

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

Molech In America: Her Name Is "Choice"

By Doug Newell IV
of Wake Forest, North Carolina

"Thou shalt not kill" (Ex. 20:13).
"Jesus said, Thou shalt do no murder" (Matt. 19:18).
"And shed innocent blood, even the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan: and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went a whoring with their own inventions" (Ps. 106:38-39).

If you read the whole psalm, you will have read a history of the children of Israel that shows the failures of the people contrasted by God's ever enduring mercy. The passage of the 106th Psalm which we read is a very disturbing one. The children of Israel offered their children up as human sacrifices unto the Devil. What a terrible thought! Children, their own children being sacrificed to their



idols, which God said was really sacrificed unto the Devil. It is difficult to think they did not grasp or consider the fact they were murdering their children and offering them to a false god, and didn't see that as the same as Devil worship, yet God did. They shed INNOCENT blood. The land was polluted because of their deaths. God looked upon their nation, and His wrath was kindled, as the land was soaked in the blood of their children that God had given them. Psalm 127:3, "Lo, children are an heritage of the LORD; and the fruit of the womb is his reward." These idols of murder were the idols of Canaan, specifically, the false god named Molech.

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The Scope of Christ's Prophetic Mission - Part One

By Charles R. Sumner
(1790 - 1874)

In considering the character of Christ, as "a teacher come from God" (John 3:2), it will be always present to the mind of the believer, that the office of prophet was subordinate in the object of our blessed Lord's incarnation to the office of priest. His intention was, not alone to instruct by word and example, according to a popular and specious representation, which strikes at the very root of Christianity, but to redeem; --- not alone to promulgate the revelation of a future life," but to "put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" (Heb. 9:26). However properly we may exalt the purity and spirituality of His doctrine---the sublimity of His discourse---the perfection of His moral precepts---we



shall still be far from comprehending His real glory, while we contemplate Him exclusively, or principally, as an "ensample of godly life," instead of a sacrifice; as a lawgiver instead of a redeemer. No error can be more dangerous than "the supposition, that man wanted an instructor, more than a saviour: or, in other words, that the merits of Christ were not so necessary to obtain remission of sins, as His instruction was to teach us the way of righteousness. But this is contrary to Scripture." Macknight has drawn the distinction with remarkable

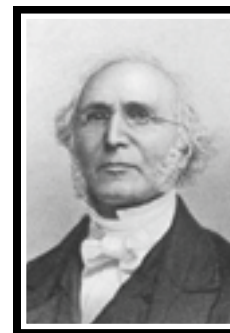
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Sorrow--- The Friend of Christian Graces

By Gardiner Spring
(1785 - 1873)

The children of God have much to struggle with. Their vocation, high and holy as it is, has a militaristic aspect. It is a protracted conflict, in which they find it necessary not only to act on the defensive, but to be the aggressors. "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Eph. 6:12). To the peculiarity of the conflict in the first ages of the Christian church, there ever has been and is now superadded, the ordinary and never ceasing conflict with that spirit of the world which is enmity with God.

It is not only true, as has been already intimated, that the love of the world is the ruin of worldly men, it is the besetting sin of Christians. "The lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life" (I



John 2:16), in some of their insinuating and multifaceted forms, are ever more ensnaring them. "The best of men love the world far more than they ought." Nor are they always sensible of its depressing and secularizing power. It eclipses their faith, and limits and obscures their spiritual vision. It allures their affections from God, confuses their contemplations of the realities of eternity, and is not infrequently so entwined about their heartstrings, that they have lost the life and soul of religion, and for a time appear in no way different from other men.

In miserable and criminal concurrence with these outward exposures, there are strong tendencies, from "the sin that

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"Where There Is No Vision, the People Perish"

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he" (Prov. 29:18).

The greatest problem plaguing us in the hour in which you and I are now living is the lack of spiritual vision. The greatest affliction with which people are suffering today is not cancer, heart disease, tuberculosis, insecurity, low self-esteem, chemical sensitivity, or many of the other such ailments we could mention. The greatest affliction now troubling lost men, women, boys, and girls, saints of God, and members of true churches everywhere is eyes which are blind and ears which are deaf to the Word of the Lord. We hear much today about how the self-esteem of people needs to



be raised, and how we need to work on getting others to feel better about themselves. I think people feel just fine about themselves; it's the work of the Lord that needs to be raised in their estimation and about which they need to have some new and revived zeal. We are living in a day much like that of which the Apostle Paul spoke to his own countrymen when they would not accept the gospel which he proclaimed unto them, showing them that Jesus is Christ: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say,

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The greatest saint on earth has got to reach heaven on the same terms as the greatest sinner: unworthy, unfit, good-for-nothing, but saved through grace. Elizabeth Prentiss (1818 - 1878)

July 5, 2009

Volume XXIX, Number 7
Whole Number 360

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

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

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

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - U.S.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45

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

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

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

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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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Molech In America

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Molech was an appalling false god, yet one that the nation of Israel allowed among them, and the worship of Molech greatly influenced them. I believe that you will easily see this is not simply a historical lesson, but as the worship of Molech was truly, in God's eyes, the worship of the Devil, this same evil influence presides heavily today, only today the false god is called "Choice."

Molech was a false god of the Amorites, the descendants of Canaan. The worship of Molech involved offering human child sacrifices. According to history, some worshipers heated the idol god and the lifeless babies were laid in the blazing arms of the idol. They burnt the children! In Scripture it is phrased "passed through the fire." What a cruel and unnatural sin! It should cause any person to step back, and be disgusted at this monstrous transgression. Archeological sites have found mass graves of infant skeletons around idol gods. When I see pictures of the Jewish Holocaust, the killing fields and mass graves, a chill goes down my spine, so when I imagine these temples of worship, and what went on there, my heart breaks. Molech was not limited to obscure barbarous nations, but had an evil influence in Israel. Solomon was influenced by his wives (I Kings 11:6-11) as he built idols for Molech, and sacrificed unto the false gods of his wives. This was the reason that God rent the kingdom. You also have King Ahab who did "all things as did the Amorites," which would include passing children through the fire (I Kings 21:26). King Ahaz as well, notice in II Chronicles 28:1-3, "Ahaz was twenty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned sixteen years in Jerusalem: but he did not that which was right in the sight of the LORD, like David his father: For he walked in the ways of the kings of Israel, and made also molten images for Baalim. Moreover he burnt incense in the valley of the son of Hinnom, and burnt his children in the fire, after the abominations of the heathen whom the LORD had cast out before the children of Israel" (Emphasis DPN). He burnt HIS children in the fire? His own children? His flesh and blood, offered in a burning sacrifice? Manasseh, moreover, was involved in this wicked observance (II Chronicles 33:6). Then, in II Kings 23, you read the reforms of godly king Josiah, and his cleansing of the nation of such a wicked custom. Despite the fact that Josiah didn't change hearts of the people by ending the practice, he did stop that wicked worship, for a time, as Jehoiakim likely brought it back. You can't legislate morality in the heart, but you can in the nation, and I am sure the babies were thankful for Josiah and his

reform. For abortion to end, it will take a spiritual revival of this land.

This is Molech. A wicked false god, to whom people took their precious children, and cast them into a fire, their life taken from them, their flesh destroyed, all in the name of this god. Molech was not a real person, but a figment of their imagination, a Devil inspired god, in which odious assassinations took place. Do you think we are so sophisticated today that we are above vile idol worship? There is a false god today, in which babies are sacrificed; however, not in some remote region of the universe, but here, a few miles from our own homes, babies lives are taken from them. THESE CHILDREN ARE SACRIFICED! MURDERED! A viable, sustainable life is taken from them by force, none the less by their mothers, sometimes forced by their fathers. The god is not called MOLECH today, but today they call her 'CHOICE', the god of abortion.

We can see that God hates the worship of Molech, the murder of babies and commanded Israel to stay away from it, and feels no different today. The worship of Choice is an abominable religion, a repulsive idol and a devilish practice. Abortion is an abomination to God. In Leviticus 18:21, God says "And thou shalt not let any of thy seed pass through the fire to Molech, neither shalt thou profane the name of thy God: I am the LORD." Prior to the Molech commandment you have regulations concerning incest. Then after the command not to murder babies, God lists homosexuality, bestiality as unlawful actions. Then closes with Leviticus 18:26, "Ye shall therefore keep my statutes and my judgments, and shall not commit any of these abominations; neither any of your own nation, nor any stranger that sojourneth among you." The sins listed are as follows: murdering babies, bestiality, homosexuality, to wit are all unnatural sins. God even compares this practice to witchcraft in Deuteronomy 18:10-13.

The worshipers of Choice will deny that they worship her as a god, but judge and compare for yourselves whether Choice is a false god. In the perspective of this article, I will use the word choice as those who advocate abortion use the word. Those who say they are pro-choice are not advocates of individuals to self-govern under laws of morality and decency, but choice means abortion, plain and simple. If you are pro-choice does not mean you promote the freedom to choose where your kids go to school, or the ability to choose to pray in public schools, or pro choice of Bible reading in the public square or choose abstinence for unmarried people, but it is unmistakable that pro-choice means pro-abortion. So, for this article, Choice will be used as the abortionist use the word, pro-babykilling.

How can the horrors of this genocide be ignored? Thousands of people daily are slaughtered and the victims are defenseless against their attackers, then murdered and cast aside. This country is soaked with the blood of innocents, sacrificed at the altar of Choice. From "sea to shining sea" we have set up idols of Choice. Under the beautiful spacious skies come the silent cry of the aborted. What a cruel and wicked god Choice is and what a deceptive religion the prophets of Choice preach. She promises hope, liberty and freedom, but leaves a trail of cruelty, bondage, death and Hell.

The priests and priestesses of Choice are very deceptive as they purposefully call their god Choice, because the word is an empowering name, it strikes a chord with mankind. What person does not want to choose for themselves? But contrary to popular opinion, Choice's real name is Murder. The particulars of this god and her religion are purposely kept under the dark cloud of rhetoric, case law and false statistics, while in reality, when the light of truth is shined upon abortion, the grim actuality of the assassins tool is clearly seen. From the beginning, anytime a person would take the life of another human being, it was called murder viz. Satan, a murderer from the beginning. Under the religion of Choice, taking the life of an innocent person is not murder, it's called abortion. Harrison Hickman, pollster for the National Abortion Rights Action league said:

"Probably nothing has been as damaging to our cause as the advances in technology which have allowed pictures of the developing fetus, because people now talk about the fetus in much different terms than they did 15 years ago. They talk about it as a human being, which is not something that I have an easy answer on how to cure."

Do you see what happens when the light of truth is shown on their veiled religion? To understand the religion of Choice, you must understand their terminology is a big part of their worship. The word abortion has changed in meaning over time. Consider in 1828 Webster defined abortion as the act of miscarrying, or producing young before the natural time. Now the term is used for the killing of the child in the womb. Abortion sounds better than killing, doesn't it? Also, their theological doctrine forbids the use of the words baby, or child, but you must say fetus. A fetus is defined by Merriam-Webster's as an unborn or unhatched vertebrate especially after attaining the basic structural plan of its kind. That is true, technically an unborn baby is a fetus, but to deny that the unborn is not a human because a technical, medical name for an unborn vertebrate is a fetus, is like denying that you are a man or a woman because you are also a human, or saying that you do not

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have any skin on your face, but you are covered by epidermis. Using a technical term can not change who or what you are talking about. What does the Bible say? **“And the angel of the LORD said unto her, Behold, thou art with child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the LORD hath heard thy affliction”** (Gen. 16:11). They may erroneously deny the Bible as the inerrant Word of God, but even the strongest infidel can't deny the Bible as an ancient manuscript. For thousands of years, a pregnant woman was not with fetus, but with child. Notice again, **“And the woman conceived, and sent and told David, and said, I am with child”** (II Sam. 11:5). **“As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all”** (Eccl. 11:5). Here recognize that a developing baby in the womb is not called a fetus, but a child, and has always been thought of as a child.

The message of Choice is a message of lies. Her priests and priestesses say that due to rape and incest, and health of the mother, abortion is not only a right, but a blessing. Do you think that I have misrepresented their priestesses? Consider this article from World Magazine, a Christian publication written by Marvin Olasky.

“Abortion is a blessing and our work is not done. Let me hear you say it: abortion is a blessing and our work is not done. Abortion is a blessing and our work is not done. Abortion is a blessing and our work is not done.” That was the Rev. Katherine Hancock Ragsdale in 2007, repetitiously inciting her disciples to be not just pro-choice but fanatically pro-abortion. Ragsdale, though, says abortion is a “blessing,” and not only in harsh situations but good ones: “When a woman becomes pregnant within a loving, supportive, respectful relationship; has every option open to her; decides she does not wish to bear a child; and has access to a safe, affordable abortion—there is not a tragedy in sight—only blessing. The ability to enjoy God's good gift of sexuality without compromising one's education, life's work, or ability to put to use God's gifts and call is simply blessing.”

As a worshiper and prophet of Choice (though she calls herself a Christian), this priestess of Choice uses lies and deception to proselytize young women, and gain bodies for her god. Consider this poll of the reasons women stated they had an abortion found at nrlc.org. 21% Unready for responsibility, 21% Can't afford the baby; 16% Baby would change life; 12% Relationship issue; 11% Feels too

immature; 8% Has enough children; 5% Other. WHAT ABOUT THE HARD CASES? 4% for mothers health; 3% baby may have health problem; 0.5% Rape. That means 92.5% of abortions are purely selfish reasons that deal with lifestyle. Even the other 7.5% are self centered reasons. The doctors give opinions on the health of the mother, they are not gods themselves. I personally know a man who was told by a host of doctors and nurses that both his wife and child would die if they did not have an abortion. As a Christian couple, they refused to murder their child, and both mother and daughter are healthy to this day. As for rape and incest, multiplying the sin doesn't erase the initial sin as the baby, who did nothing wrong, gets the death sentence. I have much compassion for those who are victims of rape or incest, but I beseech them not to take part in a furtherance of the crime.

How does God look at the death of the unborn? Choice sees infants as tissue masses, not yet human, but the true and living God sees them as children. Where the terror of the practitioners of Choice abound in death, God super-abounds in mercy. Reading Jeremiah 19 you will see Jeremiah's message at the valley of Hinnom. Hinnom is where Solomon built the idol to Molech, this awful place is where the Greek word that is translated Hell comes from. In verse four, it says **“Because they have forsaken me, and have estranged this place, and have burned incense in it unto other gods, whom neither they nor their fathers have known, nor the kings of Judah, and have filled this place with the blood of innocents;”** then in verse six **“Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that this place shall no more be called Tophet, nor The valley of the son of Hinnom, but The valley of slaughter.”** I want you to notice that God said the **‘blood of innocents’**. Though they were guilty in Adam, and inherited their depraved nature, however God, Who is merciful, called them innocent. They had neither done good nor evil, and I believe that God's Sovereign Grace and Mercy saves these aborted children. One of the great sins of Mannasah was that he

“filled Jerusalem with innocent blood; which the LORD would not pardon” (II Kings 24:4). In Ezekiel 23: 37-39 you find these children were **“born unto me”** [God]. And again in Ezekiel 16:20-21 **“Moreover thou hast taken thy sons and thy daughters, whom thou hast borne unto me, and these hast thou sacrificed unto them to be devoured. Is this of thy whoredoms a small matter, That thou hast slain my children, and delivered them to cause them to pass through the fire for them?”** (Emphasis DPN). These children were God's children, they were murdering God's children. **“Thus saith the LORD; A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rahel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the LORD; Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears: for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the LORD; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy”** (Jer. 31:15-16). This is a prophecy concerning the slaughter of the infants in Matthew chapter two, when Herod **“was exceeding wrath, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men”** (Matt. 2:16), seeking to kill the Lord Jesus. God told the godly women, who knew the Scriptures, not to weep, and to dry their eyes, because they shall come again from the land of the enemy. Were they restored to life? This verse speaks of their eternal life and future resurrection. The enemy here is death, and God showed mercy unto the murdered infants, and these unconscious babes have eternal life. I believe that every child that dies in the womb is one of God's elect. David knew when his infant died that God was gracious to him when he said in II Samuel 12:23, **“I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”** Many Sovereign Grace believers deny that God would save an infant. I believe that the doctrines of Grace expound God's Mercy and Love, and reprobation is just and it is justice. They will question how an infant could trust in Christ. I ask

you, monergistic sovereign gracer, how did you trust in Christ? Is it anymore of a miracle that you, dead in trespasses and sins believed in Christ? Either it is fully of God or not, and I believe it is. Do we ignore the fact that God told us that John the Baptist was regenerated by the Holy Spirit in the womb? **“For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb”** (Luke 1:15). I believe God shows mercy to the unborn child. I am not saying that all babies are innocent, that all babies are saved, then loose their salvation, but that these infants, who are by nature, totally depraved are shown mercy by our Merciful God. Choice would deny them even a soul, yet I believe the Scripture to teach that God loves them with an everlasting love. Even though they are sinners by nature, they have not actively and willingly rebelled against God. God says of infants in the womb in Romans 9:11, **“having done any good or evil,”** when speaking of Jacob and Esau. Many who deny God's mercy in saving the unborn use this verse to justify their belief. True, Esau was a reprobate BEFORE doing any evil, but that does not exclude the fact that Esau was a vessel of wrath fitted for destruction, and he did indeed fill his vessel full. Esau lived, he sinned and he died and is in Hell, suffering for the sins he committed. **“But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death”** (Rev. 21:8). Which of these categories does an unconscious infant belong? I have said all that to say this; we have murdered almost 50 million of God's elect in our nation. I know that we can't think in these terms, but for the sake of the effect of abortion on our land, ask yourself how different would our country be with 50 million more Christians in the land? Using our imagination, what if 10% of those saved were Baptist? How different would our churches be with 5 million more Baptists? How would our economy be different with 50 million more Christian buyers and sellers? 50 million more Christian families? This country has reaped what it has sown.

Oh, the iniquitous god of Choice! God forgive our country. You may have sighed when you saw this article, another abortion article? Preaching to the choir. What can I do but speak out against the cruelty of this crime? I have long since lost what little hope I had in our leaders ever stopping abortion. It is apparent that abortion is only a crucial issue every four years in the United States for the most politicians who claim to be pro-life, and the zeal for it wains after November,

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Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

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KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.....	550	5,000 AM
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DXDS, Digos City, Philippines...	Sunday 12:00 - 12:30 p.m.	1161 Khz	1,000 AM

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and regrettably for the children, a wicked deadly religion for other politicians. The 'indignation' shown over the taking of human life apparently only touches the hearts of some in office during election cycles. I want you to understand, this is not a political issue. Abortion isn't an issue for judges and politicians to wrangle over. This is a moral issue. One that has a clear right and wrong, and I want you to see that no matter what the Supreme Court says, God Almighty, the supreme Judge and Ruler has already given us His judgment on the matter, and I want us to consider what God says about it, not what I say, or president Obama or anyone else. As a nation we are reaping what we have sown. The legalized murder of babies has destroyed this nations economy simply by killing off our consumers and producers. That is a fact you can't deny, we are murdering our future. The legalized murder of babies has brought judgment to our nation. As a whole, our land has worshiped the god of sin and pleasure, and has harvested its reward. No money to raise kids, "murder" say the prophets of Choice. If you are not ready to have a baby, the prophets of Choice say "abort." Will it hurt your career? "Kill the child" say the prophets of Choice. Will it ruin the lifestyle, or as the prophets of Choice declare, have you made a 'mistake'? Friends, it is not a mistake, it is a baby! We live in a murderous, adulterous land, that may be rent from us because of our sin. How long can we expect the blood of innocents to cry out before severe judgment comes?

Or maybe, I'm speaking now to one who is at this time pregnant, and perhaps you are considering abortion and by God's providence you have picked up this paper. Please, do not believe the lies that are told. If you can't take care of that bundle of joy, there are thousands of couples, even now, who like Hannah, are with broken hearts crying out to God for a child of their own. There are pastors who, if can't personally assist you, will happily help put you in contact with someone that can help you. Don't compound your sin. David acted on his lusts and committed adultery with Bathsheba. In an act to cover up his sin and make life easier for himself and to avoid controversy and talk, he had Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, killed. As a result, he brought pain and sorrow upon himself and his family for the rest of his days. Please, consider the consequences of taking another life in order to hide or cover up a sin. I point you to my Lord and Great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. My redeemer, who will make the vilest sinner clean. He gives hope to the hopeless and love to the unlovable. Repent, and turn to Christ.

As I write this, I feel like Elisha, as he looked upon Hazael as telling him he would be King of Syria. Why do I write this? Why does my heart break while typing these words? **"And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord [Elisha]? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child"** (II Kings 8:12).



Sorrow---

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dwelleth in them," not only to insensible aberrations from the straight and narrow way, but to conscious and obvious backsliding. "The enemy is subtle, and the conflict severe." **"The flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other"** (Gal. 5:17). The undercurrent of inbred apostasy is strong, and so resists and mingles itself with the pure river of life that the purer waters are like the troubled sea.

God does not mean that His own children should always remain thus undistinguished from the world that lies in wickedness. We know that "all are not Israel who are of Israel." There are tares among the wheat. And though it belongs not to men to sever the just from the unjust, and although they may grow together until the harvest, the difference between them is often disclosed before the harvest sets in. If any of those who profess to be the friends of God and followers of His Son are false to their profession, He is very apt to make their unfaithfulness and hypocrisy appear, and to place them in circumstances in which their deception shall vanish like shadows before the sun, and their deceitful profession shall stand out before the church and the world. Nor is it less true that the same dispensations of His providence which detect and bring out the hypocrisy of those who have a name that they live and are dead, disclose and discover the sincerity and truthfulness of those who have more than the form of godliness.

An intimate acquaintance with the biography of good men, among other wonders of His grace, shows that the Father of mercies usually places His true friends in circumstances which prove their Christian integrity, and invigorate and burnish their graces. By early covenant He gave them to His Son, and not one of them shall be lost, nor allowed to remain undistinguished from His recognized foes. The promise is explicit--**"If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; If they break my statutes, and keep**

not my commandments; Then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes" (Ps. 89:30-32). He loves His Son too well to violate His covenant with Him, and He loves His people too well to violate His covenant with them, and allow them to rest undisturbed in their idolatrous attachments.

He has a cure for their spiritual declension and their outward backsliding. He casts them into the furnace---He tries them as silver is tried. If the dross is massive and unyielding, He heats the furnace seven times more than it is used to be heated, until the mass melts away and is consumed. This He Himself declares to be His object in these afflictive dispensations. **"Behold,"** says He, **"I will melt them: and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?"** (Jer. 9:7). When He does this, and they endure the trial, they come forth like gold seven times purified. They return to Him from whom they have revolted; their graces are stronger and brighter, and shine in all the beauties of holiness. There is a meaning in their afflictions, and the more emphatic as there is a reality and depth in them when they thus give brightness to their spiritual armor, and crown their conflicts with progressive victories.

The burning arrows of "temptation" are ordinarily showered upon the soul of the believer during the seasons of thoughtless prosperity. These fiery darts do not often fly in the valley of Baca---desolation and sorrow quench them. "Such is sorrow's mission," and such is the voice of experience, and it is but an echo from the divine oracles. "Blessed is the man," says they, "who endures trials; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life. Count it all joy when you fall into diverse trials; knowing this, that the trial of your faith works patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that you may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. Now no chastening for the present seems to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yields the peaceable fruits of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby." Afterward--the ploughshare struck deep; the seed requires time to ripen.

*"The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."*

It is not often that a truly Christian mind long languishes under the gloom of sorrow. Dejected it may be; but there is an

exhilarating power in the truths on which God has caused him to hope. Lauguish it may; but there are graces within, which, like plants of righteousness shrouded in darkness, are perpetually tending towards the light, and eventually emerge into the sunlight of spiritual joy.

Not only do these spiritual consolations break up the settled gloom, but bring with them a deeper and stronger consciousness of adoption into the family of God. The mourner feels that the chastening is from the faithful hand of paternal love. Under the cheerful sunshine of prosperity, many a good man has been so absorbed and gratified in the objects of time and sense, that he had little or no religious enjoyment. His joys were elsewhere. He could not say with the rejoicing thousands of Israel, "Let those who love your name be joyful in you; shout for joy, all you that are upright in heart. Let Israel rejoice in him that made him; let the children of Zion be joyful in their King, and glory in the Holy One of Israel." Far from this. They sought Him, but they could not find Him. They "went forward, but he was not there; backward, but they could not see him; on the right hand where he does work, but he hid himself from them; on the left hand, but they did not behold him."

Now, since the waves of sorrow began to roll over them, they find that God alone is their refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. He is now their satisfying portion; and though everything else is fading and dying around them, they can say with the psalmist, "The Lord lives; and blessed be my rock; and let the God of my salvation be exalted."

God may be seen and enjoyed everywhere; but it is "in the dark passages of our pilgrimage," in the depths of disappointment and fond expectations, on the bed of languishing, and in the death-chambers of those we love that the light of His countenance most cheers us. They were days of fearful solemnity and sanguinary persecution when the apostle Paul wrote his rich epistle to the Christians in Rome. Nothing but the sharpest trials gave rise to such thoughts as these---"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God. Not only so, but we also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom He has given us" (Rom. 5:1-5).

Who does not see the hallowed influence of abounding trials upon his abounding faith and heaven-imparted love? Who can read the eighth chapter

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Sorrow---

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of this epistle without perceiving that such noble thoughts and unwavering confidence were not the offspring of a tranquil age? What writer, except one from the cliffs of the overhanging storm, or the submerged cavern, or the lion's den, or the "mountain of the leopards," ever uttered the triumphant language, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 8:35-39).

Noble man! Sufferer signally favored! Thoughts and emotions cheaply purchased by his participation with the sufferings of his suffering Lord. "How far above the 'sorrows of nature' are the 'consolations of grace.'" How far superior to the depressions of nature is the triumph of faith. Afflictions are not useless when grace becomes victorious. It is a beautiful remark of Pascal's, in a letter occasioned by the death of his father, "There is no consolation but in truth. All trial is sweet in Jesus Christ. He suffered and died to sanctify death and suffering. See in the magnitude of our woes the greatness of our blessings, and let the excess of our grief be the measure of our joy."

We love to have the providence of God smile upon us, and we often murmur when it frowns, even though we have so often found that it is safer for us that it should not always smile. It is recorded of ancient Israel, that "God gave them their request, but sent leanness into their souls" (Ps. 106:15). This is not what the Christian desires. When God frowns upon us, we should be less anxious for exemption from the suffering, than for grace to endure it. "**Grace for grace,**" faithful grace, abundant grace--- this is what the Christian needs, what he prays for, and that which follows in the footsteps of the Destroyer.

Better, unspeakably better is it to enjoy the Divine presence and the light of His countenance, without our idols, than to have our idols without His favor. Oh, what wanderers would we be, if God did not sometimes hedge up our way with thorns! Surely it is not for lack of love to His people that He severely chastises them. David could say, "My soul cleaves unto the dust; quicken me, according to your Word" (Ps. 119:25). God heard his prayer, and sent him penitent and sorrowing to his knees. That sweet Christian poet William Cowper could

"sing of mercies and of judgments," and in strains such as angels use, and rarely in sweeter tones than when he indicted the hymn, "O for a closer walk with God." Sanctified trials had taught him to say,

*"The dearest idol I have known,
Whatever that idol be,
Help me to tear it from your throne,
And worship only Thee.
So shall my walk be close with God,
Calm and serene my frame;
So purer light shall mark the road
That leads me to the Lamb."*

I have seen, I have felt the Christian graces wither under the burning sun of prosperity; and I have seen them "revive as the corn, and grow as the vine," when these scorching rays were intercepted by clouds. The "love" that prefers God to creatures; the "penitence and humility" that have learned to "go softly," because they have "heard the rod and him who has appointed it;" the "peace" that tranquilizes; the "fear" that fills the soul with holy reverence; the "hope" that looks for brighter days; the "joy" that "glories in tribulation," looms up under the darkest skies.

From the deepest valley of humiliation, the "eye of faith" discovers streaks of light from the mountain of God's holiness; and though dark clouds hang over it, streams of mercy flow down through their selected and grief-worn channels, filling the soul from all the fullness of God. Well does the Father of mercies say to each of His mourners, "My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD, neither be weary of his correction. For whom the LORD loves he corrects, even as a father the son in whom he delights" (Prov. 3:11). His own Son, His only Son, His well-beloved Son, was "made perfect through suffering" (Heb. 2:10). God's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts. Blind unbelief naturally errs in its interpretations of His providence. "What son is he whom the Father chastens not?" (Heb. 12:7).

*"Those we call wretched are a chosen band.
Amid my list of blessings infinite,
Stands this the foremost, that my heart has bled.
For all I bless you; most for the severe."
(The Mission of Sorrow, 1862 reprint 2007, pp. 37-45).*



Studies on Saving Faith by A. W. Pink has been reprinted. This is the same as the old Reiner Publications version *Saving Faith*, but has appended three extra sermons: The Christian in Romans 7, Vile, and Is Christ Your Lord?

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Scope of Christ

(Continued from page 121) ♦

clearness. "The Son of God came from heaven, not to make the gospel revelation, but to be the subject of it, by doing and suffering all that was necessary to procure the salvation of mankind." It must never be forgotten, therefore, that He who revealed eternal life as a prophet, also "gave" (John 17:2) it as a king."

Still such is the importance of this secondary object of our Lord's mission, that John, after proving His divinity, immediately proceeds to refer to His character as the prophet of mankind. "**In him was life, and the life was the light of men. . . . That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world**" (John 1:4, 9). During the lapse of four thousand years truth had been corrupted in various ways; partly by philosophy, partly by tradition; partly by false, and partly by perverted views of what was excellent or holy; it was time for God to vindicate the knowledge of Himself, and by creating light, as it were, a second time, to illuminate the moral creation, long covered by a darkness similar to that which, at the beginning, rested upon the face of the whole earth. Christ, therefore, claimed to be considered in the spiritual world, what the sun was in the natural, the source and center of all light. "**I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life**" (John 8:12). "**As long as I am in the world, I am the light of the world**" (John 9:5).

Others, it is true, before the advent of our Lord, had been commissioned, from time to time, to communicate the divine will to man; but Christ as much surpassed the most favored among them by the extent of His discoveries, in His character as prophet, of the gracious purposes of His heavenly Father towards the fallen sons of Adam, as He exceeded all who had gone before Him in His nature and dignity as God. He glorified Himself as much in the display of His attribute of omniscience, as of omnipotence. The prophets were employed for particular purposes, with limited and special messages. Their errand was sometimes to specific nations, sometimes to specific individuals. Thus was Moses sent to the children of Israel, and Jonah to the Ninevites; thus Elijah to Ahab, and Nathan to David. But the mission of Christ was fettered by no restrictions of place or person. It was, in its ultimate extension at least, as irrespective of country and of people, as of time. As it was to have effect eventually upon the face of the whole creation, and to know neither end or limit, until all the kingdoms of the world acknowledge His empire, and all the dwellers upon earth become His people; so was the character of His

revelation adapted to the universal wants of all mankind, and commensurate with the utmost necessities of the human race. For in Him "**are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge**" (Col. 2:3). This, therefore, is one of the points on which Owen insists, for the purpose of proving Christ's ability to save to the uttermost them that come to God through Him. "As a prophet, he did not receive this or that particular revelation from God; but all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge were laid up in Him, and He knew the whole mind and counsel of God, as coming forth from His divine bosom?"

I. For a knowledge of the character which our Lord was intended to sustain in His prophetic office, we must have recourse, in the first instance, to holy writ. It was to this source that He Himself, in the days of His flesh, referred the Jews for information. "**Search the scriptures. . . . they are they which testify of me**" (John 5:39). Now the only direct prediction of the Messiah, under the name of the prophet, occurs in the eighteenth chapter of Deuteronomy. "**The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken. . . . I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him**" (Deut. 18:15, 18-19).

But besides this distinct and explicit declaration, by which the Israelites were expressly taught to apply to the spiritual deliverer of their nation the title of prophet, the Jewish Scriptures are not deficient in passages abundantly descriptive of the manner in which that prophet should discharge His functions (Isa. 11:1-2; 42:1-4, 6-7; 61:1-3). There is also another important class of texts, having a metaphorical allusion to our Lord's prophetic office---where, for instance, He is spoken of as a messenger or apostle (Zech. 2:9; Mal. 3:1 compared with John 5:36; John 20:21; Heb. 3:1) ---as a shepherd (Isa. 40:11; Ezek. 34:23; 37:24, compared with John 10:14, 16; Heb. 13:20; I Pet. 2:25) ---as a counselor (Isa. 9:6; Zech. 6:13) ---as a light (Isa. 9:2; 49:6; 60:1-3; Mal. 4:2) ---as a witness (Isa. 55:4, compared with Rev. 1:5) ---or as a lawgiver (Isa. 33:22). On reference to these passages, it will be found to have been predicted of the scope of our Lord's prophetic mission, that He should be a messenger Who would unreservedly reveal the whole will of God, and His laws for the government of men in general, as Moses did with regard to the more limited purpose and period for which God employed him---that this revelation would be complete, and

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Lizzie Blake

CHAPTER FOUR - Conclusion

“Be kindly affectioned one to another” (Rom. 12:10).

The last five years had seen many changes in Hillsley and its inhabitants. Lizzie, Rose, and Alice had become young women, and the differences of character which had distinguished them as children, were even more striking than they had then been.

Lizzie’s father was dead, and her brother, George, had taken his place on the farm. He still kept on the cottage, and Lizzie lived with him, and took care of the house and of her youngest sister and little Joe. Joe was now quite a little cripple, and the doctor said he feared he would never be able to earn his living. Mary and Annie Blake were both in service; the former at the parsonage and Annie as nursemaid at the neighboring farm. Lizzie had now more spare time than formerly, and worked a good deal at her needle. She had had an offer of marriage from a respectable young tradesman in a neighboring town, but had refused him, saying that she had no thoughts of settling for years to come. Her great ambition now was to watch over poor afflicted Joe, until he should be able to be apprenticed to some quite easy occupation, by which, if it pleased God to spare his life, he might earn his own living. With this end in view, she saved every farthing she could from her earnings, so that she still dressed as plainly as formerly, notwithstanding that she sometimes earned a good deal by her needlework.

George Blake was a good and affectionate brother, and devoted to his sister. Many people in Hillsley thought that he and Alice Parker would be man and wife some day; but Mrs. Parker’s health was very delicate, and Alice, being the only daughter, was indispensable to her mother, so that if there was any truth in the report about George and Alice, there was no chance of the marriage taking place for some time to come; as Alice, with all her faults, was a thoroughly affectionate daughter, and would never leave her mother while she could be a comfort to her.

Rose Leigh had been apprenticed for three years to a dressmaker in a neighboring town, and had lately returned home to her mother, to set up for herself at Hillsley. While Rose was

away from home, one of Mrs. Leigh’s eldest grandchildren had lived with her; but she left Hillsley when Rose returned, and the neighbors all said poor old Mrs. Leigh would find the difference, unless Rose’s behavior was altered from what it had been before she left. She was a clever girl, and had learned her business well. There was, therefore, every chance of her getting on in Hillsley, where a dressmaker was much wanted. But it soon became apparent that if she earned much, she spent it all, and was often in debt; and her poor mother, whose income had diminished, owing to her eldest son having been unfortunate in business, was frequently without decent clothes, while her daughter dressed in a manner far above her station.

Rose had formed many acquaintances at Marston, the town where she had learned her business, and some of these were far from what her mother would have wished her to choose for friends; but Rose turned a deaf ear to all warnings on the subject, and would frequently spend the Sunday at Marston, or else would join a noisy party of Marston girls and young men who came over to Hillsley on the Sabbath. Once or twice she had persuaded Alice to accompany her, but there was something in the tone and manner of Rose’s “friends,” as she called them, which Alice, weak as she was, could not approve of; and the last time they had been together, and had gone so far that they were too late for evening service, Alice told Rose that she would never go with them again. For some time it had been Alice’s custom to go to church on Sunday evening with Lizzie and her brother, and on this occasion they had not reached Hillsley until just as the congregation were leaving. For the first time in her life, Alice shrank from meeting Lizzie and George, and was glad to pretend not to see them, and to appear to be earnestly talking to one of her new acquaintances, as they passed by. The next morning she was early at Lizzie’s cottage.

“I am never going with them again, Lizzie dear. What did George think of me?”

“He was very sorry, dear, and so was I; but I am glad to hear you will not go again.”

The next week Rose tried to entice Alice to accompany her to Marston. They would be quite in time to go to Divine service if they set off early, she said, and

they would have a very merry day. “You never see anything of the world cooped up here, Alice,” said Rose; “you should just see how the girls at Marston dress on a Sunday.”

“Perhaps I had better not see, Rose; it might make me discontented.”

“Ah, I suppose Lizzie has been talking to you; she always sets herself up as better than other people.”

“You are wrong there, Rose. Lizzie never spoke to me on the subject. It was I who spoke to her.”

Alice remained firm, and did not go to Marston. She felt more than repaid when she saw the kind look with which Lizzie and George welcomed her, as she called at their cottage on her way to the house of God.

“How glad I am to have you for a friend, Lizzie,” said Alice, as they walked home together that evening. George had gone to look in upon a sick neighbor.

“And I am quite as glad to have you, Alice,” said Lizzie.

“Yes, but there’s a great difference in the reason for our gladness,” answered Alice. “Mine is almost a selfish gladness, I am afraid; I know how you help to keep me right. Why, if it had not been for you—”

“Hush, hush, Alice; it is God who helps you; we can do nothing right without His Holy Spirit.”

“I know that, Lizzie,” said Alice humbly. “I have so often tried, as I called it, to be good by myself, and have always failed, I know that; but what I mean is you always set me a good example.”

And thus matters stood in Hillsley, when, one morning, a long letter arrived to Mrs. Parker, from her son Willie; and in a very short time it was known throughout the village that William Parker was coming home for good, and was going to set up as a farmer on the Hillside farm. Tears of joy and gratitude rolled down Mrs. Parker’s cheeks, as she read her son’s letter. There was also a little note enclosed to her from Gilbert Parker, in which the kind old man told his sister-in-law all about Willie’s love for his mother, and how his heart had been set upon returning to Hillsley, notwithstanding the advantages offered to him in Scotland.

At length Willie Parker came from Scotland to take possession of his farm. His uncle accompanied him. It was the first holiday the old man had known for many years; and he thoroughly enjoyed it. He and his brother, Willie’s father, had not met since they were lads; and it was pleasant thus in their old age to renew their personal acquaintance.

Old Gilbert Parker was greatly interested in his nephew’s good farm, and gave him much useful advice respecting the management of it. Then, after a month of happy social intercourse, he took his departing, telling Willie, almost the last thing, to be sure and keep a

chimney corner for him.

“Never fear, uncle. Who has a right to one, I should like to know, if you have not?”

So the secret wish of Willie’s heart, which he had cherished, almost against hope, for so many years, was at last fulfilled; and he had really come to settle down in the home of his childhood. After a few months, it almost seemed as if he had never been away. His farm was but a few minutes’ walk from his mother’s cottage, and Mrs. Parker was in and out a dozen times in the course of the day, arranging things in the house for him. Alice declared that Willie’s coming home had made her mother young again.

Mrs. Parker was thankful to find that her son’s religious principles seemed firmly established. His uncle was a Christian man, and had taken every possible care to bring up his nephew aright; and God had blessed his efforts. The time had been, when Willie Parker was a selfishly-disposed boy; but all that had now passed away, and he had not long been resident in his native village, before old Mr. Mortimer was heard to say, that he wished all the young men in the neighborhood were like him. The old friendships of former days were renewed, and George and Lizzie Blake, and Alice and Willie Parker, went to God’s house together as they had used to do in years gone by. Rose Leigh, too, frequently joined them. Since Willie’s return, a change seemed to have come over the girl, and she was less frequently at Marston than formerly.

Lizzie, in all the simplicity of her heart, rejoiced in the change, which she attributed entirely to sincere motives; but there were those in the village who took a very different view of Rose’s conduct, which they did not scruple to say, was the result of a desire to stand well in the young farmer’s opinion.

Mrs. Parker, although she said little on the subject, rather inclined to the later opinion; and the thought gave her pain, for Rose Leigh was almost the last girl she would have chosen as a wife for her son. She mentioned the matter to her husband, who advised her to let things take their course.

“Willie has plenty of good sense,” he said, “and no good ever yet came of rashly interfering in such matters.”

It was quite certain that Willie Parker seemed to like Rose. He had always done so, from the time when he had paid the month’s visit to Hillsley, when he was a lad of seventeen. In Rose herself, mingled with some little real liking for the young farmer, there was a great deal of vanity, and a strong desire to outshine Lizzie Blake, of whom she had always been jealous.

And it was thus that matters stood, when Mrs. Hamilton again came to Hillsley to stay with her father, whose

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Lizzie Blake

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health had latterly been failing. From the old housekeeper at the parsonage, she heard of all that had lately taken place in the village, and of William Parker's return.

"He is a young man in five hundred, ma'am," said the housekeeper; "and I only hope he will choose a wife worthy of him."

"Is there any likelihood of his soon being married?" asked Mrs. Hamilton.

"Not that I know of, ma'am; but, of course, now that he has a farm, he will be looking out for a wife."

"Certainly," replied Mrs. Hamilton; then, after thinking a few moments, she added, "his sister was a great friend of Lizzie Blake's; are they as intimate now?"

"Yes, ma'am, I think they are, and I wish only that William Parker would look in that quarter for a wife, but I fear there is no chance of it."

"Why not?" asked Mrs. Hamilton, who saw that the housekeeper had something on her mind.

"We all know what Lizzie is, ma'am; but she is not so striking a girl as many others in the village."

"But from what you tell me of young Parker, I should have thought beyond mere appearance in a wife."

"May-be we are all wrong, ma'am; but he is a good deal with Rose Leigh."

"Indeed!" said Mrs. Hamilton.

"Yes, and she's a taking girl to those who look no farther than the outside."

"Does she conduct herself better than she did? My father wrote me word that she had got mixed up with some bad acquaintances from Marston."

"She seems changed a good deal for the better lately, ma'am; but somehow, I think it is only to gain favor in William Parker's eyes."

"Nay, Ellis, we must not be uncharitable; she may have worthier motives."

"Time will show, ma'am."

"That is very true," said Mrs. Hamilton, "and I shall notice the parties concerned during my stay at Hillsley, and see what turn affairs will take."

The next morning she paid a visit to Lizzie's cottage.

An eminent surgeon, a friend of Mrs. Hamilton's, had seen little Joe during the summer, and had given it as his opinion

that his case was by no means incurable, but that it was essential that he should be placed in an asylum which was established for the reception of cripples, and where he would have the best possible surgical attendance. Mr. Hamilton had promised to use all his influence to get the lad admitted as a patient, and all that was now wanted was to gain Lizzie's consent to the plan.

The old bright look of pleasure overspread Lizzie's countenance, as Mrs. Hamilton entered the cottage. The ordinary expression of her face was grave



beyond her years, for Lizzie's had been a life of self-denial and living for others more than herself; and she looked far older than she really was.

"I am so glad to see you, ma'am."

Little Joe was sitting on a low stool by Lizzie's side. He was small for his age, and his face was very pale, but his eyes were bright and intelligent-looking. His sister had taught him to read, and as Mrs. Hamilton entered the porch, he was reading to Lizzie a hymn, which she wished him to learn by heart---

"He went about, he was so kind,

To cure poor people who were blind;

And many who were sick and lame,

He pitied them, and did the same."

"Sick and lame," repeated Joe thoughtfully; "I am not very sick now,

but I am lame though," and he looked first at his little crutches, and then inquiringly into his sister's face.

"Jesus could make me well, couldn't He, Lizzie?"

"Yes, darling; He can do all things."

"I wish He would," said little Joe, with a sigh.

"Jesus knows better what is good for His lambs than they do themselves," said Lizzie, as she laid her hand fondly on her brother's head; "and if they will but trust in Him, they may be sure that He will send them nothing but what is for their good. And when He does not see fit to take trouble or pain away, He gives us His grace to bear it patiently and cheerfully for His sake, who suffered so much for us."

"I will ask Him to make me patient."

It was at that moment that Mrs. Hamilton entered the cottage. She had been an unobserved listener to the conversation between Joe and his sister; and she blessed God who had thus enabled the young sister to lead her brother in the way of His truth.

It was a good opportunity to speak to Lizzie about the asylum; and Mrs. Hamilton told her all that her husband had done in the matter, and how he thought it very likely that he might succeed in getting the afflicted one admitted at the next election, which would be in a few months' time.

Lizzie thanked her kind friend warmly, but there was evidently a severe struggle going on in her mind. Her little crippled brother, by his very helplessness, had wound himself round her heart, and the very thought of parting with him brought the tears to her eyes.

"It would be for his good, you know, Lizzie."

Mrs. Hamilton had touched the right chord in the young girl's generous and unselfish heart.

"If you think it would be right, ma'am, why---I know I am not a fit one to judge," and the tears now fell down her cheeks.

"Joe, would you like to be made quite well and strong, and able to walk like other boys?" The cripple's eyes danced with joy.

"Will Jesus do it then, ma'am, and does He think it will be good for me?"

"We will try the means He has given us, my dear child, and leave the result to Him: that is, if your sister will consent to part with you."

There was no refusing the earnest pleading face which was raised to Lizzie's; and before Mrs. Hamilton left the cottage it was settled that Joe was to go into the asylum, if Mr. Hamilton could succeed in procuring him admission.

"I called on Mrs. Parker this morning," said Mrs. Hamilton, after it was all settled about the poor boy, "and was pleased to find her looking so much better. Her son's return seems to have made her quite young again."

"It is a great happiness to her, ma'am," said Lizzie quietly.

"And Alice, too; she seems to be steadier than she used to be. It must be very nice for her to have her brother so near."

"Yes, ma'am."

"I was glad to see Rose Leigh at church on Sunday, both in the morning and evening."

"Yes, ma'am. Rose has become quite altered lately, and has not been to Marston for a long time; she is much better than she used to be," added Lizzie.

"So I understand, and I hope the improvement will last, particularly if young Parker has any thoughts of her, for he deserves to find a good wife."

After some conversation about Lizzie's younger sisters, Mrs. Hamilton left the cottage, promising to see Lizzie again shortly.

Her next visit was to Mrs. Leigh.

She found the old woman suffering severely from rheumatism, which almost prevented her from standing upright.

"I was afraid you were ill, Mrs. Leigh."

"I have not been out of doors for weeks, and do not suppose I shall be able to go any more, now the damp weather has set in."

"Do you wear flannel? You ought to do so."

"I cannot afford to get new flannel, ma'am, with everything so dear; and what I had last winter is worn out."

"I suppose Rose hasn't much work, then."

"She's as much as she can get through, and more, ma'am, but she was never a saving girl, and she never seems to have a farthing to spare for any one but herself."

"I am sorry to hear that," said Mrs. Hamilton; "I had hoped to have heard better things of her, but from what you say, I fear she is a **'hearer of the word, and not a doer.'**"

"It seems hard to speak against one's own child," said Mrs. Leigh bitterly; "and at times I think I must be partly to blame myself for having brought her up badly; but she is never the one to help me with a farthing out of her earnings."

Mrs. Hamilton promised to send Mrs. Leigh some flannel, and, as she was

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Lizzie Blake

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returning across the green, she saw Rose Leigh, who was talking to Willie Parker at the gate of his mother's garden. Rose was very smartly dressed, and looked bright and attractive, as she spoke in an animated tone to the young farmer.

Mrs. Hamilton thought of Solomon's words, "**Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain,**" and she felt how truly such was the case as regarded Rose. As Mrs. Hamilton approached, Rose wished Willie good morning and passed on, evidently desirous to avoid speaking to Mrs. Hamilton.

"I wish you success in your new farm, William," said Mrs. Hamilton, holding out her hand to him as she spoke.

"Thank you much for your good wishes, ma'am. I shall be very happy to show you over it when you have an hour to spare."

"It will give me great pleasure," said Mrs. Hamilton, "and I will come this afternoon, if you are likely to be at leisure."

So that afternoon William Parker took Mrs. Hamilton all over Hillside farm; and that lady was much pleased with all she saw, and likewise with all she heard; for William's plain good sense and high principles were evident in every word he uttered.

"There is but one thing you want now," said Mrs. Hamilton, as she sat in the neat farm-kitchen, after having been the round of all the farm-buildings.

"And what is that, ma'am?"

"Only a good wife," said Mrs. Hamilton, smiling.

"I hope that want will soon be supplied, ma'am," said Willie.

"Then you have one in your mind?" said the lady.

"I have had one for many years," replied William; "and it only remains to ask her whether she will have me."

"I hope you have chosen well," said Mrs. Hamilton, "and am glad to hear it has not been a hasty choice."

"My choice was made when I was a boy of thirteen, ma'am; and I have never once wandered in my mind since then, although I little thought I should so soon be able to think about marrying."

"Well, Willie, I have no right to your confidence in such a matter; all I can say is that you have my best wishes. You have been a good and affectionate son, and as such, are likely to prove a good husband. I hope the like test has guided you in your choice of a partner for life, and that she will be one who will be a help to you in your Christian life."

"I think she will, ma'am," said William; and then he added with a smile, "I know you will approve my choice, ma'am; and I do not see why I should keep it a secret from you. You remember that day, ma'am,

when I went for the doctor when Alice was ill?"

"Quite well; and we met you coming back."

"Just so, ma'am; and do you remember 'who' it was who had persuaded me to go by her own good example?"

Mrs. Hamilton recollected it well, and knew now whom he meant.

"I congratulate you with all my heart, William; you have made a worthy choice."

"I have not asked her yet, though, ma'am."

Mrs. Hamilton could not tell him that he need not fear a refusal; but she said she hoped he would succeed, and she looked so pleased and happy about it that William felt sure she thought he would do so.

"I shall see her tonight, ma'am."

"Very well," said Mrs. Hamilton; "I shall hope to hear the result tomorrow morning."

Little Joe had gone to the parsonage, under the care of his youngest sister, to drink tea with Mary; and Lizzie sat alone in her cottage, for her brother had not yet come home from work.

Although usually so active and industrious, on that afternoon Lizzie's work lay untouched in her lap, and her thoughts were evidently far away. The conversation she had that morning had with Mrs. Hamilton had made her very thoughtful.

"When Joe goes away," she said to herself--and the idea still gave her pain--"when poor little Joe is gone, I shall have nothing to keep me here. Hester will soon be leaving home; for Mrs. Smith spoke to me about her yesterday; and then my 'trust' will be ended--I shall be no longer wanted.

"Dear George is very good and kind, but while I am at home, I know he will not think of marrying; and now that Mrs. Parker is so much better, there is no reason why Alice and he should wait any longer. George would never speak to me about it, of that I am sure, but he would wish it all the time; and I should feel that I was standing in the way of his happiness. Besides, I fancy"---and the girl's color went and came at the very thought---"I know it would be better for me to go away from Hillsley for a time. Mrs. Ellis told me the other day of a family who wanted a plain needlewoman; she asked me if I could recommend her any one. It would just suit me, and then if I stayed away for a short time, why George and Alice could be married; and I dare say Willie and Rose would also, and then I might come back again, and I shouldn't mind it so much by that time; and, maybe, little Joe might be cured by then and able to earn his living, and I could live with him."

Whatever it was that poor Lizzie "would not so much mind," it brought the tears into her eyes; but she brushed them away hastily as she saw her brother coming in at the garden gate, and greeted

him with her usual cheerful smile.

As they sat together over their evening meal, she told him of Mrs. Hamilton's plan for Joe, and saw that it pleased him greatly. Kind as he was, he did not feel the idea of parting from his little brother as Lizzie did.

"It will be a great relief to you," he said, "and I hope it may be for the poor little fellow's good; you have done a sister's duty by him at any rate."

"I dread parting with him though, George," and then, summoning up courage, Lizzie went on, "How much better Mrs. Parker seems to be getting, George."

"Better," returned her brother, "why she's as well as ever she was in her life."

"She really does not want Alice to be always with her now; do you think she does?"

"I have thought the same thing myself many a time lately; but you see, while the children were at home here, I should never--"

He stopped short. Lizzie read his thoughts, and continued where he left off.

"But when Joe is gone, George, and little Hester---I forgot to tell you that Mrs. Smith has offered to take her to nurse her baby---why, then, there will be no one but me in the way, and I shall not be here very long;---and Lizzie tried to look and speak cheerfully---"Mrs. Ellis has heard of a situation which would just suit me; and it may be quite as well for me to see a little of the world, you know."

George looked his sister steadily in the face.

"Do you really mean it, Lizzie?"

"Indeed I do, George."

"Then you are the most unselfish girl I ever knew. But I will not, I cannot let you leave your old home; no, no, it was you who kept it together for so many years after poor mother died; and you have a right to remain in it, and you shall do so."

"But not against my will, George?"

George looked in his sister's face, which was now very grave.

"It is better that I should go; indeed it is, dear George."

Perhaps her brother saw through her motive, for he no longer offered any opposition to her plan, but merely said: "Well, Lizzie, God's blessing will go with you wherever you go, of that I am sure."

After tea, George went into the village. Lizzie guessed his errand. She sat at the window, listlessly watching the falling leaves. The days were getting very short, and it was becoming quite dark, and still Lizzie sat there lost in thought.

The garden gate opened, and a step was heard approaching the door. "Can it be George returned so soon?" she said, as she started up, and raked the embers on the hearth. It was not George, however; for there was a knock at the door; and, in answer to Lizzie's "Come in!" William Parker entered the cottage.

"May I speak a word with you, Lizzie?"

"Oh, yes, certainly," she replied, with an effort at appearing quite calm.

It proved to be a great many words that Willie had to say, judging from the length of time it took him to say them. He spoke long and earnestly; and when he had finished Lizzie said, in a voice which though it was very low and trembled a good deal, yet sounded very happy, "O Willie! I thought all the time it was Rose you cared for."

"No, no, Lizzie; no one in his senses would ever think of a girl like Rose for a wife."

When Rose Leigh heard of Lizzie's engagement, she shed many and bitter tears in secret. Until then, she had never known how much she really cared for Willie Parker. Her temper, never very good, grew worse day by day, and she nearly worried her poor old mother to death.

At last she heard of a situation in Marston as shopwoman, and she left Hillsley never to return. In a few months' time she contracted a foolish marriage with a wild, unsteady young man, and died in poverty within a twelvemonth after her marriage. Old Mrs. Leigh's gray hairs were indeed brought in sorrow to the grave, and not all the kind and tender attention bestowed upon the poor old woman by her granddaughter could make up to her for the heartless desertion of her selfish child.

Willie and Lizzie, and George and Alice, were married on the same day. It was in no light and careless spirit that they knelt together in God's house, and uttered the solemn vows which were to bind them together all the years of their mortal life. Thoughtfully, seriously, in reliance upon His strength to do their duty in the new state of life upon which they were entering, they promised to be all in all to each other, "in sickness and in health, for richer, for poorer, until God should see fit to part them."

They lived long and happily together, sharing each other's joys and dividing each other's sorrows.

Little Joe became quite cured in the asylum, and after some years returned to his native village where he set up in business as a carpenter, which trade he had been well taught in the asylum.

Gilbert Parker fulfilled his promise, and came to claim a place in the chimney-corner at Hillsdale farm, where the kind-hearted genial old man became the favorite and playfellow of his nephew's children, and passed in quiet happiness the latter years of his life.

Lizzie's married life cannot be better described than in the words of Solomon, who, speaking of a wife who walks in God's fear and love, says:

"Her children arise up, and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her" (Prov. 31:28).



Scope of Christ

(Continued from page 125) ♦

consequently final, (for "last of all he sent his Son" Matt. 21:37) ---and that, as for those who would not acknowledge His authority, or receive His Father's Word from His mouth, God would require it at their hands.

II. The next step, therefore, is to inquire how far the conditions of these prophecies were fulfilled in Jesus.

1. We have, first, Christ's own testimony to the fulfillment, in His own person, of the predictions relating to the prophet who should come. On His first appearance in the synagogue of His own town Nazareth, He read the passage from the sixty-first chapter of Isaiah, wherein the prophet describes the appointment of the Messiah to preach the gospel; and then proceeded to apply it to Himself in the most explicit terms. "**This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears**" (Luke 4:16-21). This occurrence took place at the beginning of His ministry, so that He was inducted into it, as it were, with a regular declaration of the authority under which He acted as a teacher, and of the nature of the commission which, in virtue of that authority, He was about to open. In the same year He appealed to the prophecy in Deuteronomy. "**There is one that accuseth you, even Moses, in whom ye trust. For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me**" (John 5:45-46). When He had nearly arrived at the end of His ministry, after speaking of Himself as the light of the world and the shepherd of the flock, (two of those images under which, as has been seen, His own prophetic character had been represented many ages before,) He again urges the validity of His pretensions; and appeals, as an additional motive for belief, to the notoriety of His miracles, which had been wrought in the sight of the whole nation since He formerly claimed attention as a divine teacher (John 10:24-25). After His resurrection He pursued the same system in His discourse with the two disciples going to Emmaus. Beginning at Moses, He went from the original promise in Genesis to the prediction of the prophet in Deuteronomy, and then in order through all the prophets, expounding the things concerning Himself (Luke 24:27). From first to last, therefore, in the face of an unbelieving people, ready to gainsay, and reluctant to admit as fact what, if true, would condemn themselves, Christ openly maintained His pretensions to be the prophet like unto Moses---and of the multitudes interested in disproving the assertion, none durst dispute it.

2. We have John the Baptist's testimony to the same fact. "**The voice**" bear record to "**the word**" (John 1:23, compared with verse 1). After his disciples had complained to him of the

success of Christ's ministry, he rejoices in witnessing this consummation of the glory which he had himself foretold. "**Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him, ---this my joy therefore is fulfilled. . . . For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him**" (John 3:28-34). Nor is the weight of this testimony invalidated by the apparent doubt conveyed in his message to Jesus---"**Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another?**" (Matt. 11:3). The most satisfactory explanation of this difficulty appears to be that adopted by Mr. Benson, who follows in his interpretation the view taken by the author of the Questions which stand among the works of Justin Martyr. It will be observed, that the evangelist expressly directs attention to the situation of John at the time the query was proposed. John had heard "in the prison" the works of Christ. In confinement, therefore, himself, he had no means of ascertaining personally the truth of the reports which reached him, respecting the life of a certain extraordinary personage said to have lately appeared in Judea. Had any works of a miraculous nature really been wrought? If so, had they been wrought by that very Jesus Whom he had himself baptized, and whom he had heard acknowledged by a voice from Heaven? To clear up these doubts, and to ascertain the identity of the person whose fame had given rise to them, he sent two of his disciples to make the necessary inquiries, and report accordingly. "They came, they saw, they heard, they believed, and then returned with the glad tidings of certainty to their master. And he also heard, and he also believed. His uncertainty was built upon just and reasonable grounds. It was the result of a want of confidence, either in those who bore witness to the miracles of Jesus, or in the identity of the person by whom they were performed. When that want of confidence was once removed, the effect ceased with the cause, and he became thoroughly convinced. For Scripture often speaks to us as positively by its silence, as its assertions; and in the future pages of the evangelist we meet with no other symptom whatever of the Baptist's doubt."

3. Again, we have the testimony of the apostles and disciples; as in the conversation between Philip and Nathanael (John 1:45); and in that of the two disciples going to Emmaus (Luke 24:19). Peter testified in the name of all of them, "**Thou art the Christ;**" and the same record is borne by him again in his sermon at Jerusalem, where he directly applies to Christ the prophecy in Deuteronomy, quoted before (Mark 8:29; Acts 3:22-23). Stephen refers to the same passage, and sets his seal with his dying lips to the identity of Jesus of Nazareth with him, of whom Moses in

the law and the prophets did write (Acts 7:37). And again, the apostle says to the Hebrews, ---"**Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus, Who was faithful to him that appointed him, as also Moses was faithful in all his house**" (Heb. 3:1-2).

4. Lastly, we have the testimony of the people---an evidence of unspeakable value, because it proceeded from unwilling witnesses, who stood convicted of willful unbelief by the very admissions, which acknowledged the Messiah's prophetic character. "**Many of the people therefore, when they heard this saying, said, Of a truth this is the prophet.**" And again, after the miracle at Nain, with an immediate reference to the prediction of Moses, "**They glorified God, saying, That a great prophet is risen up among us**" (John 7:40; Luke 7:16; Matt. 21:11; John 6:14). These admissions are so unqualified, that it would appear as if the convictions on which they were founded could not have yielded again to the persuasions of skepticism or prejudice. Were we to open the Bible for the first time, and to read the decisive testimony borne in these passages to the prophetic character of our Lord, we should scarcely allow, that such a distinct recognition could proceed from the people who so soon cried out against the same individual, "**Crucify him, crucify him.**" What! We should ask, with something of the same astonishment, which seems to have filled the mind of Pilate when he presided in judgment against Him, Would they crucify their prophet (John 19:6, 15)?

This however, is the certain, though humiliating conclusion to which Scripture leads us. Christ "**came unto his own, and his own received him not**" (John 1:11). And it is among such instances of the contradictions and inconsistencies of human conduct, that we find the most painful, but at the same time the most undeniable internal evidences of our fallen nature, and the extent of its consequent estrangement from the knowledge and love of God.

That a whole generation of Jews should have remained insensible to the force of a series of predictions, successively delivered by prophets of their own religion and country, ---preserved among their own records, ---and implanted in their minds from childhood, as one of the points of their habitual belief --- predictions, finally, which were all explicitly and satisfactorily fulfilled in the person of Jesus---is so extraordinary an instance of national delusion, that not even the previous course of disobedience which the whole of their history exhibits could have prepared us to expect it. It had been said of them by one who knew them well, in the bitterness of his disappointment, after forty years experience of their

manners, "**Ye have been rebellious against the LORD from the day that I knew you**" (Deut. 9:24); ---and the fifteen centuries, which intervened between the time of Moses and their demand for the blood of Jesus in the hall of Pilate, proved that the reproach which the fathers had deserved continued to be applicable to the posterity of the latest generation. Our Lord upbraided the Jews with their unprofitable reception of the Word of God, even though proceeding from the mouth of Moses. "**Did not Moses give you the law, and yet none of you keepeth the law?**" (John 7:19). Unhappily the taint of unbelief seems to remain hereditary and inveterate in the Israelitish character, even to the present day; and did we not know from Scripture, that God, Who has broken off the branches, is able to graft them in again, and that He Who is faithful has held out to the church a promise of their ultimate salvation (Rom. 11:17-27; Ezek. 35; 36; 37; Isa. 2:3; 61:9), we might be led to conclude, that the measure of their iniquities was full, and that Jehovah had finally cast them away from His favor for ever.

Again, when we consider the number and clearness of the texts referring to this subject, it appears not a little remarkable, that there should have been no general expectation among the Jews, that our Lord would come in the character of a prophet and teacher. They waited for Him as a king (John 6:14-15), as a conqueror (Matt. 21:9), as a deliverer from captivity (Luke 24:21), as a judge (Luke 12:14-15 Joel 3:12; Micah 4:3), --but not as the prophet like unto Moses. They looked for some one to appear under that form previously to Christ's advent (Matt. 17:10); but there was no distinct understanding that He Himself should sustain the prophetic office. The Samaritans, who admitted only the Pentateuch into the canon of their sacred books, and who consequently had only one prediction relating to our Lord under that character, yet had more correct notions of His commission, than those who had not only Moses, but the prophets, to enlighten them. "**I know**" ---said the woman of that nation to Jesus--- "**that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things.**" And in her subsequent description of Him to the men of her city, she styles Him the man, which told her all things that ever she did; whence she inferred that He must be the Christ (John 4:25-29).

Yet, although it was known unto God from the beginning, that His own people would afford an awful specimen of that hardness of heart, which accompanies apostasy from the truth, the scope of our Lord's personal ministrations was confined exclusively to the Jews. "**I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the**

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Are we still under the Mosaic Law today? -Alabama

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God will desire to do the things found in the Law of God. **"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"** (Psa. 1:1-2).

This writer is in the process of writing a mini series of weekly devotions that will address both questions in this month's forum in a little further detail. Interested readers may receive them by request at Ray4be@yahoo.com.

RAY BENNETT

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What do you consider the Law of Moses to be? If the Law of Moses be the Ten Commandments, then yes we are still under the expression of God's moral character that He measures all of men's action by. **"If ye fulfil the royal law according to the scripture, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself, ye do well"** (James 2:8). and the Scriptures demand **"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully"** (1 Tim. 1:8).

Do you consider the Law of Moses to be the ceremonial law of sacrifices? Do you believe the ceremonial law was done away with? What sayeth the Scriptures? **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil"** (Matt. 5:17). What part of the ceremonial law were we freed from? We were freed from the daily (blood) sacrifices that were sacrificed at the hands of the priests. Hebrews 10 is a good place to start. Remember though, the ceremonial law is still in effect today, Jesus is our sacrifice, our priest, our altar, etc. Jesus fulfilled the law, which means He is still fulfilling the requirements of the demands of the ceremonial law in the "Holiest of Holies" for His Elect people continually. **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"** (Heb. 7:25).

MIKE DEWITT



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).



The "Lace Up" II

Greetings, grace, and peace to you, dear reader. Summer has finally come to Texas, and in the southeastern part of the state, where I am, the humidity is so thick you can tote it in a wheelbarrow--and we've only just begun! However, I hope wherever the summer heat finds you that our Lord will bless you and keep you, if not cool, at least well and in the highest of spirits.

Well, not much has happened since I last wrote. I was visited by my parole attorney (whom I was blessed to have retained by my dear brother and mentor, Bro. Jeff) and she feels like I have a good chance of making parole when I come up early next year; I'm excited about that, but am still taking one day at a time. And we just had one of our semi-annual major shakedowns. [Note to free-world readers: twice a year the prison units are locked down, and all prisoners are confined to their cells or cubicles and fed brown bag meals known as, "johnnies." One cellblock or dorm at a time packs up and is taken to the unit gym where their personal and issued property is searched for contraband. Mean-while the living areas are searched as well. It usually takes about a week.] But now everything is back to what passes for normal in here again.

Please continue to pray for us, dear reader, as I journey along this rocky, pothole filled trail they call prison.

CHRISTIAN PRISONERS AND EDUCATION

"A wise man will hear, and will increase learning; and a man of understanding shall attain unto wise counsels: to understand a proverb, and the interpretation; the words of the wise and their dark sayings" (Prov. 1:5-6).

One of the worst things we can do, dear reader, is to waste these years we are incarcerated by not improving our minds. There are myriad opportunities for us to enrich our knowledge and build upon our educations.

I didn't give a hoot about education until the Lord plucked the scales from my eyes and drew me to Himself. When the scales fell I found myself looking at four concrete walls and a steel door that seldom opened. That's right, I was in administrative segregation. And for

those who don't know, they don't offer educational opportunities in segregation. So what was there for me to do? Sit there and feel sorry for myself? Con myself by thinking, 'Oh, woe is me, if only they would let me learn a thing or two...'

Not! I found out from some prisoners around me that I could write off and request books from prisoner book projects. And that's just what I did. And so can you!

When I was first incarcerated the internet was still the rich man's toy. It hadn't filtered down to the working class yet, and I knew next to nothing about it. So when I wrote to the book projects, I requested books on the internet. One of the books I received was on HTML (Hyper Text Mark-up Language), which is the programming language used to build websites. From that book I learned how the internet works and how websites are put together and used. Wow, who would'a thunk it?! And that is just one subject I studied from free books donated for prisoners. I've studied history, business management, marketing, biblical archeology, art, and writing. But why am I telling you all this?

I'm telling you this because I want you to understand that you can still broaden your educational horizon even if your trust fund account reads zero. I've been extremely blessed over the years to have a dear brother come into my life with access to funds that have allowed me to take several correspondence courses and college classes. But this wasn't always so, and I want you, dear reader, to know you can still learn new things and brush up on old things without having access to a bank account.

Another good source of free books with which to enhance your education is your unit library. I've studied psychology, electrical wiring, small engine repair, non-fiction and fiction writing techniques, and French cooking techniques---all from books in my unit library. Then an amazing thing happened.

After six years, a lot of self-motivated study (both educational and biblical), and two correspondence courses I was released from segregation. I was sent to the GRAD Program and part of it was a class called, Cognitive Intervention (CI). CI is designed to make you stop and think before you act, to weigh the

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Is Sunday a required Sabbath Day? -Alabama

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Is Sunday a required Sabbath Day? Well, no, if you don't want to please God. Christ was raised on the eighth day, a Sunday. We see in the Old Testament that the pattern of Sunday worship (Saturday worship) was observed by God's people. The New Testament pattern of worship in the Lord's Churches was to observe Sunday worship. Looking at the Scriptures and desiring to please God by being a member of the Lord's Church would certainly require me to be gathered together with the Church for worship on a Sunday. So, to answer your question, yes it is.

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THE SABBATH OR SUNDAY CONTROVERSY

The question: Should we worship on Sunday, the 'first day of the week' or on Saturday, the 'Sabbath'? What about Young's literal translation, "the first of the Sabbaths"?

"First day" in the Old Testament is always the first of a series; either the first day of the scheduled feast or the first day on the month. Sometimes, as in Genesis 1:5, it is the first of whatever is to follow. It would take three 8½X11 pages of references to delineate all the uses of "first day" in the KJV Old Testament.

I didn't think it necessary to research the Hebrew in those cases because they really are not applicable to the question that the Adventists raise. Periodically there arises a false prophet out of the ranks of professing Christendom (Acts 20:28-30) who wants to bring Christians - who have been made free of the bondage of the law - back under the law; Judaizers if you please, like those who plagued Paul's ministry. (See Galatians)

It must be noted that freedom from the bondage of the Old Testament law is not the same thing as not being free for obedience to the things taught in the

law. The Law was not abolished! The abolishment of pharisaic legalism, which was mostly manmade taboos, is not - and cannot be - antinomianism.

The Sabbath presents a slightly more difficult situation because 'sabbath' "שַׁבָּת" doesn't mean 'seven'. It means 'cessation' or 'rest',¹ and is applied to whole weeks, not just the 'seventh day', and to special holy days. The Jews kept the 'Sabbath', or the 'day of rest' on the seventh day because it was thus commanded (Lev. 23:3) for much the same reason that Christians keep Sunday as the 'holy day' because God ceased (rested) from His creation work on the seventh day. Christians worship on the 'first day of the week' because Christ rose on the first day of the week.

The Sabbath was established as a day or time of worship! The Jews were commanded to rest and worship on the seventh day (שַׁבָּת-a cardinal number; not tbv "cease, rest" as defined above) in honor of God ceasing His creative work on the seventh day. Christians worship on the "first day of the week" in honor of our Lord's resurrection on the first day of the week. Although the first day of the week is not commanded, it is condoned, encouraged and was practiced by the inspired writers of the New Testament!

The important thing that too often gets lost in the 'Sabbath or Sunday' debate is that the day is for worship, not just R & R. See the 15 times, Exodus through Numbers, where the 'Sabbath', or holy day/rest day, was commanded as "an holy convocation." Most of the people who are so adamant on keeping the Old Testament Sabbath are 'hung up' in the erroneous concept that righteousness is attained by good works. Most of those who are so adamant about the "Sabbath" having no application to the Church Age are 'hung up' on just wanting a "day off" for pleasure. We cannot over emphasize that the Sabbath is not a day to either sit with a long face while waiting until one can go back to his or her activities, nor is it a day to go play golf and have picnics, although doing either would not be wrong unless it took you away from the worship.

Equally important is that the legalistic 'work' restrictions that we so often associate with 'keeping the Sabbath' were instituted by the Pharisees, such as the 'Sabbath day's journey'. For example, as foolish as it sounds, if you were to get injured on the Sabbath day you were allowed to put a bandage on the wound but no medication, because if you put medication on the wound, the body would start to heal and that would mean

the body was working.

The 'work' that was to be stopped was 'servile' work, (עֲבֹדָה 'abodah ab-o-daw' or עֲבוֹדָה 'abowdah ab-o-daw'); labour, service, (that of servant, slave, captives or subjects).² Worship was commanded and expected, and as Jesus pointed out in Matthew 12:5, and is obvious when we look at the Jewish worship, worship often required as much or more physical work than the regular work day. For some of us, the Lord's Day requires that we get up earlier than we do on a regular "during the week" work day and we are often busier on that day than on any other day of the week. It is not the work that is involved, but the purpose of the work, i.e. worship. Again, worship was commanded and expected not 'gainful employment' or recreation. I expect we'd see as many Seventh Day Adventists mowing their lawns or going to ball games on Saturday as we do 'Christians' on Sunday.

The phrase "the first day of the week" only appears in the New Testament, and there, only 8 times:

Matthew 28:1: **"In the end of the sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre."**

Mark 16:2: **"And very early in the morning the first day of the week, they came unto the sepulchre at the rising of the sun."**

Mark 16:9: **"Now when Jesus was risen early the first day of the week, he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils."**

Luke 24:1: **"Now upon the first day of the week, very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulchre, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them."**

John 20:1: **"The first day of the week cometh Mary Magdalene early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre."**

John 20:19: **"Then the same day at evening, being the first day of the week, when the doors were shut where the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you."**

Acts 20:7: **"And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight."**

1 Corinthians 16:2: **"Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, that there be no gatherings when I come."**

Please notice that four of the eight times refer to the women's arrival at the tomb and discovery that Christ had arisen, and that those four times precede all others in both usage and occurrence.

Using the interpretation rule of 'first usage', as well as some good old fashioned logic, we are forced to see the first day of the week to be the day we now call Sunday, even though Young's literal translation, which the Seventh Day Adventists and other seventh day advocates seem to like so well, is technically accurate, μίαν (mian - one, or first) [day is supplied by the translators] σαββατων (sabbatōn - genitive plural, or the Sabbaths)."

Mark 16:9, alone in these references, uses πρῶτος (first in place or order) σαββατου (genitive, 'of the' Sabbath). The root word is σαββατον sabbaton, and answers to the Hebrew שַׁבָּת - Sabbath which we have discussed above, meaning cessation or rest, not seventh. Strong's note on this word helps a little. "...by extension, the interval between two Sabbaths."

Christ's resurrection was on the 8th day, Leviticus 23:11, i.e. the "first fruits" (I Cor. 15:20 and 23) so obviously Christians transfer of worship day to the 'first day' of the week makes good logical and theological sense.

¹ "Cease, desist, rest," The Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon; "to rest, to keep as a day or rest," Gesenius' Hebrew and Chaldee Lexicon.

² Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon

RAY BENNETT



Cellblock to Cellblock

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consequences of your actions and ask yourself if that action will meet your needs over time. It was the most amazing class I've ever taken. It was so amazing I wish every prisoner behind a razor-wire topped fence or concrete wall could take it. It's well worth the time spent and it doesn't cost you a dime. Just sign up and wait for an opening. I believe there is a CI class in every Texas unit.

I cannot emphasize enough the need for educating yourself while incarcerated. Whether it be self-motivated study, GED classes, Cognitive Intervention, college academic classes, vocational classes, private Bible study, Bible correspondence courses, or in united Bible study groups. Redeem the days you spend behind bars by taking the initiative in furthering your education.

A dear friend of mine, Bro. Louis, once told me, "It doesn't matter if you're only learning to weave a basket, as long as you're exercising your mind." So learn something today!

Be like the wise man, dear reader, who will hear and increase learning---not like the fools who despise wisdom and instruction (Proverbs 1:7).

Until next time, dear reader, may the grace of God be with you. . .



Scope of Christ

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house of Israel" (Matt. 15:24). He began His public teaching in Nazareth, the place of His infancy. He confined it to the limited, though populous, district of Galilee, during nearly the whole period of His ministry. His apostles were expressly enjoined to proclaim the approach of the kingdom of Heaven among their countrymen only; and, lest their zeal for the salvation of others should surmount the persuasion, which they shared in common with the rest of their brethren, that the children of Abraham alone were heirs of the promise, the limits of their commission were strictly confined to the boundaries of Judea by a special order. **"Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not"** (Matt. 10:5). Paul accordingly styles our Lord **"a minister of the circumcision,"** and declares to the unbelieving Jews at Antioch, that "it was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to them" (Rom. 15:8; Acts 13:46).

In fulfilling the divine decrees on this subject, Christ was exposed to a trial of patience, which no one, merely human, can ever be called to undergo. Hope is one of the great moving principles, which give life and energy to our actions. Were we sure beforehand, that all our efforts to promote any object of our desire would be unavailing, that our words would be always listened to with indifference, or our actions always thwarted by some overruling prejudice, few would have sufficient steadiness of purpose to persevere long against the certainty of disappointment, and to maintain unavailing struggles in a cause foreseen from the beginning to be hopeless. Among many discouragements, which the ordinary laborers in the spiritual vineyard are destined to encounter, an occasional blessing from above on their industry is the charm which sweetens their task, and gives a fresh impulse to renewed exertions in the prosecution of their duty. Or, if the blessing be withholden for a time, still there is expectation--- expectation brought before the throne of grace in prayer, and warranted by the promise, **"In due season we shall reap, if we faint not"** (Gal. 6:9). But, so far from being sustained by witnessing the acceptableness of His ministry, our Lord was perfectly aware, before He entered on it, that as a prophet He should receive no honor in His own country. He knew the inveteracy, the extent, the insuperable enmity of the opposition He was to encounter; yet with all this foreknowledge of the universal rejection which awaited Him by the people of His peculiar adoption, He announces to them the proffered terms of reconciliation with God, as if the whole that was to happen

when His hour was come had never been revealed to His view. He foresaw that the good seed which He was scattering would not be immediately fruitful; and that, although others hereafter might reap the spiritual harvest on ground which He had first broken up, yet that the generation to which He personally addressed Himself would be stained with a crime, in comparison of which all that their fathers had committed was light in the balance. He foresaw that His blood would lie on them and on their children, as a kind of national curse imprecated by themselves on their own heads (Matt. 27:25). Yet He set His face steadfastly to go up to Jerusalem, and labored as patiently among them as if they were destined to be His crown of rejoicing, and the blessed sons of His adoption. He offered to the last with unshaken faithfulness all the privileges of redemption, and bequeathed to them by His long suffering and gracious endurance the awful responsibility of a deliberate rejection of salvation.

At the same time, though our Saviour was statedly the prophet of the Jews, yet He gave occasional pledges to the Gentiles, of the mercy hereafter designed for them. Thus He declared His Messiahship to the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, and abode two days in her city, contrary to His apparent intention; so that **"many more believed because of his own word"** (John 4:41). So too, when certain Greeks desired to see Him, He delivered a very remarkable hint, that the time was now at hand, when all the ends of the world would be brought within the pale of salvation (John 12:20). Thus was witnessed in His ministry the partial fulfillment of the words of Jeremiah, **"They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest;"** and of Isaiah, referred to by Christ Himself, **"All thy children shall be taught of the LORD"** (Jer. 31:34; Isa. 54:13 compared with John 6:45). And, however proper it may be to explain these texts in a secondary sense of the influence of divine grace upon the minds of men, through the motions of the Holy Spirit, yet our Lord's own quotation of the words, when representing Himself as the bread of life, seems to make it necessary to refer them to Him in the first instance.

III. Having thus examined the predicted character of Christ as a prophet, and the manner in which the conditions of that character were actually fulfilled in our Lord's person, it remains that the objects of His prophetic mission should be briefly considered.

The several revelations that have been vouchsafed to mankind, have been always adapted in a manner worthy of the divine wisdom to the particular wants of the times when they were delivered. Under the patriarchal dispensation, the promise of one who should hereafter bruise the serpent's head was necessary

in order to support man in his fallen state, and to save him from irrecoverable despair. With this view the promise of a future redeemer, which formed the subject of the first revelation, was from time to time confirmed and enlarged, to the unspeakable comfort of Abraham and his descendants. Under the Mosaic dispensation a knowledge of the one God was needful to preserve a nation surrounded by idolaters from polytheism; and a system of temporal rewards and punishments was wanted to supply the place of any distinct communication respecting a future state. Accordingly, the Israelites were told that the Lord their God was one Lord (Deut. 6:4; Mark 12:29), and a code of laws was enacted to which they were required to pay implicit attention, and pain of penal inflictions in case of disobedience.

But when Christ came to the Jews, He found them resting in a formal observance of the ritual law, and possessed with a belief of their federal title to exclusive salvation. Hence a principal object of His ministry, doctrinally considered, was the removal of these two errors. At the same time it was far from being His purpose to give a complete development of Christian truth during His personal ministry; and in particular one of the two doctrines just stated was only obscurely alluded to by Himself, and was left to be more fully explained by the preachers who followed Him. **"These things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things." "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth"** (John 14:25-26; 16:13). Agreeably to this design, the manner of His teaching was rather declarative than expository; rather an exhibition of general outlines than a perfect and fully finished system. Mark's first description of it is very characteristic of His summary mode of preaching throughout the whole of His ministry, --- **"Jesus came into Galilee, preaching (proclaiming) the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel"** (Mark 1:14-15) "His instructions were conceived in short emphatic sententious rules, in occasional reflections, or in round maxims."

In fact, so much did our Saviour leave to be explained and supplied by the apostles that infidel writers have taken occasion from thence to draw an argument unfavorable to the truth of Christianity. And, as if to prove how secondary was His prophetic office in comparison of His priestly character, notwithstanding He was sent exclusively to the Jews, He preached little at Jerusalem, and seldom went thither, except when called to the celebration of the great feasts. He was more free in His communications in the

single conversation with the Samaritan woman than in all His discourses with His own countrymen during the whole of His ministry.

If, however, Christ did not come as a prophet to explain fully His own dispensation, much less did He come **"into the world to condemn the world"** (John 3:17; 12:47). He was not yet invested with any judicial character; and therefore, when the scribes and Pharisees brought before Him an offender for judgment, He declined interfering with functions which, by their own law, belonged to the civil magistrate (John 8:3-11). He came rather to magnify the patience and long-suffering of God, in awakening sinners, and calling them to repentance, than to anticipate the season of punishment by an immediate sentence, which, even had it been demanded from the purest motives, would have been contrary to the analogy of the divine judgments. There were many reasons which justified the wisdom of Providence in suffering the "tares to grow together with the wheat until the harvest" (Matt. 13:30).

Neither was the foretelling of coming events an essential part of our Lord's prophetic mission. He foretold enough to demonstrate His knowledge of futurity, and the accomplishment of some of His predictions have already stamped His pretensions to the character of a prophet with the undeniable seal of truth (Matt. 16:21; 17:22; 20: 17-19; 23-25). But neither was the subject matter of His prophecies so paramount in importance, or their number so considerable, as to make it necessary that one should descend from Heaven, much less the Son of God Himself from the bosom of the Father, solely for the purpose of declaring the dispersion of the Jews, the destruction of their city, His own death and resurrection, the propagation and final triumph of the gospel. Prophecy was incidental to Christ's mission, not its end.

The special object to which the teaching of Christ was primarily directed---an object which could have been attained only by Him Who was one with the Father (John 10:30) --- was the declaration of the divine will conveyed through His medium. By Him God **"hath in these last days spoken unto us"** (Heb. 1:2). **"No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him"** (John 1:18). **"He that sent me is true; and I speak to the world those things. . . that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you"** (John 8:26; 15:15).

It is observable, that on this ground alone did Christ Himself condescend to account for His qualifications to be a public instructor. In reply to the astonishment expressed by the Jews at His teaching, which led them to ask, **"How knoweth**

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this man letters (learning) having never learned?" he told them plainly that His doctrine was not His own, but His Who sent Him (John 7:15-16). He took upon Himself openly and in His own person that character, which He had hitherto sustained through the medium of others. For, as in Melchisedec was represented His everlasting priesthood, so in the series of divine revelations communicated in different ages to holy men of God, was also indirectly displayed the everlasting nature of His prophetic office. In all the appearances of Jehovah to Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Elijah, and the succeeding prophets, it was no other than Christ Who was the declarer of the heavenly will, and through Whom every manifestation of it was conveyed. **"Of which salvation the prophets have inquired 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?"** (I Pet. 1:10-11).

It is true, that the whole visible creation is a mighty monument of the divine power and wisdom; **"the heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handy work"** (Ps. 19:1); but of those things which constitute the surpassing excellence of His glory, the glory of His longsuffering in spite of provocations, the glory of His faithfulness to His promises, the glory of His mercy in the gracious scheme devised for the reconciliation of fallen man, the glory of His justice in the satisfaction made by a vicarious sacrifice for sin, the glory of His love in proffering, not pardon only, but the blessings of an eternal kingdom to His redeemed inheritance, ---of whatever, in short, is comprised under the term, "the great mystery of godliness" (I Tim. 3:16), --- the world would have remained in utter ignorance, unless the great high priest of the church had also condescended to become its prophet. The eternal fabric of the habitable earth, and the works of creation, wise and wonderful and glorious as they are, could never have adequately proclaimed the moral attributes of God. The world, even in its ruins, might bear ample testimony to the almighty power of its creator; but it would give no evidence of His unspeakable goodness. Man, though born in corruption, carries about him the marks of a being wonderfully and fearfully made, and stands forth as a memorial of the excellent knowledge of Him Who fashioned him behind and before, and laid His hand upon him. But for the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and mind of God, we must have recourse to the page of revelation; thick darkness covered them until they were

made known by Christ; so that even in this accommodated sense of the words it may be truly said, "No man cometh to the Father but by him" (John 14:6). We might have known something of His greatness and majesty and power, ---but should have had no clue to lead our souls to comprehend the height and depth of His goodness, or the extent of His love to man. We might have discovered, that it must have been an almighty wisdom which called our bodies into life, and upheld by sovereign laws the organized world which is our earthly dwelling, ---but we could not have arrived at the knowledge of the consoling truth, that the eternal happiness of His creatures was so dear to the creator, that He spared not His own Son in their behalf. Without the interference of our Lord, the sons of men would have been still, as we have seen them among the wisest and most civilized nations of antiquity, erecting an altar to the unknown God, alienated from spiritual religion, and vainly seeking for some vital principle of holiness which the light of nature is insufficient to supply. **"To this end,"** said He to Pilate, **"was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth"** (John 18:37).

Nothing less than that knowledge of the whole will of God which is implied in the attribute of omniscience, could have qualified the author of such a revelation for the due discharge of His office. Moses, the greatest of the prophets who preceded Christ, was not endowed with any perpetual gift of inspiration, authorizing him to speak at all times in the name of God, according to the necessity of the moment. He had no such comprehensive and indwelling knowledge of the universal will of Jehovah on every subject as would empower him to dispense with consulting in the appointed way, and waiting for particular answers to the information required. He ascended indeed into the mount, but not into Heaven. **"No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven"** (John 3:13).

But **"the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him"** (Rev. 1:1) (for so the apostle marks the peculiarity of the heavenly message announced through the ministry of our Saviour) was very different. As "in all things he was to have the pre-eminence" (Col. 1:18), He came with such full powers, that, by reason of His intimate union with the Father, and perfect sympathy with His designs, God may be said to speak to us in Him face to face. While He was a child, the evangelist bears Him witness that He was **"filled with wisdom;"** so that at the commencement of His ministry it was testified of Him, that He was **"full of the Holy Ghost"** (Luke 1:41, 52; 4:1). Instead, therefore, of that radiance which once shone on the face of Moses, after his

interview with the Most High; instead of those transient moments of inspiration, wherein in old time **"holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy ghost"** (II Pet. 1:21), as servants in the house (Heb. 3:5) partially acquainted with temporary disclosures of their master's will; there was spread around the head of Christ a halo of perpetual illumination; so that the Spirit of God which lighted on Him at His baptism, abode with Him continually; and in Him, as in an inexhaustible storehouse of truth, were **"hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge"** (Col. 2:3). And thus it was foretold of Him by Isaiah (Isa. 11:2): **"The spirit of the LORD shall rest upon him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the LORD."** It was He Who was **"wonderful, counselor,"** the "numberer of secrets," or the "wonderful numberer" (Isa. 9:6), Who alone could reveal things hidden from angels and prophets of highest degree; and unfold the purposes designed from the beginning, the decrees foreordained in the bosom of the Father. He alone was **"worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof"** (Rev. 5:9).

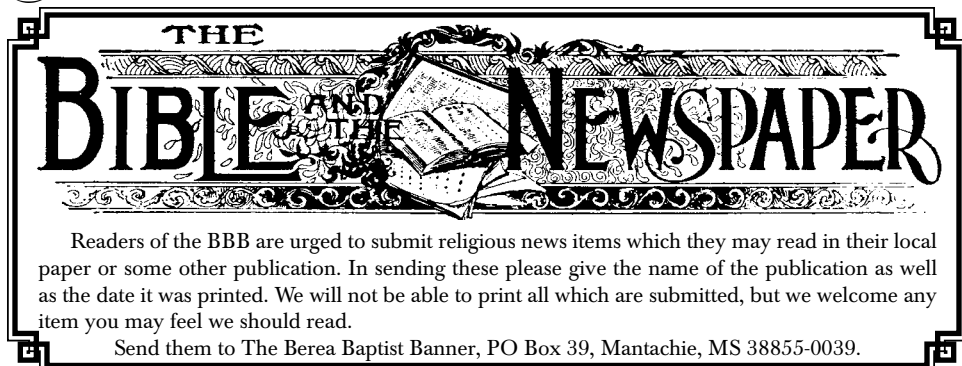
It would seem analogous to the order of the divine counsels, that as Christ, speaking by the prophets, was the original declarer of the will of God from the beginning, and as He afterwards became in His own person the direct medium of communication, He should not leave His work imperfect, but continue to sustain His office of teacher so long as the world stands in need of His heavenly aid.

The reasonableness of such an expectation is confirmed by the testimony of Scripture. **"As for me, this is my covenant with them, saith the LORD; My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the LORD, from henceforth and for ever."** "Lo," said Jesus to His disciples, as His parting assurance, **"I am with you always, even unto the end of the world"** (Isa. 59:21; Matt. 28:20); not only to the termination of their own natural lives, but with their successors in the Christian church, through endless generations, in their studies and labors, whether public or private, for the extension of His spiritual kingdom. In the strength and comfort of this gracious assurance the ministers of His Word may go forth to their work, in the full confidence that, though they be as it were **"earthen vessels"** (II Cor. 4:7), He will be glorified in their weakness, and will perfect praise out of the mouth of very babes and sucklings. And this promise will be their sufficient support in the execution of their difficult office, wherever their lot may be cast---whether

they are commissioned to bear the name of their master into lands which have not yet heard the joyful sounds of salvation; or among the Jews who have despised and rejected their prophet; or whether they are placed among Christian nations, to stir them up to faithfulness, and to put them in remembrance of the duties of their calling. The Lord will be with them, and will "remember his word unto his servants" (Ps. 119:49), even unto the end of the world. **"That fathers"** of the church, "where are they? and the prophets, do they live for ever?" (Zech. 1:5) or, as the Jews themselves observed, **"Abraham is dead, and the prophets;"** but the Lord **"ever liveth"** to complete His victory over Satan, and to work by the servants, whom He employs ministerially to act in His name and under His authority (John 8:52; Heb. 7:25), for the diffusion of the glorious truths of His gospel.

The practical reflections suggested to the mind by this subject, are of very general application. There is no view of our Lord's character, which is not fraught with valuable instruction; and, like His own Word, He may be alternately exhibited for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness. Hence we are called to **"consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession"** (Heb. 3:1), not for the purpose of mere contemplation only, but of imitation. "Christ hath left us an example, that we should follow his steps." "He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked" (I Pet. 2:21). It is that His sheep may follow Him, and especially those sheep who are themselves set over the rest of the flock as shepherds, that our Lord **"goeth before them"** (John 10:3-4). Yet it is important to remark, that this imitation does not so much consist in the performance of certain specific actions corresponding with the actions of Christ, (which in many cases is impossible,) as in an application of the principles of our Saviour's conduct to the various calls of Christian duty; and in a general conformity of spirit and temper, according as our circumstances give occasion for its exercise, and as the experience of divine grace enables us to exhibit it. When our Lord said, **"I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you"** (John 13:15), He did not intend that His disciples should copy Him literally in His action of washing their feet; but that they should look to the thing signified, and take Him in the spirit which dictated the act for a model of humility and lowliness of mind. It is by this mode of imitation that the Christian may study to attain the same **"mind. . . which was also in Christ Jesus,"** and daily endeavour to follow the blessed steps of His most holy life (Phil. 2:5). (Continued in the next issue.)





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.

LEGISLATION WOULD PROTECT KIDS FROM MORNING-AFTER PILL

(EP News)--U.S. Rep. Doug Lamborn, R-Colo., has introduced legislation that would pull federal funding from any school that hands out the morning-after pill. The Schoolchildren's Protection Act (HR 2458) has 40 co-sponsors. "It is morally unacceptable for taxpayers to fund (this drug) for school-age children," Lamborn said in a statement. "Additionally, these drugs can lead to serious health consequences, such as heart attacks and strokes. It is in everyone's interest to protect our children." The morning-after pill is a series of pills given to women within 72 hours of sexual intercourse to prevent pregnancy. The pills, also referred to as "emergency contraception," contain high concentrations of the hormones found in oral contraceptives.

OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE BANS HUMAN CLONING

(EP News)--The Oklahoma Legislature unanimously passed a ban on human cloning last week. The measure now goes to Gov. Brad Henry, although his signature is not a sure thing. "He's vetoed the (ban on) embryonic stem-cell research," said Mike Jestes, executive director of the Oklahoma Family Policy Council. "So there's a chance he'll veto this." The House passed the bill by an 83-0 vote; the Senate approved it 44-0. The bill prohibits all human cloning -- including the creation of embryos for the purpose of harvesting their stem cells, and reproductive cloning.

KANSAS SUPREME COURT HEAR ARGUMENTS IN PLANNED PARENTHOOD CASE

(EP News)--The Kansas Supreme Court heard oral arguments in a criminal case against Planned Parenthood on May 13 -- the first movement in the case in 10 months. The cases involves then-District Attorney Phill Kline, who first charged Planned Parenthood of Kansas and Mid-Missouri with 107 criminal counts -- including 23 felonies -- in October 2007. The charges include illegal late-term abortions, failure to determine viability for late-term abortions, failure to maintain records, and filing false information related to late-term abortions. Kline appealed to the state's highest court after a district judge rejected four of his subpoenas and other matters related to the case. The justices took the case under advisement. A ruling is expected before the end of June.

KEEP TAXPAYER MONEY FROM FUNDING ABORTIONS IN D.C.

(EP News)--President Barack Obama is urging the House and Senate to repeal a law that has prevented taxpayer-funded abortions in the District of Columbia. The law -- the Dornan Amendment -- has prevented taxpayer-funded abortions in D.C. for several years. "If Congress goes along with the Obama proposal, the predictable result will be tax funding of several thousand elective abortions annually, including roughly 1,000 abortions annually that would not otherwise occur," said Douglas Johnson, legislative director for the National Right to Life Committee. "Any member of Congress who votes for a bill that contains the White House proposal is, in reality, voting for tax-funded abortion on demand with congressionally appropriated funds." The move is part of Obama's 2010 budget proposal.

COLORADO GOVERNOR OKS TAXPAYER-FUNDED GAY BENEFITS

(EP News)--Colorado Gov. Bill Ritter has quietly signed into law a bill that provides benefits for the same-sex partners of state employees -- despite the fact that voters rejected a similar proposal in 2006. "We have no doubt the governor and fellow Colorado legislators heard vehement opposition from their constituents in regard to this bill," Jessica Langfeldt, legislative director of Colorado Family Action, said in a statement. "If the signing of Senate Bill 88 did not disregard the desires of the people, why was it signed in the dark of the night?" Taxpayers will foot the bill for the benefits, which include health care.

OBAMA WANTS TO CUT FUNDING FOR ABSTINENCE EDUCATION

(EP News)--President Barack Obama wants to eliminate \$133 million for abstinence education, but pour an additional \$150 million into "comprehensive," or what some conservative groups call "condom-based," sex education. His 2010 proposed budget kills funding for Community Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) and the Title V Abstinence Education Program, the two main abstinence-education programs. Recipients of CBAE funds -- the largest funding stream for abstinence education -- include pregnancy centers and charitable organizations throughout the country. Currently, at least 1 million students are taught abstinence under CBAE.

NEVADA GOVERNOR SAYS 'NO' TO DOMESTIC PARTNERSHIPS

(EP News)--Nevada Gov. Jim Gibbons vetoed a bill May 18 that would have allowed domestic-partner benefits for heterosexual and homosexual couples, citing the state's 2002 marriage-protection amendment. In a statement released over the weekend, Gibbons said: "I believe that because the voters have determined that the rights of marriage should apply only to married couples, only the voters should have the right to undo or amend constitutional mandates." SB 283 would have enshrined community property and debt rights for domestic partners, but, as Gibbons pointed out, those same protections are available through private contracts.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO PROTECT MARRIAGE IN D.C.

(EP News)--Legislation has been introduced in the U.S. House to preserve one-man, one-woman marriage in the nation's capital, after the Washington, D.C., Council voted to recognize gay "marriages" performed elsewhere. Congress has final authority over laws in D.C. Same-sex "marriage" is legal in five states -- Massachusetts, Vermont, Maine, Connecticut and Iowa. Thirty states protect marriage in their constitutions. Rep. Jim Jordan, R-Ohio, acknowledged that his bill -- HR 2608 -- faces an uphill battle in the Democratic-controlled Congress. "We don't think it's appropriate for the council in our nation's capital to redefine the institution that is the cornerstone of families," he said. Nevertheless, Jordan said, he is optimistic. "Every time this issue has gone to the people," he said, "the people have said marriage should be what marriage has always been."

PARENTS ALLOW 8-YEAR-OLD BOY TO LIVE AS A GIRL

(EP News)--A Nebraska couple has decided to let their 8-year-old son live as a girl, The Associated Press reported. They say he has wanted to be a girl since age 4. Ellie Hites, an Omaha therapist, suggested it's healthier to live as one's chosen gender. But Jeff Johnston, research analyst at Focus on the Family, said the parents are being steered in the wrong direction. "They have bought into the delusion that this young boy is a 'girl trapped in a boy's body,'" he said. "Boys are designed to grow into their true, masculine identity. When something derails that process, they need help and guidance to embrace their God-given masculinity." The Nebraska boy recently completed second grade at a Catholic school. He will be enrolled in public school next year -- as a "girl."

PBS MAY CRACK DOWN ON RELIGIOUS CONTENT

(EP News)--Thirty-nine members of Congress have sent a letter to PBS Chairman John Porter expressing concern about a proposal that would strip affiliation from any station that carries "sectarian" content, such as local religious services. The board plans to vote on the issue June 16. The lawmakers

wrote: "There simply is no compelling reason for punishing these stations by forcing them to choose between programming that many depend on ... and the PBS affiliation." The letter asks Porter to allow a 30-day public comment period. "Forcing stations to ban religious programming or lose their affiliation treats religion like some kind of disease," said Ashley Horne, federal policy analyst at Focus on the Family Action. "That is absurd, considering 65 percent of Americans report that religion is important in their daily lives, and 3 out of 4 say Christianity is their religious preference."

COURT BANS BIBLE FROM KINDERGARTEN SHOW-AND-TELL

(EP News)--The 3rd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has sided with a school district in suburban Philadelphia that refused to allow the Bible to be read during show-and-tell. Donna Kay Busch had sued the district after she was told she could not read her son's favorite book, the Bible, to his kindergarten class. David Cortman, senior legal counsel with the Alliance Defense Fund, called it a clear violation of the First Amendment. "This assignment was titled 'All about me,' not 'All about the school,'" he said. "The student's freedom of religion should've been respected."

HOMESCHOOLING ON THE RISE

(EP News)--The number of home-schooled students has nearly doubled in the last eight years, according to a new report by the U.S. Department of Education. An estimated 1.5 million students -- nearly 3 percent of the country's school-age population -- were home-schooled in the spring of 2007. In 1999, about 850,000 children were home-schooled. That number was 1.1 million in 2003. More than 80 percent of parents said they home-school their children to provide religious or moral instruction, up from 72 percent in 2003. About 36 percent said that was the most important reason they home-school their children, followed by concern about the school environment (21 percent) and dissatisfaction with the academic instruction available at other schools (17 percent).

SAN DIEGO COUNTY TELLS PASTOR TO CANCEL HOME BIBLE STUDY

(EP News)--Officials in San Diego County recently told the Rev. Dave Jones to stop hosting a Bible study in his home, calling it an "unlawful use of land." He was told to "stop religious assembly or apply for a major use permit." Jones said he faces fines if he continues to host the group of about 15 people. Dean Broyles, president and chief counsel of The Western Center for Law & Policy in California, said, "The biggest thing that stands out for me is the concept that the government may not prohibit the free exercise of religion. Yet, that's exactly what they're trying to do in a pastor's home with a small home Bible study." Broyles has

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responded to the county. Meantime, Jones continues to host the study.

RISE IN ABORTIONS BLAMED ON ECONOMIC DOWNTURN

(EP News)--As the economy continues to struggle, some Planned Parenthood clinics are reporting a record number of abortions. An Oakland, Calif.-based group that claims to help poor women seeking reproductive health care reports about 72 percent of its calls are from women considering abortions, up from 60 percent last year, the Times reported. A year ago, abortions accounted for 1 percent of business at Planned Parenthood clinics in Fresno, Calif. Now, it's about 3 percent. And California taxpayers funded 94,600 abortions for poor women in 2005, the most recent year for which data is available.

CALIFORNIA SUPREME COURT UPHOLDS MARRIAGE-PROTECTION AMENDMENT

(EP News)—Conservative pro-family and Christian groups mostly applauded a May 26 California Supreme Court decision to uphold a statewide ban on gay marriage. The decision also preserved the estimated 18,000 gay marriages that were performed before voters approved the ban last November. By a 6-to-1 majority, the court said that by approving Proposition 8 last fall, California voters had spoken clearly that marriage should be reserved for heterosexual couples. Religious groups, including evangelical Christian groups, the Roman Catholic Church and the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, used their money and influence to push for Prop 8, which was backed by 52 percent of California voters.

LIFE ADVOCATES TROUBLED BY SUPREME COURT NOMINEE

(EP News)--Many pro-life groups say they are concerned by the president's nomination of Sonia Sotomayor to replace Justice David Souter on the nation's highest court. "She is on the record, not once, not twice, but several times, saying that she would bring her own personal political opinions to the bench when considering her decisions," said Charmaine Yoest, president of Americans United for Life. Sotomayor has ruled in just two cases related to abortion, and she was obligated to follow Supreme Court precedent. "As she is elevated to the highest court in the land, she won't have the same constraints," Yoest said. "She disqualifies herself by making statements that it is the job of a judge to make policy. We should closely examine her judicial philosophy." Other conservatives agreed. Bruce Hausknecht is a judicial analyst at Focus on the Family Action. He said, "From what we know about her, Judge Sotomayor considers policy-making to be among a judge's roles, no matter what the law says." President George H.W. Bush appointed Sotomayor to

the district court for the Southern District of New York in 1991. President Bill Clinton nominated her to the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in 1998.

OUT-OF-WEDLOCK BIRTHRATE DOESN'T FAZE MOST AMERICANS

(EP News)--A recent report from the Department of Health and Human Services shows nearly 40 percent of U.S. babies are born to unmarried moms. Just a few decades ago, the numbers were markedly lower, yet the country seemed more concerned. In 1965, Assistant Secretary of Labor Daniel Patrick Moynihan wrote a report detailing out-of-wedlock births in the black community and calling for national action. Robert Rector, senior research fellow in domestic policy studies at the Heritage Foundation, said, "This decline of marriage is not an accident, but a deliberate result of policy -- a policy of neglect. I'm not sure we can reclaim the ground as long as predominantly liberal institutions run Congress, the media, our universities and so forth," he said.

FAMILY ADVOCATES GROW INCREASINGLY CONCERNED BY SOTOMAYOR

(EP News)--The more pro-family leaders learn about Sonia Sotomayor, President Barack Obama's Supreme Court nominee, the more concerns they have about her. In 2005, Sotomayor commented that the "court of appeals is where policy is made." And Obama already has promised to seat a justice who supports Roe v. Wade. "I am troubled by President Obama's use of the 'empathy standard' when selecting federal judges," said Alabama Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., the ranking Republican on the Judiciary Committee. "This view -- that a judge should use his or her personal feelings to decide a case -- stands in stark contrast to the impartiality we expect in the American courtroom." Obama has said he wants Sotomayor confirmed before the August recess. The Judiciary Committee has not announced when confirmation hearings will begin.

UCLA WILL ALLOW GRADUATE TO MENTION JESUS

(EP News)--The University of California, Los Angeles, will allow a Christian student's graduation statement to mention Jesus, thanks to a letter from the Alliance Defense Fund (ADF). The Molecular Cell and Developmental Biology Department collected short statements from graduating students to be read as they cross the stage June 13. Christina Popa was told she could not mention Jesus in her statement. On Friday, the university changed its mind. "Christian students are entitled to the same rights as all other students," said Heather Gebelin Hacker, litigation staff counsel for ADF. "We are pleased that UCLA officials understand that denying religious liberty to students is a violation of the First Amendment. We commend UCLA for acting quickly to protect Ms. Popa's constitutional rights."

NEW HAMPSHIRE LEGALIZES HOMOSEXUAL "MARRIAGE"

(EP News)--New Hampshire on June 3 became the sixth state to allow homosexual "marriage," after the state House and Senate passed a new version of the legislation and Gov. John Lynch signed it. Lawmakers apparently reached a compromise on the controversial legislation, which still fails to protect the religious liberties of individuals and small businesses. The law will take effect in January. Kevin Smith, director of Cornerstone Policy Research, said he was very disappointed. "When you take 12 votes on five versions of the same issue, you're bound to pass it sooner or later," he said. "It was terribly flawed from the beginning." A recent New Hampshire survey found 64 percent of respondents agreed that "marriage between one man and one woman should be the only legal definition of marriage."



Mini-Edition by Joseph Harris

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The Impossibility of Same Sex Marriage

Some things just can't be changed. In the areas of nature and science, fire is hot and ice is cold. Wind always blows and the sun always produces heat. The aforementioned facts are not up for discussion or debate. Facts are facts. There is no movement underway to "redefine" or "better understand" these facts. They are accepted because they have been proven to be true.

With the advent of the destruction of absolute authority in society (which followed the discrediting of the Bible), has also come a redefining of many things. For instance, gender is up for debate. Several years ago, a "Christian" college offered three types of housing to its students: male, female and transgendered housing. This special housing was for those students who were not sure of their gender. Huhhhh! Without being crass or too improper, there is a real easy way to find out. The answer is so common sense, it does not even need mentioning.

The definition of murder was changed years ago when it began to be called by new names such as "choice," "abortion," "birth control" and "freedom," to name a few. With this change, came the questioning of life beginning at conception, which used to not even be an issue, but an accepted truth.

There are many absolutes in life. Here are some more: (1) Death is the absence of life, (2) a fertile sperm and egg are required to begin a new life and (3) Politicians, both Democrat and

Republican, will always raise taxes, if given one tenth of a percent of an opportunity. The statement, "Fire is not hot" will not change the fact that you will get fried if you jump into it.

The union of two males or two females may in fact be a union, but brother, it ain't a marriage and no amount of name changing, redefining, "compassion" or tolerance will change the truth. And speaking of civil unions, they should not even be allowed. A civil union for "domestic partners" is a mockery of marriage and an endorsement of fornication and perversity by "legally" allowing two individuals of the same sex to live together and potentially receive some of the benefits reserved for marriage.

If every federal, state and local court in the land declare that a homosexual union is a marriage, it still will not be a marriage. There are certain qualifying factors required for a couple to be married, but the foundational requirement of marriage, apart from a government license, is a requirement that is moral and common sense: that the candidates be of the opposite sex.

The continued push for perversion is not just an attack on marriage. It is an attack on God, the creator of marriage. Nevertheless, you better get ready. Buckle up tight. This abomination is coming soon to a town near you via New Hampshire.

Once again, I end this Mini Edition with another limerick from my newly written collection of Politically Incorrect Limericks (and soon to be illustrated and published):

Common Sense Sex

When your time has come for a mate

And you go out to look for a date

God made Adam and Eve

Not Adam and Steve

Common sense will help keep you straight.

Truth is truth and you can do one of two things with it: (1) accept it or (2) reject it... but you cannot change it.

Cold Hard Fact: If Adam and Steve had been the first couple in the Garden of Eden, none of us would be here today.



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From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The Little Flock Commanded and Cheered

"Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom" (Luke 12:32).

In this context the disciples of Christ were in distress because of needless anxiety. Our Lord knew that His friends were filled with fears of every description. He answered their fears with the words of my text. By these simple words the Master Teacher sought to induce His disciples to repose on His providence while passing through life and to look forward to the enjoyment of a future kingdom.

A INTERESTING SIMILITUDE

Earlier Christ had addressed His disciples as **"my friends"** (v. 4). Now the group near Him is addressed in another term of tender endearment. This time He refers to them as His **"flock."** His disciples were as dear to Him as a flock of sheep to the shepherd. In a very simple manner He assured them of His love and concern as to the difficulties which lay ahead of them in the work of His cause.

In the Scriptures God's people are often compared to sheep. The psalmist said: **"So we thy people and sheep of thy pasture will give thee thanks for ever"** (Ps. 79:13). Again he wrote: **"For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand"** (Ps. 95:7). Still again in Psalm 100:3: **"...we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture."** In Matthew 10:16 Christ said of His followers: **"Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves."** Christ is called **"the good shepherd"** (John 10:11), **"the chief Shepherd"** (I Pet. 5:4), and **"that great shepherd of the sheep"** (Heb. 13:20). Christ is our shepherd and we are His flock (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:1-3).

Before our conversion we were wandering sheep. The Lord said of Israel: **"My sheep wandered through all the mountains, and upon every high hill"** (Ezek. 34:6). Isaiah 53:6 tells us: **"All we like sheep have gone astray."** In Jeremiah 50:6 the Lord complained: **"My people hath been lost sheep."** There is such a thing as a lost sheep. Jesus Christ said in Matthew 10:6: **"But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."**

The elect in their unconverted state are not called goats. They are sheep, but before regeneration they are **"lost sheep."** They are called sheep because they were chosen of God and given to Christ to be

redeemed, sought out and saved by Him: **"For thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I, even I, will both search my sheep, and seek them out. As a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep, that are scattered; so I will seek out my sheep, and will deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. . . I will seek that which was lost, and bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick. . ." (Ezek. 34:11-12, 16). In Luke 19:10 Christ declared: **"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."** Each time the Shepherd seeks and saves a lost sheep He says to the disembodied spirits of the righteous in Heaven: **"Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost"** (Luke 15:6).**

In our unconverted condition we were like sheep who had wandered from the green pastures into the barren wilderness. A wandering sheep will never come home on its own. If it remains out in the wilderness it is beset with many dangers and enemies. A sheep by nature has little courage, cunning, or means of defense against ravenous beasts. Even so, the sinner is exposed to the dangers of a corrupt nature, Hell and the second death. He is exposed by the Devil, a roaring lion which seeks to devour him (I Pet. 5:8). Like a helpless sheep, he is **"without strength"** (Rom. 5:6).

It was a sovereign act of the Good Shepherd which gathered us into the Divine fold. He enlightened our minds and leads us to Himself for spiritual and moral cleansing. We are then a part of His flock. **"And ye my flock, the flock of my pasture, are men. . ." (Ezek. 34:31). The Chief Shepherd feeds His flock: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd" (Isa. 40:11). He leads His flock: "Thou leddest thy people like a flock. . ." (Ps. 77:20). He defends and saves them as well: "Therefore will I save my flock, and they shall no more be a prey. . ." (Ezek. 34:22). Oh, as sheep of the flock, let us follow the Great Shepherd!**

A PAINFUL FACT

In my text is a diminutive, very sweet and full of love. The Lord's people are a **"little flock,"** not a big flock. The original expression is a double diminutive, the literal translation of which is "little,

little flock," or maybe "a very little flock." The **"little flock"** is in contrast to **"an innumerable multitude of people"** who had gathered around Christ at this time (Luke 12:1).

This has always been true of Christ's flock in the world. His sheep are but few and feeble. The flock of God is a vineyard, a garden, a small spot, compared with the wilderness of this wicked world. The Lord's flock was small in the days of Noah---only eight souls. It was small in the days of Abraham---one man and his family. It was small when He chose the nation Israel. Israel was **"like two little flocks of kids"** when the **"Syrians filled the country"** (I Kings 20:27). The Lord told Moses that the Israelites were **"the fewest of all people"** (Deut. 7:7). Out of this smallest of all nations only a remnant was really saved (Rom. 9:27). Jeremiah said: **"Let, we beseech thee, our supplication be accepted before thee, and pray for us unto the LORD thy God, even for all this remnant; (for we are left but a few of many, as thine eyes do behold us)" (Jer. 42:2).**

As can be seen in my text, the New Testament church is a **"little flock."** The Founder of the church taught: **"Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it"** (Matt. 7:13-14). Such teaching caused His disciples to cry out: **"Lord, are there few that be saved?" (Luke 13:23). In Matthew 9:37 Jesus Christ declared: "The harvest truly is plenteous, but the labourers are few." In this generation in which we now live the churches are largely in apostasy (I Tim. 4:1). Even in what we consider sound churches, there are but **"a few names. . . which have not defiled their garments"** (Rev. 3:4).**

The elect of God in every generation has been a few among the many, a remnant, a seed (Rom. 9:29). The Lord from Heaven said: **"For many be called, but few chosen"** (Matt. 20:16). Today true believers are a **"little flock"** when compared with the unsaved world. The righteous are few when compared to the multitude devoted to sensuality, to the love of mammon, and to the commission of sin. The **"men of the world, which have their portion in this life"** (Ps. 17:14) are far more numerous than those who have chosen the Lord as their portion (Ps. 73:26). It will not be otherwise until the Lord comes.

Looking at it from the standpoint of human responsibility, it is no small matter to become a part of the Lord's little flock. It involves sacrifice and self-denial. Our Master laid down some very strong requirements for those who would become his followers: **"If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me"**

(Matt. 16:24). We must restrain our carnal appetites (Luke 21:34; I Pet. 4:7) and subdue our lusts (Matt. 5:29). We must follow the Shepherd over the cold, dark mountains and through the thorns and thistles of the valley. We may be called upon to give up home, friends, and business (Luke 5:27-28; 18:29-30). Persecution and tribulation will be our lot in this present evil world. The heart of man is naturally opposed to meeting these requirements, and this is one of the reasons the disciples of Christ are a little flock.

In comparison to the host of Hell the army of the Lord is a little flock. We are few, feeble, and faint. We are insignificant in the eyes of the masses who are loyal to Satan. We are a little flock sent forth among many wolves (Matt. 10:16). From the standpoint of numbers and earthly power, it seems we are in danger of being overpowered and overthrown by our enemies. The world even mocks our feeble attempts at serving God. When Nehemiah started to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem his enemies said: **"What do these feeble Jews?" (Neh. 4:2).**

A GRACIOUS PURPOSE

The gracious purpose of Christ concerning His little flock is seen in His promise: **"For it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."** There is so much in the words, **"it is your Father's good pleasure."** This expression speaks of free and sovereign grace. Whatever God does is according to His sovereign will and pleasure. In Isaiah 46:10 He tells us: **"My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."** The elect are predestinated unto the adoption of children **"according to the good pleasure of His will"** (Eph. 1:5). He makes known unto us the mystery of His will **"according to his good pleasure"** (Eph. 1:9). How we need to acquaint ourselves with **"all the good pleasure of his goodness"** (II Thess. 1:11).

The kingdom is the Father's gift to believers. It is not obtained by our works or deserts. It is given, not of debt, but of free and sovereign grace. It is ours through a new and spiritual birth: **"Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"** (John 3:3). Even this new birth is from the Father above (John 1:13; Jas. 1:18). It is through the merits of Christ that we inherit the kingdom. **"Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son"** (Col. 1:12-13).

What is the kingdom to be given in my text? I believe it is the kingdom in a threefold sense. First, the Father gives us the kingdom of grace now: **"Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have grace, whereby**

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The Little Flock

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we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear" (Heb. 12:28). This kingdom is entered by a spiritual birth (John 3:5), and it is spiritual in nature: **"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost"** (Rom. 14:17). Presently, Christ reigns upon the throne of our hearts by His grace (Rom. 5:21) and written Word. Believers are already **"the children of the kingdom"** (Matt. 13:38).

Second, there is the heavenly kingdom to which our spirits go at death. This is the abode of the spirit between death and the resurrection. The Apostle Paul spoke of this kingdom in II Timothy 4:18: **"And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve me unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom be glory for ever and ever."** There is a heavenly kingdom to which the Lord will receive His faithful and suffering saints at death. Our Savior preserves us in times of difficulty and dangers by His grace now. That grace will never fail us here, and it will take us to be at home with the Lord at death. This hope is not based on our own strength, or maturity of Christian growth, but only on the Lord's faithfulness and power.

Third, believers will be given the millennial kingdom in the age to come. One day Christ shall return to earth in all His glory and take His seat upon the throne of His glory in Jerusalem (Matt. 25:31; Jer. 3:17; Isa. 24:23; Luke 1:31-33). At this time He will say to His little flock: **"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world"** (Matt. 25:34). In Luke 22:29-30 Christ spoke of this future kingdom: **"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."** James made reference to it also: **"Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"** (Jas. 2:5).

This is a future kingdom during which Christ will be **"king over all the earth"** (Zech. 14:9) and when **"all dominion shall serve and obey him"** (Dan. 7:27). His kingdom will be global: **"his dominion shall be from sea even to sea, and from the river even to the ends of the earth"** (Zech. 9:10). For this future kingdom we are to pray: **"Thy kingdom come"** (Matt. 6:10). There is a glorious kingdom awaiting the Lord's flock. Now we are ridiculed and mocked like our Savior was, but **"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory"** (Col. 3:4).

Now we suffer with Him, soon **"we shall also reign with him"** (II Tim. 2:12). Oh, glorious day when we **"shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years"** (Rev. 20:6) **"on the earth"** (Rev. 5:10)!

A NECESSARY COMMAND

The Omniscient One knew the weaknesses of His own disciples. He knew they were filled with fears of every kind. They feared the fewness of their number---feared their evil enemies---feared the difficulty and dangers ahead---feared because of their own faults and follies. So He gives them a necessary command: **"Fear not, little flock."**

The fears of the little flock are many. First, we fear that our adversary the Devil may get the best of us in our spiritual warfare. The evil one won a great victory against our first parents, and he has had many victories since. Whenever we seek to do the will of God it seems that Satan is always present to resist us (Zech. 3:1). He ever seeks to **"get an advantage of us"** (II Cor. 2:11) and to corrupt us **"from the simplicity that is in Christ"** (II Cor. 11:3).

Second, we fear that by some mysterious providence we shall lack food and raiment. Many fear they may lose their job, their house, and their car. They fear they may lose their good health and not be able to earn a living for their family. They fear that their company may go broke, or that their plant may close down. We say to ourselves, "How tragic to be hungry and naked in these prosperous times!"

Third, some members of the Lord's little flock fear that they may be a failure in the Christian life. We know the just are to live by faith, but we also know that some of the just may **"draw back"** (Heb. 10:38). Some put their hand to the plow and look back (Luke 9:62). Some preach to others and then become castaways (I Cor. 9:27). Some run and labor for Christ in vain (Phil. 2:16). A true Christian fears he may fail his Savior that he loves so dearly. Truly, he longs to hear the "Well done" of the Master at the judgment seat of Christ.

Fourth, the believer fears his faith may not be strong enough. Hebrews 4:11 says: **"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief."** God blesses His people according to their faith in many cases (Matt. 9:29). We forfeit many blessings every day of our lives because of our unbelief (Matt. 17:19-20). In Hebrews 3:12 the writer warned the holy brethren: **"Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God."** Oh, may the Great Shepherd grant us that our **"faith fail not"** (Luke 22:32).

The only thing that believers have to be afraid of in the absolute sense is fear itself. Fear can become a paralyzing, chronic thing. Like a fog, it can settle down over

the soul. Day and night it wraps the soul in its chilling and visionless embraces. It makes us barren and unfruitful. It flows from doubt in the promises of God, and, if not checked, it leads to despair. Slavish and servile fear drives men from God like it did our first parents. Vicious fear springs from selfishness; it causes us to care for ourselves too much. At best it makes us not better, but only a little more prudent than the Devil.

There is no cause for alarm. There should be no dread of the future. We are under the protection of the Good Shepherd. Christ has redeemed us to God by His precious blood. He will lose none of His sheep. To the sheep He said: **"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand"** (John 10:28). He will care for body and soul for time and eternity. I say again that we have nothing to fear but fear itself.

Calamities shall surely come upon us, but there is no need to be fearful and afraid. The Good Shepherd has said: **"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"** (Heb. 13:5). Our spiritual foes are many and powerful, but **"we are more than conquerors through him that loved us"** (Rom. 8:37). We face an evil and alluring world, yet our Savior has said: **"Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"** (John 16:33). There is indeed a mean Devil out to get us at all costs, but we need not be alarmed: **"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly"** (Rom. 16:20). Death is a dark valley and we must all go through the gates of death. But we need not fear this last enemy, for our Savior has taken the sting out of death for His flock (I Cor. 15:54-56). Let us not fear the want of any good thing, for it is our Father's good pleasure to give us the kingdom of grace and glory!

CONCLUSION

1. Let us as born-again believers dismiss our fears and cast all our cares upon the Good Shepherd of the sheep. "It is a foolish thing, not to look for small things at His hands, who freely gives us the greatest things" (Beza). The Apostle Paul said: **"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"** (Rom. 8:32). Christ is **"heir of all things"** (Heb. 1:2), and soon we **"shall inherit all things"** (Rev. 21:7). The kingdom is ours and ten thousand other things (I Cor. 2:9; 3:21-23). So let us not fear, but rather rejoice!

2. It is very important to be a member of the Lord's little flock. Are you one of the Lord's sheep? Are you among those who have eternal life and shall never perish? Is Jesus Christ your shepherd? All who belong not to Christ's little flock belong to the world's herd. Only the flock is promised the kingdom of grace and glory.

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 5-1-2009 to 5-31-2009

Beginning Balance	\$5,830.81
RECEIPTS:	
Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX.....	25.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL	53.58
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN	150.00
Bethel M. B. C., Pasadena, TX.....	100.00
Bible Believer's B. C., Naples, ID	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV	300.00
Buffalo Valley B. C., Clay, WV	50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL.....	25.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME	200.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR.....	25.00
Frank James, Columbus, OH	25.00
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME	20.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY.....	100.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, OH.....	50.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC	50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....	35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	200.00
Joseph Jurzec, Richmond, IL	125.00
L. H. Farrell, Des Allemands, LA.....	100.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....	100.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH.....	100.00
New Testamnet B. C., Bristol, TN	20.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	50.00
New Testament B. C., Leivasy, WV... ..	125.00
Ocoonita M. B. C., Keokee, VA.....	40.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL.....	100.00
South Park M.B.C., Seattle, WA	25.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Columbus, MS	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wake Forest, NC.....	100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C. Warren, OH.....	75.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA	25.00
Subscriptions	58.00
Anon.....	141.00
Sub Total	\$3,077.58
TOTAL	\$8,908.39
EXPENDITURES:	
Printing.....	581.71
Postage	762.64
Wages	2,000.00
FICA	153.01
Dividing Checks	8.25
Total Expenditures	3,505.61
ENDING BALANCE	\$5,402.78

BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 5-1-2009 to 5-31-2009

Beginning Balance	\$11,944.36
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Berea M. B. C., West Point, TN	50.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	375.00
TOTAL	12,319.36
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	710.00
Tape Production.....	130.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	840.00
.....	\$11,479.36
Interest	+86
.....	11,480.22
Less Corbin, KY des.	-1,008.52
ENDING BALANCE	\$10,471.70
CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT	
Beginning Balance	\$1,168.52
RECEIPTS:	
.....	1,168.52
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio Time	160.00
ENDING BALANCE	\$1,008.52



Where There Is

(Continued from page 121) ◊

Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them" (Acts 28:25-27).

When we speak of vision, we speak of the truth and of a knowledge of the truth. Many today do not know what the truth really is. They think that truth is relative, that truth changes to fit the likings and dislikings that they have at any one particular moment in time. That is called a preference, but it is not truth and it is not vision. Where there is vision, there is consistency, there is joy, and there is commitment to something greater than one's self. Those who profess to be saved and who have no vision are easily distinguishable because they lack spiritual fruit and spiritual growth in their own lives. (II Pet. 1:5-9) The problem with churches today is not in the One who founded His kind of church almost two thousand years ago and promised His presence and her perpetuity. The problem with churches today is with those in the church whose spiritual sight is very short, almost non-existence, because the Word of God has no permanent place in their hearts and lives. **"Where there is no vision, the people perish."** Churches perish because they are filled with people whose minds and thoughts are not governed by the Word of God, and no one's mind can be governed by the Word of God when that person is not faithful to attend to the preaching of God's Word in God's house.

The vision that was lacking here in the wise man's observation in our text is none other than the revealed Word of the Lord. (I Sam. 3:1) When Samuel was a young child who lived and worked in the tabernacle under the supervision of Eli the high priest, there were no prophets, no speakers of the Word of God, none who could claim to have a message of the Lord for the people. When such is the case, the spirituality of the people will be wanting; and such is the case as far as the majority of people are concerned in our day. There is a famine today, but it is not a famine of bread and water, or of dainties and pleasing food and drink, or of fleshly pleasure. We have all these things in abundance in our churches, and yet we lack the most precious thing of all, the preaching and hearing and believing and obeying of THUS SAITH THE LORD!

Permit me to make a few observations before we proceed into the main portion of the message. Your life as a child

of God is dependent upon one thing without which you cannot survive, intake of the teaching and preaching of the Word of God. God says, **"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge"** (Hos. 4:6). The problem plaguing our churches is one of spiritual starvation: people are not feeding on the truths of the Word of God, and they are weak and feeble and about to perish! The Apostle Peter wrote to some believers who were young in the faith of their need of the Word of God, stating, **"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby"** (I Pet. 2:2). Some people are not growing at all. Their spiritual progress is stunted, and their spiritual light is dim, not burning bright for the Lord Jesus Christ. Many are weak in the faith and unable to make spiritual decisions, unable to stand in the battle for truth, and unable to put off the deeds of the flesh for the service of the Lord; and the reason for this is that they have a very poor spiritual diet without very much attendance to the teaching of the truth that occurs in the Lord's kind of church. I am troubled by what I see, and the reason I am troubled is first of all because of the consequences of this problem: **"the people perish,"** and I am troubled secondly because of the great distress of the hour in which you and I are now living. It seems that people think that serving God is somehow less important now than it was in the past; that attending to the truth and the teachings of the Scriptures is less necessary; and that proclaiming the gospel and telling lost sinners about the Lord Jesus Christ is something that can be left off. This is very distressing to me because we are living in a day, not when these things are less important, but more important. (II Tim. 3:1-7) Public schools are teaching atheistic evolution, practicing humanistic psychology, and passing out condoms in the classroom. Very soon homosexuals will be teaching your children their pernicious manner of living in school, and if you object you will be charged with violating the homosexual's civil rights. More people are living together before they get married, and more are getting divorced. Girls are getting pregnant at younger and younger ages, and violence among youth is on the rise. Parents are working two and three jobs so they can afford the best clothes, the best houses, the best cars, and the best schools; all the while forgetting that without God, these things are worth less than nothing. We don't need less of God's Word, and less of faithful church attendance, and participation on the part of church members as a result of hearing and obeying God's Word – we need more!

I. The Vision of a Backslidden People.

When the Word of the Lord is preached and received into the hearts

of God's people, they will recognize the cold and spiritually indifferent condition into which many have fallen. (Isa. 1:1-3) Isaiah was caused, by the Word of the Lord, to see the sad spiritual condition of the people in his day. There was much lacking in that day, and there is much lacking in our day on the part of those who are members in the Lord's churches. Many things are being left undone that ought to be done, and many things are being done that are not fitting in the work of God. There is a lack of interest, lack of cooperation in churches, lack of concern for things of spiritual and eternal value. Only the Word of God can reveal this to a person and awaken him or her to the need of revival!

People will not take medicine until they actually think that they are sick. People will not change until they realize that something is wrong. The prodigal son sat in the pigpen for a long time before he realized that he was perishing with hunger, and arose and went to his father repenting. The only thing which can show a person that he or she is in need of a closer walk with God is the effectual working of the Word of God in his or her heart. (Jer. 36:1-7) God sends His Word to His people to open their eyes to the fact that they have slid back from following Him, that their lives are displeasing to Him, and that they are about to ruin themselves by their spiritual adultery and negligence and disobedience. (II Chron. 34:1,2, 8-33) God's Word had a tremendous effect upon this young king in revealing to him the poor spiritual condition of the people. God's house had been neglected and the service of the Lord had been left off. The people who were called by God's name were not living in a way which brought honor to that name or showed that they were a separated people.

Many people today are in spiritual denial regarding their own condition and the condition of the churches in which their names are enrolled as members. They are willfully ignorant of the reality of the truths that govern their existence, and are seeking to live in a false reality of illusion and made-up fantasies. There is no vision, and so they perish. They cannot see the dangers into which they are leading themselves and all those over whom they have an influence. (Prov. 14:12, 26, 27) Children of God cannot live their lives according to their own plans and their own purposes and ignore the will of God as revealed in the Word of God without heaping disappointment upon themselves. God's Word brings a true vision of the condition of people who are living after the flesh and not following the leadership of the Holy Spirit. Many need to be awakened, and only the Word of God can accomplish their awakening.

II. The Vision of a Field of Missionary Labor.

God's Word reveals the great need of

the hour that the Lord's churches would carry out the Great Commission and preach the gospel unto every creature. The reason so many today do not seem to recognize that there is a need to put aside the things of the world and engage in the work of witnessing for the Lord Jesus Christ and pointing others to the Savior is that they are not listening to the Word of the Lord. (Matt. 9:36-37) The great need of the hour in which you and I are now living is that God's people would become concerned with the sad condition of the souls of lost men, women, boys, and girls round about them. We seemingly do not recognize the need of those who are all around us every single day; but we know their need! We are not prompted to do anything as we ought to be because we have turned a deaf ear to the Word of God our Savior who says, **"As my Father hath sent me, even so send I you"** (John 20:21).

Beloved, we should look out on the highways and the streets of the cities and neighborhoods where we live and see a lost and dying world in need of Jesus. The faces we see in the hallways of our school buildings and places of business and in the supermarket ought to be looked on as those who are dead in trespasses and in sins and who need to be brought to Jesus. They are crying out for help, but they do not even know their own need. People think they need psychoanalysis, drug therapy, stress management class, and quality time with their families; and what they really stand in need of is to come to the saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. You say, "Well, they will not listen to me." I wonder if anyone ever said the same thing about you, my friend. If you're hear today and saved by the grace of God it is because God placed a burden upon the heart of one of His saints that the gospel needed to be preached and that sinners needed to hear of the only living and true Savior who died on the tree of the cross, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the scriptures. May we heed the Word of the Lord and have a vision of the field that is white already to harvest!

(Acts 16:9, 10) Beloved, we need to hear the voice of the Spirit of God today calling us to send forth the invitation into all the world. **"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely"** (Rev. 22:17). We are not living in an hour when the gospel is any less needed than that in which the first churches were living and working for Jesus. If you're saved by the grace of God then you know the need because you received this invitation yourself and you know that without Christ you would have perished. Right where you are is where you need to be missionary first and foremost. We

◊ (Continued on page 139)

Where There Is

(Continued from page 138) ♦

have not done anything to meet this responsibility such as we ought. When you go outside of this church building and look up and down the street, you ought to see a mission field upon which the good seed of the Word of God needs to be sown. As you drive to your respective homes following the service, you ought to see a field of labor wherein are the souls of lost men crying out, "Help us!" Look in the pews around you and in your own homes and families and you will find a mission field. Why aren't we doing anything about it? We don't want to be inconvenienced or troubled; but we do not realize the value of this work because we have no vision, and people perish. The Apostle Paul had a vision of the field of Baptist labor because of the Word of God, which caused him to say, **"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory"** (II Tim. 2:10). We who are saved are the ones who must see the need and go forth with the Word of Life. **"Where there is no vision, the people perish."**

III. The Vision of an Imminent Return of Jesus.

(Rev. 1:1-20; 22:7, 12-16, 20) One of the greatest truths of which people are living in spiritual ignorance is the fact that Jesus is coming again. His return is imminent: He may come at any moment. There is one thing we know for sure about the coming of Jesus Christ, and that is that He will come again. Jesus said, **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"** (John 14:2,3). This is the next great event which is going to happen as far as the already decreed and appointed plan and purposes of God are concerned. Over and over again Jesus told His disciples that He would come again. The greatest incentive we have to be working for the Lord Jesus Christ in this hour in which we are now living is that He is coming and that His coming is drawing nigh.

Beloved, without a Bible-based knowledge of the return of our Lord, we have no motive for living godly in this present evil world and we have no incentive for carrying out the instructions He gave us to go and make disciples of all nations. Because our attention has been turned away from the Word of God, we have focused our eyes and our efforts on the things here below rather than looking up and watching for His coming. I do not mean that we are to stand around looking up into the visible clouds, but we

are to be living like we know He's coming! (Acts 1:9-11) These who witnessed the ascension of Jesus needed to be reminded that He was going to return, and being thus reminded they set about the work He had given them to do. (Tit. 2:11-13) Jesus told those seven churches in Asia Minor that He was coming quickly. We need a vision of this reality that Jesus is coming soon!

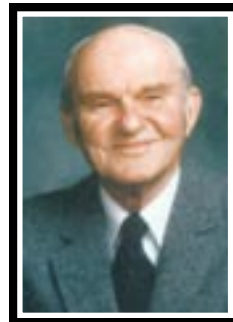
I know that people are teaching many falsehoods regarding the coming of the Lord. Some teach that His coming is not imminent, or that it could not happen at any moment. Some teach that His coming is not literal, but only figurative and only refers to when a person is saved or when a person dies. When a saint of God dies, Jesus doesn't come to that person, that person goes to be with Jesus; wherefore Paul stated, **"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better"** (Phil. 1:23). He is coming, and He will come, and He says Himself, **"Surely I come quickly."** We need to live like He's coming. We need to attend church like He's coming: **"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). The reason Satan wants us to be in doubt with regard to His coming is because we will not be faithful if we are not looking for His appearance. I know people who are lost, and if Jesus came today they would not be saved and they would be left behind to die in their sins and go to hell. I want Him to come, and I want to live like He is coming very soon.

Without the Word of God, there can be no spiritual vision. **"Where there is no vision, the people perish: but he that keepeth the law, happy is he."** God's Word has not lost any power, and God's Word still has the answers which are needed in this present hour. The Bible is not obsolete or out-of-date. You will die and go to hell if you do not hear and believe what the scriptures say about Jesus Christ. Everything this church needs is in the Word of God. Everything your home and family needs is in the Word of God. Every problem you face has an answer in the Word of God. Without the right vision, this church, your home, and you personally will perish. Do you see something today by the Word of the Lord that you didn't recognize before? Are you lost and without Christ? Are you saved and you need to be baptized? Have you made a profession of faith that was founded on false grounds, and has God opened your heart to the truth? Are you a church member who needs to rededicate his or her life to Christ, make things right with this church, and start living for the One who loved you and gave Himself for you? May God give you grace to follow His will.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

On June 13, 2009 Capt. Gilbert Russell Evans departed this life. He was 95 years old. He for many years wrote articles in this and other papers on governmental and religious topics.



He studied at North Carolina State College and was a graduate of the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, Naval War College, U.S. Navy Advanced Flight Training Center, Civil Aeronautics Administrative Advanced Instrument Flight Center and the U.S. Navy Jet Transitional Training Center.

He served 30 years in the U.S. Coast Guard, served as executive officer of several Coast Guard cutters and commanded several air stations. He was a veteran of many rescues at sea and, for a time, was aide and pilot to the U.S. Secretary of the Treasury. Service decorations included two air medals, two commendation medals and campaign medals for the American and European Theaters in World War II. His service in World War II included Greenland, Iceland, Newfoundland and anti-submarine patrols.

He was editor of the U.S. National Search and Rescue Manual and developer of search techniques. He retired from the U.S. Coast Guard in 1965 when he was Chief of Staff of the Portsmouth, VA base Fifth Coast Guard District. Then, for several years he was a consultant for Fairchild-Hiller Aircraft Corporation, Hagerstown, Maryland where he helped design a search and rescue aircraft.

Since 1968, Captain Evans was an author and researcher into national, religious and historical subjects and their impact on national security-including the Panama Canal, Korea, Vietnam, Central America, Nicaragua, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

He was author of five books and numerous published articles on a regular basis and traveled many times to Panama and to Washington to generate support for preserving U.S. rights at the Panama Canal and to warn of Chinese incursions in violations of U.S. treaty rights.

He was a member of Talbot Park Baptist Church and had previously been a United Methodist.

He will be missed because there is no replacement for the type of writing he did covering politics and religion with honesty and facts.

The Big Creek Baptist Church would like to announce that they have authorized a home mission work in West Jefferson, Ohio. They have received Elder Roger Reed into their membership and

have sent him and nine other members separated unto the new mission work.

Bro. Roger will be doing deputation over the next few months to present the work to interested churches of like faith and order.

Please contact Elder Roger Reed at (419) 589-2398 or email at pstr_reed@neo.rr.com. Also you can contact Pastor Matthew Stepp at (304) 522-1261 or email at sovgrace@citynet.net.

Please pray for this work.

The Northside Baptist Church and Pastor Irving Cummins would like to announce their annual Bible Conference on August 6th - 8th.

Service times are Thursday at 7:00 p.m., Friday at 9:30 a.m. with a noon meal and afternoon services at 2:00 p.m. with supper at 5:00 p.m. and evening services at 7:00 p.m. Saturday service begin at 10: a.m. followed by a noon meal.

Speakers are Elders Mark Clark Sr., Dan Gordan, Scott Guiley, Lee Hammel, Robert Keller, Larry Lafferty, Garner Smith, Randy Titus, Steve Trescott and Ted Tweet.

The church is located at 532 North Main St, Elkton, KY. If you need more information please contact Pastor Cummins at (270) 265-9665 or (270) 791-8474.

The Lord's Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Eagle, AK will be hosting a three day preaching service starting on Friday July 24th.

There are several men scheduled to speak. All are invited to fellowship and attend.

For more information please contact Pastor Gary Howard at (907) 547-2256.

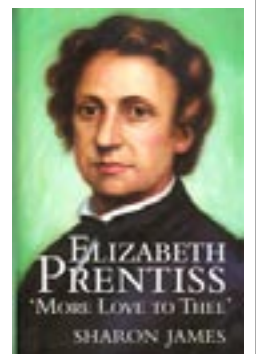
The Bethel Bible Baptist Church, PO Box 85, Mansfield, LA is in need of a pastor.

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.

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The Parent Eagle

“As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings” (Deut. 32:11). “No chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous” (Heb. 12:11).

*The parent eagle bids her young to fly,
And far aloft their fluttering pinions try;
With seeming cruel haste she stirs their nest,
Which may no longer be a place to rest,
Then flutters o'er them, spreads her wings to fly,
And seeks to bear the little ones on high.
They learn to trust their feeble wings at length,
And soar aloft with all their parent's strength.
So oft in life, the fate that seems so hard,
Brings in the end exertion's rich reward.*

It is related as a fact in the natural history of the eagle, that when the proper time has arrived for the young eaglets to leave their nest, the parent eagle so stirs it up that they can not stay in it longer, and they are obliged to find some other spot in which to live. They now make their first attempt to use their wings: in this they are assisted by the parent bird, who flutters over and about them; spreads out her wings, so that when the efforts of her young fail, she bears them on her own wings to a place of shelter and safety. By this means they are taught to fly and provide for themselves.

It would seem harsh and unreasonable to the young eaglets, were they capable of reasoning on the subject, to see their parent tearing to pieces the comfortable home in which they had so long nestled in quiet and security. They might ask, What wrong have we been guilty that we thus should be broken up and cast out upon the cold world? The conduct of their parent would, at least, be unaccountable; they might even charge her with cruelty, and loudly murmur and complain at what appeared a great misfortune. Could they discover the reason, they would see that love for them was the true cause of it all.

In this trait of the eagle with regard to her young, we have an apt similitude of many occurrences which have taken place among communities of mankind. The land of Canaan was promised to the descendants of Abraham, and by this they were entitled to its possession. However, during a time of famine, they emigrated to Egypt, where many favors and privileges were allotted to them. A generation was born there, and their homes seemed secure. When the time had nearly arrived that the Israelites should take possession of the Promised Land, the Egyptians were stirred up



against them, and made their lives bitter with bondage. Finally, by a train of providential events, they were brought into the land promised to their fathers.

At the commencement of Christianity, most of the followers of Christ had collected at Jerusalem, where they were greatly prospered, and were so happy in the love and fellowship with each other, that they seemed inclined to build their tabernacles at Jerusalem, exclaiming, in their joy, “**It is good for us to be here.**” They desired and expected to continue there during their lives. But in mercy to others, and to themselves, whose truest happiness was connected with their usefulness, a great persecution arose at the time of the death of Stephen, and the disciples were “**scattered abroad, and went every where preaching the word.**” The cause of Christianity was thus wonderfully advanced, and Christian churches established in almost every part of the known world.

Paul, the learned apostle to the Gentiles, being better qualified than his brethren to speak before kings and emperors, was driven by persecution away from his countrymen, to appear before the Roman emperor, by which the Gospel was introduced into the palace of the Caesars. Persecution followed the other apostles; they found no resting place where they could abide in peace and safety; every new abode was in turn stirred up, and they had to flee from one city to another.

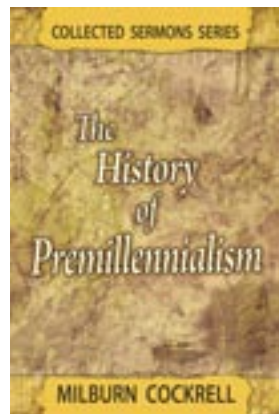
In modern times, the history of the Puritans furnishes a remarkable instance of the truth of the similitude of the eagle stirring up her nest for the benefit of her young. After the bloody persecutions of Queen Mary, the Protestant religion gained the ascendancy in Great Britain, when, in the year 1558, Queen Elizabeth of England ascended the

throne, to the joy of all her Protestant subjects. Many of these were Puritans, so called from their efforts to maintain purity of worship, untrammelled by those rites and forms which they thought contrary to the spirit of true religion. The Puritans felt certain of her protection, and expected to pass the remainder of their lives in tranquility.

But they soon heard a voice, saying, Arise, “**this is not your rest**” (Micah 2:10). Queen Elizabeth, though a Protestant, and in favor of the reformation, was of an arbitrary disposition. She took violent measures to enforce uniformity in church discipline and service. The Puritans, while holding to the same doctrines as the established church, had scruples about practicing all its rites and ceremonies, and therefore refused compliance.

A storm of persecution arose; their rest or place of abode became stirred up. They were subjected to severe penalties, and compelled to collect for worship in private places with great secrecy. Hundreds of Puritan ministers were deprived of their livings and silenced, and others imprisoned, while their families were starving. These persecutions were continued with but little abatement for about fifty years. The Puritans made many efforts to obtain toleration, but the queen and most of the bishops refused.

In consequence of these persecutions, many of the Puritans left their native country, passed over to Holland, and formed distinct and independent churches; but not liking their situation there, most of them emigrated to America. The stirring up and unpleasantness of the place of their abode, caused the emigration to and founding of the colony of Plymouth, in 1620. These colonists, in order to obtain “freedom to worship God,” were thrown upon their own exertions, like the young of the eagle; they sought another habitation; they went into a savage and howling wilderness, and there, deep and wide, laid the foundations of civil and religious liberty.



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