tree he desires to die. **"...and he requested for himself that he might die; and said, It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life..."** (I Kings 19:4).

From that scriptural record we may learn four lessons that apply to this question.

1. Whenever we are aware that someone, even if it is our self, is contemplating suicide it is a cry for help. Let us therefore apply the principle of Galatians 6:1 and James 5:14. **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted...Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."**

2. God challenged and corrected His distraught servant but did not condemn him.

3. From this we conclude that suicide is not God's will for His people but He has grace and compassion for those who are so depressed that they feel the need..

And 4, God gives needed rest and nourishment but then reassigns His servant. The best antidote for the depression that makes one contemplate suicide is to get busy in the service of the Lord.

The questioner goes on to ask, "Also, will they be in Heaven?" That is a judgment call that none of us have the spiritual insight or authority to answer.

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First I will address suicide. If you are contemplating suicide or if you know of someone that is thinking about suicide, please talk to your pastor or member of the Church you attend. If you do not trust these people then contact me by email or snail mail. This is very serious. Suicide is not an option that is pleasing to God. After all, He wrote a commandment that states, thou shalt not murder.

"But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes" (IITim. 2:23). How can something not be God's will, but He permits it to happen? **"Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world"** (Acts 15:18). This question in no way lifts up the Lord's people, nor could it produce growth in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour.

For the child of God there is hope, **"Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope"** (Psalms 16:9). The child of God is able even though things may seem to be very bleak. We are able to say this, **"Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the LORD"** (Ps. 31:24).

We have a duty that is most pleasurable to God's people we serve Him and not our flesh, **"Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer"** (Rom. 12:12). We are to mortify the deeds of our flesh daily. The fruits of the Spirit abound when we walk in the Spirit. **"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"** (Gal. 5:22-25).

MIKE DEWITT



Songs in the Night

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house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live" (Isa. 38:1). In great bitterness of soul Hezekiah said: **"I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the LORD, even the LORD, in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Mine age is departed, and is removed from me as a shepherd's tent: I have cut off like a weaver my life: he will cut me off with pining sickness: from day even to night wilt thou make an end of me"** (Isa. 38:10-13).

Then he prayed to God and wept sore (Isa. 38:2-3). The Lord answered his prayer and sent Isaiah the prophet to inform him that He had added 15 years to his life. Hezekiah had been brought to the gates of death, but he was spared from passage through them. The Lord gave him a song in the night of approaching death. Listen to what he said after the Lord answered his prayer: **"O Lord, by these things men live and in all these things is the life of my spirit: so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live. Behold, for peace I had great bitterness: but thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back. For the grave cannot praise thee, death can not celebrate thee: they that go down into the pit cannot hope for thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy truth. The LORD was ready to save me: therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the LORD"** (Isa. 38:16-20).

George Keith penned these words:

*In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in
wealth;*

*At home and abroad, on the land, on the
sea,*

*As your days may demand, shall
your strength ever be.*

God our Maker gives us songs in the night of

DEATH.

"For in Adam all die" (I Cor. 15:22). Death is an impartial Judge. He regards no person, has no pity on the fatherless, cares not for the poor, dispenses not with the rich, fears not the mighty, honors not the aged, passes not for the noble, spares not the wise, pardons not the foolish. There is no man alive but what shall see death, be he a king with David, a prophet with Isaiah, a wise man with Solomon, a foolish man with Nabal, a holy man with Daniel, or a profane man with Esau.

The righteous are not immune to death. The very dearest and best friends

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Could you please explain Rom. 5:13 "Sin is not imputed." -Mississippi

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"For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law" (Rom. 5:13). Adam was a sinner, and Eve, their children were sinners also. Noah and his family were sinners. They all sinned. Sin was in the world even before the law (the Ten Commandments, and divers kinds of laws) was given for peoples to not transgress. I will let the Apostle Paul explain under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. "What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7).

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Romans 5:13-14: "For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come."

"Impute" in this verse is *ellogē-ō* (*el-log-eh*). It is only used here and in Philemon 18 where it is translated "put to my account". Other places "imputed" is *logi-zom-ahēe* *dzomai* (*log-i*, usually translated "accounted" or "reckoned"). The difference has to do with experiential guilt. Our preachers talk about the doctrine of imputation, referring to our sins being imputed (*zomai,logi* reckoned to) Christ and His righteousness reckoned to us. But in either case the one to whom sin or righteousness is reckoned to is not experientially worthy of either the sin or the righteousness.

When we use the term "imputed" we usually have reference to the latter word, *zomalogii*. This is an accounting term referring to a debt owed. Since the giving of the law, or once informed of the law, we

are liable for the fine extracted by the law. "...Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet" (Rom. 7:7). But by grace, God imputed (charged) the fine or penalty to Christ, whereby He was charged for a debt He had not incurred. In the reverse action God imputed (credited) our account with a payment which we had not made. "For He hath made Him, who knew no sin, to be sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God" (II Cor. 5:21 more literally translated).

Paul goes on to say that those between Adam and Moses "had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression" but rather had inherited the sin nature and just condemnation from Adam. Without the law man could not be charged with breaking the law, therefore they could not be fined according to the law. But murder is just as much a sin even when there is no specific law forbidding murder. Between Adam and Moses man was not charged with specific sin, hence "sin is not imputed when there is no law." This is why Paul could say to the Athenians: "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent" (Acts 17:30). But man still had the depraved nature which makes him lost and condemned, therefore he still needs a Savior.

William Newell explains it like this. "The wholly different word 'reckon' in Chapters 3:24 and 4:23, 24 regards the person; this word in 5:13 regards some item put to one's account. It was to Adam, not to us, that God said: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." It was to Israel through Moses that God gave the ten commandments. The general argument of the apostle here is to show the effect of a federal or representative sin, in which Adam acted, bringing an effect upon the individuals connected with him. Paul is about to prove that death passed to all men not because they sinned, but because Adam sinned. He is also about to show (verse 18) that all men were condemned by Adam's act, - were made to become sinners.

"To understand (this)...we must remember:

1. That sin was in the world, between Adam and Moses.

2. That, according to Chapter One, the race had rejected light and were without excuse...(anomos) without law...not "transgression of the law" but refusal to be controlled - self-will."

Praise God that Paul also shows us how the grace of God takes care of that

condemnation. "Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous" (verses 18-19). This is why all men everywhere are called on to believe, repent and come to Christ. Will you?

RAY BENNETT



Songs in the Night

(Continued from page 230) ♡

must be parted with. Old scenes precious with fond memories must be given up. Cherished hopes of the years must be thrown away. This world must be given up for another when our flesh and heart shall fail. "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccl. 12:7).

Death has a certain terror to it. We must die alone. We must go on the mysterious journey for the first time in all our existence, without anyone to accompany us. The friends and relatives beside our bed must stay behind. It is a dark valley into which we must plunge as the psalmist said (Ps. 23).

The Christian is not so very much afraid of death. The gates of death hold little or no terror for him. In the night of physical death God gives His elect a song of holy triumph. Full of the peace of God, rejoicing in the hope of glory, strengthened by faith in Christ, he finds himself joyful while all around him are sad and weeping. As the shadows deepen over this mortal life, there rises a song of praise in victory: "Death is swallowed up in victory, O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" (I Cor. 15:54-55).

CONCLUSION

The psalmist declared: "I have considered the days of old, the years of ancient times. I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart: and my spirit made diligent search" (Ps. 77:5-6). As he reflected of the olden times, he remembered how God had so many times given him a song in the night. He recalled how he had been enabled to sing in the former nights of afflictions. Is this not true of us all? Can we not call to mind the supports and consolations we have enjoyed in former difficulties? Thank God for a song in the night! Life would not be worth living if

we did not have these.

Truly in times past we have had our songs in the night. But the God of all grace has promised us more in the future: "Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth with a pipe to come into the mountain of the LORD, to the mighty One of Israel" (Isa. 30:29). Let us look and long for these songs in the night in days to come, for we shall surely need them as we did in the days that are past.

In Heaven there is one never-ending song of joy where there is no night: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9).

Who does not desire these songs in the night? Who does not wish to sing them upon earth and later in Heaven? They can only be learned at the feet of Jesus!



Preaching to the Choir? The Hillary-Obama Faith Strategy for 2008

by Dr. Paul Kengor

I'm typically not prone to conspiracy theories. Yet, I have reason to suspect that Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama may be coordinating their campaign strategies. This is especially apparent in their strikingly similar bids to win the religious "values voters" who twice elected George W. Bush.

Consider the most recent overture: Over the weekend, Senator Obama went into a huge church in Greenville, South Carolina and called himself an "instrument of God," one who is "confident that we can create a Kingdom right here on earth." His message was notably Hillary-like, as Senator Clinton is fond of quoting Methodist founder John Wesley, who stated, "The world is my parish." Both Senators Clinton and Obama see themselves as doing the Lord's work; or, as Mrs. Clinton's husband said during a political rally at a Newark church in 1996: "God's work must be our own."

The secular press, which goes berserk anytime it asks George W. Bush if he prays and he answers yes, is, naturally, not offended by these grandiose statements. Likewise, ACLU lawyers are not dashing to courthouses to strip the non-profit status of the Greenville church, nor any of the 27 New York churches that hosted political rallies for Mrs. Clinton in the two months prior to the 2000 vote.

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Preaching to the

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Yet, even more instructive is this similarity between Senators Clinton and Obama: Outside the Greenville church, Obama told reporters. "I think it's important, particularly for those of us in the Democratic Party, to not cede values and faith to any one party." He criticized Republicans' "particular brand of faith," surely a reference to how Republican legislators cite Scripture to oppose gay marriage. Rather, noted Obama, evangelicals need to appreciate the "social justice" concerns embraced by Democratic politicians, such as fighting poverty.

This sounded a lot like Mrs. Clinton's November 10, 2004 visit to Tufts University, immediately after religious voters made the decisive difference in re-electing President Bush. She called it a mistake for Democrats to have not engaged evangelicals on their own turf, thereby ceding the vote to Bush.

She singled out areas where she thought faith-backed Republican politicians were vulnerable, pointing to social justice: Mrs. Clinton said the Bible should be cited to win debates over poverty, akin to how Republicans referenced Scripture to resist the legalization of gay marriage. "No one can read the New Testament of our Bible without recognizing that Jesus had a lot more to say about how we treat the poor than most of the issues that were talked about in this election," said Senator Clinton.

Obama agreed, and followed up with an important June 28, 2006 address to the Call to Renewal convention in Washington, where he made a heartfelt appeal on behalf of liberal Christians. He said there were certain issues that not only proved his personal Christianity but on which liberal Christian politicians could turn the tables on conservative Christian politicians—issues like supporting daycare facilities and the estate tax.

Such examples are commonly cited by liberal Christians. There is, however, a major flaw in these pleas. Consider:

Liberal and conservative Christians alike agree that Jesus wants them to help the poor. Yet, they can respectfully disagree over whether the estate tax or government-funded day care is what Jesus had in mind. Conservative Christians prefer to address poverty through individual outreach and faith-based organizations; citing Scripture, they believe that Jesus pushed for private means of assistance. For instance, the parable of the rich man getting into heaven calls not for a government program of forced wealth distribution but for the rich man to personally choose to share his wealth. Liberal Christians, on the other hand, favor public-sector solutions, many of which their conservative counterparts

find ineffective.

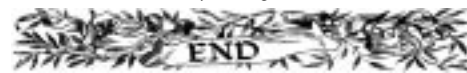
In short, this is a legitimate disagreement over means toward an agreed upon end. Liberal Christian politicians can scream in frustration over why conservative Christians will not vote for them as they invoke social justice. Yet, the mistake is to conclude with certainty that Jesus Christ would prefer an upper-income marginal tax rate of 36 percent instead of 31 percent. Similarly, all Christians agree that Jesus wants them to be good stewards of the earth, but no liberal Christian can presume to know that the Prince of Peace would support drilling for oil in the Persian Gulf but not in Alaska.

That said, there is a point where liberal Christian politicians like Obama and Mrs. Clinton reach irreconcilable differences with conservative Christians: abortion. For pro-life Christians, a second-trimester abortion for the purpose of birth control is far more significant than whether one advocates an increase in the minimum wage from \$5.15 an hour to \$5.45.

As vocal pro-choicers, both Clinton and Obama are aware of their vulnerability in this area, to the point where Mrs. Clinton has hired a top party strategist to advise her on reaching out to pro-life evangelicals, and Obama has openly admitted that the accusation that he is not a "true Christian" because of his position on abortion—a charge leveled by his 2004 Senate opponent—"nagged" at him.

For now, however, the faith rhetoric by these two leading Democratic contenders—even when sincere—looks like a concerted strategy for 2008. It seems too similar to be a coincidence, and quite unlike anything we heard from Democrats in 2000 and 2004. Whether the strategy will work is another question.

(EP News) - Dr. Paul Kengor, author of spiritual biographies of Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush, has just published "God and Hillary Clinton" (HarperCollins, 2007). He is a professor of political science and executive director of the Center for Vision & Values at Grove City College.



THE

BIBLE 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.

JUDGE RULES LESBIAN STUDENTS DO NOT HAVE SPECIAL RIGHTS

(EP News)--When a couple was caught kissing in the halls of California's Santiago High School, school administrators, following their rules, notified the parents. For their courtesy to Mom and Dad, the school district got sued. Why? The students self-identify as lesbians, and one of the girls was outed to her mom. The American Civil Liberties Union and the Gay Straight Alliance Network brought the federal suit, claiming the girls were disciplined because they were gay. Judge James Selna disagreed, saying the discipline, "was not motivated ... by sexual orientation." Kevin Snider of the Pacific Justice Institute said, "Schools have a right to set rules for public displays of affection, and they have a right to enforce these rules with appropriate discipline. If the student had won in this case, that would have undermined the Bill of Rights. It's not surprising in many ways that the ACLU once again shows its confusion over due process rights."

INVESTIGATION REVEALS TEACHER-STUDENT SEX ABUSE

(EP News)--An Associated Press investigation into teacher sexual abuse in the U.S. found more than 2,500 educators are accused of misconduct each year. Young people were the victims in 1,800 of the cases

— 80 percent of them students. Kansas State University Professor Bob Shoop has served as an expert witness in dozens of sex abuse cases and said it's not a new phenomenon. "I've been writing about this since 1984, and consistently most studies have indicated that between 5 and 10 percent of the students in a high-school setting have had an inappropriate relationship with an adult," he said. Most of the abuse never gets reported. Jeff Kuhner, communications director for the Thomas B. Fordham Foundation, said there are many reasons why, but underneath is a bureaucracy looking out for its own. "You have public school unions who are very deeply entrenched, who are more interested in protecting the interests of their members and teachers than they are in serving students," he said. The National Association of State Directors of Teacher Education and Certification operates a voluntary database to track offenders. Spokesman Roy Einreinhofer said the list is long. "The clearinghouse contains around 37,000 names," he said, "and that increases at a rate of about 2,500 or so a year."

SCHOOL PROGRAM PROVOKES WRATH OF ATHEISTS

(EP News)--Two atheist families with children in the Cherry Creek Schools near Denver are suing the school district

over a character-development program. The program's material references church involvement as one of 40 "Developmental Assets" to help young people become responsible and healthy adults. No. 19 on the list is "My family participates in a religious or spiritual community." Robert Tiernan, a lawyer with the Freedom from Religion Foundation, said "to us, that means go to church once a week."

Schools spokeswoman Tustin Amole said "the district is confident the project is not illegal because it does not mandate participation in religious activity." The program, which has been in the schools since the 1990s, states that research shows that more positive behavior is exhibited by students with 30 or more of the 40 success factors, she said.

6TH CIRCUIT STRIKES DOWN PORN RECORD-KEEPING LAW

(EP News)--On Oct. 23, the 6th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Cincinnati struck down a federal law that requires pornographers to keep age-verification records of their actors. The court said requiring the documentation had a chilling effect on the industry. "The law requires these pornography producers (to) visualize an ID by their actresses and make a copy of it," said Pat Trueman of the Alliance Defense Fund. "This will definitely increase child pornography. We will be back to the situation that we were in the 1980s and years before that, where the porn industry regularly used children." Using underage actors is still illegal, but Janice Crouse of Concerned Women for America said without the records law, it will be impossible to enforce age restrictions. "It takes the teeth out of any enforcement efforts," she said. "There's no way to make the porn industry comply with the federal laws when they don't have to provide documentation."

MORAL GUIDELINES WILL COST BOY SCOUTS \$200,000 IN RENT

(EP News)--Philadelphia has decided the local Boy Scouts chapter must pay fair-market rent of \$200,000 a year for its city-owned headquarters because it does not allow gay-identified Scout leaders. The Cradle of Liberty Council, which currently pays \$1 a year in rent, must pay the increased amount to remain in its downtown building past May 31, Fox News reported. City officials say they cannot rent taxpayer-owned property for a nominal sum to a private organization that discriminates. Jeff Jubelirer, spokesman for the council, said the higher rent money "would have to come from programs. That's 30 new Cub Scout packs, or 800 needy kids going to our summer camp. It's disappointing, and it's certainly a threat." The Supreme Court ruled in 2000 that Scouts have a First Amendment right to bar gay-identified individuals from membership.

PARENTS UNITE AGAINST OFFENSIVE BOOKS

(EP News)--Of the millions of books in

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American public and school libraries, last year just 546 challenges were reported to the American Library Association (ALA). Of those, a mere 29 were removed from the shelves. Yet the ALA still likes to scream censorship every year during its Banned Books Week. David Miller of Ohio's Citizens for Community Values called Banned Books Week a farce. "They have made up a Banned Books Week," he said, "where they try to focus attention on the fact that parents are getting involved in their kids' education."

MAINE MIDDLE SCHOOL RECONSIDERS BIRTH-CONTROL PLAN

(EP News)--Parents in Maine recently launched a petition drive to recall the seven board members who voted to give birth-control pills to girls as young as 11. At least one member of the Portland School Committee heard their cry. The board will consider a proposal by Benjamin Meiklejohn that would return power to parents. But Mike Heath, executive director of the Christian Civic League of Maine, said he isn't sure any action will be taken. "Of course, giving the parents the option to block access is a good move," he said. "(But) my understanding is that school board is divided, and perhaps a majority just wants to not touch it at all." Dr. Gary Rose, president and CEO of the Medial Institute for Sexual Health, said the current policy raises serious concerns. "Most young people that age are not having sex voluntarily," he said, "so it suggests that there's coercion and issues of statutory rape."

FEDERAL ABSTINENCE FUNDING SAFE FOR ANOTHER YEAR

(EP News)--More than \$100 million in federal abstinence funding was preserved Tuesday when three conservative senators were able to convince Sen. Frank Lautenberg, D-N.J., to drop an amendment that would have eliminated the funds due to discrepancies in the term "medical accuracy." "The way that definition was framed, it was a backdoor method to defund abstinence education," said Valerie Huber, executive director of the National Abstinence Education Association. The three senators who intervened are: Republican Sens. Sam Brownback of Kansas, Mitch McConnell of Kentucky and David Vitter of Louisiana.

CITY COUNCIL DROPS LORD'S PRAYER FROM MEETINGS

(EP News)--For 55 years, the City Council of Akron, Ohio, has opened its meetings with the Lord's Prayer and the Pledge of Allegiance. But the council recently dropped the prayer after receiving a letter from Americans United for Separation of Church and State that threatened to sue if the prayers continued. If a city council wants to invoke the blessings of God upon its proceedings through recitation of the prayer,

the First Amendment does not prevent it, but threats of law suits have caused some local governmental bodies to take the path of least resistance.

POLL SHOWS MOST AMERICANS ARE PRO-LIFE

(EP News)--A CBS News poll revealed 54 percent of Americans oppose abortion in most or all cases. When Americans were asked about their "personal feelings" on abortion, 16 percent favored abortion only to save a woman's life, 34 percent thought abortions should only be allowed in the rare cases of rape, incest or to save the mother's life, and 4 percent wanted all abortions illegal. Sixteen percent of Americans believe abortions should be permitted but with greater restrictions, and 26 percent feel abortion should be permitted in all cases. The October poll shows an increase in the percentage of pro-life Americans since CBS conducted a similar poll in January. Among evangelical voters, CBS found 79 percent hold pro-life beliefs.

ACLU HELPS PRISONER WIN RIGHT TO CONTINUE PREACHING

(EP News)--Wesley Spratt is back to preaching to his fellow prisoners, thanks to an unlikely ally. In 1995, Spratt killed a parking attendant in Providence, R.I., sending him to prison for life. In prison, he began to study the Bible and its teachings. When the warden shut down Spratt's preaching for "security reasons," Spratt went to court.

"At that point, the ACLU contacted him and offered to assist him in the lawsuit," said Steven Brown, director of the ACLU of Rhode Island. "The appellate court pointed out, as we had pointed out from the beginning, that Mr. Spratt had been preaching without incident for years." With Brown's help, Spratt regained his right to tell his fellow inmates about Christ. "Religious freedom is important for every American, but it's especially important in a prison setting," said Dr. Charles Haynes, senior scholar at the First Amendment Center. "One hopes we'll do everything we can to encourage people to change their lives so they can be better citizens when they leave prison."

BALTIMORE MAYOR ANNOUNCES GAY-ISSUES OFFICE

(EP News)--Baltimore Mayor Sheila Dixon said Oct. 28 she will create an office dedicated to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) issues. The Washington Blade reported that the office is scheduled to open by the end of the year. Dixon made the announcement during the city's annual Equality Maryland Jazz Brunch. "This office will work with all citizens to ensure that Baltimore is not just a place where people are tolerated," she said, "but people are honored, cherished and celebrated."

ADF DEFENDS CROSSES THAT HONOR SLAIN STATE TROOPERS

(EP News)--A group of atheists is claiming memorial crosses along Utah highways are

forcing religion onto the public. American Atheists filed suit against the Utah Highway Patrol and Utah Transportation Department in 2005 when it noticed the state patrol's motto at the center of the crosses, which pay tribute to officers killed in the line of duty. Byron Babione of the Alliance Defense Fund sought to have the case dismissed this week in District Court, saying the crosses were placed by private citizens and should be left alone. "The Utah Highway Patrol Association is a private organization that conceived of the idea of a memorial cross," he said. "The state of Utah did not fund the construction of these crosses; they did not even put them up." Babione said there's nothing unconstitutional about honoring fallen troopers with a cross. "The Supreme Court says that government cannot endorse or prefer a particular religion," he said. "The reasonable observer, when he sees a cross on the side of the road, is not going to look at that and think, 'Oh, the state of Utah is proselytizing on behalf of a particular religion.'"

FLORIDA SEX ED UNDER FIRE OVER EXPLICIT CONTENT

(EP News)--Michael Lannon, a superintendent in St. Lucie County, Fla., claims his planned sex-ed curriculum — Get Real About AIDS — promotes abstinence. But Pastor Bryan Longworth argues that the graphic, explicit content mentions condoms and contraceptives 210 times, while only mentioning abstinence 17 times. Linda Klepacki, sexual health analyst for Focus on the Family Action, said abstinence-only education is the healthiest choice for young people. "It continues to become more dangerous for pre-teens and teens to be sexually active," she said. "It is irresponsible for professionals to encourage anyone of school age to be sexually active." Concerned parents can attend a public forum Dec. 8 to discuss the controversial curriculum.

BUSH VETOES BILL OVER \$1 BILLION IN EARMARKS

(EP News)--President Bush vetoed a \$606 billion appropriations bill Nov. 13 because it is billions of dollars above his budget request and contains 2,000 earmarks totaling about \$1 billion. The bill also designates \$310.9 million in funding for family planning services — the majority of which would go to Planned Parenthood. "The (Democrat) majority was elected on a pledge of fiscal responsibility," Bush told Indiana business leaders Tuesday, "but so far it's acting like a teenager with a new credit card." Bush also said that free spending by Democrats in Congress would lead to tax increases. "The price of these tax increases would not be paid in the halls of Congress — it would be paid in living rooms and shop floors and office buildings across America," he said. "Higher taxes would mean that you'd put in longer hours to bring home the same amount of money, which would lead to more time at work and less time with our families."

CASINOS DOMINATE BILOXI LANDSCAPE

(EP News)--Residents of Biloxi, Miss., are still working to rebuild after Hurricane Katrina. Casinos, it turns out, are way ahead of them. Eleven of the city's 13 casinos have reopened since the storm. And eight more gambling houses are expected to sprout along Mississippi's coastline in the next six years. Casinos that had been kept on the water before Katrina are allowed to rebuild inland. "They are able to be on land and turn these communities in Mississippi into casino cities instead of cities with casinos," said Evelio Silvera, executive director of Casino Watch. He said casinos bought vast amounts of Katrina-devastated land at a bargain before other businesses had a chance. "They utilized a natural disaster as their final crux and excuse to get what they have been seeking for years," he said. "They took advantage of devalued land and opportunities to create a dependency upon their particular brand of business." The casino building boom is driving up the price of drywall and lumber and making it difficult for working families to rebuild their homes.

CHLAMYDIA HITS RECORD LEVEL IN U.S.

(EP News)--More than 1 million cases of chlamydia were reported in the U.S. last year — the most ever reported for a sexually transmitted infection (STI), Fox News reported. Gonorrhea rates also increased after hitting a record low, federal officials said. Syphilis is rising, too. "It's vital that everyone understand how the increase in sexual activity at younger ages is skyrocketing the number of STIs in our country," said Linda Klepacki, sexual health analyst for Focus on the Family Action. "Pre-teen and teenage girls are at much higher physical risk of contracting STIs than mature females. Youth should not be encouraged to be sexually active. "Parents need to teach their children about sexuality and the health that God built into His plan for sexuality."

MARRIAGE BRINGS STABILITY, ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

(EP News)--Married couples, when compared to their single or divorced counterparts, are more likely to own homes and stocks, and attain affluence, according to researchers at the Heritage Foundation. They also discovered married households earn \$12,000 more annually than cohabiting couples and are less likely to default on bills. Spokeswoman Christine Kim said that's because married couples work for the future. "Married people are planning ahead and thinking about having children, and that may impact home ownership," she said. "There are a lot of things going on that would suggest that marriage would have an impact on economic well-being."

JUDGE DISMISSES CLAIMS IN WAR MEMORIAL CROSS CASE

(EP News)--After more than 18 years of

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litigation in federal and state courts, an epic battle over the well-known Mount Soledad cross war memorial in San Diego appears to have turned the corner. Federal Judge Larry Burns issued a 19-page order Nov. 7, agreeing with the Pacific Justice Institute that most of the claims in the case are no longer valid. He dismissed the city of San Diego as a defendant. The court also took the opportunity to note that there is nothing inherently wrong with a cross on public land. The case started with a lawsuit from two atheists, who claimed the 29-foot cross violated their constitutional rights. San Diego ran out of options last year in the courts, which told them they had to remove the cross from city land. Congress stepped in and acquired the land and the memorial through eminent domain as a national war memorial — which prompted another lawsuit. Brad Dacus, president of the Pacific Justice Institute, said, “This case has huge implications not only for San Diego and the West Coast, but for the entire nation. We will continue to fight until we obtain a final judgment that this time-honored war memorial — like the fallen soldiers it honors — can rest in peace.”

CALIFORNIA SCHOOLCHILDREN LEARN READING, WRITING AND THE GAY AGENDA

(EP News)--What are teachers telling your children behind closed doors? Parents in San Diego recently found out. Mick Rabin, a teacher at Oak Park Elementary School, is unashamedly promoting homosexuality to third-grade students. Ron Prentice, director of the California Family Council, said San Diego residents should be concerned. “The parents of these children as well as the parents throughout San Diego and California and the country should be outraged by this message coming to 8- and 9-year-olds,” he said. A new California law forbids anything negative about homosexuality from being taught in schools. Finn Laursen with the Christian Educators Association said parents need to wake up to what’s happening. “If I were a parent,” he said, “I would be making sure that somebody with an agenda to twist the minds of little children would not have control of my children.”

CALIFORNIA HIGH SCHOOLS TO DISPLAY “IN GOD WE TRUST”

(EP News)--“In God We Trust” will be displayed in more than 2,300 classrooms in the largest high school district in the country. After weeks of debate, trustees of Kern County High School District in Bakersfield, Calif., voted 4-1 Nov. 5 to mandate placing the motto on a poster that includes the Constitution, Declaration of Independence, and Bill of Rights. Trustee Chad Vegas proposed the plan as a way to promote patriotism. The idea created controversy as opponents said the proposal forced religion in public schools. Jacquie

Sullivan, president of In God We Trust-America and a Bakersfield councilwoman, said she encouraged the trustees to put this issue on the meeting agenda. “We need to promote patriotism and promote it in our schools,” she told FoxNews.com. “It’s not political. It’s not religious. American patriotism is love of God and love of country. It’s pride in our country.”

ADF SUES TO PROTECT FREE SPEECH AT MOUNT RUSHMORE

(EP News)--Minnesotan Michael Boardley ran afoul of the National Park Service in August, when he and several others began handing out Gospel tracts outside the main entrance to Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. On the second day, a park ranger told them to stop — or obtain a “speech permit.” The Catch-22, Boardley found later, was that the Park Service wouldn’t issue him such a permit. The Alliance Defense Fund then filed a complaint in federal district court in Washington, D.C., saying Boardley had been denied his constitutional right to free speech. The government may impose reasonable “time, place and manner” restrictions on the exercise of free speech to balance the rights of speakers and listeners. However, the court has held that when those restrictions are interpreted or applied in an arbitrary manner so as to effectively prevent speech, then the government has acted unconstitutionally.

N.J. DISREGARDS PHARMACISTS’ RIGHTS OF CONSCIENCE

(EP News)--New Jersey has become the 12th state to force pharmacists to dispense drugs that are in conflict with their religious beliefs. Gov. Jon Corzine signed a bill last week that requires prescriptions — including those that may cause an abortion — to be dispensed “without delay.” The law makes it the duty of a pharmacy to fill prescriptions, “notwithstanding sincerely held moral, philosophical or religious beliefs of its pharmacists.” Frank Manion, an attorney with the American Center for Law and Justice, told Family News in Focus that the law’s opt-out provision does not constitute ironclad protection for pharmacists. “What happens is the pharmacy owner — usually a large retail chain — says, ‘We understand that’s what the law says, but there’s no way we can accommodate you for one reason or another,’” he explained. “Therefore the pharmacist ends up losing his or her job.” Clark Forsythe, president of Americans United for Life, called it an all-out attack on First Amendment freedoms. “It’s a very bad example of trampling on the ethical convictions of a minority in the United States,” he said.

NEWDOW CHALLENGES PLEDGE IN NEW HAMPSHIRE

(EP News)--Michael Newdow, the atheist who has been fighting for years to remove the phrase “under God” from the Pledge of Allegiance, is now representing a New Hampshire couple in a similar suit. The

anonymous couple sued a Hanover school district last week for leading their children in reciting the Pledge. Although a 2002 state law says student participation is voluntary, the suit maintains that by including “under God,” the district is endorsing the religious notion that God exists, creating a “societal environment where prejudice against atheists ... is perpetuated.” Newdow has filed similar suits in the past, and so far the courts have resisted his attempts to remove God from the Pledge.

JUDGE AFFIRMS KENTUCKY TEN COMMANDMENTS DISPLAY

(EP News)--A federal judge has ruled in favor of a Ten Commandments display at the Kentucky Capitol. U.S. District Judge Joseph Hood had barred a Ten Commandments display in 2000 and 2006, but approved it on Monday, because it’s part of a larger historical exhibit. The framed copy of the Commandments appears as part of a group of documents in the Capitol rotunda called the Foundations of American Law and Government. It includes the Magna Carta and the Kentucky Constitution. Rob Schenck, president of Faith and Action, said it’s still an important victory. “It may indicate that there’s going to be a turning on this and we certainly hope so,” he said. “It’s long overdue.” Republican Gov. Ernie Fletcher had ordered the display put in place, but he lost Tuesday’s election to Democrat Steve Beshear. It’s not clear what Beshear will do with it.

N.J. HURTLES TOWARD SAME-SEX “MARRIAGE”

(EP News)--The New Jersey Legislature is headed toward the creation of same-sex “marriage” after supporters made significant gains in this week’s election. New Jersey Democrats added to their majority, thanks to generous support from Garden State Equality, a gay-rights political action committee. According to news reports, the group contributed more than \$100,000 to the election and said the Democrat gains will help as it presses for gay “marriage.” In February, the state Supreme Court created civil unions that grant the same rights as marriage. Two groups are running pro-gay-marriage TV commercials. And the Legislature is set to convene a lame-duck session in which the issue could come up, in spite of the fact that Senate President Richard Codey and Assembly Speaker Joseph Roberts Jr., both Democrats, have said the issue will not be brought up this year.

VA ALLOWS GOD BACK INTO FLAG-FOLDING CEREMONY

(EP News)--A nationwide uproar has caused the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs to “clarify” its position — and allow the mention of God back into the flag-folding ceremony at military funerals. A VA official had pulled the recitation from ceremonies at national cemeteries last month after a complaint was filed with the White House over the phrase accompanying the 11th fold

that mentions “the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,” Fox News reported. Under the VA’s “clarification,” volunteer honor guards “are authorized to read the so-called ‘13-fold’ flag recitation or any comparable script,” though “survivors of the deceased need to provide material and request it be read.” Politicians had stepped into the fray. Rep. Heath Shuler, D-N.C., wrote a letter co-signed by 11 lawmakers calling for the return of the recitation to the full military funeral. Members of the American Legion also had flooded national headquarters since the decision.

WORLD BRIEFS

BRITISH BILL WOULD ALLOW CREATION OF ‘SAVIOR SIBLINGS’

(EP News)--A bill in Britain would loosen restrictions on the creation of “savior siblings” to allow parents of sick children to use in-vitro fertilization to create designer babies. These children would be used to treat the medical conditions of siblings by supplying bone marrow or umbilical-cord blood shortly after birth. “The creation and selection of young human life as a ‘savior sibling’ is a dangerous and slippery slope toward a utilitarian ethic that evaluates a person’s worth solely based on how they can be of use to others,” said Dawn Vargo, associate bioethics analyst for Focus on the Family Action. The bill also would allow the creation of human embryos containing animal DNA. It is expected to become law in 2009.



Mini-Edition by Joseph Harris

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



We’ve Come A Long Way Baby!

According to officials in Montgomery County in Maryland, individuals can now choose their gender (Worldnetdaily.com, November 14, 2007). If you as a male, “feel” or “perceive” you are female, you are. Same thing for females who think they are males. This will certainly save a lot of money on “gender reassignment” surgeries, if you want to overlook one small fact: it’s absolutely insane. Sane thinking people are concerned about people of the opposite sex using the same public facilities as the opposite sex, such as restrooms, showers, locker rooms, etc. and their proposed law would allow this, even though the officials deny it.

Think of the possibilities. If anyone wants to change their race, just use the power of the mind and presto, it’s done. Whites can be Black, Blacks can become Asian, and so on. Never mind some absolutes that were established at

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Mini-Edition

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birth. Absolutes are no longer absolutes. What you think, perceive and feel is now the standard for reality. I wonder if I can convince my bank that I really have a balance in my checking account of \$300,000.00? If this is my perception, then the bank will just have to accept it and validate all the checks I write, because I believe I have \$300,000.00 in my account. Don't argue with my reality.

On a related issue, I am reminded of a story I read a few years back. The University of California in Los Angeles has long been known as a hotbed of liberalism, especially evident in the 60's. It's no surprise that feminism is strongly supported and taught at UCLA. What's surprising is the presence of a campus group known as the Independent Women's Forum, a conservative organization. The IWF claims to be a counter-organization of the NOW, National Organization for Women, or as I fondly refer to them, the National Organization of Whiners.

We are often cautioned against placing a stereotype on individuals or groups, but it's kinda hard not to with liberals. They are so predictable. One stereotype of a liberal group is this: THEY can downgrade, denigrate and devil anyone they choose, but let just ONE word be said in opposition against them or their ideology, and they cry incessantly like the thin-skinned babies they are. It's true almost every time; the great "preachers" of tolerance suddenly become extremely intolerant when they are on the receiving end of criticism. So if the stereotype fits . . . well, you know the rest.

The Independent Women's Forum ran an advertisement in the student paper challenging what they called "The Ten Most Common Feminist Myths" and the outcry began. The feminists cried "hateful" and "damaging to the UCLA community" for starters. Now, all the IWF did was tell the truth with hard facts and statistics about some of the following feminist myths: (1) One out of every four girls experiences rape or attempted rape by a male on college campuses; (2) Girls don't receive as well an education as boys; (3) Gender is a social construction, . . . and so on.

Now, the IWF did say the feminist professors at UCLA were "factually challenged" and were "male bashers," but hey, the truth usually hurts. Someone needs to say it. Groups like the National Organization for Women have for too long had free reign given to them by the major liberal news media outlets and it's refreshing to hear someone tell the truth. Liberal groups have been unchallenged for so long, they just can't handle it when they are confronted with truth. Unfortunately, most have been

inoculated to the truth by their own self deception.

What saith the Lord concerning male and female? The man was first formed, then the woman, Paul said, and the order of creation establishes the authority of the man. Concerning sin, the man was in the transgression, but the woman was deceived, therefore it was "**by one man sin entered into the world**", not one woman, according to Romans 5. Paul also stated that a woman was not to usurp the God-given authority of the male. There has been a rash of women "preachers" over the past few decades, but scripture is plain on this issue, for those who will accept truth and not be guided by feelings and emotion.

Ladies and Gentlemen, males and

females are different. They have different roles, different positions in the home, and different areas of ministry. They are just as different emotionally as they are physically. Women have no place in the foxhole and men just can't nurture like women can. And no one can change their gender by wishing, hoping or having surgery. God does not make mistakes and He does not place a male in a female body or visa versa.

Departure from the Word of God can only lead to switched roles and confused, unfulfilled men, women, and children. Hey, I have a novel idea! How about we try it God's way for the next generation? We've come a long way baby. Now let's shift into reverse.



CELLBLOCK TO CELLBLOCK

By David G. Hoffman

Encouragement and thoughts from a prisoner to other prisoners and readers.

"Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried" (Rev. 2:10).



Helpful Resources for My Readers

Greetings, grace, and peace to you, dear reader, in the glorious name of our Lord, Jesus the Christ. I pray you are doing well and in the highest spirits.

I'm doing fine. By the time you read this the Automotive Technology course I'm taking will be close to completion. I'd forgotten how fun wrenching on cars can be. I did finish the HVACR Technician correspondence course and hope to find a way to take the EPA Certification exam soon.

My college academic classes are going well, too. I finally got my hands on a college catalog and can see exactly what classes I'll have to take to complete my associate degree. Some of the classes are less than desirable but a few---Composition I & II, Psychology; and Public Speaking will benefit my future goals.

Speaking of goals, when I do finish the auto tech class I plan on going to work in the unit kitchen. The Garment Factory (where I worked before getting in the auto tech class) was okay for a minute, but it's a dead end job as far as usable skills are concerned. I want to cultivate job skills I may actually use in the free-world. On that note, once I'm in the kitchen I'm going to sign up for the Culinary Arts vocational course offered by the state through a community college. Kitchen workers are top priority for getting in the class and the state will pay the tuition. I love to cook so this is a good plan for me, and if all else fails, a good cook can always

find a job somewhere in the free-world.

Those of you who have read my column for a while may be thinking, man, a Paralegal certificate, a Professional Writing certificate, a HVACR Technician certificate, an Automotive Technology certificate, working toward an associate degree, and wanting to take a Culinary Arts course? Does this guy know what he wants?

No, dear reader, I'm not suffering from multiple personality disorder. The method to my madness is to acquire as many different job skills in as many different career fields as possible. So when I'm released and go looking for work and a job in one field doesn't pan out, I'll have other job skills to fall back on.

I would encourage you to follow my example. Getting a job as an ex-felon isn't easy, but the more skills you have the easier it will be.

Please continue to pray for me, dear reader, as I progress toward my goals and, hopefully, encourage you to set and reach your own.

Instead of broaching a subject this month, dear reader, I want to pass along a few resources you may find useful. My mentioning them here in no way implies endorsement by *The Berea Baptist Banner*, nor does it imply my full endorsement either. My mentor, Bro. Jeff, has told me repeatedly I shouldn't "write people off" because I don't agree with them on every point. Instead, spit out the bones and savor the meat. So with some of these resources you will need to spit out a bone or two, but there will be plenty of meat

for your trouble:

Inside Books Project
12th Street Books
827 W. 12th Street
Austin, TX 78701

(Provides free literature and educational materials to Texas prisoners. Request books by subject, 3-6 months for reply.)

Eternal Life Ministries
P.O. Box 10092
Fayetteville, AR 72703-0036

(Write for application. Provides free Christian books to all prisoners. Authors include Charles Spurgeon, Arthur W. Pink, John Gill, etc.)

Bible Correspondence Course
P.O. Box 744
Emory, TX 75440

(Some bones. Provides free Thompson Chain-Reference Study Bible upon completion.)

Crossroad Bible Institute
P.O. Box 900

Grand Rapids, MI 49509-0900

(Reformed Theology. Some bones, but not too bad.)

A Better Way To Live
P.O. Box 44171
Madison, WI 53744

(Ask for "A Better Way To Live Guide" a Christian prisoner resource guide.)

Christian 12 Step Ministry, Inc.
P.O. Box 4321
Ocala, FL 34478-4321

(Free to prisoners---Walking the 12 Steps with Jesus Christ: A Christian, Bible-based Study Guide for use in recovery from addiction to drugs, alcohol, or other out-of-control habits.)

Prison Living Magazine \$12.00/yr.
10645 N. Tatum Blvd.

Phoenix, AZ 85028

(Christian-based magazine for prisoners.)

Blackstone Career Institute
P.O. Box 899
Emmaus, PA 18049-0899

(Paralegal/Legal Assistant correspondence course. Write for current tuition price. Excellent course for prisoners to get a better understanding of how the legal system works.)

Long Ridge Writers Group
91 Long Ridge Rd.

West Redding, CT 06896-9979

("Breaking Into Print" professional magazine writing course. Write for current tuition price. Excellent course for beginning writers.)

American Christian Writers/
Christian Writers Institute
P.O. Box 110390
Nashville, TN 37222

(Offers six Christian writing correspondence courses and several dictionaries and writing books. Write for current tuition prices and catalog.)

These ten resources should be useful to most of you. I've used all of them but the last and hope to use it in the future.

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Cellblock to Cellblock

(Continued from page 235) ♦

I believe Bible study and education are keys to getting out of prison and staying out, avail yourself of both as often as possible.

“Happy is the man that findeth wisdom, and the man that getteth understanding. For the merchandise of it is better than the merchandise of silver, and the gain thereof than fine gold” (Prov. 3:13-14).

Until next time: **“The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen”** (Ga. 6:18).

Krystal Ruthann, I pray school is going well for you. You are in my thoughts and prayers daily. I love you more than words can express.

Bro. Jeff, you guys are in my thoughts and prayers as well. Thank you for all you do.

Bro. Harold and Bro. Luther, y'all are both in my thoughts and prayers, too. Thank you for your continued encouragement and fellowship. [Dear reader, please continue to pray for Bro. Luther, he is still in ill health.]

Bro. Kevin, I still miss you, man. Stand strong in the Word and keep fighting the good fight. You are not alone.

Bro. Danny, keep working on the book, it very well may be a tool the Lord can use to help others.



A BOOK REVIEW

THE CHURCH THAT CHRIST BUILT

(Encouragement From The Past For Today's Church)

Author: John Legg

Published by Evangelical Press - 2006

Faverdale North, Darlington, DL3 OPH, England - P.O. Box 825, Webster NY 14580 USA. Originally published as *The Footsteps of God*, 1986

The title of this book is misleading to anyone seeking any kind of documentation of the church history of the Baptists, at least for those who do not see Baptists as a product of the Reformation. Mr. Legg seems to consider the history that claims the pre-reformation separatists as Baptists to be an “abuse” of history. *“This results in some strange interpretations of history, such as the tendency today to regard the Waldensians as evangelical Baptists or primitive Plymouth Brethren, when in fact they were rather unclear about the gospel.”* (p. 345)

Nevertheless this book is a very good, encouraging book in terms of the struggles of believers throughout the 2,000 years of the Christian era. It is accurate, often revealing personal touches of those who have strived for the Doctrines of Grace from the apostolic times. By Mr. Legg's

own comment the Doctrines of Grace are *traditionally, if unhappily, known as Calvinism.* (p.329)

The book is written from a Reformation and Universal church point of view. However, if the reader keeps this in mind the book is an excellent history of the struggles of those who came to see the authority of the Bible, the necessity of getting the Bible in the hands of the common people and especially Justification by Faith. It also, although inadvertently, points out the two major confictions between the professed doctrines of the Reformation and the practices of the Reformation. It wasn't until years after the Reformation that the Reformers seemed to think in terms of 'free churches.' It was only after their own established churches, supported by the government and enforced by civil law, that men we still know as reformers, not Baptists, attempted to have churches that were free of the government and government supported churches. He also fails to mention the government supported persecution of Baptists by the Puritans and Congregationalists as late as the 19th century here in our own country. It was 1843, mostly under the leadership of Thomas Chalmers, that the reformers were forced out of the churches they had established, deprived of buildings to meet in, and realized the need of free and independent churches, a position that Baptists have held for 2,000 years. In the course of the book, however, he does acknowledge the inconsistency of the Congregationalist fleeing the oppression of a state church but immediately establishing one of their own.

The Reformers and Mr. Legg all seem to miss the contradiction of paedobaptism and justification by faith. This book demonstrates that inconsistency throughout the Reformation.

Mr. Legg claims as one of the benefits of history, as he has presented it, in this quote. *“It can only do Baptists good to realize that most of the great men of history before the twentieth century were paedobaptists, whom the Lord did not exclude from his communion and service.”* (p. 344) This seems to be a poorly disguised slap at the Baptist position of closed communion and the writings of men like Carrol and Graves. He ignores throughout the book that many of these same “great men” persecuted the Baptists as severely as did Rome and as Rome had persecuted them. Mr. Legg does, however, acknowledge that Luther's treatment of the Anabaptists was inexcusable. (p. 91)

Under the heading of “God's Truth” as one of the great doctrines the Reformers stood for, he writes: *They were prepared to contend for the truth of God....It is alleged that such an attitude is contrary to the spirit of toleration and the practice of love. We ought to speak in terms of making our contribution, of the evangelical point of view or perspective,*

not about truth and error. There is no such thing as heresy; anyone who claims to be a Christian is to be accepted as a brother in Christ with no questions asked. (p, 326) It is unclear whether Mr. Legg is expressing his opinion here or if this is a charge he lays against the modern liberal Christian community. But I suggest it is this same error, although perhaps modified a little, which leads to the notion of an invisible, universal church. He goes on to say, *How different was the attitude of the great leaders of the past! Because the Scriptures are the Word of God, not of man...they did not consider themselves at liberty to pick and choose what they believed or to leave serious error alone to wreak havoc in God's church.* (p. 327)

I would not recommend this book to anyone looking for historic evidence of Baptist Perpetuity nor would I recommend it to anyone who would quickly attempt to use it as an argument against Baptist perpetuity. Otherwise it is good reading, revealing the battles in which evangelical Christians have fought and died over the 2,000 years of church history. We cannot deny the spiritual debt we owe the Reformers in some areas even though they have often been our persecutors as well.

Respectfully submitted,

Raymond F. Bennett



Temperance

By J. Harvey

“To temperance all our liveliest powers we owe;

She bids the judgment wake, the fancy flow;

*For her the artist shuns the fuming feast,
The midnight roar, the bacchanalian guest.’*

This is the last link in the believer's golden chain--the final grace or Christian virtue enumerated in the apostolic catalogue. But though last in order, it is not the least in importance. If this link be wanting, the chain is not complete; or, in other words, without temperance we cannot paint an exact likeness of a Christian--the figure would lack proportion and perfection. Inattention to the culture of this moral virtue would jeopardize, if not totally destroy, all the rest mentioned by the apostle.

Temperance signifies self-government over the appetite and passions of our nature; a perfect control of ourselves; the moderation of our desires, pursuits and aversions. It is the equilibrium of the mind, the equal balance of the temper, and the regulator of the heart. It is the boundary line over which we cannot step without violating the rules of discretion blotching our character, disfiguring our moral features, and sustaining great physical loss. It is an essential element in a good character; and is necessary to prevent extremes either of excess or deficiency. Excessive indulgence in sensual pleasures, in indolence, carnal gratifications, in eating and drinking, it is not only injurious to our physical and moral nature, but is also prohibited. **“Be not among winebibbers; among riotous eaters of flesh: For the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty; and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags”** (Prov. 23:20-21).

Intemperance is at variance with the spirit of religion. The former operates against our temporal and spiritual interests, but the latter promotes both. Religion is designed to deliver us from the dominion of sensual lusts, to purify our nature, to make us **“vessels unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared for every good work.”** Reminiscences of past experience, broken reports, fragments of Christianity, or scraps of religion, are not sufficient to constitute us eligible for a blissful immortality. There must be a transformation of character, a heart renewed by Divine grace, the evidence of our acceptance, a uniform obedience to God, and a well-grounded hope of everlasting life. We must be **“complete in Him who is the head of all principality and power.”** Christians will do well to regard the Saviour's caution to His

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NOW AVAILABLE



Now available just in time for the season. This book is a collection of sermons by Milburn Cockrell on Christmas. The title was taken from a small booklet he first printed in the 1960's. Articles included: A Man-Made God, The Three Wise Men, An X-ray View of Xmas and Questions for Honest Minds. Retail Price is \$3.95. Order early so you can use them this season. Please add \$2.50 for S&H. On five or more copies the price is \$2.50 plus postage.

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NOW AVAILABLE

Temperance

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disciples: **"Take heed to yourselves, lest at any time your hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life"** (Luke 21:34). Temperance being a fruit of the Spirit, is worthy of our prayerful attention. Let us---

I. VIEW ITS GENERAL MEANING.

The term is very comprehensive in its import. In many things, and in various ways, men may be intemperate. It denotes moderation in the use of the blessings of Providence---in temper and conversation---in dress, desires, and imaginations. It denotes moderation---

1. *In the use of the blessings of Providence.* **"Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth"** (Rom. 14:22). It is a lamentable fact that numbers abuse those things **"which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth"** (I Tim. 4:3); and, consequently evince a glaring disregard of the sacred precept, **"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God"** (I Cor. 10:31). The conduct of such characters grieved the apostle Paul; to them he refers when he says, **"For many walk, of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the cross of Christ: . . . whose god is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things"** (Phil. 3:18-19).

In the history of the Jews there are instances which clearly prove their proneness to habits of dissipation and excessive indulgences. Their feasts, whatever might have been their primary object, had a demoralizing tendency; for they were made the occasions of licentiousness and improper conduct. **"The harp, the viol, the tabret and pipe, and wine,"** were introduced at those times; an inordinate indulgence of which produced a disregard to the work of the Lord, and inattention to the operation of His hands. And the language of many at the present day, whilst rioting and reveling in the vices, luxuries, and amusements of the world, is identical with those who said, **"Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die."**

But temperance is opposed to gluttony and drunkenness, and implies a proper control over the appetite. Christians must let their **"moderation be known unto all men."** They are to be examples to the world, by keeping within reasonable bounds in all things. Whilst the Author of our being hath bestowed His temporal mercies upon us, and delights in our happiness, He insists upon a proper appropriation and temperate use of these favours. Temperance includes---

2. *The government of the temper and*

conversation. **"If any man offend not in word, the same is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body"** (James 3:2). It is reported that Peter the Great, Czar of Russia, once struck his gardener, who, being a man of great sensibility, took to his bed, and died in a few days. Peter hearing of this, exclaimed, "Alas! I have civilized my subjects, I have conquered nations; but I have not been able to conquer myself." There are some who appear to have no command over their temper. As a match struck on a rugged substance instantly ignites, so when they come in collision with something they do not approve, they are seen enveloped in a flame of passion. Trivial occurrences, slight provocations, or a little opposition, throw them into tumult and fits of irritation. Such uncontrolled emotions and unrestrained violence of temper are serious scars on the character, and indicate the existence of an ill-regulated heart.

The mind, the disposition, and the tongue must be disciplined. Lessons of self-possession must be learned and practiced; reason must be consulted; it should not be held in mournful captivity by inordinate passions and appetites, but have the pre-eminence, and every emotion and action be in habitual subordination to its exercise.

Besides, it includes the dominion over the tongue. There may be improper language where there is no violent passion. Man is endowed with the power of speech, and by the noble faculty of the tongue he possesses a wonderful capability for good or evil. **"Therewith bless we God, or therewith curse we men."** The government of the tongue is as necessary as the control of the appetite. The apostle James represents the unbridled tongue as a world of iniquity, defiling the whole body, setting on fire the course of nature, and itself set on fire of hell. Unless it be kept under proper restraint, it is liable to start aside from sober to ridiculous conversation. Some people say much, but to no sensible purpose. Their fickleness and levity, their sallies of imagined wit, their burlesques on character, their exaggerated statements, their foolish expressions, their jestings at sacred things, and their idle words may excite the vulgar laugh from those as devoid of good sense as themselves; but their language betrays their folly, shows their weakness, violates the law of order, and is therefore highly reprehensible, and offensive to men of sense and intelligence. But a proper government of the tongue checks the inclination to such unguarded levity, extravagances, and inconsiderate remarks; it moderates conversation, promotes **"sound speech that cannot be condemned,"** and secures the approbation of wise and good men. Our conversation should be seasoned, as well as temperate. There is **"a time to be silent, and a time to speak."**

Words fitly spoken are valuable, and often effective. David said, **"I will take heed to my ways, that I sin not with my tongue"** (Ps. 39:1). **"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man"** (Col. 4:6). Temperance denotes---

3. *Prudence in apparel.* The Scriptures furnish us with no rule as to what shall be the precise form of the coat, the color of the gown, or the shape of the headdress. Various forms and modes of dress have been adopted both in heathen and civilized nations; the people have been influenced by the prevailing customs of the times in which they have lived. But although the Scriptures lay down no particular rules as to the cut, color, or exact quality of the dress, they commend and enjoin the adoption of certain great principles and duties which claim the serious attention of all professing Christians. What is required of them?

(1.) *Honesty.* Sometimes elegant silks and satins, costly artificials, magnificent ribbons, fashionable lace, gold rings, and gay embroidery, are worn at other people's expense. Some people can march about with an air of importance in rustling dresses which are unpaid for, having imposed upon some unwary tradesman. Others suffer through their extravagance and dishonesty. Here is a violation of the precepts of Christianity---a superfluous exhibition of what righteously belongs to others. Such a course is condemned and prohibited in the Scriptures. We are to **"provide things honest in the sight of men."** There must be---

(2.) *Circumspection.* Uniformity in dress is not to be expected. Customs, circumstances, and views will influence the putting on of apparel. Some in inferior stations of life would fain be equal to those who are in affluent circumstances. Some are determined to be fine, and, therefore, to adorn the body they will sacrifice a portion of necessary food, so as to impair their health. Such conduct betrays a vacant mind, and a sad lack of prudence and circumspection. With respect to dress, there must be---

(3.) *Modesty.* That there are many arrayed in immodest attire, both in the higher and lower orders of society, needs no confirmation. Let us hear what the apostle Paul says on this subject, **"In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which becometh women professing godliness) with good works"** (I Tim. 2:9-10). Similar were the views entertained by the apostle Peter, **"Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel; but let it be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible, even the ornament of a**

meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price." A lady asked John Newton what was the best rule for female dress and behaviour. "Madam," said he, "so dress, and so conduct yourself, that persons who have been in your company shall not recollect what you had on." This will generally be the case where singularity of dress is avoided, and where intelligence of mind and gentleness of manners are cultivated. There must be---

(4.) *Economy.* In some there is a propensity to extravagance; much is expended in needless finery by the more wealthy members of the church of Christ. Some well meaning people think if they can afford costly raiment there is no harm in wearing it; forgetting, we fear, the responsibility of their stewardship, and the importance of a proper appropriation of the money entrusted to their care; and overlook those around them who are destitute of the common necessities of life, as well as the many calls and demands for Christian liberality.

(5.) *Nonconformity to the world* must be observed. The divine injunction is, **"Be ye not conformed to this world."** The world is not to lead the church, but the church is to be an example to the world. Shall I not be thought singular if I conform not to the fashion, and dress as other people do? ask some. That question may be answered by asking another: May you not as well be thought singular as insane? Examine your motives. Do you put on gold and costly apparel that you may be admired, or thought superior to others? Or is it that you may be thought handsome? You may decorate a corpse with flowers, but that will not alter its features; it is a corpse still. You may clothe your bodies with gaudy attire, and surround your faces with rows of artificial flowers; but these cannot transform the countenance. Let not those who are clothed in superb raiment think more highly of themselves than they ought to think; and neither waste money nor time in purchasing and adjusting their external trappings. Neither, should those of the lower ranks of society be intemperate in their remarks about those whose garb and views may not be uniform with their own. "To affect singularity in any way," says Dr. Raffles, "is incompatible with true humility; and upon this principle the plain bonnet of the Methodist and the straight cut coat of the Quaker are equally liable to objection to the finery of the Congregationalist or the splendor of the Episcopalian. The query is, wither there is not as much pride, as much affection, as much self-complacency in the one as in the other. Who will say that there is less of self-consequence in the coarse habiliments and bare feet of the ancient monk than in the comely garment and canonical robes of the modern rector? The desire to court observation---the

♦ (Continued on page 238)

Temperance

(Continued from page 237) ♦

ambition to be singular--the hope of being admired, is the essence of pride; and in this vice both the extremes of finery and of plainness will be found to meet." "Let the Bible," says the late W. Jay, "be the mirror at which you dress; and while others are busily engaged in catching a fashion or adjusting a curl, let the object of your cultivation be the understanding, the memory, the will, the affections, the conscience. Let no part of this internal creation be unadorned; let it sparkle with the diamonds of wisdom, or prudence, of humility, of gentleness. These ornaments alone will confer dignity, and prepare for usefulness." Let us therefore be careful to have our hearts right with God, and make His Word the rule of our faith and practice. Temperance furthermore denotes---

4. *The government of the desires and the imaginations.* The mind cannot be dormant; it is constantly exercised either with lawful or unlawful desires and imaginations. Objects, opportunities, and actions furnish ample material for thought and observation. But when the thoughts, desires, and inclinations of the heart are tending in a forbidden direction, they must be arrested, controlled, and brought into subjection. Hence the necessity of self-command. To desire what the Scriptures forbid is sin.

The imagination will often be predominant, and far exceed the bounds of reason, unless it is disciplined and kept in subordination. It delights to luxuriate in the regions of fiction. Wild speculations, inordinate desires, and uncontrolled imaginations have, in numberless instances, been detrimental to the highest interests of man. "Under its influence," says Edmondson, "the ignorant may consider themselves as being very wise; the poor may flatter themselves with prospects of future wealth; and the most disgraceful wretches on earth may puff themselves up with ideas of distant honour and glory. Wild imagination carries us forward, with rapid wings, to the summit of human perfection; but sober reflection rectifies those romantic flights, and discovers both what we now are, and what we are likely to be in future. I may fancy myself a lord, a duke, or a king; I may rank myself among renowned conquerors; or place myself at the head of the learned world; but when reason resumes her seat, I find myself exactly what I was before these airy notions took possession of my mind. Some have indulged these wild views so frequently, and to such a degree, as to be incapable of sober reflection; others, under their baleful influence, have sunk into a state of dejection and melancholy; and others have fallen into a state of downright madness."

It is obvious, therefore, that to govern the desires and imaginations they must be under the influence of religious principle. Having glanced at temperance in general,

II. LET US CONSIDER IT SPECIALLY IN RELATION TO INTOXICATING DRINKS.

1. *Its necessity.* Some may think I ought not to introduce this subject here, but to reserve my remarks for a public temperance meeting. I have no apology to offer, save a sense of duty and a deep conviction of the importance of the subject. It is said that there are five hundred thousand unhappy drunkards in Great Britain, and that sixty thousand are supposed to die every year. Intemperance is the parent of almost every other evil; it is the curse of the nation, and one of the Herculean sins of the age in which we live. It is the channel through which flow kindred evils. "Eight of the judges of the land have declared that nine-tenths of the crime of our country, three-fourths of the beggary, and one-half of the madness of our country-men, are to be attributed to drinking," or result from intoxicating liquor. It is the high-road to murder, adultery, poverty, disease, Sabbath desecration, penal settlements, misery, and ruin. Many, through intemperate habits, have been reduced from affluence to abject poverty and wretchedness; like the prodigal, they have wasted their substance in voluptuousness and dissipation. Look into the dwelling of the inebriate, and what see you there? Perhaps rooms without furniture---a pantry without provisions---a dejected wife, and children in rags. Disease and misery are there; hunger and desolation are there; the most awful imprecations and vulgarities are uttered there; nothing is wanting to complete the scene of misery. Hear the language of inspiration: "**Who hath woe? who hath sorrow? who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine; they that go to seek mixed wine**" (Prov. 23:29-30). Sobriety in all things is not only necessary, but---

2. *Desirable.* It tends to establish a good reputation. "**A good name,**" says Solomon, "**is better than great riches.**" Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage; and the intemperate man barter his reputation for the carnal gratifications of a vitiated appetite. This is a foolish exchange---an act fraught with disastrous consequences; for a sullied character, a blighted reputation are formidable obstacles to a man's temporal interest. The worth of his character does not depend upon his general conduct. How many have sacrificed their health, character, and acquaintance at the shrine of intemperance!

But when the conduct is influenced by the principle of sobriety, it preserves the

reputation from that censure and wreck of chastity to which it would otherwise be subjected. I grant that there may be false accusations and invidious attacks made upon the character of the most abstemious persons. This, however, is not to be wondered at, when we consider that the Saviour of the world was designated "**a glutton, a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners.**" But where temperance exists it will manifest itself--it will be seen and felt. "**For the time past of our life may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries: Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you**" (I Pet. 4:3-4).

3. *It is important.* It fits man for the duties of life, whether relative, social, civil, or religious. Intemperance beclouds the mind, weakens the memory, pollutes the conversation, excites the passions, and incapacitates its recipients for business. "**There is a spirit in man, and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth him understanding.**" Reason and intellectuality distinguishes man, and ranks him high in the scale of being. But many allow sensuality to supplant reason, and corrupt good manners. Such conduct tends to dissolve friendship, alienate affection, and blunt the desire for mental and moral improvement. It is said that "nine-tenths of all the losses which occur at sea are caused directly or indirectly through intemperance." How necessary that those men who "go down to the sea in ships," in whose hands so much property and so many lives are entrusted, should be temperate! "**Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging; and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise**" (Prov. 20:1). Christian temperance is a subject worthy of man's pursuit; it makes him useful and honourable, and fits him for discharging his duties in a manner worthy of the station he occupies and the religion he professes.

It is important because it contributes to the perfection of character. What is required of ministers should be regarded by all Christians: "**Not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate**" (Tit. 1:7-8). We cannot be Christians without a proper government of the passions, nor advance to the path of holiness without temperance. Every link is essential to the chain; all the parts and features are necessary to attain perfection.

Temperance, blended with deep piety, will regulate the heart and conduct, and stamp the character with loveliness. We must be temperate in all things, and fruitful in every good word and work, that we may be true Israelites indeed, in whom there is no guile. "**Teaching**

us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil world."

Temperance promotes a physical, moral, and circumstantial improvement. It has lifted many a degraded and miserable wretch to respectability and happiness. Personal, relative, and national advantages will be felt in proportion as the temperance principles are appreciated and supported.

♦ (Continued in the next issue)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 10-1-2007 to 10-31-2007

Beginning Balance.....\$6,618.64

RECEIPTS:

B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL.....	36.66
Berea B. C., Mansfield, OH.....	50.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS.....	200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., Westpoint, TN.....	150.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX.....	100.00
Bible Believers B. C., Naples, ID.....	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV.....	300.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY.....	150.00
Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV.....	50.00
Cedar Grove B. C., Millport, AL.....	50.00
Central Avenue B.C., Tampa, FL.....	1,000.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR.....	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME.....	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC.....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL.....	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV.....	100.00
Joseph Jurzec, Richmond, IL.....	50.00
L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA.....	125.00
Landmark M.B.C., Moncks Corner, SC.....	100.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Morris St. B. C., Hobbs, NM.....	500.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....	400.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN.....	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN.....	50.00
New Testament B. C., Leivasy, WV.....	100.00
Paul Stepp, Lizemores, WV.....	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL.....	100.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS.....	25.00
South Park M.B.C., Seattle, WA.....	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS.....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Warren, OH.....	75.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC.....	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA.....	25.00
Walnut Creek B. C., Grove City, OH.....	50.00
Subscriptions.....	330.00
Anon.....	230.00
Dividing Checks.....	150.00
Sub Total.....	\$5,446.66
TOTAL.....	\$12,065.30

EXPENDITURES:

Printing.....	597.51
Postage.....	1,145.35
Supplies.....	295.66
Wages.....	2,000.00
FICA.....	152.95
Dividing Checks.....	150.00
Total Expenditures.....	4,341.47
ENDING BALANCE.....	\$7,723.83

World Scene

(Continued from page 240) ♦

scale and with *your money!* This means the remodeling of the UN building could have carpenters from Cambodia, bricklayers from Bolivia, electricians from Estonia, plumbers from Pakistan, and steamfitters from the Seychelles---all paid for by the American taxpayers.

I'm sure that construction workers all over the world are lining up for a chance to win an all-expenses-paid trip to New York City that includes a high-paying job once they arrive.

The UN was originally organized as a forum where representatives of the world community could meet to tackle problems such as world hunger, illiteracy, and disease. Now, most of the members of the UN are small countries that are openly hostile to the United States.

"I wish, looking back, that I had treasured the doing and being, a little more, and the getting it done, a little less." ---Anna Quindlen

Law of the Sea Treaty--- L.O.S.T.

UN charter ratified by the United States nearly sixty years ago boldly gives the UN "primary responsibility for international peace," adding "the members of the United Nations, agree to accept and carry out UN decisions."

"The Law of the Sea Treaty' is not just a bad idea, it's a very dangerous legal document that heralds a major step into the world government and grants vast powers to the United Nations." ---William F. Jasper, *The New American*

This article urges President George W. Bush to revoke his ill-advised decision to endorse Senate ratification of the anti-sovereignty, anti-defense, anti-prosperity "Law of the Sea Treaty" also appropriately referred to as "L.O.S.T."

This UN boondoggle has been more than 30 years in the making. It started with Jimmy Carter, it was halted by Ronald Reagan, ---but revived by Bill Clinton.

But the powerful U.S. Senator Richard Lugar is pushing to make the United States a part of this global-wide nightmare. And worse still, President George W. Bush has actually endorsed its ratification by the Senate! This is an outrage.

Thus far, all debate over "L.O.S.T." has taken place behind closed doors in Washington. The obvious hope of the globalists' is that they can push senate ratification of "L.O.S.T." without public debate.

Well, with your help, that is about to change! We plan to force this issue out of the closet and onto the court of public opinion where the arrogant globalist politicians in Washington cannot cover it up.

Make no mistake. If the public ever learns what "L.O.S.T." is truly all about, many of the politicians pushing it will be looking at "LOSING" their powerful jobs in Washington---and the Presidents' job approval numbers will drop even further to new record lows!

Why? Because the "Law of the Sea Treaty" is the biggest threat to our military and economic sovereignty America has ever faced. If ratified by the United States it will give the United Nations:

- * Legal Authority over two-thirds of the earth's surface,

- * Power to tax American corporations, and

- * Regular control over nearly all the world's oceanic commerce and travel.

In short, "L.O.S.T." is a backdoor way for the United Nations and the "New World Order" to gain all of the power they have lusted after for more than five decades---and here's how and why. The "Law of the Sea Treaty" has been signed by 145 nations. The only major holdout thus far has been the United States, and for many good reasons.

Like the International Criminal Court (ICC), the Kyoto Protocol, and other globalist schemes, "L.O.S.T." is another blatant attempt to install what they call "Global Governance" over America.

The truth is, "L.O.S.T." is nothing less than an overt raid on our national independence and treasure! It establishes a vast watery commons called "The Area" and claims all resources within this "area" are "the common heritage of mankind."

It has established an enforcement body called the International Seabed Authority (ISA) which, referred to simply as, "The Authority"---and it grants this "Authority" sweeping powers to dictate what commerce of travel is done on nearly all of the earth's waterways.

By ratifying the "Law of the Sea Treaty," America will be locking herself into a treaty that:

- * Can force American companies to pay "fees" (I call them taxes) for mining the seas, even those off our own shores.

- * Claims control of everything in and over the seas, meaning air travel and even space exploration will also be under the thumb of "The Authority."

- * Will have the sole power to determine what ships can be boarded and searched, handcuffing our Coast Guard as it searches for terrorists, illegal aliens and drug smugglers.

- * Gives the ISA legal jurisdiction to punish Americans for alleged violations of "L.O.S.T.," and

- * Could even lead to the creation of a "U.N. Navy" to impose the will of "The Authority."

In short, "L.O.S.T." is a globalist's dream. It gives the legitimacy to a global justice system, global taxes, and global regulation over commerce, travel and exploration on two-thirds of the earth's surface.

It will ultimately lead to the creation of a "U. N. Navy." It is a major roadblock to America's ability to secure our seaports, borders, and airspace against terrorism and smugglers.

Frankly, **WE RATIFY THIS "NEW WORLD ORDER" AT OUR OWN PERIL!**

And unless the President withdraws his ill-advised and reckless support for the treaty, the Senate will soon ratify it!

Former U.N. Ambassador Jeane Kirkpatrick told the Senate hearing that the "Law of the Sea Treaty" threatened our sovereignty "not only on the high seas, but in the air and outer space as well." Ambassador Kirkpatrick was absolutely right!

"It does not take a majority to prevail. . .but rather on irate, tireless minority, keen on setting brushfires of freedom in the minds of men." ---Samuel Adams

(Excerpts are from previous writings of Capt. Evans and excerpts for Public Policy Research, Selous Foundation, and writing---Morgan Norval, Executive Director).



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 10-1-2007 to 10-31-2007

Beginning Balance	\$12,149.03
RECEIPTS:	
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN	50.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Everson, WA	600.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
.....	1,075.00
TOTAL	13,224.03
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	360.00
Tapes	123.87
Postage	141.35
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	625.22
.....	\$12,598.81
Less Corbin, KY des.	-1,971.52
ENDING BALANCE	\$10,627.29

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$2,131.52
RECEIPTS:	
.....	0.00
.....	2,131.52
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT	160.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,971.52

ANNOUNCEMENTS

On Saturday, November 24, at 2:00 p.m. the members of Landmark Baptist Mission, Annville, KY were constituted into a New Testament Baptist Church by the authority of Parkway Landmark Baptist Church, Springfield, Oregon.

For more information please contact Pastor Steve Flinchum at (606)364-3162 or P.O. Box 121, Annville, KY 40402.

Grace Baptist Church of Rural, NC will be having special services beginning on Wednesday, December 5th through Sunday the 9th. Elder Sam Wilson of Gladwin, MI will be preaching.

Services will be held at 7:30 Wednesday through Saturday and 9:45; 10:45; and 1:00 p.m. on Sunday, with lunch being

provided by the church.

All are invited to visit and those who are unable to come we ask that you pray for the services. For more information please contact Pastor Gene Kiger at (336)377-9808.

Elder Roy Thomas went home to be with the Lord on October 29th, 2007. He was pastor of Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Wake Forest, NC.

The church is need of a pastor. Any qualified elder who is interested may contact the church by email at eigngracebaptist@earthlink.net, send a resume and statement of beliefs to 601 Woodland Church Road, Wake Forest, NC 27587, or call Brother Titus Dickerson at 919-570-6178.

Please pray for Sovereign Grace Baptist Church as they seek the will of the Lord in finding a new pastor.

The Westbrook New Testament Baptist Church (Indianapolis, IN) and the Brownsburg New Testament Baptist Church (Brownsburg, IN) have combined and are now the Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Brownsburg IN.

Westbrook Baptist has been pastored by Elder Steve Cornett for the past 11 years.

Pastor Cornett spoke, "The merger has really been a blessing to all of us as we are now better able to carry on the Lord's work."

"We have not changed our doctrine though we have changed our name, we still believe in church authority, the doctrines of grace and the soon coming our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We do request all the churches prayers as we carry on the Lord's work in this area."



The Opolkas have remastered their former cassette tapes "My Eyes Are On Jesus" and "Trust In Him" to CD. The CD is 77 minutes of Christian music written and composed by Debbie and Karen Opolka with the exception of one song. The CD is available for \$12.50.

Also, they have a second CD called "Heaven's Road" with April Brewer on guitar. This CD is available for \$9.00. These can be ordered from our bookstore. Please add \$2.50 for S&H on one or both CDs



WORLD SCENE

By
Capt. G. Russell Evans USCG (Ret.)



The Biggest Threat to America's Sovereignty and Independence---U.S. Supreme Court

The biggest threat today to America's sovereignty and independence "no longer" comes from the United Nations. Incredibly---it comes from the United States Supreme Court! That's right!

Despite the President's choices of Justices John Roberts and Samuel Alito to the Supreme Court, "the courts balance has not fundamentally changed." And frankly, the enclosed petition may be our last chance of preserving the supremacy of the United States Constitution over so-called "international law."

An alarming number of Justices on our nation's highest Court and throughout the federal courts are increasingly citing foreign law and foreign courts as precedence for their decisions. Your petition urges the nine members on the Supreme Court to:

1. "Reject" all foreign amicus briefs seeking to influence American law and justice.

2. "Ignore" foreign constitutions and laws in interpreting American law and the United States Constitution, and

3. "Cease" citing foreign court rulings for precedence when interpreting AMERICAN law.

With your help, we will flood the Supreme Court in a sea of petitions saying "NO" to global interpretation of "our laws" and frankly, this petition campaign comes none too soon.

Believe it or not, foreign governments are increasingly appealing to American courts on issues that are none of their business. Several nations---including Russia and Turkey filed an "amicus curiae" or "friend of the court" briefs at the Supreme Court in an attempt to influence their decision on the constitutionality of the McCain-Feingold campaign reform bill!

These countries claimed they had a vested interest in McCain-Feingold since they have similar laws suppressing free speech and believe the United States should also. Incredibly, the Supreme Court actually took these foreign "amicus" briefs under consideration! In short, members of the Supreme Court are increasingly citing foreign law as rationale for their own interpretation of "our law."

Consider:

* *Justice Anthony Kennedy*: in writing the majority opinion of Lawrence et al. v.

Texas, Justice Kennedy cited foreign law as the courts rationale for its shocking 6-3 ruling; striking down "Texas" statute prohibiting homosexual sex as a deviant and destructive behavior (this ruling has opened the door for homosexual marriages.)

* *Justice Stephen Breyer*: Justice Breyer, former staffer of Ted Kennedy, is a huge fan of international law and believes his fellow Supreme Court Justices are moving in that direction as well. "Many members of the Supreme Court continue to hold that view---a view that now extends beyond public international law to embrace foreign law and legal institutions as well."

* What's more, before she stepped down from the court, *Former Justice Sandra Day O'Connor* had declared, "conclusions reached by other countries and by the International Community should at times constitute persuasive authority on American courts. This is sometimes called "Transjudicialism."

Transjudicialism! It is shocking that a former member of the United States Supreme Court would even imply that something called "transjudicialism" was somehow superior to the U.S. Constitution! While Justice O'Connor is now gone, the pressure on her replacement (Samuel Alito) to carry on her "legacy" is already overwhelming. And make no mistake: This shocking trend of looking to foreign courts and tribunals for precedence is riddled throughout the Federal court system.

Quite frankly, unless they are stopped, there is no telling where this "globalist judicial tyranny" will end.

Property rights. States rights. Tax-cuts. The right to keep and bear arms. The sanctity of marriage. Freedom of speech. Military justice. Even Social Security.

All of these crucial matters, and more, may soon be subject of the will of foreign courts and foreign law! Which is why we need to rise up now and put an end

to this judicial activism gone amuck because if we don't---NO ONE WILL and America, as we know it, will cease to exist!

As you well know, when it comes to educating the public, Congress, and the Executive Branch about foreign policy and America's security and sovereignty, no group can hold a candle to the "Selous Foundation." More recently, we were among the leaders of the fight to halt Bill Clinton's treasonous drive to surrender our sovereignty to the U.N. and our secrets to Red China. Right now the "Selous Foundation" is a leading voice of opinion regarding the ongoing war effort against radical Islamic terrorists - as well as the need for a new defense and intelligence buildup. But now we've got a new fight on our hands - the outcome of which may well determine the survival of "our judicial system"---ultimately our nation.

The Supreme Court and other Federal Jurists have absolutely no business looking to foreign courts and tribunals for the rationale of their opinions. "They need only to look at the United States Constitution."

"A man has made at least a start on discovering the meaning of human life when he plants shade trees under which he knows he will never sit." --- Anonymous

(Excerpts are from Public Policy Research, Selous Foundation, and writing - Morgan Norval, Executive Directory).

The Scheme for Aging U. N. Headquarters

The U.N. wants to remodel the aging UN headquarters in New York City--and make the U.S. taxpayers foot the bill.

Originally, the UN bureaucrats tried to negotiate a \$1.9 BILLION remodeling "LOAN" from U.S. taxpayers, but given the history of the United Nations, few people thought the "LOAN" would ever be repaid to us.

The United Nations headquarters building, like the UN itself, is outdated, falling apart and no longer useful. The building has never had a renovation, is full of asbestos, and is energy inefficient.

The best thing would be to bring in a wrecking ball to raze the building and move the UN headquarters to some place like the Philippines or Senegal. But, the UN bureaucrats are addicted to the fancy restaurants, and extravagant shopping that New York City offers so they thought they would cut a sweetheart deal with the Bush administration to make the dilapidated UN Building the world's most expensive "fixer-upper."

When news of the planned remodeling (loan) got out, tens of thousands of supporters petitioned the Secretary of the Treasury demanding that the Federal Government stand up to the bureaucrats and deny them the "LOAN."

However, our victory was short-lived because when the control of congress fell to the liberals last fall, the UN bureaucrats seized on the shift in power on Capitol Hill to jump-start efforts to get their hands on U.S. tax dollars.

Let me give you a brief history of the UN headquarters rip-off:

* In 2003 the cost of the renovation was estimated at \$953 MILLION. This quickly jumped to \$1.3 BILLION and that was when former UN Secretary General Kofi Annan asked our State Department officials for the \$1.3 BILLION "LOAN."

* The cost of remodeling the UN building is now estimated at \$1.9 BILLION and the cost has increased at the rate of almost \$20 Million per MONTH over the last three years.

Two years ago, famed New York businessman and developer, Donald Trump, offered to complete the UN project for 1/3 of what it will now cost. In the typical arrogant fashion of UN bureaucrats, they never even gave Donald Trump the courtesy of discussing his plan that could have saved more than \$1 Billion dollars.

Donald Trump may be colorful and sometimes controversial, but he is a proven and very successful real estate developer in New York City. Ignoring Donald Trump's offer to save more than \$1 Billion shows that the UN bureaucrats have become very comfortable in spending, and wasting, other peoples' money.

Now the UN leadership has cooked up a new scheme to fund the remodeling whereby member countries will add a pro-rated share of the remodeling construction costs to their annual "assessment." This means that the U.S.'s share will be \$143 Million at today's cost---and that number will surely go higher.

But the worst part of the new plan is that the UN's plan for remodeling calls for the work to be done by "vendors from developing countries and countries with economics in transition."

Can you believe it?

The UN bureaucrats not only want to have their own "Pork Barrel" spending boondoggle, they want to do it on a global

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