

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

The Privilege of the Baptist Church Member

By Nathaniel Hille
of Caldwell, Kansas

"For we are labourers together with God: ye are God's husbandry, ye are God's building" (I Cor. 3:9).

John Gill wrote in his *Body of Practical Divinity*, "exclusion or excommunication [from the local church] is a removal of an offender from the communion of the church and from all privileges of membership in the church" (Brackets NRH).

It is upon this thought that we take our subject and lesson: "WHAT ARE



SOME OF THE PRIVILEGES OF BEING A MEMBER IN THE LORD'S CHURCH?" I shall not take the time to establish that when we speak of the Lord's church we are speaking of those local, independent, landmark, Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist churches. Ample materials have been written upon the subject establishing this as fact. As a true Baptist we reject the notion that we are protestants of any kind, for never did the Lord's church(es) come out of Catholicism. Nor do we agree that all

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The Dangers of Sin - Unanswered Prayer

By Paul Stepp
of Indore, West Virginia

Sin is a dangerous thing. Sin is something that can entangle us, and drag us down. As an introduction to the message today, let's read Hebrews 12:1-2, "Wherefore seeing



we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." Today I want us to think about how sin can affect our relationship with God – especially our prayer life.

For my primary text today, I want us to turn to Joshua 7:1-13, "But the children of Israel committed a

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The Duplicity of Twos

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma



There is an intended play on words in the title to this article. "Duplicity," according to Merriam-Webster, involves a "contradictory doubleness of thought," especially with the idea of deception involved. It seems curiously consistent to note that among Protestants (and some Baptists), a well-accepted method of changing the truth is to give a word a double meaning. This they do to words in the Scriptures. When there is no clear Scripture that gives us reason to understand that a word has more than one meaning, we are on dangerous ground if we do so. But we find Protestants saying, without scriptural basis, that in certain instances, there are two kinds of

a thing. In this way the Scriptures can be wrongly divided and the doctrinal and practical inconsistencies of modern religionists covered over and promoted. And so many people are deceived. I believe this practice is a tool of the devil and that we ought to be aware of these tactics. We are not to be guilty of "**handling the word of God deceitfully**," that is, not corrupting the Word of God and ensnaring people by

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The Lord of Glory

By Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

"Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory" (I Cor. 2:8).

When the Romans and Jews united in carrying out the crucifixion of Jesus Christ they did not fully understand and realize what they were doing. This is why our Lord said on the cross: "Father,

forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). The murderers of Christ did not see the glory of our Lord's character and person. They did not see the glorious redemption He came to give in any sense whatsoever. Their ignorance did not excuse their putting to death One who was innocent and just.

HIS PRE-EXISTENT GLORY

The Son of God had a primeval glory with the Father. In John 17:5 Christ

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The Purpose of God's Grace

By Jesse C. Hille
of North Canton, Ohio

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and



godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:11-13).

It has been said of these verses, that they describe the entirety of the New Testament of the Bible, beginning with the Gospels in verse 11, the Epistles in verse 12, and the book of Revelation in verse 13. Also in these verses, God has made known the full extent and purpose of His grace unto sinners.

There is a divine order here given. First, God's grace brings salvation. Secondly, God's grace teaches the saved sinner how to live acceptable before

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Christ's Volunteers

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

I Chronicles 12:1-7

We read here a portion of the record of those who freely and voluntarily joined up with David to fight with and for him while he was as yet exiled from Israel. David, for a time, had his headquarters at Ziklag because of the persecution which he suffered at the hands of Saul. Saul had been rejected by God as king, and David had been anointed by Samuel



the prophet. It was known to many in Israel that the Lord had anointed David to be king over Israel, to be their captain and their shepherd, to lead them in and out, and to fight for them (I Chron. 11:1,2). While David was exiled because of Saul seeking his life,

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Affliction is a thorn, but still it is from God, and by it He pierces through the leaves of pride. Many trees grow better in the shade than in the sunshine.

F. W. Krummacher

"This is my comfort in my affliction: for thy word hath quickened me" (Ps. 119:50).

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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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Privilege of the

(Continued from page 1) ◊

Baptist churches belong to the Lord. Yet we believe that the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ is a Baptist church. We reject the notion of the universal, invisible church that all the saved are in. Many have mistaken the family of God and the kingdom of God, for the church of God. Again, an abundant supply of materials is written upon this topic and we will not address this subject further in this manner.

By "privilege" we mean "showing special favor to." Some examples of memberships with privileges would be AAA, Sam's Club, Farm Bureau. There are others as well, but by being a member in a group like these, one has "privileges" that those who are not members do not have!

A "privilege" is the opposite of a "right," for a "right" is that which a person has a just claim to. No one has a right to be a Baptist church member. According to God's Word, a person has no more a right to be a member of the Lord's church than they have a right to be saved. In Acts 2:47, Luke writes, "Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Here we are told that the Lord adds to the church. And if God must add one, then it is not a right, but a privilege! None have a right to the body of Christ. And this is where many Baptist church members have gone wrong. We have forgotten the great privilege of being a member of His church. I do not think our Ana-Baptist forefathers forgot this great privilege; for if not for them, we would not know the privilege at all. There are millions saved who never will be members of His church. There are millions who play and pretend at church, but it is not the Lord's. Remember, we are dealing with those churches which are in agreement with "thus saith the Lord." Not those who were started by man.

ERRONEOUS THOUGHTS OF THOSE WHO ARE WRONG

I have heard those who were excluded, excommunicated by the local church say, "Well, so what. So I don't get to vote in the church business, or observe the Lord's Supper. I am still going to Heaven." If they are genuinely saved, then yes, they are still going to Heaven. But they are missing out on great privileges in the Lord's church. Too many church members only look at their responsibility in the church, but the greatest responsibility in the church is also the greatest privilege in the church. David wrote of the House of the Lord in his day that "For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a door keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents

of wickedness" (Psa. 84:10). Thomas Brooks says, "One day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere. He doth not say, One year in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere, but One day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere; nor doth he say, One quarter of a year in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere, but One day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere; nor doth he say, One month is better than a thousand elsewhere, but One day in thy courts is better than a thousand elsewhere, to shew that the very least of God is exceeding precious to a gracious soul that hath God for his portion." (*Treasury of David*, Spurgeon). David did not look upon the 'office' of a door-keeper as burdensome—but rather as a privilege.

YE ARE GOD'S HUSBANDRY I COR. 3:9

Here the church of God at Corinth and at every locality is described as being "God's husbandry" or "God's tillage, tilled land" (Vine). My earthly father said, "The church is God's cultivated field." It is important to note that the apostle Paul changes and says, "For we (Apollos, Paul, Cephas) are labourers together with God: Ye (the Corinthian church) are/is God's husbandry, Ye (the Corinthian church) are God's building." Paul was not setting up an hierarchy. He was emphasizing that the Church at Corinth was not Paul's or Apollos' or Cephas' but rather that the Corinthian Church belonged unto the Lord. "The minister does not own the field, he is but the steward while the owner and husbandman is departed for a season" (Matthew Henry).

The church of Christ is God's property; His pearl of Great Price (Matt. 13:45, 46), which He has purchased with His own blood (Acts 20:28). John Gill describes the church of Jesus Christ as "the land of God's manuring." It is where God fertilizes, sows, weeds, and fruit is produced.

God is not the owner of every 'church' or 'field' no more than a farmer is the owner of every piece of ground. The Lord has fields or churches scattered throughout the world. Paul was not a part of "God's cultivated field at Corinth," the apostle was a part of the "cultivated field at Antioch." We believe this is why he addressed the church at Corinth in this fashion: "Ye are God's husbandry."

The church is His vineyard, which the Lord waters, His garden of which He plants, His orchard from which He purges His fruit trees. We read that God used this illustration toward Israel in the Old Testament: "Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the

midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes?" (Isa. 5:1-4).

In the New Testament we see that the Lord Jesus Christ uses the illustration of the vine and the branch concerning the Lord's church. Many believe that this refers to an individual believer and the Lord, but it does not. The context is Christ speaking unto His church. Beginning with John 13:1 and ending with John 18:1, the Lord is in "church capacity" with His disciples, which means He and the disciples had assembled together for worship of God. A careful reading of John 13 and Matthew 26:20-30 shows that these were at the same time.

It is in John 15:1-8 that Jesus speaks unto His church and says: "I AM the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. I am the vine, ye are the branches: He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples."

Jesus tells His church, that He is the vine (trunk) and they are the branches. We may apply what was said unto Israel in Isaiah 5:1-4 unto the New Testament Church¹. As Isaiah wrote, so too may we say of the Church of Jesus Christ that it is "the well beloved vineyard planted in a fruitful hill." The church is a city set upon a hill (Matt. 5:14). The Lord Jesus hath "fenced the church, gathered out the stones thereof, planted us with the choicest vine, built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he is now looking that it should bring forth grapes (fruit)." It may also be said of the Lord's kind of New Testament Church "what could have been done more to Christ's vineyard?" And so we see that this is what the Lord Jesus Christ referred unto His church: He is the vine and we are the branches!

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Privilege of the

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WHY IS THIS A PRIVILEGE?

Many who have read this far are asking, "Where is your privilege?" and I respond, "How do you not see the great privilege?" Let us consider what it means to be "God's husbandry" or "God's cultivated field."

THE WORK: In God describing the church as a field, we must first understand that the soil is found by God untilled! Every lost sinner is 'untilled.' So the fallow ground must be broken up (Hos. 10:12, 13). The Holy Spirit of God does this when He saves a person. And the Bible tells us that after one is saved they should join or be added unto the Lord's New Testament Church in their locality (See Acts 2:47). And that individual through baptism is set in the church. Now once there they are cultivated by the Lord.

PREPARATORY WORK: I Cor. 3:9—in cultivating a field there is much involved. Trenching, plowing, gathering out stones, fencing! All this must be done. When one plows a field what are they doing? They are turning over the soil. But there is something else which is involved: that is the uprooting of weeds. Weeds are the enemy of the desired crop. Weeds choke out the desired fruit; use up the nutrients and water that the fruit bearing crops need. When one plows the field, the weeds are uprooted and turned over and the roots thereof are exposed unto the sunlight and the weeds die. This is painful to the weeds. When something dies it under goes pain. And to the child of God we have many weeds in our life! These weeds are choking out the spiritual life of the believer to the point that little, if any, fruit is produced (Matt. 13:22). And these must be uprooted and mortified or put to death. Are these not the words of the apostle Paul unto the Church at Colosse? **"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry: For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience..."** (Col. 3:5-6). And so it is within the church of Jesus Christ. When sin is preached against and the Word of God touches us personally it is painful, for that sin must die. We have many weeds in need of being plowed up!

Not only are the weeds or sin destroyed when the field is plowed, but the earth is disturbed. This, too, is a privilege, for all too often we become spiritually settled, that is to say, we are in a rut. Not too many church members like things stirred up, but sometimes we need to be stirred up by the Lord (Acts 17:16). We need to be disturbed by the Holy Spirit. The Church at Laodicea was a church that

had become complacent. They believed they were in need of nothing. Spiritually, Jesus Christ says they were lukewarm. They were in need of having their soil disturbed (Rev 3:14-22).

SOWING: Once the ground has been plowed and trenched the ground is ready to receive the seed. The preaching and teaching is the sowing. There is a great preparatory work that every church member should do before coming to the House of the Lord and hearing the Word of God declared. Many members of Baptist churches are fleeing the Lord's church because "I'm not getting anything out of the sermon." Perhaps the reason is because that member did not put anything into it! A student who does not study at home in preparation for a test is not likely to pass that test. Whose fault is that? And yet many will blame the church, the minister, and some even dare to blame God that they did not get anything out of the sermon. Yet the whole week outside of the church meeting, they not once read the Bible, let alone read it with any "study time"; did not pray for the Scriptures to be revealed to them, nor for the pastor to declare God's Word clearly, nor that they might receive what they needed to. We have a daily preparatory work for the Lord's house that must be done before we can receive the spiritual seed. There is nothing wrong with the seed, for the seed is the Word of God. It is the ground that does not produce the fruit.

WATERING: After the sowing comes the watering! Many times the seed dies for lack of watering after being planted. So, too, are many children of God who do not frequent the house of God. I have observed church members whose attendance was infrequent finally quit coming altogether. They never did grow spiritually because they lacked watering on what had been sown. There is a watering that takes place in the Lord's church that cannot take place anywhere else. I am aware that there is a need to prepare the soil before the Lord's Day, as we mentioned already. So, too, after the seed has been sown on the Lord's Day ought there to be a watering of it throughout the week. But this watering

outside the Lord's house cannot take the place of the watering received within. So many think they can worship God in their homes just as good as they can in His Church, but the Scriptures declare otherwise (Eph. 3:21). So, too, is there a privileged watering in the House of God!

MAINTAINING: We next find that there is a need of weeding God's cultivated field. No one enjoys this work, but it is of necessity. I have observed gardens that once were very promising, perhaps even bringing forth fruit, soon choked out for a lack of the removal of the weeds. Weeding may be compared to that preaching which causes the child of God to remove that which is contrary to God's Word from his/her life. The children of Israel in days of old were against this kind of preaching. **"That this is a rebellious people, lying children, children that will not hear the law of the LORD: Which say to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophecy not unto us right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits: Get you out of the way, turn aside out of the path, cause the Holy One of Israel to cease before us."** (Isa. 30:9-11). A great majority of children of God cannot handle the strong meat of God's Word. They are not interested in any weeds being rooted up in their life.

Another work that takes place in God's husbandry is pruning or purging. This is closely related to that of weeding. In John 15:1-2, **"I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit."** Beloved, count it a privilege if you be purged by God, for you have brought forth fruit and He desireth more fruit from you! As I understand it, when a fruit bearing tree is purged, pruned, "dead-headed" it is injurious to the tree. Yet, it is for the tree's own good. For when a tree is well taken care of it is pruned, fruit is picked and the next season, it brings forth more fruit and luxurious fruit. This shall continue until God does bring forth **"much fruit"** (John 15:5). But those branches which

no fruit grows on are cut down and cast aside to wither and die.

Beloved, it is a privilege to have God's Word preached to us; to have the Holy Spirit come and break up the fallow ground, for the Holy Spirit to sow, to water, to weed, prune and then to harvest all to the glory of God. And those who are not in good standing with the Lord's church are not receiving this privilege. Those who are not members of His New Testament Missionary Baptist churches are not partaking in this privilege. You may sit in your homes, you may go to your churches, but you do not have the same privilege as I do in the house which is called by the name of our God!

This is the work of the ministry. We see that God has set pastors and minister, and Bible teachers in the church as it hath pleased Him (Eph. 4:11-16). And the work of the ministry is to **"...to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant"** (Jer. 1:10). Paul said, **"We are labourers together with God."** Paul was the laborer in God's hand in the husbandry of God!

WHY IS THIS A PRIVILEGE?

Some will say, "How is this a privilege?" I respond, **"HOW IS IT NOT THE GRANDEST PRIVILEGE!"** It is a privilege to bring forth fruit to God (John 15:1-5; Matt. 7:15-20). To be used of God in His vineyard is a privilege. To bring forth fruit to cultivate and have fruit harvested is a privilege that a saint will never know outside of the church of Christ Jesus. And when one is excommunicated Scripturally, or excluded Scripturally, when disciplinary action has taken place upon a member, God's favor is no longer upon them in this fashion! For they have been cut off!

Only the church(es) of the Living God are His cultivated field. Life comes forth from this cultivated field. Compare with the harlot and her daughters where God's Word declares **"Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her"** (Rev.18:8). **"And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth"** (Rev. 18:24). Beloved, in the Lord's church we find life! In the harlot we read of "plagues, death, the blood of prophets and saints." These are contrasting pictures of the Lord's kind of church and the world's religious systems. Surely you can see the privilege of the Lord's church over the harlot and her daughters!

CONCLUSION

Jesus Christ only cultivates His fruit in His church. People ask, "What about these folks over here?" Seemingly they are good people, they appear to have some fruit of some kind, but beloved... are they God's cultivated field? What a privilege we have! No other can

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Tune in to the
Berea Baptist Broadcast

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Privilege of the

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call them self this! God gave Israel a warning, saying: **“Now will I sing to my wellbeloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My wellbeloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill: And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes. And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem, and men of Judah, judge, I pray you, betwixt me and my vineyard. What could have been done more to my vineyard, that I have not done in it? Wherefore, when I looked that it should bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? And now go to; I will tell you what I will do to my vineyard: I will take away the hedge thereof, and it shall be eaten up; and break down the wall thereof, and it shall be trodden down: And I will lay it waste: it shall not be pruned, nor digged; but there shall come up briars and thorns: I will also command the clouds that they rain no rain upon it. For the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his pleasant plant: and he looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry”** (Isa.5:1-7).

God is not always going to be longsuffering to His church. The Lord has removed the lamp stand from many of His churches who **“brought forth wild grapes”** and did not heed the words of His ministers that were sent unto them. Let us take heed to that warning as well and bring forth fruit to the praise and honor and glory of His name! Ah, What a Privilege we have!

NOTES:

1. This author does NOT believe in the false doctrine known as “Replacement Theology”. Replacement Theology teaches that the N.T. church of Jesus Christ has replaced Israel. The Author of this article rejects and in no way believes that the Church of Jesus Christ has ever replaced the nation of Israel; furthermore that the teaching of Replacement Theology is a heretical doctrine and apostasy of the grandest kind. I am simply making a comparison between these two as being that special people of God whom God deals with and works through.



Dangers of Sin -

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trespass in the accursed thing: for Achan, the son of Carmi, the son of Zabdi, the son of Zerah, of the tribe of Judah, took of the accursed thing: and the anger of the LORD was kindled

against the children of Israel. And Joshua sent men from Jericho to Ai, which is beside Bethaven, on the east side of Bethel, and spake unto them, saying, Go up and view the country. And the men went up and viewed Ai. ³ And they returned to Joshua, and said unto him, Let not all the people go up; but let about two or three thousand men go up and smite Ai; and make not all the people to labour thither; for they are but few. So there went up thither of the people about three thousand men: and they fled before the men of Ai. And the men of Ai smote of them about thirty and six men: for they chased them from before the gate even unto Shebarim, and smote them in the going down: wherefore the hearts of the people melted, and became as water. And Joshua rent his clothes, and fell to the earth upon his face before the ark of the LORD until the eventide, he and the elders of Israel, and put dust upon their heads. And Joshua said, Alas, O Lord GOD, wherefore hast thou at all brought this people over Jordan, to deliver us into the hand of the Amorites, to destroy us? would to God we had been content, and dwelt on the other side Jordan! O Lord, what shall I say, when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies! For the Canaanites and all the inhabitants of the land shall hear of it, and shall environ us round, and cut off our name from the earth: and what wilt thou do unto thy great name? And the LORD said unto Joshua, Get thee up; wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face? Israel hath sinned, and they have also transgressed my covenant which I commanded them: for they have even taken of the accursed thing, and have also stolen, and dissembled also, and they have put it even among their own stuff. Therefore the children of Israel could not stand before their enemies, but turned their backs before their enemies, because they were accursed: neither will I be with you any more, except ye destroy the accursed from among you. Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you” (Josh. 7:1-13).

PRAYER IS A HOLY THING

Prayer is a time where we can come together with our God in Holy Communion. Sin, on the other hand, is definitely not Holy. Therefore, sin and prayer cannot be mixed. We read in Proverbs 15:29, **“The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.”**

The unsaved (unholy) have no access unto God. Since prayer is a holy thing – and communion with God is holy, it

must be true that the unsaved do not have access unto God through prayer. We read in John 9:31, **“Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth.”**

Further, we read in Psalm 1:1-6, **“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.”**

I think that these verses prove that the Lord does not have any regard for the person or the desires of those that are not His children. Now, we must admit that those that are elect, but not yet saved, certainly occupy a special place in the love and providence of God. But, the wicked and the ungodly do not, as a people, have any standing with God, or any claim upon His mercy. And, certainly, those sinners who come to the Lord Jesus Christ, will be heard – but only once the Holy Spirit has quickened them and turned them to Christ.

The saved (holy) must be sanctified. We read in a portion of our text, **“Up, sanctify the people, and say, Sanctify yourselves against to-morrow: for thus saith the LORD God of Israel, There is an accursed thing in the midst of thee, O Israel: thou canst not stand before thine enemies, until ye take away the accursed thing from among you”** (Josh. 7:13).

This is what James had to say to the readers of his epistle: **“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up”** (James 4:7-10).

GOD'S FAVOR REQUIRES OBEDIENCE

The Lord our God requires our obedience unto Him in all things. He is a Holy God that requires holiness from His people. He has every right to expect obedience from us. We are not left here without word or example. He has given us His Word and His Commandments and the example of His Son. Therefore, in our service unto God, we must be

obedient unto Him.

Let me refer you to the 4th chapter of Deuteronomy. In this chapter, Moses spends much of his time reminding the children of Israel of their need to be obedient and faithful unto God. They must not make graven images; they must not worship false gods; they must remain faithful and obedient unto God. And, they must remind and teach their children these things as well. But, during the course of this chapter, Moses prophesies that there would be a time (or times) when the children of Israel would fail in their duties unto God. And, upon such an occasion, Moses tells the children of Israel that they must return unto God. **“But if from thence thou shalt seek the LORD thy God, thou shalt find him, if thou seek him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. When thou art in tribulation, and all these things are come upon thee, even in the latter days, if thou turn to the LORD thy God, and shalt be obedient unto his voice; (For the LORD thy God is a merciful God;) he will not forsake thee, neither destroy thee, nor forget the covenant of thy fathers which he sware unto them”** (Deut. 4:29-31).

Have you ever come to a point in your life that you wondered if God would even hear you or your prayers? Well, could it be your disobedience that might be preventing the favor of God? Or, could it be that you have allowed some false god – such as pleasure, family, or career, to come between you and your God? Remember what Moses told the children of Israel: If you will seek the Lord, you will find Him. But, you must seek Him with all thy heart and with all thy soul. If you only give Him a portion of your soul or heart, how do you expect the Lord to hear you, and bless you? Is He your God, or not? If He is your God, and if He is all powerful and merciful like you believe, then doesn't He deserve all that you have – and not just a part.

GOD'S FAVOR REQUIRES FAITHFULNESS

The Scriptures make it plain, that if we allow sin to come between us and our duties unto God; or, if we allow sin to point our affections elsewhere than God; then, surely, we cannot expect God to answer our prayers. We must be faithful unto our God. No one, and no thing, must come between us and our God.

We read in James 1:5-7, **“If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him. But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering. For he that wavereth is like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed. For let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord.”**

Let me refer you to a passage in James' epistle where he instructs his readers

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Dangers of Sin -

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concerning the need for faithful prayer unto God. **“Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms. 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: And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up; and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much. Elias was a man subject to like passions as we are, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit”** (James 5:13-18).

CONCLUSION

In closing, let's read James 4:1-4, **“From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.”**



Duplicity of Twos

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so doing (II Cor. 4:2). But let us look at some ways modern “evangelicals” corrupt the teaching of the Bible by “the duplicity of twos.” (Throughout this article I have put the word “evangelicals” in quotation marks. This I have done because the word means “being in agreement with the Christian gospel” and I am not at all sure that all who travel under the name “evangelical” do indeed preach the one true gospel of salvation by grace alone through the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ.)

Let us look first at one segment of the “evangelicals” – the Pentecostals and Charismatics. In the beginning decades of the Pentecostal movement, it was claimed that their so-called “tongues” were actual languages just like in the Book of Acts – just like on the Day of Pentecost. Hence the name “Pentecostal” because they claimed to be doing what the apostles did on that first Day of Pentecost after the Lord's ascension. However, as time passed, the “tongues” these people uttered

were examined by language scholars and found to be nothing more than basically infantile sounds or gibberish. Again to quote Webster, “gibberish” is defined as “unintelligible or meaningless language.” Now even a casual reader of the Book of Acts will notice that when the apostles miraculously spoke in “tongues” (lit. “languages”), persons who from birth spoke these languages could understand them. In other words, the apostles spoke real languages by the power of God acting on and through them. This cannot be contradicted by any honest reader. So the Pentecostals had a problem! The whole religious world knew they were NOT speaking real languages. What should they do? Well, some made claims that they really were speaking languages, but that these languages were “extinct” so to speak – that is that nobody now alive spoke these ancient languages. This was supposed to be the reason that nobody alive at that time could understand them. That was a thin soup of an answer and satisfied nobody.

However, with the advent of the Charismatic Movement, tongues-talkers have come up with a new and more deceptive answer to their critics. They no longer teach that they are speaking in the same kind of “tongues” as the apostles did. Rather, they say, they are speaking in “heavenly languages” or “angelic languages” or, perhaps more popularly today, “prayer languages.” These, they say, are a different kind of tongues than were produced by the power of God through the apostles. (We would heartily agree with them there!) They have given the word “tongues” a second meaning. But the plain and sensible fact of the matter is this: Any language, whether spoken by men, angels, or in prayer to God, must be a language. By that I mean that a combination of sounds is not necessarily a language. To be a language, sounds must first of all be words – that is they must be sounds which properly combined are recognizable by a community as a means of communication. The combination of sounds must be words! Then, secondly, these properly combined sounds or words, must be systematically arranged so as to provide the hearer with a subject (nouns or pronouns), action or state of being words (verbs) and modifying words (such as adjectives, adverbs, articles, etc., etc. The plain fact of the matter is that these modern “prayer languages” have no system (syntax), convey no meanings and are useless noise understood by no one. But our point is that modern Pentecostals and Charismatics have attempted to deceive the public by claiming that the “tongues” spoken on Pentecost and the “tongues” spoken, for instance, in the Corinthian Church are different: the former being real languages and the latter being “prayer languages” and the like. (I suppose then, it would be in good order for them to change their name from

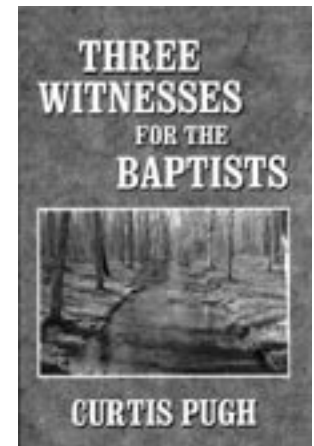
“Pentecostals” to “Corinth-ostals.”) By their double talk – by attempting to give the word “tongues” as used in the New Testament two meanings in an attempt to escape being seen as out of harmony with the Bible, they have made use of “the duplicity of twos.” Shame on them!

A second instance of Protestants (and, sadly, some called Baptists) using “the duplicity of twos” is seen in the two kinds of “churches” most “evangelicals” profess. They cannot escape the fact that the New Testament speaks of (real, local) Churches so they believe in “local” churches. And they need these real assemblies because these pay the bills, build the buildings, and support the pastors. Their “mystical body” or “universal church” cannot do anything, so they must have real congregations. I have purposely used the words “churches” and “assemblies” and “congregations” in my last few sentences because the latter two words are better definitions of the first. Greek scholars define “ecclesia” which is commonly translated as “church” as meaning an assembly or congregation. The word is used in the Bible of both of lawful gatherings of people and unlawful ones. The word ecclesia had no religious connotation prior to Christ saying that He would build His congregation/assembly.

Sound Baptists have no problem at all with saying that the word “ecclesia” means a congregation or assembly of people and that Christ's assembly is a real, local Church organized according to the New Testament. Understanding that there are differences between “the kingdom of God” (or “of Heaven”), “the family of God” and “the church of God,” sound Baptists teach that salvation is in Christ and that acceptable worship and service is in a New Testament Baptist Church which, as old Baptists were wont to say, does kingdom work. However, among Protestants there is found the basic teaching that there are two kinds of “churches.” In teaching that there are two kinds of “churches,” advocates of this idea make use of “the duplicity of twos” – they manufacture a second meaning of the word “church” because it is a theological necessity for their preconceived scheme of things, not because it is taught in the Scriptures. Some of their seminary trained men have admitted the fact that nowhere in the Bible is there even a single verse that says there are two kinds of “churches” – one real and local and the other mystical, universal and invisible. Rejecting the meaning of the Greek word “ecclesia” and completely disregarding all the metaphors used to teach us the real, local nature of the Lord's church, most modern “evangelicals” insist that there exists an age-long, universal, invisible, mystical “body” which is a “church.” The reason behind this is a modern version of an old Roman Catholic idea. That idea is that salvation is in the church.

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The Catholics openly teach this. Most Protestants and many Baptists claim to believe that salvation is in Christ alone, but at the same time teach that all that are born again are born into their universal “church.” So, while they may not say that “salvation is in the church,” they do say that “all the saved make up the true or universal “church.”

Now the Bible makes it clear and common understanding of terms agrees: a person is born into a family. One is received into a church based upon meeting the requirements of baptism so that baptism can be said to be the door of the church. And as the Lord Himself clearly taught, a person must “enter” the kingdom. And whatever your definition of the present kingdom of God is, it must harmonize with all the Scriptures pertaining to it, including the one that says that an individual can be hindered or kept from entering the kingdom by another individual. Note this verse: **“But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in”** (Matt. 23:13). Neither you nor I nor any other human being can keep the Spirit of God from regenerating whomever He pleases! See John 3:8. So it seems clear to me that entering the kingdom in its present day

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phase does not come about by the new birth. It comes about by an action or actions on the part of the one **“entering”** and such persons can be kept by other people from completing the action of entering. But my point is this: most contemporary persons who claim to be Christians believe that when you are born again, you automatically become a member of the “true” or “universal church.” Why this confusion? This confusion comes about because they put salvation in a “church” – their “universal church.” They are not willing to say that salvation is by being a member of a real, local church (and neither are we Baptists), but they are willing to say that if you are saved, you must be a member of this “other kind” of “church.” They, like Martin Luther, have used “the duplicity of twos” and made for themselves a second kind of “church” in which they can be members without being members of a real Church, from which they cannot be excluded, and which requires nothing in the way of attendance, giving, faithfulness, etc.

And, in order to get into their new kind of “church,” modern day “evangelicals” have used “the duplicity of twos” again. They have said that there are two kinds of baptism in spite of the fact that the Bible clearly says, **“One Lord, one faith, one baptism”** (Eph. 4:5). What the Bible says seems unimportant to them. They need a way to get people into their “mystical, universal church.” They cannot deny the Scripturalness of (real) water baptism: too much is said about it! They understand that real baptism gets a person into a real church. So they, almost universally, believe in being “baptized by the Spirit.” It is this new kind of baptism which puts one into their “universal church.” They have only one verse in the Bible which seems to hint at such a doctrine and that is I Corinthians 12:13 which says in part: **“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...”** Rejecting a close examination of the Greek language here, they claim that this verse teaches that the Holy Spirit immediately baptizes the newly born-again-one into their mystical “body” or “church.” That is the only explanation I have ever heard or read them give as to how one gets into their mystical, universal, invisible “church.” So they have by their “double talk” (using “the duplicity of twos”) confused the issue and confused many people and now teach openly the idea of more than one meaning to the word baptism!

Carefully, please, consider this. Beginning with John the Baptist, Scriptural, Baptist, Christian baptism was administered. John’s baptism was the only baptism that Christ, His apostles, and New Testament-era believers had.

John was the only man of whom it could be truthfully said that God sent him to institute baptism (John 1:33). Now John’s baptism (Christian baptism) can be demonstrated to be by immersion and emersion. By that we mean that we, like John, put the candidate completely under the baptismal waters – but we do not leave him there – we also bring him up out of the water. Thus the best English word for the Greek word transliterated as “baptize” is to “dip.” Again relying on Webster, we read that in our case the best definition the word “dip” means “to plunge into a liquid and quickly emerge.” That fits! So, our friends who insist that they were “baptized” (dipped) into this mystical “body-church” are saying that they were actually plunged into it and quickly brought out of it. That being the case, if there was such a universal “church” and if they were “baptized” or “dipped” into it, they are no longer in it because baptism includes taking out after dipping. My point is that the word baptize does NOT mean to place into something: it means to place into and then quickly bring out. So “baptism” does not accurately picture being placed into their imaginary “church.” Do they really want us to believe that they were placed into what they term as Christ’s mystical body or “church” and then quickly brought out of it? I trow not! That would defeat their doctrine, would it not? By their own poor choice of words they were in their “true” church for a brief moment but now they are not in it any longer. And so the very idea of being “baptized” into a body or a church as they imagine, is seen to be foolishness, to say the least! But they have used “the duplicity of twos” and by giving a second definition to the word baptize they have manufactured a method of getting folk into their imagined universal, invisible nothingness that they call their true church! And so we fear that untaught people are deceived by this evil method.

A fourth and last instance in this series of illustrations of modern “evangelicals” use of “the duplicity of twos” is in the matter of the popular teaching that there exists two kinds of Christians. Without going into the strict, Biblical use of the word “Christian,” which refers to a born again, baptized disciple of Christ who was a member in good standing of a New Testament Church, let us consider what they say. The popular idea is that there exist in the world today two kinds of “Christians.” The one kind is continually repentant, prayerful, striving against sin, possessed by a genuine fear of the Lord, going about by the Spirit in his or her daily life, and desiring in every way to please God by seeking first the advancement of the kingdom of God and His righteousness – like the saints of God are instructed to do in the New Testament. This is the meaning of the word “Christian” according to the Bible.

But there is another meaning set forth by religionists of our day. This is the idea of the existence of “carnal Christians.” There is another kind of “Christian,” they assure us. This other species of the truly born-again child of God cares nothing about prayer, is not grieving over his sins, has never experienced repentance, pays no attention to the teaching of the Bible, has no interest in hearing the Word of God preached, lacks any real fear of the Lord, and is completely caught up in living to please himself or herself. The natural (unregenerate) man is a pleasure-seeking animal given over to tickling his five senses and this “carnal Christian” is no different except for the fact that he or she one time “prayed the sinner’s prayer” or “walked the aisle” or whatever and is, because of his religious actions, now saved and safe and going to Heaven – according to many modern-day “evangelicals.” And so by manufacturing another kind of “Christian” they have used “the duplicity of twos” and destroyed for the popular religious world the Biblical idea of what a true child of God is and does. (We do not mean in this brief consideration to deny that even God’s true children may at times be carnal and walk as men, but we do deny that this is the tenor of their lives!)

Reader, I have tried to point out in this brief article the danger posed by these our contemporaries who make use of “the duplicity of twos.” By their “double talk” they have done great harm to the truth of which the Lord’s Churches (real Churches) are the **“pillar and ground”** (I Tim. 3:15). Because of the evil works done to these Biblical words, confusion as to meanings exist in the minds of people when they hear the words “tongues,” “church,” “baptism,” and “Christian.” Religious double talk has accomplished this confusion and deception. Promoting un-Biblical doctrines by presumptuously giving a word more than one meaning is pure deception and nothing short of duplicity!

Rest assured: there is one kind of “tongues,” one kind of “church,” one kind of “baptism,” and one kind of “Christian.” There is not a single verse of Scripture that says that there are two meanings to the words “tongues,” “church,” “baptism,” or “Christian.” The Biblical kinds are “real tongues” (real human languages), “real churches” (local congregations organized according to the New Testament), “real baptisms” (in water of a scriptural candidate, for a scriptural reason, in a scriptural mode, and by a scriptural administrator), and “real Christians” who **“who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit”** (Rom. 8:4). It can be said of true children of God that they **“Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling”** (Ps. 2:11). Reader, do not be deceived by those who would tell you that these words have two or more different meanings. They may have been and may

today be correctly used metaphorically, but it is a perversion of Scripture to give them meanings that differ from that assigned to them by their usage in the Bible. Be aware and beware!



Christ’s Volunteers

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many men resorted to him and followed him. As he fought against the enemies of Israel, they followed David as king, though as yet he was not crowned as king or sitting upon the throne as king.

We may find that our true David is even now shut out from this world’s religious system. They do not own Him as King. Those who would follow the Lord Jesus Christ must separate themselves from others and go to Him, following Him in the wilderness and from battle to battle (Isa. 55:1-5). We ought to go and join ourselves to Him whom God has anointed. We ought to enlist under the banner of the gospel and the ensign of the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Like those men whose names are recorded in God’s Word, we ought to come to our Lord where so ever He may be and render ourselves as volunteers to His name and His cause. We ought not to be ashamed of Him (Mark 8:38).

We find some spiritual teachings here illustrated by these volunteers who came to David. First of all, we find that they were **“helpers of the war.”** You find these men coming armed with bows and slings to help David in fighting the enemies of Israel. They did not come to David so that they might profit from his popularity, or make a gain from his successes and victories. These came to fight alongside and under the banner of David. In churches today, there are too many who want to sit and too few who want to fight. There are too few who desire to engage in the battle for the Lord. They do not want to risk themselves in witnessing for and working for the Lord (Eph. 6:10-18; Rom. 16:3, 4; Acts 15:23-26). There is warfare, and we ought to be volunteering daily to follow and fight for our Lord Jesus Christ. There is a conflict daily with sin. There is a conflict daily with false doctrine. There is a conflict daily with worldliness and worldly-mindedness. There is a conflict daily with the devil. Who will be helpers of the war, praying daily without ceasing? Who will be helpers of the war, exhorting one another in the Lord? Who will be helpers of the war, witnessing to the lost of the saving grace of Jesus Christ? Who will be helpers of the war, restoring those who have been overtaken in a fault and made to stumble spiritually? We must have some volunteers who will fight, work, and labor for their Commander and Captain, Jesus Christ.

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Christ's Volunteers

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We find, secondly, that these men who came to David at Ziklag **"could use both the right hand and the left in hurling stones and shooting arrows out of a bow."** They were skilled warriors. They could fight with either hand, being ambidextrous with the sling and the bow. In one respect, they were imitators of their lord and king. David was skillful with the sling, and commanded that his armies be taught the use of the bow (I Sam. 17:49; II Sam. 1:17, 18). The best way in which you and I may fight the spiritual warfare of children of God is to follow the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of the men who followed David were mighty men, men of valor, who had slain giants (John 14:12-15). We serve Christ best when we follow His example and obey His commandments.

These men were skilled warriors. Why is it that so many Baptists today are not skilled in the Word of God? These warriors who came to David could fight with the right hand and the left. They had no disadvantage in using their weapons with either hand (Heb. 5:12-14; II Tim. 2:15). We need people who can fight with both hands, who can hold fast the form of sound words while proclaiming the gospel, who can be an example of Christian conduct and generosity while living a consecrated and holy life of godliness.

We note, thirdly, that these men who are mentioned here were **"even of Saul's brethren of Benjamin."** Saul was still king when David was in Ziklag, and yet these men who were of the same tribe and quite possibly of kindred relations with Saul had become volunteers in David's army. These forsook fleshly and worldly relations in order to follow the king whom God had anointed. There are some today who will never do anything that will cross family, kinsfolk, or friends (Luke 14:25-27).

The names of these men were enrolled in the king's chronicles. David did not forget these men who had enlisted with him when he was despised and rejected. Neither does Christ forget those who freely and fully follow Him, though He is rejected of men and denied by the world. The names of those who join the army of the Lord are written in His book, and they shall one day be called forth to receive the glory their Lord shall delight to bestow upon them (Phil. 4:3 Heb. 6:10-12; Rom. 8:16, 17; II Tim. 2:3, 11, 12). These men followed David when he was persecuted, when he was living outside of his homeland, and was a stranger among his own brethren. Those who serve Christ when He is despised will be crowned when He is made to sit upon His throne.

These men were not pressed into

service. They volunteered. Will you follow Christ fully and freely? Will you risk self and all for Him? You do not have to be a captain. Some of these men were leaders, chiefs, and officers in the army: **"the chief was Ahiezer . . . and Ismaiah the Gibeonite, a mighty man among thirty, and over the thirty;"** but not all. They came to fight for David because of the love they had to him and the regard they had for him as the Lord's anointed. They were led by God's Spirit to join and fight with David. May God's Spirit fill us and guide us to go to Christ wherever He may be, and fight the good fight of faith in His name.



The Lord of Glory

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prayed: **"And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was."** In these words Christ speaks of the glory of the Godhead, the eternal, divine glory that extends back into all eternity before the world, or any created glory existed. Here Christ claims Divine glory co-equal with the Father, but in a personality distinct from the Father. The **"only begotten Son"** was **"in the bosom of the Father"** (John 1:18) and loved by the Father **"before the foundation of the world"** (John 17:24).

Of our Savior the writer of Hebrews declared: **"Who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high"** (Heb. 1:3). The word translated **"glory"** carries with it the idea of light. This Greek word is used in the Septuagint Old Testament for the Hebrew word which denotes the splendor surrounding God manifested in the tabernacle (Ex. 24:15; 40:34). Moses was not allowed to see the full blaze of this glory (Ex. 33:18).

The words, **"Who being the brightness of his glory"** can mean no less than that Christ, the Lord of glory, is of the same glorious nature and perfection as the God of glory (Acts 7:2). The Father and Son are of the same nature and essence. They are co-eternal (John 1:1) and inseparable (Prov. 8:30). The Father and the Son are distinct from each other (John 5:17), but neither is less glorious than the other. The incomprehensible glory of the Father (Eph. 1:17) most brightly shines forth in the Son.

Speaking of the pre-incarnate Son of God, Paul tells us: **"Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God"** (Phil. 2:6). The word **"being"** is emphatic. It means "being to begin with." The RV has "being originally." It means that the Son possessed originally the essential attributes of Deity. To be in

the form of God is to be equal with God (John 5:17-18; 10:30). If Christ was in the same form, nature, and essence of God, He must have been equal with God. This equality with God was not obtained by robbery or usurpation as Satan and man attempted to do. The Son in His pre-incarnate state possessed the same attributes as did the Father, and He was very God of very God.

Because the Greek text says of Christ in Philippians 2:7 that he **"emptied himself,"** some have assumed that Christ in the incarnation emptied Himself of His deity and divine attributes, but this is a great error. The Son did not empty Himself of His divine glory when the world began, nor at any other time. Christ said in John 16:15: **"All things that the Father hath are mine."** Never at any time did Christ lay aside even so much as one attribute. If He did, He would have ceased to be God, for God is unchangeable. While Christ did not empty Himself of His deity (Col. 2:9), He did strip Himself of the manifestation of His glory. His glory was veiled under human flesh.

Although His glory was veiled under human flesh, those who had eyes to see could look through the humiliation and get a glimpse of what was hidden within: **"And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth"** (John 1:14). Some say this means His real glory was in holiness, meekness, and gentleness. They also saw it in His knowledge and in the wisdom of His Divine utterances as well as in the power manifested in His mighty deeds of compassion. **"This beginning of**

miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him" (John 2:11).

Liberals and cultists are determined to deny the deity of Jesus Christ. They will no doubt offer this objection: Seeing Christ prayed in John 17:5 for the Father to restore His glory, does this not prove the Logos emptied Himself of His nature and attributes?" No, it does not. The words: **"O Father, glorify thou me"** means in His human nature. The words: **"with the glory which I had with thee before the world was"** means with the glory of My Divine nature.

THE MEDITORIAL GLORY

There was a glory given Christ by the Father which follows His sufferings and death. This was foretold by the Old Testament prophets: **"Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow"** (I Pet. 1:10-11). Christ Himself spoke of it: **"Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?"** (Luke 24:26). After being obedient to death Christ as the Mediator was exalted above all exaltation: **"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"** (Phil. 2:9-11).

Jesus Christ died in the room and stead of His people. He rose for our justification. When He ascended to the Father He was crowned with glory and honor (Heb. 2:7, 9). Presently Christ **"is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him"** (I Pet. 3:22). As a part of His exaltation as the Mediator of the covenant, the Father has given **"him to be the head over all things to the church"** (Eph. 1:22). Christ is the only Lawgiver to the church (Jas. 4:12). All preaching, praying, ordinances, and discipline must be administered in His name. All church officers are called and commissioned by Him (Eph. 4:11).

Because Christ was faithful in His covenant engagements, glory and honor are to be ascribed to Him for ever more by angels and redeemed saints: **"And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast**

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Please see postage chart on page 19.

The Lord of Glory

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slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing" (Rev. 5:8-12).

HIS COMING IN GLORY

Our Lord at His first advent came in humiliation (Phil. 2:8). His glory was veiled behind human flesh. It shall not be so of His second advent. Matthew 16:27 says: **"For the Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels; and then he shall reward every man according to his works."** Christ is coming in the same glory amid which the Father dwells. This is the glory He gave up to become our Redeemer. When His mission ended He returned to the Father and regained this glory (John 17:5). Luke 9:26 tells us Christ **"shall come in his own glory, and in his Father's, and of the holy angels."** Here is seen a threefold glory.

Presently the Lord is seated on the Father's throne (Rev. 3:21). When He comes in all His glory He will take His seat upon His glorious throne in Jerusalem: **"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory"** (Matt. 25:31). **"At that time they shall call Jerusalem the throne of the LORD"** (Jer. 3:17). This is the kingdom and glory the Father promised Him (Dan. 7:14). The saints shall share in this kingdom of glory: **"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel"** (Matt. 19:28).

The very city where Christ was rejected at His first advent He will return to at His second advent (Zech. 14:4-5). This time the Israelites will not reject Him. Instead they will bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all: **"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD strong and mighty, the LORD mighty in battle. Lift up your heads, O ye gates; even lift them up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in. Who is this King of glory? The LORD of hosts,**

he is the King of glory" (Ps. 24:7-10). When the Lord of glory returns to His capital city, He will build it up: **"When the LORD shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory"** (Ps. 102:16). All nations shall come to Jerusalem to see the glory of the King of kings: **"...I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come, and see my glory"** (Isa. 66:18; cf. 60:19). Habakkuk 2:14 says: **"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea."**

On the mount of transfiguration Peter, James, and John saw a foreview of the glory of Christ in the coming millennial kingdom: **"Verily I say unto you, There be some standing here, which shall not taste of death, till they see the Son of man coming in his kingdom. And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light"** (Matt. 16:28 - 17:2). Verse 5 goes on to tell us: **"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."** The cloud, which the Father spoke from, probably was like the Shekinah glory which hung over the tabernacle. The cloud resting on Christ symbolized that all the glory of God was centered in our Lord.

THE LOVE OF THE LORD OF GLORY

It is astonishing that our Lord Jesus Christ should strip Himself of His robe of glory to clothe Himself with the garment of our flesh. Why would He, Who was in the form of God, take to Himself the form of a servant? I can understand why a man would want to become God, but I cannot understand why God would want to become a man! The eternal Son of God did not look like Himself when He became a man. He was despised and rejected of men. The birds and beasts were provided with better accommodations than the Lord of glory: **"And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head"** (Matt. 8:20).

Of the Lord of glory Paul wrote: **"...the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me"** (Gal. 2:20). Still again he penned these words: **"And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour"** (Eph. 5:2). O love unspeakable! Christ put off the crown of glory to put on the crown of thorns because of His great love to His people. The song writer has so well expressed it:

*Could we with ink the oceans fill,
And were the skies of parchment made;
Were every stalk on earth a quill,*

*And every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Tho' stretched from sky to sky.*

HIS GLORY SHALL ONE DAY BE OURS

One day the saints shall be made like their glorious Lord. We shall partake of His glory in Heaven in answer to His highly priestly prayer: **"And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one"** (John 17:22). We know Christ's essential glory is incommunicable, but there is a glory which is communicated to His elect. The glory given to us is that of being sons of God by the indwelling and leading of the Holy Spirit. We are given **"power to become the sons of God"** (John 1:12). It is written in Galatians 4:4-5: **"But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."** Christ's true sonship involves His unity with the Father (John 10:30). The sonship of His followers involves our spiritual unity with Christ and with the Father (John 14:20). The final stage of our sonship will be seen when Christ comes back in all His glory and when we experience **"the manifestation of the sons of God"** (Rom. 8:19). May the Lord hasten the day when Christ **"shall come to be glorified in his saints"** (II Thess. 1:10; cf. Rom. 8:16).

Peter wrote: **"But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy"** (I Pet. 4:13). He then goes on to speak of himself as **"a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed"** (I Pet. 5:1). The glory to be revealed is a reference to the second coming of Christ when our vile bodies shall be made like His glorious body. **"Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself"** (Phil. 3:21). Colossians 3:4 reads: **"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."** I John 3:2 declares: **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."**

During our earthly pilgrimage we have fellowship with Christ in His sufferings, and so we shall have fellowship with Him in His glory. To the Phillippians, Paul said: **"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead"** (Phil. 3:10-11). Again he wrote to the Romans: **"And if**

children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us" (Rom. 8:17-18). Christ in us in the person of the Holy Spirit is our hope of glory (Col. 1:27). Believers in their resurrection bodies will outstrip Solomon in all His glory.

SOME PRACTICAL OBSERVATIONS

First, a knowledge of this truth will aid us in enduring trials in the Christian life: **"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"** (I Pet. 1:7). The Lord of glory puts a glory upon the very sufferings we undergo in this evil world for Him. This is what caused Moses to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt (Heb. 11:26). To him the diadem of Egypt was not half as valuable as self-denial for Christ. It is always an honor to be dishonored for Christ (Acts 5:41). Suffering for Christ's sake is a badge of honor (Phil. 1:29).

Second, seeing Christ is the Lord of glory, we who profess to be His followers must take care that we do not dishonor Him in our daily life: **"My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons"** (Jas. 2:1). Since Christ is a glory to us, let us not be inglorious to Him. We ought to walk circumspectly (Eph. 5:15) before the world. As Christians we must adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in all things (Tit. 2:10). We represent the Lord of glory to this God-hating world. If all professed believers lived godly in Christ Jesus, how lovely we would make Christ appear to the world.

Third, it is our duty at present to behold more and more of Lord of glory (II Cor. 3:18) in His Word. In Heaven we shall continue to do the same thing, but on a much greater scale. Our Lord prayed in John 17:24: **"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me."** In the ages to come believers shall behold more and more of the glory of the Mediator. This was seen by some of the disciples when Christ walked on earth. Others have seen it in the gospel by faith to a limited degree. In Heaven with our own eyes we shall see Christ in all His glory. Until that blessed hour we can only **"rejoice in hope of the glory of God"** (Rom. 5:2).

CONCLUSION

1. As His disciples we should long to be with Christ and to behold Him in all His glory. The pangs of death mean little

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The Lord of Glory

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to a true believer, for these shall end in the sight of Christ in all His glory (II Cor. 5:8). Let us look and long for the return of Christ. When we shall see Him as He is in all His glory, we shall be made like Him (I John 3:1-3). Think about wearing a crown of glory in the presence of the Lord of glory!

2. Sinner listen to the gospel, for it is a call to obtain the glory of Christ (II Thess. 2:14). Oh, to be among the many sons Christ has engaged to bring to glory (Heb. 2:9)! Oh, to have revealed to you **“the riches of his glory”** (Rom. 9:23) and to come to see yourself as a vessel of mercy **“afore prepared unto glory.”** Seek to obtain **“the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory”** (II Tim. 2:10).

“To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen” (Jude 25).



Purpose of God's

(Continued from page 1) ◊

God. And, thirdly, God's grace causes the saved sinner to look for the coming of the Lord.

We look to the Word of God for a definition of God's grace. The grace of God is not earned, not merited, not bought – it must be given by God (Ps. 84:11; I Cor. 3:10; 15:10; James 4:6; I Peter 5:5). We find also that the grace of God is the undeserved favor and loving-kindness of God (Gen. 6:8; Eph. 2:7; Titus 3:3-6). No one, who has received the grace of God, has done so because of self worth.

There is a cry today of, “We are under grace!” That is not denied, for it is truth. Yet, many say this not to proclaim the purpose of God's grace according to the Bible, but as a wrongful attempt to try to justify sin.

“For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid” (Rom. 6:14-15).

What Paul here stated was that the grace of God removes the penalty for transgressing the law of God, which was death; it does not license sin, justify sin, or excuse sin. The grace of God does what the law could never do – justify a transgressor before a holy and righteous God (Rom. 3:24).

The law of God demands justice for the breaking of it, demanding the death of the transgressor. Sin is the transgression of the law (I John 3:4). The grace of God is the loving-kindness of God in giving to the sinner eternal life instead of the

eternal death so justly deserved (Eph 2:1-5).

Paul did not state that in this age of the dispensation of grace, that the Christian has no obligation to the law of God. May it dare to be said, to be a Christian, one must keep the law, for Christ did (Matt. 5:17). The Sermon on the Mount attests to the individual Christian's responsibility to the law of God.

Under grace, the recipient of God's grace bears a tremendous responsibility before God.

The purpose of God's grace towards the sinner begins in salvation.

“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men” (Titus 2:11).

This is in reference unto the Lord Jesus Christ's first advent – His coming to this earth in the likeness of sinful flesh, to satisfy the justice demanded by the broken law of God, by dying upon the tree of Calvary for the sins of lost men, women, boys and girls.

“And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth” (John 1:14).

“For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).

This is the message of the Gospel:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through him might be saved” (John 3:16-17).

Only by accepting the Lord's substitutionary sacrifice for one's sins by faith can one know the saving grace of God (Eph 2:8-9).

Salvation is only the beginning of God's grace towards the sinner. And just as the saving grace of God can only be known through Jesus Christ, so only through Jesus Christ can one know the fullness of God's grace.

“And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace” (John 1:16).

After salvation comes works of righteousness. The first of which is to be following the Lord in scriptural baptism (Matt. 3:13-15; Rom. 6:1-4).

The grace of God teaches that after salvation comes acceptable service unto God.

“Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:12).

Baptism does not, nor does consecrated service, earn one God's grace. Nor does God impart grace unto one through any ordinance. Rather, baptism and walking in newness of life are the resulting effects

that God's grace has upon a saved sinner. It has taught them to do this, to live unto Christ.

The grace of God teaches one that they are now able to do what they could not do before the Lord saved them – fulfill all righteousness.

“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit” (Rom. 8:1-4).

It has ever been since Creation, and ever shall be until the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, that the whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments (Eccl. 12:13). And it is the grace of God that enables the sinner to do this.

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God” (Rom. 12:1-2).

God gives grace to the saved sinner for the reasons of sustaining, strengthening, and enabling one to live according to His revealed will. The grace of God is sufficient enough to do this for each and every child of God. The saved sinner is without excuse, he is to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age, for he is under grace!

And the grace of God is always accessible to the child of God.

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need” (Heb. 4:16).

The dispensation of grace is not for sin, but for righteousness; not for the fulfilling of the lusts of the flesh, but for the fulfilling of the perfect and holy will of God.

“For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ” (Jude 4).

Lasciviousness means “licentiousness, wantonness, lewd, lustful”; it is connotative an “absence of restraint, indecency, and shameless conduct”. From such manner of living did the grace of God that bringeth salvation appear to save sinners from, and it is ceaselessly

imparted to keep saved sinners separated from.

Being under grace gives no warrant or license to sin, for those that have received the grace of God **“have not so learned Christ”** (Eph. 4:17-24).

The grace of God teaches the saved individual to live soberly, righteously, and godly.

“Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (II Tim. 2:19).

Lastly, the purpose of God's grace is culminated in causing the recipient to look for the coming of the Lord.

“Looking for that blessed hope, and glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ” (Titus 2:13).

The phrase **“looking for”** is figurative of “enduring unto”, and literally has the meaning “to be expecting.” This is not a gazing (Acts 1:11), or a toil-less looking (Luke 19:13), or a prayer-less looking (Luke 18:1; Matt. 26:41).

This latter principle is based upon the former principles. The coming of the Lord means nothing to those who have not received the grace of God that bringeth salvation. While the way of salvation has appeared unto all men, not all men believe it. And many who profess to be saved, and say they are looking for the coming of the Lord, their life is lived in a way contrary to what the grace of God teaches.

The child of God is to be living in a way that professes Christ is coming again (I Thess. 5:2-9; II Peter 3:10-14).

“And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. The night is far spent, the day is at hand: lest us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armor of light. Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof” (Rom. 13:11-14).

The grace of God alone is that which enables the saint of God to endure the reproach of being a Christian in this ungodly age. It alone helps us to be steadfast and unmovable in the Lord; to live soberly, not under the influences of the world, the flesh, and the devil; righteously, establishing the law of God; and godly, reflecting the grace and light which has been given unto us by God. The grace of God alone is that which gives us the ability to endure until, to patiently wait for, to live with the expectation of Christ's coming, in this sin-blinded and Christ-rejecting world. How unbearable

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. To what extent will the Gospel be preached during the tribulation period? - Mississippi

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As I was studying the Scriptures in an attempt to answer this question I found out an interesting fact that I had never come across. John the beloved apostle who wrote The Gospel of John, First, Second, and Third John, as well as the Book of Revelation under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit only used the word "Gospel" once in all of his writings. In Revelation 14:6 John wrote: **"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people."** This is the only time that the word "gospel" appears in the Book of Revelation and the prophetic timing of it occurs during the Great Tribulation Period. It appears that God will employ the use of an angel to preach the Gospel to the inhabitants of the earth during this time frame.

I also believe that the 144,000 Jewish men introduced in Revelation chapter seven will be martyred because of their witness for the Lord Jesus Christ and the power of His Gospel. Elijah and Moses will appear on the earth and be given power to testify and prophesy for the first three and one half years (42 months) of the Tribulation Period before they are killed by the beast (Rev. 11:3-12). They will be resurrected and will ascend up into heaven in a cloud as the world watches (11:12). I would also assume that the elect who are saved during the Tribulation Period will be a witness of the Gospel. Their desire to follow the Lord and serve Him faithfully will ultimately result in a martyrs' death because they will refuse to worship the beast, nor will they take the mark of the beast (Rev. 13:15-18). The elect who are urged to come out of the whore of Babylon (Rev. 18:4) will be forced to declare their loyalty to Christ and His Gospel when they separate from her. So it appears to me that God will employ various means and persons to testify and preach the Gospel during the Tribulation Period. It makes perfect sense that the Gospel will be preached during the Tribulation Period. Matthew 24:14 is a prophetic passage that describes events leading up to and that occur during the Great Tribulation:

"And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come." Acts 14:16-17 implies that there is no time during human history that God has been without a witness: **"Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways. Nevertheless he left not himself without witness, in that he did good, and gave us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."**

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The Gospel will be preached during the tribulation period with great fervency to the extent that people will be executed for it. **"And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years"** (Rev. 20:4).

To the extent that all the world will give gifts to each other to rejoice in the death of the two witnesses **"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth"** (Rev. 11:3). **"And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth"** (Rev. 11:10).

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"For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (II Thess. 2:7). The Great Tribulation will begin very shortly after the rapture

occurs. One of the most important things to know about that imminent event is that God will come for ALL of His elect. And with the departure of God's people, the above verse in Thessalonians will come true-the Holy Spirit will also be taken out of this world! (Not in the scope of His omnipresence, but in the aspect of the work of the Holy Spirit to regenerate and effectually call the sheep!)

This means that for an indefinite (but short) period of time there will be NO SAVED INDIVIDUALS on the earth. However, God DOES mean for the Gospel to be preached during the tribulation period, therefore He will send two preachers- the Two Witnesses of Revelation 11:3, **"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth."** This total of days equals exactly the first 3.5 years of the Great Tribulation. So their coming will both herald the beginning of the destruction, but as God so often does- also mingles His grace and gospel amidst His righteous wrath and judgment.

The Holy Spirit will return with these two powerful preachers and will save folk the old-fashioned way, by grace through faith and repentance at the beckoning of the Gospel! **"And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel"** (Rev. 7:2-4).

These 144,000 dedicated (virgin-Rev.14:3-5) preachers will be used mightily of God and a GREAT MULTITUDE of sinners will be saved. **"After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; ...And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"** (Rev. 7:9, 13-14).

However, a point must be made, since, I might guess the intent of the question. Some might try to find solace in their continued rejection of the Gospel in this current day and say "Well, I'll get saved after the Rapture, then..." Beloved Reader, I cannot find that hope for you in Scripture! I can't deny that God is

gracious and merciful beyond measure, but there is NO SCRIPTURE AND VERSE to found such a hope upon! Beloved **"...now is the day of Salvation!"**

The Great Tribulation will be peculiarly the time of the nation of Israel once again. Daniel's Seventieth Week will have begun at the sound of the voice of Michael the Archangel on rapture day. **"For I am with thee, saith the LORD, to save thee: though I make a full end of all nations whither I have scattered thee, yet will I not make a full end of thee: but I will correct thee in measure, and will not leave thee altogether unpunished"** (Jer. 30:11). The "Time of the Gentiles" will be over. Sure, God can save Jews today, and He will save Gentiles then, but it is now, and will be then, the exception, rather than the rule.

Dear sinner, the time will come when the clock will not be on the side of us Gentiles! At the conclusion of the church age (Matt. 28:20), God will be finished working on this earth through His blessed churches. No one will be baptized in the Great Tribulation. They will become Jews (or Jewish proselytes) again! **"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, UNTIL THE FULNESS OF THE GENTILES BE COME IN"** [Emphasis-TMS](Rom. 11:25). Selah! Think about it!

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"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words" (I Thess. 4:16-18).

The above Scripture gives us what I believe to be the rapture. It will be a joyous time for some but not so joyous for those who remain. This will assuredly show absolutely and without question who the true Christians are. All speculation and guess work will be gone. Whether you believe that only the true Baptist Church (the Bride) will be taken at this time or that all of Christendom along with the true Baptist Church (the Bride) will be raptured up will come to an end, for the truth of the matter will

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Have we (Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist Churches) failed in evangelizing non-white races? Is there an attitude of segregation in worship amongst our churches? Were the early churches segregated or a mixture of all races? How do we fix this problem? – Alabama

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I, for one, do not see a problem to fix. Indeed if you see a problem amongst the Lord's Churches with the problems you have stated then those churches are wrong in doing so.

I do want to address something though and that is the loose use of the words race or races. My question is how many races are there anyway? I hear some of you saying that is just a figure of speech, really? Let's try this figure of speech out for size, I'll be a monkey's uncle, or Jiminy Crickets, how about God willing and the creek don't rise. All are just a figure of speech and harmless, right?

God created one race, within that one race of human kind is variations of skin tone or color if you will. The only differences in those that have more melanin or skin pigment than myself (I am fair skinned), is the cultural differences they may have been raised with.

God's people should be the very last people to even entertain the thought of racism or the separation of races. I, to my surprise, read an article by a Baptist preacher that tried to use the Scriptures to prove that marriage to other "races" was not Biblical. One of the Scriptures used was the account of the tower of Babel when God "confound their language", which by the way means God mingled the language. The reason for what God did was not because He did not want dark skinned individuals to be separate from light skinned individuals but He did this to stop what they were trying to do. If you don't believe me, read.

I sometimes sit in amazement at how people depict our Lord and Saviour as a blue eyed Anglo Saxon with draping long hair. I hear complaints of the length of hair, but never the color of skin. Christ took upon Him the flesh of a Jew. I don't reckon many of us have realized the wide variations of skin color of Jews. Moses was married to a dark skinned woman, and Phillip had no problem preaching to the Ethiopian who became a member of one of the Lord's churches. The early churches were in obedience to Christ by preaching the Gospel to all nations, all

people.

I would like to amend what I have previously said. If there be any hint of racism or it is disguised under "separation of races" in your church it needs to be made known of its wickedness. If preachers or members of the Lord's churches hold it to be a doctrine that is taught or believed, they need to be excluded from the membership. "Being tolerant" or "love covers a multitude of sins" attitude doesn't mean we are to turn a blind eye from sin or to encourage it in any way or its propagation.

I challenge anyone to prove to me with the Scripture God created more than one race, that those at the tower of Babel were grouped by color, and that the early churches were selective to whom they allowed into the membership due to skin color.

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I have read this question over and over and I am a little surprised that it has been asked. I am not saying it is a bad question but it makes me wonder if the questioner believes in mission work and it is a question in my opinion that is a no win question but I will endeavor to answer it just the same.

As I read this over again there are four questions that were asked, so we will attempt to answer each one separately.

First Question: Have we (Sovereign Grace Landmark Missionary Baptist Churches) failed in evangelizing non-white races? I will answer No, definitely not. If I was to answer yes, then I would be saying that Elders Milburn Cockrell, Dan Stepp, and Mark Minney have wasted their time in the Philippines along with the large number of churches that support the missionaries in the Philippines. I just today received an email from Brother Almond & Sister Nalin Katryan who are in Guyana, South America that I know many Baptist churches here in America support. I could mention a multitude of men that are evangelizing non-white races in the world. If the questioner is talking about here in America then that is the question that should have been asked and I am not

going to make any assumptions but state two things concerning this:

1. We hold these truths to be self-evident, that "all men" (Emp. RR) are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. (*The Declaration of Independence*).

2. In Matthew 28:18-20, "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." (*The Bible*).

Any that have a problem with that, in my opinion, have a grave and very sad problem. This is and has always been my stand.

Second Question: Is there an attitude of segregation in worship amongst our churches? I honestly don't know! I would hope not. I have had non-whites in the churches I have been pastor of. I have personally invited non-whites to the services as well as witnessed, too. I will honestly say years ago there was an attitude of segregation in worship amongst our churches, but I do not know about now.

Third Question: Were the early churches segregated or a mixture of all races? I would have to ask how early? If you want to go back to the church that was in Jerusalem then I would say there were a mixture of all races, "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying one to another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilaeans? And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? Parthians, and Medes, and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, and in Judaea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus, and Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes, Cretes and Arabians, we do hear them speak in our tongues the wonderful works of God" (Acts 2:5-11). And then it says in Acts 2:37, "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission

of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved."

Verse 41 says there were added unto them about three thousand souls, were they all the same color? I know there are non-white Sovereign Grace Baptists, what does that tell us?

Fourth Question: How do we fix this problem? Please do not take this as sarcastic but I was not aware there was a problem to fix. We have to be very careful as God's people not to stereo-type other races and many times that is the problem and that is with any people. I would ask that the reader meditate on these two verses: "Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons" (Acts 10:34); "For there is no respect of persons with God" (Rom. 2:11). There are other verses with respect of persons, please take time to look them up! God Bless!

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Mark 16:15 declares: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." Revelation 5:9 states: "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."

In light of the verses above two things are clear: First, the Lord's church is

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Forum #1

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be revealed. If you are an Amillennialist or Post-tribulationist all will be made clear at this time, all arguments and disagreements will cease.

I have brought this to the reader's attention in view of the question asked because once the Rapture happens things will no longer be as they were. I believe that those who thought they were saved will realize for the first time that they had been lied to about how to be saved and that they never were saved. For some there will be a great urgency to be saved, and others will be so furious that they will curse God.

I know there is a disagreement on who will be raptured and I won't get into that here. But for the sake of argument, please bear with me. After the rapture the seven years of tribulation will begin, there is no true church (Baptist) all Christians will be gone (if you believe differently, I will respect that, for I also have questions concerning this) but again for the sake of argument, who will be left to tell about God's saving grace?

The question is; "To what extent will the Gospel be preached during the tribulation?" First, although I believe there will be many Gentiles saved during the tribulation, I also believe the primary focus of the Gospel will be toward the nation of Israel (Romans 11:25-27). A close study of Jeremiah 30:7, Daniel 9:24 and Deuteronomy 4:30-31 will reveal that the focus is on Israel. Now, how will this be accomplished if the church and her preachers will no longer be here?

First, the Gospel will be preached by God's two witnesses; **"And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will"** (Rev. 11:3-6). Since there seems to be a great disagreement on who these two are, and we are not told directly who they are, neither will we speculate on their identity. But regardless who we might think they are they are God's messengers none the less! I believe they will preach the need for repentance and the judgment of Jesus Christ, much the way John the Baptist did. They will preach 1,260 days (three and half years) in Israel and many will be saved.

Second, with the Gospel being

preached by God's two witnesses, God will raise up 144,000 men, of course they will be Jewish men out of the twelve tribes of Israel, 12,000 from each of the twelve tribes (Revelation 7:4; Revelation 14:4-5). Then they will preach the Gospel of the kingdom to the entire world (Matthew 24:14). They will proclaim that Jesus is who He said He was, finally, praise God, these Jews will know Jesus as the Messiah the Son of God!

In closing, "To what extent will the Gospel be preached during the tribulation?" All of God's elect will be saved before Christ; the "KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS" comes to set up His Millennium Kingdom.

Forgive my feeble attempt to answer such a question for there is much that could be said, and greater men than me have written volumes on this subject and if the questioner and the reader have a greater desire to know more, I would encourage them to contact the Berea Banner Church Bookstore for books on this subject. There are three I would recommend, "Things To Come: A Study In Biblical Eschatology" by J. Dwight Pentecost, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ" by Willard Willis, and "Elementary Eschatology" by Tom Ross. God Bless!

ROGER REED



Forum #2

(Continued from page 11) ◊

responsible to preach the Gospel to every creature regardless of race. Second, there will be saved people from all races, cultures, and languages in Heaven so the Gospel will be preached to them in some form or fashion (Rom. 1:16-17; 10:13-18; I Cor. 1:18-25).

To answer the first question, have the Lord's churches failed in evangelizing non-white races? To some degree the answer would be yes in the sense that we should never be satisfied with our mission activity. We should be striving each and every day to spread Christ's Gospel to the ends of the earth and I feel as though we are not nearly as urgent about this monumental task as we should be. However, the Gospel has been preached by Baptist missionaries all over the world regardless of race. In fact, I would assert that the Lord's true churches have been the most faithful through the centuries in preaching the Gospel throughout the world to all races of men.

To answer the second question: Is there an attitude of segregation in worship amongst our churches? It would be impossible for me to answer this definitively as I have not had the opportunity to worship in all the churches. So, the best I can do is give an educated guess based on personal experience and general attitudes I perceive. The

answer is probably, but if the truth be told the segregation in worship generally goes both ways. Black folks probably feel very comfortable worshipping with other saved people of the same skin pigment just like white folks feel very comfortable worshipping with saved white folks. Segregation in American worship is probably more pronounced in the churches of the south than in the north. The answer is not politically correct, but in general pretty accurate. With that said, I would have no problem with a saved black man or woman presenting themselves for scriptural baptism and church membership before the Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church of Chesapeake, Ohio (the same would hold true for any other skin pigment, red, yellow, brown, or white). It's not the color of the skin but grace in the heart and the leadership of the Holy Spirit that counts when it comes to church membership and worship.

To answer the third question: Were the early churches segregated or a mixture of all races? The answer is yes to both. I am sure that there were some churches made up mostly of Jews. Other churches were made up of Jews and Gentiles. Some churches were segregated and others were mixed. I don't think there was social engineering involved in making sure there were certain numbers of each race integrated into every church. God builds His churches as it pleases Him.

To answer the fourth and final question: How do we fix this problem? The answer is relatively simple. Allow the Lord to add to the church as it pleases Him. I Corinthians 12:18 declares: **"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him."** Rest in God's sovereign placement of His elect in His churches. Be pleased with what God is pleased with. If it pleases Him to add a white man to a predominantly black church thank God and bring glory to His name (Eph. 3:21).

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Four questions! Let's take them one at a time...

Have we failed? No, for two reasons.

#1- God's Elect will never be lost! **"While I was with them in the world, I kept them in thy name: those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled"** (John 17:12).

#2- Some of the best missionary work in the world is going on in "non-

white" countries, such as the Philippines, Nigeria, Central America, etc. Certainly there is no lack of ministry to all colors here in America, either. Cold hearts are evident in every race and none seem to want to hear the truth... **"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables"** (II Tim. 4:3-4).

Next question- Is there segregation amongst our churches? On this question, I can only speak from my experiences in West Virginia. Without having any large minority population, it is difficult for me to speak knowledgeably. But whenever we do have an opportunity to minister to lost folk, it really doesn't make much difference to us what their color or nationality is. Lost folk need the gospel, period! And in this day and age, it's as hard to reach 'white folk' as it is the minorities.

Third question- What was the make-up of the early churches? Understanding that the Jews made up the majority of the first churches, there was a very real problem with prejudices. Gentiles and even Samaritans were considered worse than dogs, religiously. Unclean. This was a very great difficulty that the early churches had to overcome. God used the Apostles Peter and Paul to break down these barriers, I think very successfully! As you read through the Book of Acts and the Epistles of the New Testament, you'll see the openness that has become the characteristic of the LORD's True Baptist churches down through the ages.

As you enter the first few centuries, the explosion of the Gospel knew no barriers! In North Africa, across the Middle East and Europe! It was a very open and cosmopolitan era that the LORD had designed for the Proliferation of Truth and Salvation! Certainly there have been incidents throughout the History of the LORD's churches, but I believe any close scrutiny will bear out that religious freedom and the individual freedoms that come along with that precious liberty have always been spearheaded into new countries by God's people. The Holy Bible DEMANDS an equality that is rarely, if ever, seen in other religious and political bodies. **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen"** (Matt. 28:19-20).

Last one- How do we fix the problem? Whether perceived needs to be interjected, or whether the questioner has personally witnessed such problems, might need to be ascertained.

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Forum #2

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The problem of prejudice and its poor sister 'segregation' can be dealt with the way it always has. Preach the truth of God's Word. Any cold-hearted, white Christian that doesn't love her brethren of color is not exhibiting the love of God. Preach Jesus Christ and all kindreds alike will rejoice at the truth, or reject it. Not based on any color or background, but whether his heart has been touched by the power of God, **"And I saw another**

angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the EVERLASTING GOSPEL [Emphasis TMS] to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, ...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 14:6, 5:9).

MATTHEW STEPP



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Speaking Blood

"And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel" (Heb. 12:24).

Most of us are familiar with the story of the two sons of Adam and Eve. It is found in Genesis 4:3-4: **"And in process of time it came to pass, that Cain brought of the fruit of the ground an offering unto the LORD. And Abel, he also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the LORD had respect unto Abel and to his offering: But unto Cain and to his offering he had not respect."** Abel's offering was accepted because it contained blood and was offered in faith of a coming Redeemer (Heb. 11:4).

Abel, unlike his brother Cain who was of that wicked one, proclaimed by the sacrifice which he brought the great truth that salvation could be only by a bloody offering. It spoke prophetically of the virtue which would be in the pleading voice of holier sacrificial blood, the great Antitype which spoke of better things than Abel. What Abel's blood-offering spoke in a typical and obscure manner, Jesus Christ proclaimed in a more distinct and better manner by the reality.

THE VOICE OF TYPICAL BLOOD

The prophetic voice of blood spoke from the altar in the Old Testament of better things to come. It was repeatedly taught under the old dispensation that **"it is the blood that maketh an atonement for the soul"** (Lev. 17:11). The Jewish sacrificial worship expressed the yearning of those saints for a blood atonement. The brazen altar was fed with unceasing sacrifices of life. It was a place of slaughter. Blood was ever fresh on its sides. The brazen altar was itself a type of Christ dying to make a blood atonement for our sins.

There were four kinds of animal sacrifices: burnt-offerings, sin-offerings, trespass-offerings, and peace-offerings. The first three offerings had an expiatory virtue. These sacrifices were full of symbolic import. He who presented the victim at the altar laid his hands upon its head before it was slain, showing thereby that the animal substituted in the place of the offerer, transferring his own guilt to the victim, and thus consecrating it as his substitute. He killed it to indicate that on account of his sins he deserved to die. Life was taken from the animal by cutting its throat with a single stroke of the knife, so deep that all the blood might flow out of the body. The streaming blood from the dying victim was received into a vessel and carried within the sanctuary, while a portion was sprinkled toward the mercy seat, and placed upon the horns of the golden altar, as a seal of the atonement which God had accepted.

This all spoke of the blood atonement of Jesus Christ. It was the voice of preparation for better things to come. It was a helpless suppliant after the substitution of One higher and better than man, Whose sacrificial blood would obtain eternal redemption. The streaming blood on Jewish altars cried to an expecting people, **"Prepare ye the way of the LORD!"** (Isa. 40:3).

Blood on the altar was a declaration on man's sinful condition and of death by sin. In all sin-offerings upon the altar the blood expressed the sin of the offerer. As the life-blood of an innocent victim ran out, the offerer was to see how the innocent Lamb of God would one day die for the guilty sinner. The bloody offering taught that remission of sin and the removal of its penalty were through the shed blood of a slaughtered Substitute.

God would accept no man who refused to come to Him upon the blood on the altar of propitiation.

The blood on the altar had no power of its own to make atonement: **"For the law having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins"** (Heb. 10:1-4). These animal sacrifices satisfied the requirements of the ceremonial law, but they had nothing to meet the demands of the moral law, except the shadow of good things to come. They were only to herald of the actual virtue in the antitypical blood of Christ (Rev. 1:5).

THE VOICE OF THE CROSS

The voice of blood from the altars of types and prophecies was verified on Calvary. **"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?"** (Heb. 9:13-14). The shedding of Christ's blood on the cross was the fulfillment of all prophetic blood. It is the blood of sprinkling which **"speaketh better things than that of Abel"** (Heb. 12:24).

The blood of the crucified One outside Jerusalem is invested with both speaking and saving power. This is the blood of the God-man, the reality of all types and shadows, the fulfillment of all prophecies, the desire of all nations, the truth of all truths, the power of all powers!

The blood spattered tree was Christ's spokesman. It declared His nature, His merits, and the power of His incarnate life more fully than all His deeds and words. Calvary was His pulpit, and His blood the orator. The voice from this place was a more fruitful oracle than any voice that has ever sounded in the human spirit across the centuries.

What is the nature of that blood which speaks from the cross? Is it different from the blood of the typical altars? Was it the blood of a mere man who died for what he believed? A thousand times no! It was the atoning blood of the Son of God for guilty men.

DIVINELY APPOINTED

Jesus Christ was Immanuel, God in, with, and for us! His blood was different from all other blood of men and beasts ever shed. It had a quality of sacredness unknown to ordinary blood. It was more

than martyr's blood. If His were mere martyr's blood, then why did the earth rend, the graves open, and the dead come forth? Why did the Roman soldier cry at the bloody scene, **"Truly this was the Son of God"** (Matt. 27:54)?

This was divinely appointed blood, atoning blood, the blood of a vicarious sacrifice. The Father foreordained it to be shed before the foundation of the world. Of Christ, Peter wrote: **"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you"** (I Pet. 1:20). The Redeemer stood as the **"Lamb slain from the foundation of the world"** (Rev. 13:8).

THE ANTHROPIC BLOOD

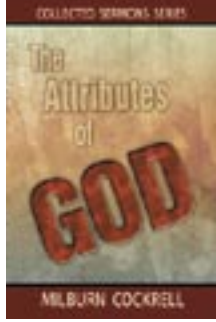
The blood of Christ is superior blood, suffused with the indwelling element of Divinity. The Scriptures speak of it as God's own blood (Acts 20:28). It contained the life of that flesh which is more than human flesh. It was the blood of an immaculate humanity in which all the fullness of the Godhead dwelt bodily. It is the blood of the Second Adam, the Lord from Heaven. His Divinity was so allied with His human nature that His blood is an expression of both His natures. The God in it gave it infinite value and efficacy. Surely God will not visit us with vengeance when He sees this blood sprinkled on our hearts!

SINLESS BLOOD

The blood of Christ on Calvary is sinless blood. **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot"** (I Pet. 1:18-19). His blood was not shed for crimes He had committed. He did not die for any guilt of His own, but to show me I was guilty and deserved to die for my sins.

The sinlessness of His blood proved its power to atone. The Messiah was **"cut off, but not for himself"** (Dan. 9:26). His crucifiers proved nothing against Him. The Father was well pleased with Him. Judas threw away his blood-money and exclaimed in remorse: **"I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood"** (Matt. 27:4). Pilate, His judge, declared Him to be without fault

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Speaking Blood

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(Luke 23:4). One of His murderers who drenched his hands in His blood declared: **"Certainly this was a righteous man"** (Luke 23:47).

VOLUNTARY BLOOD

Our Saviour endured the accursed death because He chose to die. He declared: **"I lay down my life. . . No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself"** (John 17:18). Men did not force Him to suffer. His blood was a freewill offering for the sins of His people. It was His hearty concurrence with the Father's will and the carrying out of His covenant engagements.

ACCEPTED BLOOD

The blood of Christ shed on Mount Calvary is accepted blood. Gazing from His throne in the Third Heaven upon the awful scene of Calvary, God the Father saw the travail of His blood and was satisfied. He saw His Son suffering to vindicate the Divine government, meeting all the demands of His righteous law, and becoming by self-sacrifice the Author of full and free redemption. The Father put His seal of acceptance upon it. The Father would be compelled to un-God Himself before He could reject the merits of the atoning blood of His Son.

SAVING BLOOD

The blood of Christ is saving blood. It alone has saving virtue in itself. There is no salvation apart from the blood of Christ. Everything apart from it is the Devil's delusion. The blood of the spotless Lamb propitiates, redeems, sanctifies, and washes us from our sins. It hushes the thunders of God's wrath and causes the Sun of righteousness to break forth upon the soul.

ALL-SUFFICIENT

It is all-sufficient blood. It is all-sufficient both to purchase and to plead, to cleanse and heal, to overcome all enemies and liberate all prisoners. There is no sin for which it cannot atone, no guilt which it cannot remove, no wrath which it cannot appease, no crime it cannot expiate, no favor it cannot propitiate, and no malady it cannot heal! It cleanses from all sin (I John 1:7). "Sinners plunged beneath that flood lose all their guilty stains."

FACTS PROCLAIMED BY THE BLOOD

The speaking blood of Christ declares some important truths. In the atoning blood we see the real character of God. If you want to know how much God hates sin, look at the blood-spattered tree. If you would hear the depth of God's love, listen to the speaking blood of the cross (I John 4:10). Every drop of blood declared God was just and merciful.

It speaks of the awful death Christ endured. The cross speaks as no language can and as no pencil can write. It cries

out of the thorns in His temples, of the nails in His quivering fibers, and of the spear in His side. It speaks of a death no orator can describe. Such a scene overwhelms the soul and brings a silence of wonder. We can only stand in awe before a spectacle of blood as glorious in love as it is terrible in justice.

The blood of Jesus speaks of the greatness of sin. How awful must be the misery which made it necessary for Christ to bleed and die. It was our sins that drove the nails in His hands and feet, put the crown of thorns on His head, and thrust the spear in His side. We are murderers! We are guilty of the body and blood of the Lord! If you would know the full measure of your sins and what a godless creature you are, then pay a visit to the cross of Calvary.

VOICE FROM THE MERCY SEAT

The voice of the blood of Christ is heard in Heaven at the right hand of the Father. Having offered the immaculate oblation of Himself on the accursed tree, He entered the celestial Temple, the seat of the glorious presence of God, to plead the merits of His atonement. **"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us"** (Heb. 9:24). He appears before the mercy seat of God in Heaven with the visible tokens of His suffering and death (Heb. 9:11-12; Rev. 5:6), as the Jewish high priest carried into the Holy of Holies a part of the blood of the animal sacrifices.

Christ is a wise Representative and Advocate of His people, knowing the case of His clients, the character of the Judge, and all that is written in the law. As our merciful and faithful High Priest, He pleads for the sinner. He never neglects His chosen ones and never delays to press their cause. When they sin, He pleads for their pardon; when they are accused, He vindicates their character; when they are afflicted, He procures their succor; when they are tempted, He at once prays that their faith fail not. Every day they commit sins, and every day He pleads their pardon on the ground of His own vicarious atonement (I John 2:1). Because He thus pleads for them, they will never be condemned (Rom. 8:34) and never perish (John 10:28).

THE VOICE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Jewish Passover was instituted as a memorial of the deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage by the blood of the paschal lamb. The Lord's Supper is the dying command of Christ our Passover to His churches (Matt. 26:27-28). This holy ordinance commemorates the shedding of Christ's blood at Calvary for our sins. By partaking of the cup of wine we show by symbol our saving attachment to the benefits of Christ's cleansing blood: **"The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of**

Christ?" (I Cor. 10:16).

By partaking of it in church capacity, we show that we as a body of Christ partake in common of the benefits of His blood. We drink the cup of the Lord amid memories of His sufferings and death. We sit at the Lord's table in anticipation of a more joyful banquet at the marriage supper of the Lamb. We drink in fond hopes of plucking fruit from the tree of life and drinking the water of the river of life in the New Jerusalem.

THE VOICE OF BLOOD IN HEAVEN

The high Heaven above is filled with the voice of glorifying blood. Ten thousand times ten thousands, and thousands of thousands, sing with the voice of many waters: **"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). There amid the golden streets, the heavenly thrones and the host of angels is heard "The Anthem of Glorified Blood." Those in Heaven will never forget or lose sight of the wonder of Christ's blood at Calvary.

There in the midst of the sainted spirits of the departed believers stands a Lamb as it has been slain. He is the center of attraction; all else fades into comparative insignificance before the Lamb. There He stands with all the marks of His crucifixion wounds, clad in the robe of His atoning blood, to show His position in the scheme of redemption. The imagery of death and of blood is preserved amid a

scene where blood cannot go and death can never enter. There His blood speaks "better things than the blood of Abel."

CONCLUSION

One day this evil world shall lose its power to persecute the saints. Some day Satan will loose his power of death and destruction. Sin shall lose its power to tempt. The sun, the moon, and the stars shall lose their power to shine. But the **"blood of the everlasting covenant"** (Heb. 13:20), shall exist so long as there is an elect soul on earth or a harp to sing praise in Heaven. It shall ever be the theme of all songs, the sentiment of all the pure in heart, and the glory of all the redeemed.

Nothing but the blood of Jesus can save your poor sin-sick soul. Morality will avail nothing. All religious ordinances are filthy rags in the sight of God. Faith is mute and powerless. Nothing but the blood of Jehovah Jesus can save your poor soul! This is your only hope.

When on your bed in your dying hour, what will be your hope of salvation? Membership in a religious society? the observance of religious ceremonies and rites? the signing of a decision card? Of what worth are such things to a spirit ready to depart to Heaven or Hell? You can only die in peace by **"faith in his blood"** (Rom. 3:25). With faith in His atoning blood you can go triumphantly out of this world of sin and suffering to the deathless bliss of Heaven!



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.

UTAH CITIES CREATE SPECIAL RIGHTS BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION

(EP News)--City councils in Moab, Utah and Murray, Utah, passed on Nov. 9 housing and employment ordinances to create special rights based on sexual orientation and gender identity. Both city councils voted unanimously to adopt the measures. Murray, a suburb of Salt Lake City, and Moab, located in the eastern part of Utah, join seven cities peppered around the state that have passed similar ordinances. Twenty-one states and the District of Columbia have passed laws providing special rights based on sexual orientation, while 12 states and D.C. add protections based on gender identity. Federal legislation has also been introduced by Democrats in Congress.

SENATOR GOP LEADER FILES BRIEF OBAMACARE CHALLENGE

(EP News)--Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, R-Ky., has filed a friend-of-the-court brief in the multi-state lawsuit over ObamaCare. On behalf of Republican senators, McConnell argues that by passing the law, Congress exceeded its constitutional authority, damaged its institutional legitimacy, and could cause long-term harm "to our governmental institutions and constitutional architecture." The U.S. District Court in Northern Florida is scheduled to hear the 21-state challenge on Dec. 16. The lawsuit, which was filed hours after President Obama signed the so-called Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act into law in March, was filed by Florida Attorney General Bill McCollum.

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Bible & the Newspaper

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HIGH COURT REJECTS CHALLENGE TO OBAMACARE, SAYS APPEALS COURT MUST HEAR FIRST

(EP News)--In a rare full-panel review, all nine justices of the U.S. Supreme Court have rejected a petition that asked for immediate action to overturn President Obama's health care law. The case, *Baldwin v. Sebelius*, was filed by Republican Steve Baldwin, a former California legislator, and the Pacific Justice Institute petitioned the high court. The case is pending before the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. The decision does not affect suits filed by 21 states challenging Obamacare.

RELIGIOUS HIRING RIGHTS THE FOCUS OF HOUSE HEARING

(EP News)--The day after an Executive Order was signed to amend the way faith-based organizations (FBOs) interact with the federal government, a hearing was held by a House subcommittee to consider policies related to faith-based social service providers. The House Judiciary Subcommittee on the Constitution, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties heard testimony from two "separation of church and state" advocates and one for the constitutional protection of religious hiring rights. The hearing took place on Nov. 18. Douglas Laycock, a professor of law and religious studies at the University of Virginia, said the changes would obstruct the vital work performed by FBOs. "It uses the power of the purse to coerce religious organizations," Laycock said, "to become less religious and more secular."

TEXAS TEA PARTY GROUP FILES COUNTERSUIT AGAINST STATE'S DEMOCRAT PARTY

(EP News)--The King Street Patriots (KSP), a Houston-based Tea Party organization, filed a countersuit Nov. 17 against the Texas Democratic Party (TDP) -- and asking the Judge to strike down state law that effectively silences free speech. The TDP filed a lawsuit alleging that KSP intimidated voters during the election. Kelly Shackelford, president and CEO of the Liberty Institute, said the legal attacks are merely attempts to intimidate and harass average citizens because KSP found thousands of problematic registrations. Shackelford said KSP's success in bringing to light alleged voter misconduct has sparked the interest of other Tea Party groups. "They've (KSP) been called by people in 45 states who started very similar groups," he said, "to make sure that there's integrity in the voting process and that elections are free and fair."

APPEALS COURT UPHOLDS NEW HAMPSHIRE'S PLEDGE LAW

(EP News)--The 1st U.S. Circuit Court

of Appeals upheld on Nov. 12 a New Hampshire law, which requires public schools to set a daily time for students to voluntarily recite the Pledge of Alliance. The Alliance Defense Fund (ADF) filed a friend-of-the-court brief defending the Pledge. The court chastised the lawsuit, brought by the Freedom from Religion Foundation and longtime Pledge-challenger Michael Newdow, which questioned the constitutionality of "under God." David Cortman, senior legal counsel for ADF, said, "The Pledge of Allegiance shouldn't be banned from the nation's public schools simply to appease an atheist group's political agenda."

AMERICANS SAY ELECTIONS MORE NEGATIVE THAN PAST, LACK CIVILITY

(EP News)--New research released in November suggests Americans are fed-up with the lack of civil discourse in this country and believe American political leaders are not working to overcome differences. The PRRI/RNS Religion News Survey, conducted by Public Religion Research Institute in partnership with Religion News Service, found that nearly six-in-ten Americans believe the country is more divided over politics than it was in the past and only one-in-five Americans believe American political leaders work well together to overcome differences to get things done. The poll also indicated that twice as many Americans believe the tone of the 2010 election compared to past elections was more negative (41 percent) than positive (22 percent). Democrats (51 percent), who lost a large number of congressional, gubernatorial and state legislative races across the country, are twice as likely as Republicans (26 percent) to believe the election's tone was negative. Alternatively, one-third of white evangelicals report that the election was more positive than past elections, a number significantly higher than white mainline Protestants (17 percent), the unaffiliated (17 percent) or Catholics (23 percent).

FIRST ACTIVIST TRANSGENDER JUDGE APPOINTED IN TEXAS

(EP News)--Phyllis Frye -- born Phillip Frye -- became the first transgender-identified municipal court judge in Texas. Appointed on Nov. 17 by Houston Mayor Annise Parker -- a self-identified lesbian -- Frye becomes the third transgender-identified judge in the nation to be elected or appointed to the bench. The city council unanimously approved the appointment. The mayor's appointment did not go unnoticed by Dave Welch, the executive director of the Houston Area Pastors' Council, a network of approximately 300 churches. "Phyllis Frye is a very well-known radical transgender activist," Welch said. "We don't think it is consistent with the values of the vast majority of the people. We think it is an anti-family lifestyle and agenda."

\$100 BILLS ARE MULTI-BILLION PROBLEM

In April, the government announced a new high-tech \$100 bill that would feature new security features such as a 3-D security strip and color-shifting image of a bell, but this process hit a costly snag when it came to actually printing the money.

The government has produced 1.1 billion of these new bills with a total face value of \$110 billion, more than 10% of the entire physical supply of U.S. currency. Unfortunately, millions of these folded during the printing process, leaving a blank portion running across the bill.

The defective bills will have to be burned. For now, the bills, which cost a total of \$120 million to print, are simply sitting in vaults.

DOING THEIR DUTY TO GOD AND COUNTRY

2010 was the 100th anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America.

Many organizations that celebrate such values as "duty to God and country" -- words from the Scout oath -- have either fallen on hard times or have abandoned these values in a quixotic effort to stay relevant. The Girl Scouts, for example, no longer require members to believe in God, and it allows openly gay leaders.

The Boy Scouts, however, will have none of that. Atheists have sued the Scouts so they can be members without having to pledge duty to God, but the Scouts have defended themselves vigorously -- and successfully -- in the courts. In the 1990s, James Dale, an openly gay man, wanted to be a Scout leader and sued for the privilege. The case went to the Supreme Court in 2000. The Boy Scouts won -- but barely: the decision was 5-4.

Though the Scouts have won virtually every case brought against them by the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and others, these battles have not been without their costs, which over several decades have amounted to tens of millions of dollars in legal fees. Robert Knight, an Eagle Scout, said, "The ACLU is trying to peck the Scouts to death, and even when they don't win, they generate controversy and they intimidate." Knight said that in some parts of the country the United Way no longer funds the Boy Scouts, because of the controversy the lawsuits have generated.

But they have also earned the Boy Scouts the admiration of social conservatives and many others because, Knight said, "The Boy Scouts make it clear where moral authority comes from. From God. That's controversial today, but most Americans still believe it's true."

And as 2010 comes to an end, and 2011 unfolds before us, we ask again the question with which we began: "What does it all mean?" That's hard to say, but one thing we can say is that the Scouts might have yet one more lesson to teach us, and that lesson comes from the Scout Motto, which is "Be Prepared."



The Rantings
and
Ravings
of
Brother
Ritechus
N.
Dignation



HYPOCRITES

Hypocrites probably do more damage to the Lord's churches than anyone or anything else. Jesus had some choice names for hypocrites, such as vipers, and even used language calling them the children of hell (Matt. 23:15). Now all Christians at some point have some measure of hypocrisy when their walk and their talk is a mite out of step at times, but hypocrites as described in the Bible are usually professors who don't possess. I am amazed at the people who think that a little walk down the church aisle, shakin' the preacher's hand, and doing a repeat-after-me prayer is all it takes to do the trick. These goldbricks never darken the door of the church again, but at their funeral the preacher will say, "I know he was saved because he made a profession of faith." Well, a profession with no possession ain't worth spit. Seems I remember readin' that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away, behold, all things are become new" (II Cor. 5:17).

These hypocrites are just the kind of church members the lost world is looking for as their example. Then they can point out their ungodly living and say, "Well if he's saved with his ungodly living and his profession, then I'm saved with no profession and better living." When you invite them to church, they love to say, "Preacher, I ain't coming to your church because you got hypocrites there." Well, that's clear as mud. They won't go to church with hypocrites, but will rub shoulders with them at Wal-Mart, the shoe store, gas station and everywhere else in town. My answer to their reasoning is, "Well, I would rather go to church with a few hypocrites in this life, than go to hell with all of them for an eternity."

Sure, there are hypocrites in churches and some are runnin' over with them, but it's hard to see how a sane thinkin' man would let others determine what he does with God.

Hypocrites in church may be a reason why some folks stay away, but brother, it's only a reason and not a valid excuse.

Brother Ritechus N Dignation

(Bro. R.N.D. can be contacted thru his friend Joseph Harris at miniedition.net.)



Purpose of God's

(Continued from page 9) ◊

this world would be without the grace of God.

The extent of God's grace towards the sinner is from the day of one's salvation to the day one is called, or all the saved be gathered, home to glory. The purpose of God's grace towards the sinner is that those who have received it would be unto the praise, honor, and glory of the Lord – something of which no sinner can be without the grace of God. Because we are under grace we are able to be and do that which God has purposed for His people.



The Woes of the Great Tribulation

By Philip C. Parks
of Flint, Texas

Matthew 24:15-22 BACKGROUND:

The initial context of Matthew, chapter twenty-four, is primarily the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman general, Titus, in 70 AD (read v. 2).

These verses also have generalized implications for the time and people of the last generation that will witness the apocalyptic coming of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Certainly, the Jews were the initial sufferers when they witnessed their temple's destruction after they rejected their Messianic King. Their punishment became due when they literally took the responsibility and ultimately the blame upon themselves for crucifying their Messianic King by clearly demanding, **"His (Jesus') blood be on us, and on our children"** (Matt. 27:25).

Following our Lord's announcement that the temple would be destroyed, He lists a series of events that will affect the entire globe and its population (see v. 4 ff). There will be---

1. Global deception by assorted antichrists (vv. 4, 5).
2. Global political unrest and warfare (vv. 6, 7a).
3. Global calamities (vv. 7b, 8).
4. Global persecution of God's elect (v. 9).
5. Global unrest between individuals (v. 10).
6. Global proclamation of the gospel (vv. 13, 14).

When all these have come to pass our Lord ominously stated, **"and then shall the end come."** The "end" is described in the remaining verses.

READ Matthew 24:7-22.

INTRODUCTION:

Our Lord stated there is no excuse for any ignorance regarding these prophecies: **"whoso readeth, let him understand"** (v. 15b).

Our Lord's discourse provides only a generalized overview of the woes that will be suffered during this unprecedented difficult time. Many details are provided in numerous other Scriptures. The exegete will be profited by comparing Scripture with Scripture to ferret out complimentary facts for a broader and more in-depth understanding.

The contextual language seems to focus solely upon the Jews' persecution. Consider the following phrases:

(v. 15) **"the holy place"** describes the Jewish temple.

(v. 16) The geographical region of **"Judaea"** obviously refers to the Jews' homeland.

(v. 20) The reference of fleeing **"on the sabbath day,"** the Jewish day of rest, pertains solely to the Jewish religion.

An example Scripture supporting this premise is found in Exodus 16:29. This verse prohibits the Jews from doing work on the Sabbath day and from traveling outside the home. Moses told Israel, **"the LORD hath given you the sabbath, . . . abide ye every man in his place, let no man go out of his place on the seventh (Sabbath) day."**

TRANSITION: At least four descriptive woes are provided.

1. WOE #1: THE ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION (V. 15).

Our Lord said, **"When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place. . ."**

(1) The phrase, **"abomination of desolation,"** must be correctly interpreted.

(A) The word **"abomination"** may be described as

* anything that is foul, repugnant, detestable, and disgusting;

* usually associated with gross immortality;

* a defiling, sacrilegious object or idol that is erected in a holy and forbidden place.

Our Lord did not provide any details or a literal description of what this abomination will be. But rest assured, the Jews will immediately and readily recognize it for what it is and its blasphemous and desecrating significance.

(B) The word **"desolation"** may be described as anything that destroys the sacred purpose of an object or place. If the Jews build a new temple during the end time, that temple will most likely be where this **"abomination of desolation"** will appear. The very presence of that which will be determined to be the abomination will cause the Jews to forsake that place of worship.

Possibly the closest resemblance to the eschatological abomination of desolation was when King Antiochus IV "built an idol altar upon God's altar, [and] he slew swine upon it" (see Flavius Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*, vol. III, book XII, chap. 5, para. 4).

(2) The "ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION" WILL BE WORSHIPPED IN GOD'S STEAD.

Our Lord said it will **"stand in the holy place."** The word **"stand"** means to be fixed or established. It seems to imply that an idol statue or even a person will stand in the Jew's sacred place of worship and proclaim to be God and/or the Messiah.

The phrase, **"the holy place,"** may arguably be:

* Jerusalem (see Neh. 11:1; Matt. 4:5; etc.), or

* the yet to be erected temple that will be deemed holy as was the former temple (see passages such as Psa. 79:1, etc.), or

* within the veil (**"the most holy place"**) (see Heb. 9:7, etc.).

(3) DANIEL'S PROPHECIES FORETELL THIS EVENT (V. 15).

Daniel was verified as a legitimate prophet when our Lord stated, **"..spoken of by Daniel the prophet."** See Daniel 9:24-27; 12:9-12 for our Lord's reference Scriptures. One such specific quotation is stated thus: **"the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up"** (Dan. 12:11).

II. WOE # 2: PERILS WILL DISPERSER THE JEWS (vv. 16-20).

NOTE: In Luke's parallel record of our Lord's Olivet discourse, Jesus describes a significant event not recorded in Matthew, chapter twenty-four. Luke records our Lord saying, **"when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed (surrounded) with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh"** (Luke 21:20). This event will prompt the Jews to disperse to escape certain death. The word **"desolation"** has two connotations:

(1) Jerusalem will be destroyed to the point that the city will be uninhabitable, and also, the city will be looted and plundered so that it will not be able to sustain an economy. These conditions will force the Jews to disperse from the destroyed remains of their beloved city.

(2) THE JEWISH DISPERSINGS ARE GENERALLY DESCRIBED (Matt. 24).

(A) To avoid certain death, every Jew must flee for safety (v. 16): **"Then let them which be in Judaea (the center of the Jewish persecution) flee into the mountains."**

(B) The urgency of their fleeing takes precedence over preparation (vv. 17, 18): **"Let him which is on the housetop not come down to take any thing out of his house. Neither let him which is in the field return back to take his clothes."**

The importunate need for immediate

flight will prohibit the Jews from preparing and packing even the barest necessities required for such a venture.

(C) Fleeing will be especially difficult for the pre-natal and those with infants (v. 19): **"And woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck in those days!"** Compare this verse with Luke 23:28, 29.

(D) Weather and the Jewish religious traditions will pose physical and religious ethical difficulties for the fleeing Jews (v. 20): **"Pray ye that your flight be not in the winter, neither on the sabbath day."**

III. WOE # 3: GLOBAL TRIBULATION (v. 21).

Our Lord described this terrible time succinctly: **"then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no, nor ever shall be."**

(1) THIS PERIOD IS DESCRIBED AS THE "GREAT TRIBULATION."

The word **"tribulation"** is synonymous with trouble, distress, and suffering. Conservative Bible scholars usually interpret this phrase to be the second half of the seven-year tribulation period. The indescribable calamities the Jews suffered during the persecutions under Antiochus Epiphanes IV, the Roman emperors, Adolph Hitler, and the like, will pale in comparison to that they will endure during the Great Tribulation.

(2) DANIEL'S PROPHECIES FORETELL ADDITIONAL DETAILS DURING THIS EVENT (e.g. Dan. 9:27).

(A) The eschatological Antichrist will make a peace treaty with Israel based on deception (Dan. 9:27a): **"He (the Antichrist) shall confirm the covenant with many for one week (seven years)."**

(B) The Antichrist will treacherously break this treaty and prohibit Jewish worship (Dan. 9:27b): **"In the midst of the week (after the first 3 1/2 yrs.) he (the eschatological Antichrist) shall cause the sacrifice (the daily slaughtered sacrificial animal) and the oblation (gift offerings) to cease."**

(C) The Jews will forsake their defiled place of worship (Dan. 9:27e): **"For the overspreading (extreme idolatrous practices) of abominations he (the Antichrist) shall make it desolate (cause it to be abandoned due to its defilement), even until the consummation (full end), and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate."**

(3) ALL JEWS AND CHRISTIANS WILL BE THE FOCUS OF PERSECUTION.

(A) Of the Jews' persecution, our Lord stated, **"they (the Jews) shall fall (be slaughtered) by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations; and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled"** (Luke 21:24).

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Woes of the Great

(Continued from page 16) ◊

(B) God's elect will also be persecuted as stated by the elder conversing with Apostle John: **"These (Christian martyrs) are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb"** (Rev. 7:14).

Apostle John speaks of these same martyrs later on in his revelatory writings (read Rev. 20:4).

IV. WOE # 4: WIDESPREAD DESTRUCTION OF LIFE ON PLANET EARTH (v. 22):

"Except those days should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened."

(1) THE BOOK OF REVELATION IS REplete WITH RECORDINGS OF WIDESPREAD DEATH.

Examples references include:

(A) The rider of the red horse will **"take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another"** (Rev. 6:4).

(B) Of the pale horse and rider: **"power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth"** (Rev. 6:8).

(C) Of the first trumpet events: **"the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up"** (Rev. 8:7).

(D) Of the second trumpet events: **"the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died"** (Rev. 8:9).

(E) Of the third trumpet events: **"many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter"** (Rev. 8:11).

(F) The hellish army of the sixth trumpet will **"slay the third part of men"** (Rev. 9:15).

(G) Of the second vial events: **"every living soul died in the sea"** (Rev. 16:3).

(2) GOD'S ELECT WILL BE PERSECUTED UNTO DEATH (Rev. 17:6).

Apostle John, writing of the global apostate religion, declared, **"I saw the woman drunken (speaks of her murderous hatred) with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus."**

CLOSE: No past holocaust has ever measured up the woes of this great tribulation because, as previously pointed out, our Lord horrifically described this period as the **"great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to this time, no nor ever shall be"** (v. 21).

While God's elect will be persecuted unmercifully by the world's religious system, they will receive mercy from their God: **"for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened"** (v. 22b).

The good news for God's elect is that

our Lord Jesus Christ will deliver His people from this awful fate as proclaimed by Apostle Paul. He encouraged us to **"wait for his (God the Father's) Son from heaven, whom he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come"** (I Thess. 1:10).



Truthfulness Versus Deception

By Tom Ross
of South Point, Ohio

"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another" (Eph. 4:25).

The character trait of truthfulness may be defined as accurately reporting the facts without exaggerating or concealing information. It is the opposite of lying (I John 2:21). When truthfulness is faithfully practiced we earn the trust of others. In a world where deception runs rampant Christians must strive to be truthful in their homes, on the job, and in the world at large.

FOUNDATIONS OF TRUTHFULNESS

There are three sources which serve as foundations of truthfulness:

1. The Word of God: **"Sanctify them through thy truth: THY WORD IS TRUTH"** [Emp. TR] (John 17:17). The more our lives are permeated with the Word of God, the more truthful we will be in our relationship with God and others. Those who disregard the Scriptures as a standard of truthfulness usually are marked by deception and dishonesty.

2. The Law of God: **"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor"** (Ex. 20:16). Psalm 119:142 declares: **"Thy law is the truth."** The moral law reveals that God is a God of absolute truthfulness who despises deception. Therefore, God's moral government requires truthfulness. Deception is one of the things God hates and regards as abominable (Prov. 6:19). Those who disregard God's law through the practice of deception will be punished: **"A false witness shall not be unpunished, and he that speaketh lies shall not escape"** (Prov. 19:5).

3. The Life of the Lord Jesus Christ: **"Jesus saith unto him, I AM the way, THE TRUTH, [Emp. TR] and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me"** (John 14:6). Jesus Christ is the epitome of truthfulness (John 1:14,17). He never tried to deceive anyone, nor did He ever utter a falsehood. As ambassadors for Christ, believers should strive to model the behaviour of Jesus of whom it is written: **"Who did no sin,**

neither was guile found in his mouth" (I Pet. 2:22).

When the Word of God regulates the life, and the law of God is obeyed, and the example of Christ is followed, truthfulness will prevail.

BEWARE OF DECEPTION

1. Satan is the original deceiver (John 8:44). Therefore when we practice deception we are modeling the behaviour of the most wicked person in all the universe (Prov. 11:18; 14:25; II John 7; Rev. 12:9; 13:14).

2. Once an individual starts lying and deceiving, they develop a pattern of deception. They will lie in an attempt to cover their sin, escape certain consequences, or to make themselves look better in the eyes of others. We must teach our children that lying is wrong and sinful!

3. Abraham endangered the purity and welfare of his wife when he lied (Gen. 12:18-19). David tried to cover his sin of adultery through deception, but it was brought to light and he was chastised by God the remainder of his life (II Sam. 12:7-14). Annanias and Sapphira were killed because of their practice of deception (Acts 5:1-11). It is for this reason we must take heed to God's warnings against the practice of deception (Prov. 12:17-22; Col. 3:8-9; Rev. 21:8).

4. The demon of deception permeates our society. Its influence comes through the secular media, politicians, and public education (the teaching of situation ethics and secular humanism). Many television shows are permeated with lying and deceit. The liberal media often reports only the news that promotes their political agenda. Many politicians have reached their position through deceit and dishonesty. Beware of the subtle demon of deception. God hates it and rejects those who practice it (Psa. 5:6; 101:6-7).

IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICING TRUTHFULNESS

1. God desires truth in the inward parts of man (Psa. 51:6). Therefore we must endeavor to saturate our heart, soul, and mind with truthfulness.

2. If we expect to be used of God to influence others for good, truthfulness must permeate our lives (Ex. 18:21; Zech. 8:16-17).

3. Acceptable service (Josh. 24:14); fellowship with God (Psa. 15:1-2); worship (John 4:24); and spiritual liberty (John 8:32) are all associated with truthfulness. Therefore, this character trait is indispensable.

4. Where truthfulness is lacking injustice and iniquity will prevail (Isa. 59:13-15). This is the very reason why America has become so wicked.

5. The spiritual welfare of our homes is at stake. If we fail to be truthful, what kind of example are we setting for our children? If we practice truthfulness

we can say with Solomon: **"Hear; for I will speak of excellent things; and the opening of my lips shall be right things. For my mouth shall speak truth; and wickedness is an abomination to my lips"** (Prov. 8:6-7).

ABRAHAM'S COMMUNION WITH GOD

The eighteenth chapter of Genesis provides much instruction concerning the art of communion with God. The entire chapter involves Abraham's fellowship and enjoyment in the presence of the Lord that flows from an obedient life characterized by consecration unto God.

There are two New Testament passages of Scripture that best explain Abraham's communion with God. John 14:23 declares: **"Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him."** Abraham had kept, believed, and cherished the promise of God; now he would enjoy the fruit of obedient faith: intimate communion with the Holy One. Oh, that each child of God would learn that obedient faith enhances our fellowship with God! Our Lord wants us to awaken to His promise and invitation to share intimate communion with Him as Revelation 3:20 implies: **"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."** What a delightful, spiritual feast we can enjoy with our lovely Lord if we would only hearken to His gracious invitation!

Even though Abraham had failed some tests, the desire of his heart was to walk with God and commune with Him. That elevated desire was granted in the form of three distinct privileges revealed in Genesis eighteen. C. H. Mackintosh describes them thusly: **"In the interesting section of his (Abraham's) history now before us, we find him in the enjoyment of three special privileges, namely providing refreshment for the Lord, enjoying full communion with the Lord, and interceding for others before the Lord. These are high distinctions; and yet are they only such as ever result from an obedient, separated, holy walk."**

ABRAHAM SUPS WITH JESUS (Gen. 18:1-8)

1. In the heat of the day we find Abraham sitting at the door of his tent in all probability mediating upon the things of God and praying. Our most wonderful times of communion with God often occur when our hearts are seasoned and our minds are prepared through prayer and meditation.

2. As Abraham was mediating, the Lord and two angels appeared to him. This preincarnate appearing of Christ is referred to as a Theophany in theology.

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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).



Stand for Truth, or Fall for Anything

Greetings, grace, and peace to you, dear reader. I apologize once more for my sporadic writing. There have been differences of opinion, miscommunications, and lack of diligence---for all of which I take full responsibility. Please keep me in your prayers.

I am doing well, still in college. After this semester I only need two more classes to complete my degree.

Speaking of learning, it is my prayer that each of my incarcerated readers takes every opportunity available to further your education. A wise and dear friend once told me that it doesn't matter what you study, as long as you never stop learning. And let's face it, we need every advantage we can garner coming out of prison. Not to mention, knowledge is something no-one can take from you.

Coming out of prison is something I hope to do soon. I'm three months away from my next parole review. I received a one year set-off this year and look forward to a favorable answer next time around. Please keep this in your prayers also.

Again, I apologize for my inconsistency and will try to have a column each month until at least February when I'm due to receive my parole hearing. I don't know yet what my writing status will be when I am released. I'll have to cross that bridge when I reach it. Until then, dear reader, keep me in your prayers as I continue to stumble down this rocky path they call prison.

"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25).

I am often asked why I do not attend the unit chapel services. I hear comments such as, "Man, your column is great. How can you write so well about the Bible and not go to church?" When I give an answer they look at me like I kicked their dog. It's the same look I get when I refuse an invitation to a "prayer circle." In short I don't believe these things honor God, however, I would like to take the time to further expound upon my beliefs and reasoning.

First of all, I'm not a Protestant and all unit chapel services are Protestant or Catholic. The Sovereign Grace Baptists, known by many different names down

through the centuries, have never been a part of the Catholic church. So by definition we are not a Protestant denomination.

I believe the Protestant denominations teach errors and vain traditions of their harlot mother and try to ". . .**shun profane and vain babblings: for they will increase unto more ungodliness**" (II Tim. 2:16). So to attend the unit chapel services would require me to compromise my beliefs and convictions, something I'm just not willing to do.

I do believe the Scriptures, and fully believe we (Sovereign Grace Baptists) should assemble ourselves together as the Word admonishes. However, I do not believe that we should compromise our beliefs and attend Protestant services just because that is all that is available. I would not get baptized by an unscriptural church, so why would I attend to be taught by one?

Now, as for "Prayer Circles," I believe these are polar opposites from what Scripture teaches about prayer: **"And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men"** (Matt. 6:5). Isn't this what is done when a group of inmates gather together in a prayer circle? Are they not, in effect, saying, "Look at us, look how pious we are?"

True believers should follow the clear teaching of Jesus: **"When thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly"** (Matt. 6:6).

It is never easy to be the lone voice standing for truth when the establishment and the population are opposed to it. But I cannot, and will not compromise the truth just to be accepted by the status quo. Better souls than I have given far more than I'll ever be asked to give in standing for the truth. So how can I not use this voice I've been given to do the same?

Until next time, dear reader, may the Lord bless you above measure with His all consuming grace.



Truthfulness Versus

(Continued from page 17) ◊

There are several times in the Old Testament where Christ appeared in bodily form to the saints of God. What a thrill it must have been to behold the Lord of glory face to face!

3. Abraham was so overwhelmed by the Lord's presence, he ran to greet Him and bowed himself toward the ground. Just a glimpse of the Lord of glory, whether with physical or spiritual sight will send a man to his knees in humble worship. I find it interesting that though there were three men, the Lord and two angels, who appeared to Abraham, he only worshipped one of them. He called Jesus **"My Lord,"** and recognized that grace and favor proceeded from Him. Abraham was a worshipper of the true God only. He never paid homage to angels or men, but rather to God alone. He recognized that Christ alone was worthy of adoration and exaltation. Those who worship men or angels in any form whatsoever are the worst sort of idolaters! Abraham addressed Christ in the singular, whereas when the two angels went to Sodom to deliver Lot he addressed them in the plural as **"my lords"** (Gen. 19:2).

4. Not only was Abraham eager to commune with and worship the Lord, he desired the Lord to remain in his presence as evidenced by his request in verse 3: ". . .**pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant.**" This ought to be the consistent desire of every child of God! We ought to delight so much in communion with God that we long to remain in His presence. Dear saint of God, is this your attitude? Do you desire the presence of the Lord and take great delight in communing with Him on a consistent basis? I am afraid that, if some of us were placed in Abraham's tent, we might have said, "It's not Sunday, what are you doing here?" Others might say, "I don't have time to talk to church people today, I want to watch the ball game." Still others might have said, "Come back some other time, I am just getting ready to go hunting or fishing." For Abraham, communion with the living Christ was a top priority that took precedence over everything else.

5. As soon as Abraham greets his honored guests, he makes them feel at home by extending genuine hospitality to them. Abraham actively desired the comfort of his guests. He fetched water so that they could wash their feet, and he offered them a choice spot under the shade tree so they could rest and refresh themselves. He did not look upon the Lord and the two angels as intruders, but rather as honored guests. Hebrews 13:1-2 exhorts God's children to: **"Let brotherly love continue. Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for**

thereby some have entertained angels unawares."

6. The Bible often records instances where fellowship and the sharing of a meal are connected. Abraham quickly dispatched his wife to the oven to make some bread. He then went and picked a choice, tender calf out of his herd, had it dressed and prepared for the feast. He put butter for the bread on the table and milk to drink with their meal. On the spur of the moment, Abraham had prepared a meal fit for a king! No sacrifice was considered too much to enjoy communion and fellowship with His Lord. What a glorious time it must have been for Abraham to enjoy a meal with the Lord of glory and two of His mighty angels! I find it interesting to note that the preincarnate Christ and two of His angels engaged in eating and drinking. I believe there will be a time when the glorified saints in Heaven will sit down at the Marriage Supper of the Lamb to enjoy a meal as they honor the Lamb and His Wife.

7. Several elements of communion with God are revealed in these verses. Preparation by way of meditation, delight in the presence of God, sacrificial hospitality, and giving the Lord priority in our lives are all exemplified in Abraham's communion with Christ. Oh, that God would stir our hearts to emulate the example set by this man of faith!

GOD REBUKES SARAH'S UNBELIEF (Gen. 18:9-15)

1. The Lord and the two angels had a specific reason for coming to Abraham's tent. God always does things for a purpose and a reason. He is never guilty of doing things haphazardly or by accident. There are no accidents with God. They had come to once again tell Abraham that Sarah would bear him a son. This was a miraculous announcement considering Abraham and Sarah were both well past the age of producing children. Jesus promised that at the set time fixed by the decree of God, Abraham and Sarah would have a son.

2. Sarah was eavesdropping on the conversation between Abraham and the Lord Jesus. When she heard the miraculous announcement, she began to laugh to herself or as the Scripture records **"within herself"** (v. 12). In her heart she also manifested unbelief that God could do such a marvelous thing. Many times I have read this passage and pictured Sarah bursting out in laughter and then shouting that such a thing was an utter impossibility. However, she laughed and expressed this unbelief silently in her heart. No one heard the laughter and unbelief of Sarah, but the Lord. He knows the thoughts and intents of our hearts. God knows all about our innermost feelings that no one else can see or hear. This passage ought to stir us to

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Truthfulness Versus

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sanctify our inner thoughts and desires, seeing that the Lord is the omniscient Seer of our hearts and minds.

3. God rebuked Sarah for her laughter of unbelief. Sarah tried to deny that she had laughed within herself, but to no avail. Notice that unbelief, denial of sin, fear, and lying all go together. When people fail to believe the Word of God, they will also deny and attempt to justify their sin. No matter how loud and long Sarah denied her sin of unbelief she could not hide her emotions of unbelief from the Lord. When Jesus told Sarah that He knew she had laughed within herself, her heart must have been overwhelmed with conviction and awe. Here was an individual who could look beyond the outward exterior and see the innermost workings of her heart.

4. Verse fourteen is one of the touchstone verses of Scripture where the Lord boldly declares: **“Is any thing too hard for the LORD?”** How our hearts ought to rejoice and take comfort in such a powerful statement! What we consider to be unattainable and impossible with men, God can accomplish with His Almighty hand. Our God is able to accomplish whatever He purposes to do! He can bring life out of the loins of Abraham at 100 years old, and out of the dead womb of Sarah at 90. Nothing is too hard for God. He created this vast universe by merely speaking it into existence. He destroyed the earth with a worldwide flood. He brought the ten plagues upon the Egyptians. He opened the Red Sea so the Israelites could escape their oppressors. He was responsible for the virgin birth of Jesus Christ. In the person of Christ He was able to pay the penalty for sin and redeem a multitude out of Adam’s fallen race. He conquered sin, death, and Hell by raising from the dead. He has the power to quicken spiritually dead sinners and transform them into saints. How our hearts ought to burst with confidence and admiration for a God who can accomplish that which is impossible with men. Our faith should be strengthened when we read the declaration of Ephesians 3:20: **“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us.”** In light of such a glorious promise let us cast off our shackles of unbelief and renew our confidence in God. No matter what impossible circumstances we find ourselves in, let us draw comfort, confidence, and faith in God from the words of Christ: **“The things which are impossible with men are possible with God”** (Luke 18:27).

7. How Abraham’s heart must have been cheered and encouraged by the precious promise of the Lord. As we

consider what great and impossible things God has done, our desire to commune with Him ought to grow more fervent. Who would not want to commune with a God of such majesty and power?

GOD REVEALS HIS PURPOSE TO ABRAHAM (Gen. 18:16-22)

1. Intimate communion with the Almighty will usually yield the rich fruitage of enlightenment concerning the Divine purpose. The man who spends much time with God will come to know the purpose and will of God. Such was the case with Abraham. Christ’s mission was one of grace and mercy to the household of Abraham, but also one of doom and destruction for the reprobate cities of the plain which included Sodom and Gomorrah. As the honored guests walked and looked toward Sodom, Abraham walked with them. The Lord then determined to reveal His purpose to Abraham concerning the wicked cities of the plain because of their open practice of sodomy.

2. The reasons why the Lord determined to reveal His purpose of destroying Sodom and Gomorrah are two fold as revealed in verses 18-19. First, because Abraham was to become the father of a great and mighty nation and be known as the man whose seed would bless all the nations of the earth. Second, because Abraham was a man of faithfulness and obedience who would instruct his household in the way of the Lord. Abraham was a man who would lead his family in paths of moral rectitude and uprightness. He would command his children in truth and lead them in paths of righteousness. The man who enjoys close communion with the Lord will have a testimony that influences those around him for good. The man who governs his family according to godly principles will be enlightened to God’s will. The more closely we walk with God, and the more subject we are to His Word, the more we shall know of His mind about everything. Oh, that we might live in such a way that the Lord would be pleased to reveal the deep things of God to us!

3. The cries of sin and debauchery had reached the ears of the righteous judge of all the earth. He had determined to come down and execute judgment upon the cities of the plain for their depravity and ungodliness. They had been guilty of sodomy which God calls a very grievous sin. The Lord reveals to Abraham His plan to judge the cities. The two angels are dispatched to go to Sodom to deliver Lot before the Lord rained down fire and brimstone upon it in judgment. The Lord Jesus remained with Abraham as the two angels proceeded to Sodom. Abraham would enjoy further communion with the Lord of glory.

ABRAHAM’S INTERCESSION (Gen. 18:23-33)

1. Those who engage in intimate,

consistent communion with God will also have a heart filled with concern for others. When the heart is set upon God, it will also be set upon the spiritual and physical welfare of others. Abraham loved God supremely which led him to love his neighbor as himself which is the fulfilling of the whole law as expressed by Christ in Matthew 22:40: **“On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.”** When Abraham learned of the plight of Sodom, his heart was burdened for Lot and his family. He began to pray fervently and persistently that God would not destroy the righteous with the wicked in that city.

2. Abraham first started pleading that God would not destroy the city if only fifty people were found in it. By the time he finished his intercession for Sodom, he was down to ten people. Each time the Lord answered that He would not destroy the city if a certain number of righteous were found within it. However, as Genesis chapter nineteen reveals, only three persons were delivered from the judgment fire that fell upon Sodom. Sodom was so corrupt and ungodly only three righteous people with weak testimonies could be found within it! As a result, God rained down fire and brimstone upon it.

3. What amazes me about the intercession of Abraham is that he knew full well of the wickedness of Sodom, yet his heart was burdened for the ungodly there. I am afraid that if God revealed to many Christians in our day that He was going to rain down fire and brimstone upon San Francisco, their reply would be **“Burn baby, burn!”** Abraham was so moved by the prospect of judgment upon the ungodly he began to intercede for them. The lesson for us is that no matter how wicked we may perceive people to be, we should desire to see them saved by the grace of God.

4. I think it is most instructive to see how Abraham approached God as he interceded for the cities of the plain. He came in a spirit of reverence acknowledging the absolute righteousness and justice of the One He was speaking to as verse 25 implies: **“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?”**

As Abraham approached God on behalf of others, he came in a spirit of humility and dependence. He recognized his own frailty and baseness by declaring himself to be **“but dust and ashes”** (v. 27). Abraham was pleading with God, not presumptuously demanding anything from Him.

Also, Abraham’s intercession is marked by persistence. He did not stop interceding after his first request, but continued knocking on the door of the throne of grace. God rewards that kind of persistence in prayer as James 5:16 implies: **“The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.”**

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BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 11-1-2010 to 11-30-2010

Beginning Balance	\$8,188.58
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Berea B. C., Westpoint, TN.....	150.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	575.00
TOTAL.....	8,763.58

EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	640.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	640.00
.....	\$8,123.58
Less Corbin, KY des.	-843.72
ENDING BALANCE	\$7,279.86

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance	\$1,043.72
RECEIPTS:	
TOTAL.....	1,043.72
EXPENDITURES:	
WCTT	200.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$843.72



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 11-1-2010 to 11-30-2010

Beginning Balance	\$2,465.09
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RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX	50.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	24.30
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN	150.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	100.00
Bible Believer’s B. C., Naples, ID	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	313.45
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	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
L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA	60.00
Landmark M. B. C., Moncks Corner, SC.....	50.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Lord’s Church, Goose Creek, SC.....	50.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....	400.00
New Testament B. C., Bristol, TN	10.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumersville, AR.....	50.00
South Park M. B. C., Seattle, WA	25.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX	60.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC.....	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	110.50
Dividing checks	250.00
Anonymous	1,342.00
Sub Total	\$4,465.25
TOTAL.....	\$6,930.34

EXPENDITURES:	
Printing.....	581.00
Postage	737.81
Wages	2,300.00
FICA	175.96
Dividing checks	250.00
Total Expenditures	\$4,044.77
.....	2,885.57
Bank Service charge	-13.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$2,872.57

Where Will You Spend Eternity?

By Larry Ellis
of Livermore, Kentucky



that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. 7:21-23).

Hebrews 9:12 establishes the fact that it is the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ and that alone which saves a person from their sin. According to Titus 3:5, salvation is not by any works done by man, but by the mercy and grace of God. Man can make many wrong choices and poor decisions in this life, and perhaps be able to recover later on. But, if a person neglects the salvation provided by Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary, they will spend an eternity regretting it in Hell.

Take a look at Luke 16:19-31. In these verses we find two people who died. One went to Heaven and the other went to Hell. One was rich and one was poor. One would be considered a failure and the other considered a success by the world's standards. One spent a lifetime accumulating "stuff" to enjoy in this life while the other spent time preparing to enjoy the life of eternity. You that are reading this article are doing the same thing, either living for time or preparing for eternity. Which one is it?

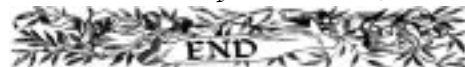
Now take special note of Luke 16:30. This is a message proclaimed from Hell by

a man who became concerned about his family that was still alive. All of a sudden he woke up to realize that Hell was a real place for him, and he did not wish for his family to come where he was. Listen to the message of salvation this lost man in Hell presented, "And he said, Nay father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." This is a lost man who neglected the salvation of Jesus Christ, who is now burning in Hell, wanted someone to go back into time and preach the message of salvation to his family? The message he wanted to send to his brothers was "repent." There is not a mention of works of any kind, but simply a repentance of sin and faith in the shed blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Let me ask you, if you died today, where will you spend eternity? It will either be Heaven or Hell. You may be religious, you may be sincere, you may be baptized, you may have your name on a church roll, and the list goes on. But, if you don't have a personal experience of salvation where you repented of your sins toward God, and by faith trusted in the death, burial and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, you are still lost in your sins and headed for a place called Hell, which was prepared for the devil and his angels.

John 3:3 says, ". . . Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Please do not wait until it is too late, because at death your eternal home is established and the offer of salvation has ended.

(Bro. Ellis is pastor of the Richland Baptist Church of Livermore, KY. For more information visit www.richland-baptist-church.com.)



Truthfulness Versus

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Each request Abraham made was answered by the Lord. As we intercede for others may we do it with persistence and diligence!

5. Verse 33 reveals the nature of true communion with God. It is man and God speaking and listening to one another, enjoying the fellowship and closeness of one another. Oh, that God would stir our hearts to desire closer communion with Him. May we learn to listen to God as He speaks to us through His Word, and reverently speak to Him in prayer. We all need to dive deeper into a consistent devotional life marked by genuine communion with the One who is Altogether Lovely.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, Kansas would like to announce that they are having special services for their 15th anniversary. Services will be held January 28th (7PM), January 29th (7PM), and January 30th (regular Sunday Services). The guest speaker will be Eld. Jesse C. Hille, pastor of Maranatha Missionary Baptist Church in Alliance, OH

For more information contact Pastor Hille at (620) 845-3624 or nhille@gmail.com.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Galena, OH is in need of a pastor. Any interested candidates possessing the qualifications and traits concerning the office as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are asked to contact either of the following: Bro. Randy Coffey at (614) 871-2406 or Email recoffeypot@aol.com or Bro. Joe Vass at (614) 846-8699 or Email jamiijoe@wowway.com.

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

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

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

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

The Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, MS is in need of a pastor.

Any interested Elders may call (662) 282-7794 or email bbchurch@nexband.com for more information.

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

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- The Dangers of Sin – The Chastisement of God by Paul Stepp
- God So Loved the World by E. G. Cook