

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

Why I Use The KJV

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941-2002)

Special Note: Recently there has been some controversy about what Pastor Cockrell believed concerning the KJV Bible. Therefore, we feel it is best to let him speak for himself. This article was published in the Oct. 5, 2021 edition of the Berea Baptist Banner, less than a year before he went home to be with his Lord.

In my 44 years in the ministry I have used the KJV of the Bible, and so have the churches I have pastored. I urged all church members to secure and study the KJ Bible. I do not recommend to them that they throw away their KJV and get new modern Bible versions. That this is so can be ascertained from any church where I have ever pastored, although there are rumors to the contrary being circulated by some brethren.

Some of my brethren use the KJV because they have read and studied books by a cursing Arminian preacher in Florida, or because they are afraid they will



be called a liberal or modernist by the followers of this man. I, for one, marvel that some brethren follow a cursing Arminian preacher and are influenced by him. Our King James Version says in James 1:26: **"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain."** Evidently, some brethren do not believe the KJV here and prefer a new version of some kind.

A few years ago I attended a Bible conference where one preacher got up and said in his message he was a follower of this cursing Arminian preacher in Florida. I immediately wrote him down as an ultradispensationalist, a universal church man, and an Arminian heretic. I did appreciate his honest confession. Our churches need to be aware of such men so as to keep them out of their pulpits.

I do not use the KJV because

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The Murder of Jesus – His Illegal Arrest

By Mel Kimberlin
of Fairview Heights, Illinois

(This article was transcribed from a recording of a sermon preached in May of 2022. As a note of interest, Bro. Kimberlin is an Assistant State's Attorney in St. Clair, IL)

I would ask you to take your Bibles this morning and make your way into the book of Mark. This morning, we are going to read three verses in the 9th chapter of the book of Mark. These verses, I hope, will set the tone and serve as a launching point for the message,



not only today but, Lord willing, in the coming weeks. Notice verses 30-32. **"And they departed hence, and passed**

through Galilee; and he would not that any man should know it. For he taught his disciples, and said unto them, The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day. But they understood not that saying, and

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A Great Mystery

By Steve Flinchum
of Annville, KY

"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church" (Eph. 5:32). A Defense of Chain-Link Church Succession from a Sovereign Grace Landmark Baptist Perspective

PREFACE

Throughout the Old Testament, there are many instances wherein a wife or bride is seen to be a type of a New Testament church. In the New Testament, passages such as Ephesians 5:22-33 present husband and wife as a type of



Christ and church. Verse 32 of that passage says, **"This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the**

church." Other New Testament passages refer to Jesus' kind of church as a "body" and liken it and its members to a human body and its members, as in I Corinthians 12. We may refer to many kinds of organizations, such as a legislative body or a body of congress, as

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

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

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Why I Use The KJV

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of the teachings of some cursing Arminian preacher. Neither do I use it because I am afraid some of the followers of this man in our group of Baptists will call me a liberal or Bible corrector. I use the KJV before I ever heard of this man. In fact the idea that this man teaches is not as old as I am. It is a mere novelty never believed or taught by any Baptist before the modern era.

Brethren, here are the reasons I used the KJV. First, I believe it was made from the best Greek and Hebrew texts, which are the preserved Word of God. I refer to the Masoretic Hebrew Text preserved by the nation of Israel, and the Textus Receptus Greek Text (or Byzantine text). This is the Greek text preserved from A. D. 452 to 1453 by the Greek Church, the Waldenses, and Albigenses.

All modern translations are based upon the reconstructed Greek text of Westcott and Hort, Two Romanist oriented scholars, whose purpose was to replace the Protestant and Baptist text with those of the Roman Church and thereby wean back Protestants to the Roman fold. These two men denied the blood atonement of Jesus Christ, exalted Mary worship and the Romanish masse, denied the Genesis record, and were ardent evolutionists and had universalist tendencies.

About 95 percent of all Greek manuscripts that we have are the Byzantine type. This means that the Westcott and Hort texts disagree with 95 percent of extant sources, including Scripture quotations from the writings of the early church fathers, who antedated the texts

on which the Westcott and Hort reconstruction was based. The W & H texts came from Rome and Egypt, depicted as God's enemies in Scripture, whereas the text of the KJV came from Syria and Greece, the areas of the initial outreach of Christianity.

All translations since 1611 have not been made entirely from the Textus Receptus. These did include some of the Textus Receptus but they largely depended on the Vaticanus and Sinaiticus. Codex Vaticanus was found in the pope's library in A.D. 1481 and Codex Sinaiticus was taken from a waste basket on a Mt. Sinai monastery in 1859. Both of these manuscripts include the apocryphal books outside of the New Testament canon. This makes the new translation based largely on these texts essentially Roman Catholic translations. They resemble Jerome's Latin Vulgate and the Rheims-Douai versions of 1582 authorized by the Roman Catholic Church at the infamous Council of Trent.

2. The KJ translators employed a method of verbal equivalence (a word for word translation) rather than the method of paraphrase of dynamic equivalent (a meaning for meaning). The idea of the KJ translators was to give us what the Bible writers really wrote instead of what some committee of liberal scholars thought they wrote. This practice was not followed by modern-day translators.

The KJ translators believed every word placed in the original text was exactly as God intended. Their regard for verbal inspiration is reflected in the use of italics in translations wherever words were added in English, which were not in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. This practice has not been followed by modern

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versions,

Personally, I look upon most modern versions (especially the New Testament) as new Bible versions. I say this because a translation of the Bible to be true to its name must be the writing down of the message into another language without changing its meaning. The natural man cannot understand the things of God (I Cor. 2:14), and he cannot be trusted to put God's thoughts into correct English.

3. The KJV has been read and examined by some great minds since 1611, and wherein it has weak translations these have been pointed out by men like Henry, Pool, Trapp, Gill, Spurgeon, Pink, Graves, etc. This is not true of any of these modern versions. The examinations which have been made of these are limited, and they have resulted in unsatisfactory reports.

4. The KJV has been the Bible of my Baptist fathers. It is the one I have studied, memorized, and preached from for 44 years. It was the one being preached from when I was converted to Christ. It was the Bible of the church which baptized me, and of the church and men who ordained me to the ministry. It is the Bible I have heard preached all my life. I have no plans to throw my KJV away for some new version made by infidels from Catholic manuscripts.

5. I believe the KJV is a faithful translation of the preserved Word of God in the Hebrew and Greek manuscripts. It is the best we have for the English speaking world in this generation. As long as any translation follows the Textus Receptus and the Masoretic

Hebrew text, they are inspired. When they choose to do other wise, they are in error. This rule applies to the KJV as well as others. I believe that only the original autographs were perfect or inspired. God has preserved His Word in Hebrew and Greek, but no translation has come down to us from inspired translators, and this includes the KJV.



The Murder of...

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were afraid to ask him.” And I would point out that when the Lord says, that **“they shall kill him,”** He is talking about murder. There is a type of killing that is not murder, and we have talked about that in previous messages. So, in Mark 9:30-32, we see the Lord Jesus flatly teaching and emphatically stating that He was going to be killed. This morning, I want us to think about the murder of Jesus. This will be the first of, what I believe – unless the Lord leads otherwise – will be several messages on this subject – The Murder of Jesus.

The Murder of Jesus. You may or may not be familiar with the case of Russ Faria from Troy, Missouri. Russ was sentenced to life plus 30 years for the 2011 brutal murder of his wife, Betsy. She was stabbed over 40 times. According to Russ' account, when he came and found her, she still had a steak knife protruding from her neck. There was one problem with Russ' conviction. He did not do it. His sentence was later overturned as a result of a bench trial that occurred in 2015.

Russ' case received massive media attention. There have been at least six *Dateline* episodes

chronicling the case. His trial and involvement with Betsy's friend, Pam Hupp, was the focus of NBC's true crime series that just recently completed, *The Thing About Pam*. That series starred Academy Award winner Renee Zellweger, and it was viewed by over 14 million people. There is no doubt that this case – and other cases similar to Russ' – have generated massive interest from the public.

Russ Faria's case was a case of wrongful conviction. It was a gross miscarriage of justice. And yet, as sad as that was for Russ and his family, the miscarriage of justice was nowhere near the miscarriage of justice as it relates to Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ was an innocent man that was, in essence, lynched by a mob and murdered by the Jews, the Jewish leaders, and the Roman authorities of the day! Those are controversial statements, but they are true Biblical statements.

Our text, as I pointed out, I hope serves as simply a launching point for our study. In the text, Jesus is teaching His disciples this very truth – that He would in fact be murdered. The murder of Jesus is the greatest travesty; it is the greatest injustice; it is the greatest perversion in legal history. The facts prove this.

Over the coming weeks, we want to study the murder of Jesus. Our study will cover at least three different parts of the murder of Jesus – His arrest, His trial (if you can call it that), and the sentence that was carried out. This morning, we are starting with the very beginning of these legal proceedings, if you will – the arrest of Jesus. So, if I were going to title this message, it would be “The Murder of Jesus – His Illegal Arrest.” As we think about His illegal arrest, I want us to spend our

time this morning thinking about three elements that contributed to Jesus' illegal arrest. First, this contributing factor – this element – *The Jewish Autonomy in Court Proceedings*. I will explain what I mean by that as we get into it. The second element – *The Religious Authorities' Conspiracy to Murder Jesus*. And then the third element which contributed to Jesus' illegal arrest – *The Abandonment of Jewish Legal Procedure*. These three elements contributed to Jesus' illegal arrest. We are talking this morning about “The Murder of Jesus – His Illegal Arrest.”

Now think about first of all this element – the first element that contributed to Jesus' illegal arrest – *The Jewish Autonomy in Court Proceedings*. I do want to give you a warning that really should preface each of these messages. There are background details that we are going to get into that may, or may not, be of interest to you. But I am going to ask you to please stay with me, pay attention, because they are not just for the sheer purpose of accumulating knowledge that would not be useful for anything. But they are important for understanding what happened to Jesus and what Jesus went through. This is one of those areas – *The Jewish Autonomy in Court Proceedings* – that is elementary and fundamental in understanding what happened to Jesus and having an understanding about the murder of Jesus.

As we think about *The Jewish Autonomy in Court Proceedings*, we first make this note that you should understand – and I think that most of you that understand the context of the New Testament understand this – that the Jews were under Roman rule. Daniel, all the way back in the Book of Daniel – 500 years before the

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New Testament events recording the murder of Jesus – Daniel 500 years prior, prophesied that Rome was one of the four world powers that would be recognized historically and scripturally. We are not going to read these verses, but I will give them to you to write down and go back and reference them. In Daniel 2:41-43, Daniel speaks about the **iron** in the dream that was had. This speaks of the coming Roman world empire. Now, 500 years after Daniel prophesied this in Daniel 2:41-43, this was fulfilled in 63 B.C. In 63 B.C., the Roman general Pompey led troops into Jerusalem and conquered Jerusalem and the surrounding area. The Roman Senate declared – and see if you recognize this name – Herod the Great as the “King of the Jews” in 40 B.C. Now, that title is of particular note. Herod was declared by the Roman Senate as the King of the Jews. Who is the King of the Jews? Well, it just so happens to be the guy that was murdered. That is no coincidence.

In 6 A.D., Rome consolidated its power and consolidated Judea proper, Samaria, and Idumea into the province that we know in scripture as Judaea. And so, we are talking about the Jews being under Roman rule. Judea, which was the land where they dwelled, was under Roman rule. So, it is important to understand that the Jews were under Roman rule. But secondly, it is also important to understand that the Jews, while they were under Roman rule, were granted almost unlimited autonomy to carry out their own court proceedings. That is important! Let me say that again. The Jews, while they were under

Roman rule, were “granted almost unlimited autonomy in carrying out their own court proceedings.” So, the same year that Judea was consolidated from these different regional areas, in 6 A.D., Caesar Augustus granted the Jews full judicial authority – with two glaring exceptions.

The first glaring exception you probably already know about from studying the Bible, and that is this. The Jews could exercise no power over a Roman citizen. Now, how do you know this from scripture? Well, you know a guy

by the name of Paul – Saul of Tarsus – who was persecuted for his beliefs and his actions, and when he was haled in to be disciplined and chastened, what did Paul say? Paul said, “Hey, I am a free born Roman.” And what happened at that time? All proceedings stopped, because

there was no authority to take any action against Paul – because he was a Roman. You will find that recorded in Acts 22:25-29. So, the Jews were granted almost unlimited autonomy in carrying out their own court proceedings. But there were two glaring exceptions. First of all, the Jews had no power whatsoever over a Roman citizen. And secondly – and this of utmost importance in the murder of Jesus – the Jews could not carry out the death penalty. They were not permitted to carry out the death penalty. Listen to this in John 18:31. **“Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him [him being Jesus],**

and judge him according to your law.” Now, there you have the autonomy that was granted unto the Jews that they were able to carry out their own court proceedings.

But watch this exception that the Jewish leaders remind Pilate of. The last part of verse 31 of chapter 18 says, **“The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:”** That had to be spoken in the context of the authority, and the limited authority, that they had been given by the Romans. And

I say “limited” because there were two exceptions. The Bible clearly teaches the death penalty. The Bible in the Old Testament, the Bible in the New Testament clearly teach the death penalty. And the Jews had previously had the authority to govern

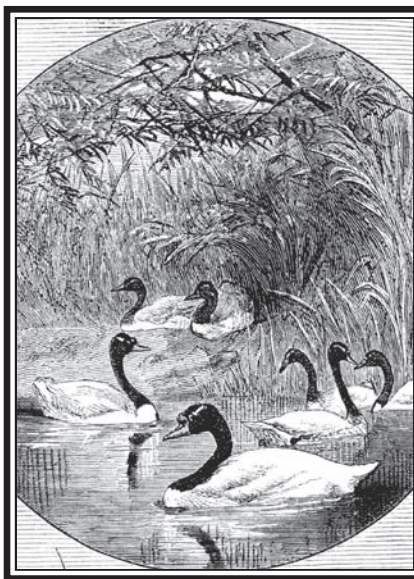
themselves when they were not under the rule of any other world power, and they in fact carried out the death penalty. The Bible here is giving us insight as to the real intentions of the Jews. There is a lot that we are going to get into, but at this point when Jesus is before Pilate, Pilate finds nothing wrong that Jesus has done. And he certainly finds nothing wrong worthy of death, and so he, not even understanding at this point that the Jews wanted to put Jesus to death, said, “Well, you take him back and you administer justice under your law.” Of course, that meant that he thought they were going to administer justice short

of the death penalty. And they say to Pilate, **“It is not lawful for us to put any man to death.”** They did not have the authority under Roman rule to carry out the death sentence. This is important, because the Jews could do anything to any Jew based upon legal proceedings that they wanted, except put them to death.

Listen to this in Matthew 27:1-2. This is after Jesus is arrested. **“When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death: And when they had bound him, they led him away, and delivered him to Pontius Pilate the governor.”** Now, their intent was clearly to put Jesus to death. Their intent to murder Jesus. But they did not have the legal authority to do so, which is why they sent him to Pilate. Now, having established first of all, the fact that the Jews had autonomy in their court proceedings, they could do almost anything they wanted – with two exceptions. They could not carry out any penalty or sentence any Roman citizen, and they could not carry out the death penalty. This is important to know, because the Jews had autonomy in dealing with Jesus as it relates to legal proceedings.

Now we move on to the second element that contributed to Jesus’ illegal arrest. The second element is this – *The Religious Authorities’ Conspiracy to Murder Jesus*. In other words, what led to Jesus’ arrest? Well, first of all, the Jews had complete legal authority to do what they wanted. They could literally go in and arrest anybody that they wanted. It was not up to the Romans. That is important to know. Secondly, there was a religious conspiracy to murder

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Jesus, and this formed the basis for His arrest. The chief priests and all of those down the line were complicit in this conspiracy to murder Jesus. Think first of all about the chief priests' and the religious leaders' animosity and intentions towards Jesus. And so here, we just want to go back and factually prove to you that there was animosity towards the Lord Jesus Christ on the part of the chief priests and the religious leaders, and we want to show what their true intentions toward Jesus were. So, we are building up to the arrest of Jesus – and I say, the illegal arrest.

Now, note first of all, their animosity and their intentions as it is related when Jesus teaches the parable of the householder and the heir. Turn with me in your Bibles to Matthew, chapter 21. We are going to read two verses, although the parable of the householder and the heir is certainly revealed starting in verse 33, but I want you to notice Matthew 21:45-46. Of course, the parable of the householder is about a certain man leaving his possessions and then attempting to come and regain them, and they wanted to put him to death. **“And when the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.”**

I may have commented on this before, but this is a very serious verse. But I can not help but be taken aback every time I read it, because I can not tell you the number of times people have said, “Well, you were preaching that against me,” and then they get offended and leave. By the way, I have 19 years in now of

pastoring – 19 years. Is this not what the Pharisees are saying? They perceived that He spake of them? They hear what Jesus says, and they got offended! “Oh, He is talking about us.” And then look at verse 46 – **“But when they sought to lay hands on him, they feared the multitude, because they took him for a prophet.”**

And so, beloved, we are laying the groundwork. This is almost as if we were going to present this case to a jury, and we are going through all of the pieces of evidence that would show the jury that this guy was illegally arrested – first of all, their intentions and animosity towards Jesus. They had it out for Jesus when Jesus entered into His public ministry. They did not like what He taught, they did not like the fact that He preached against their own sins, and they conspired to do something about it. They had animus, and they had ill intentions towards Jesus. We see it revealed in the parable of the householder and the heir.

We see it when Jesus was “cleansing the temple.” And I use that term very delicately. What was Jesus doing when I talk about cleansing the temple? Well, He goes into the temple, and there were those that were in there that were making money by selling sacrifices that would be used in the temple, and they had made it a business for them. And Jesus goes in, and He starts turning over the tables of the money changers, and He says, “Listen, my Father’s house is a house of prayer, and you have made it a den of thieves.” Well, they did not like that. They did not like the harsh preaching of Jesus. And so, what happened? Mark 11:18 says, **“And the scribes and chief priests... [Notice it is coming all the way from the top.] ...the scribes and chief priests heard it, and sought**

how they might destroy him: for they feared him, because all the people was astonished at his doctrine.” So now we have a clear pattern here that the religious leaders, beginning all the way from the chief priests and down – they did not like Jesus, they had it out for Jesus, and they were going to try to make sure that Jesus paid for what He was doing. Which was what? Simply preaching the Word.

And then notice a few chapters over, in Mark 14:1-2, the Bible reads, **“After two days was the feast of the passover, and of unleavened bread: and the chief priests and the scribes sought how they might take him by craft, and put him to death. But they said, Not on the feast day, lest there be an uproar of the people.”** So, they wanted to do this surreptitiously. They wanted to do this under the cover of not anybody being able to see what they were doing. They did not want the proceedings to be outward and the public to see what was happening. They were doing this that they might take Him by craft. And again, it is revealed what their intention was – to put Him to death. So, we are talking about the religious authorities’ conspiracy to murder Jesus. It is the second element of Jesus’ illegal arrest. We see their animosity and intentions towards the Lord Jesus Christ. But then secondly, we see their action and actually implementing their conspiracy. So, they’ve got it out for Jesus. They’re going to murder Jesus. They are trying to figure out how they can murder Jesus. How are we going to get this done? Oh, let’s enter into the conspiracy.

Now watch. Turn with me first of all to Luke, chapter 22. Here we have the formation of the conspiracy. Two or more

people deciding that they are going to commit a crime, and they are both complicit in the action conspiring together to commit the crime. Watch Luke 22:1-6, as we see their action in implementing the conspiracy in that they are forming the conspiracy. Notice Luke 22, beginning in verse 1. **“Now the feast of unleavened bread drew nigh, which is called the Passover. And the chief priests and scribes sought how they might kill him; for they feared the people.”** Are you seeing a common trend? They want to murder Jesus. There is no cause for which they can rightly kill Him. He is not a criminal. He has not committed any crime. But they do not like Him, and they do not like what He is preaching, and they want Him to be silenced. Sound familiar, with everything that is going on in our nation today? They want Him to be silenced, and so what they are going to do is they are going to take Him craftily, and they want to murder Him.

Notice verse 3. **“Then entered Satan into Judas surnamed Iscariot, being of the number of the twelve.”** You know, the devil is always ready to stand by and help people that want to commit evil, actually commit that evil. He does not miss an opportunity. He is always available to help those that want to enter into sin. I said this years ago in preaching, and I said, “Look, if you want to commit sin, the devil will always help you commit sin. If you want to go out today and you want to get drunk and live lasciviously and lewdly, there are people that will help you do that. The devil will help you do that.” And so notice here, interestingly, that the religious leaders and the chief priests want to form this conspiracy to commit

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against Jesus. Well, here is the devil ready to help. And what does he do? He works on one of his own – Judas. And then look at verse 4. **“And he went his way, and communed with the chief priests and captains, how he might betray him unto them.”** Look at verse 5. **“And they were glad, and covenanted to give him money. And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.”**

So, Judas is playing right into what they want to do. They covenant together to give the 30 pieces of silver. Judas agrees that he is going to betray the Lord Jesus Christ, and he is going to do it exactly the way that they want it. Notice he says, **“in the absence of the multitude.”** They wanted this to be done where nobody was around and nobody could protest the proceedings. And so, they form the conspiracy. Now, notice in John, chapter 18 how they actually carry out the conspiracy.

I mentioned a little bit earlier about some of the details that we would get into as far as the law goes. Well, we also are going to get our fingers limbered up by turning and pointing to a number of scriptures. Notice John 18:1-3. We see them carrying out the conspiracy by the actual arrest of Jesus. **“When Jesus had spoken these words, he went forth with his disciples over the brook Cedron, where was a garden, into the which he entered, and his disciples. And Judas also, which betrayed him, knew the place: for Jesus oftentimes resorted thither with his disciples. Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the**

chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.” They effected the arrest. This was a conspiracy that, notice here, it says the **“officers from the chief priests and Pharisees.”** I believe this means that the chief priests and the Pharisees were involved in the arrest. And notice as well who is involved with this. They have received “a band of men.” Do you know who this band of men was? Roman soldiers. You say, “Why would Roman soldiers be a part of this? I thought you just taught and just said that the Jews had received this autonomy to carry out their own legal proceedings.” Well, they did. But I want you to think about the time in which this is happening.

This is at Passover, and we know that – as we have already indicated – the Jews were under Roman authority. Let me ask you this. Did the Jews enjoy being under Roman authority? Were they looking for somebody to relieve them and free them from Roman authority? Of course they were. We looked at that when we were talking about Jesus making His triumphant entry. There were those that thought, “Well, He is King of the Jews. He is going to be a physical king, and He is going to deliver us from bondage under the Roman empire.” Well, guess what? Because they did not like being under Rome’s rule, anytime there was a pilgrimage to Jerusalem by the Jews for one of the great feasts, it was usual for riots to break out. It was usual for there to be pockets of those that would revolt against the Roman government and plead for the Messiah to come so that He might relieve them of Roman rule. And so, because of this during the times of the great feasts, there were always Roman

soldiers that were available to assist the Jews in the observance of their great feasts. And so, it is easy to see how these bands of Roman soldiers would have been available to help the Jews effect this arrest, because they perhaps – and we know that they did later on – would have accused Jesus of being seditious and being a traitor against the Roman government. And so, we find their acts of implementing the conspiracy – they form the conspiracy, they carry out the conspiracy and the arrest, and then notice, even after Jesus is in custody, they continue to voice their conspiracy. Notice Matthew 26.

You will notice here that this is the last verse of chapter 26 dealing with this particular account of Jesus’ arrest. Matthew 26:59 says, **“Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus,”** [Why?] **“..to put him to death;”** We are nailing down – piece of evidence by piece of evidence – the conspiracy that the Jews and the religious leaders wanted to murder Jesus. This was their intent in arresting Him. They did not arrest Him for any other purpose than that they intended to put Him to death, and for that, they would have had to send Him to Pilate because they did not have the authority to do it. And so notice, even when Jesus is in custody, they voice their conspiracy. Now move down to Matthew 27:1 – the next day.

“When the morning was come, all the chief priests and elders of the people took counsel against Jesus to put him to death:” Do you see how the conspiracy is playing out? It is conceived in the minds of the chief priests and the religious leaders. They form this idea that they are going to get this guy. They then

begin to form the conspiracy. They get Judas, through the leadership of Satan, to agree to betray the Lord Jesus Christ. Then after Jesus is in custody and has been illegally arrested, they continue to further the conspiracy by trying to find false witnesses who will say something against Jesus. We know their true feelings revealed because, in Mark 15:10, the Bible says that Pilate **“knew that the chief priests had delivered him [Jesus] for envy.”** They were envious of the Lord Jesus Christ, and they wanted Him dead. He was murdered. What were the actions that led to His murder? His illegal arrest. We see it in the Jews’ autonomy to carry out their own legal proceedings. We see it in the religious authorities’ conspiracy to murder Jesus. And then finally, this third element.

We see that *The Abandonment of Jewish Legal Procedure* shows what they were about. The religious leaders completely abandoned proper legal procedure. There were rules to be followed and legal procedure to be followed. I want to say that certainly in the murder of Jesus, there was no just cause to put Him to death. But if you go back to His arrest, there was absolutely no legal basis for the arrest of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now, I want to begin by a brief explanation of our legal procedure to show you what is happening in the Jewish legal procedures – and ours. If you can equate what happened, I think it helps you understand. When was the last time you were arrested? I know that is a loaded question. I will not ask if anybody’s ever been arrested. But in our legal system, the police cannot just arrest you for any reason. They can not stop your car, and Jim’s wearing his

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Pittsburgh Steelers garb, and they say, "We do not like the Pittsburgh Steelers, so we are going to arrest you." You can not do that! In order for you to be arrested, there has to be this little legal term which we call "probable cause."

What is probable cause? Probable cause is very simply a reasonable basis or a reasonable ground to believe that a crime has been committed. You can not just be arrested because you do not have hair, or you have red hair, or you have blue hair. Those things are not against the law. So, a crime must have been committed, and the police must have a reasonable basis for belief, or a reasonable ground, that a crime has been committed. That is probable cause. So, there can be probable cause for your arrest.

What happens, if there is probable cause for your arrest? Somebody calls the police and says, "My boyfriend just punched me in the face." Do the police just roll up and arrest the boyfriend? No, they go to the house. They respond to the 9-1-1 call and are dispatched to the house. They investigate the case. The police see that the woman actually has a bruise under her eye. She is willing to cooperate and say that this happened. The boyfriend has fled the scene. He did not want to stay and talk to the police. The woman gives an audio/video recorded interview of what happened, and she has injuries. She wants to go to the hospital and be treated because perhaps maybe she has an orbital fracture. You know what that is? That is probable cause.

So, the police find the boyfriend, and they arrest the

boyfriend. What happens then? The arrest process is still not done. They bring him to the police station. They have 48 hours to have this individual charged with a crime. If he is not charged with the crime within 48 hours, he must be released. Guess who determines whether or not he is charged with a crime – the St. Clair County (if you live in St. Clair County) State's Attorney's Office. And so, the Assistant State's Attorneys that work for the



State's Attorney get all the police reports and all the evidence, and they determine whether or not an actual crime has been committed. Is there probable cause to believe a crime has been committed? Yes, and so, we charge that individual with that crime.

The detective that works the case comes by and picks up the charging document and the arrest warrant, and they take it over to the felony judge. The felony judge looks at the case, talks to the officers, and they swear the detective in. The detective has to swear under oath that what he or she is saying is correct. The judge listens to that and determines that he or she is going to sign the warrant, and then he or she sets a bail or an amount of bond. Those are the procedures for a proper arrest.

Once the individual is arrested properly and detained, perhaps they post bail or bond. Maybe they do not, but the next thing that happens is that there is an arraignment. At the arraignment, this is the first time that the defendant will appear before the Court, and the charges for which he or she is charged will be formally read. They will be asked to enter a plea, and then a date is set for a preliminary hearing. The preliminary hearing is to

determine whether or not there is probable cause to hold this person over for a trial. The defendant can waive their preliminary hearing, or they can insist that a preliminary hearing take place. If a preliminary hearing takes place, it is like a little trial where the State presents evidence, the defendant may present evidence, and then the judge determines, "Is there probable cause?" Remember, the burden is probable cause – not beyond all reasonable doubt. So, if the judge determines that there is probable cause to hold this person over, that person is then held over and a trial date can be set. That is the legal process.

Now, let me ask you this. In your knowledge of scripture, do you recall much of that happening in the case of Jesus? The Jewish legal procedure is in essence the

same as ours with some variations. Certainly, if you go back to the Jewish legal procedure that was in existence at the time of Jesus' murder, you are going to find that the Jews did not follow their own legal procedure. I wanted to go through that to establish the process – because you need to understand the legal process in order to understand how Jesus was illegally arrested, and how He was actually murdered by the authorities of the day.

Having considered the legal process, think about the evidence that the Jews abandoned their own criminal legal procedure. Remember the Jews had a civil law, they had a ceremonial law, and then of course they were given the moral law by God. And so, because they were God's people, there were some rules that they were to follow and that were implemented that we do not follow today. These are important as we think about the illegal arrest of the Lord Jesus Christ. I want you to think about the evidence that they abandoned their own criminal legal procedure.

Now think about this: first of all, according to the Jewish legal procedure that was in existence at that day, no steps of criminal proceedings could be implemented after sunset. In other words, you could not arrest somebody, bring them in, arraign them, have a preliminary hearing, or set a trial date. You could not do that! [If you are interested, I can send you references to this where all of this historical data is coming from. I did not just dream this up.] But this was done to avoid the possibility that there would be a conspiracy, and especially a conspiracy that could be hid by cover of night. Now, does that not strike you that that law existed to

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prevent what actually happened to Jesus? That procedure existed to prevent what actually happened to Jesus! Once the sun had officially set, authorities were not to proceed with “any form” of criminal proceeding.

Now, think about this in Luke 22:6. **“And he promised, and sought opportunity to betray him unto them in the absence of the multitude.”** So the Jews were intentionally framing this to be done under the cover of night. Was Jesus arrested at night? He was! We can prove it! Listen to this in John 18:3. We already read this verse, but I want to bring it out again. **“Judas then, having received a band of men and officers from the chief priests and Pharisees, cometh thither with lanterns and torches and weapons.”** You don’t need a lantern and a torch in the daytime. This was done under the cover of night to further the conspiracy and hide it from the people. It was an absolute infringement on Jewish criminal procedures. No steps of criminal proceedings were to occur after sunset.

Secondly, any man who served as a judge or a member of the Sanhedrin was not allowed to participate in an arrest. It would be awfully odd and strange if the judge who was going to preside over your trial is the one who came out and arrested you. Could you say, “Well, maybe the fix is in. They got it out for me. I mean, the judge is the one who arrested me, and the judge is the same one who is going to preside over my trial.”? We have not gotten into the makeup of the Sanhedrin or any of the other courts, but we are going to do that as we get into

the study in coming weeks. But suffice it to say, that judges or members of the Sanhedrin were not allowed, according to Jewish criminal procedure, to participate in an arrest. Well, how did that work out?

Mark 14:43 says, **“And immediately, while he yet spake, cometh Judas, one of the twelve, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and the scribes and the elders.”** I present to you that they were present at the arrest of Jesus. Look at Luke 22:52-53. **“Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him,”** [Did you get that?] **“Then Jesus said unto the chief priests, and captains of the temple, and the elders, which were come to him, Be ye come out, as against a thief, with swords and staves? When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretched forth no hands against me: but this is your hour, and the power of darkness.”** And they certainly committed these acts and deeds under the cover of darkness. And so, we see here that they were not permitted to be part of the arrest process because they were going to sit in judgment on the Sanhedrin – 71 members of the Sanhedrin. The chief priests sat in on the Sanhedrin and was not permitted to be there at the arrest.

And then thirdly and finally, we see evidence of the abandonment of criminal legal procedure that makes the arrest of Jesus illegal. This is elementary, but there must be criminal charges that form the basis for the arrest. I was being silly a few moments ago and said Jim rolls up in Steelers gear. You know, a cop can not arrest him for just wearing Steelers gear. That is not illegal. There must be a

criminal infraction. There must be criminal charges that form the basis for the arrest. When you arrest somebody, and when you arraign them, that is part of the formal arrest process. They must be apprised of what they are being arrested for. Was that done with Jesus?

I read to you again Matthew 26. We have already read verse 59, but now we want to read verse 56 down through verse 59. **“But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled. Then all the disciples forsook him, and fled. And they that had laid hold on Jesus led him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and the elders were assembled. But Peter followed him afar off unto the high priest’s palace, and went in, and sat with the servants, to see the end. Now the chief priests, and elders, and all the council, sought false witness against Jesus, to put him to death.”** Now, what is missing from that? What is missing from this account?

There is no accusation of what He did wrong. There is no account of what He is being arrested for. There is no indication that Jesus had broken any Roman law or Jewish law. There are no charges levied against Him. In fact, when Pilate was examining Jesus, do you remember what Pilate said? He actually said this three times to the people, “What evil has he done? What law has he broken?” There was no reason for Jesus to be arrested. He had not broken any law, and they could not accuse Him of breaking any law. In fact, they tried to get false witnesses to make something up. And they had difficulty with that.

Folks, Jesus was murdered, and it all began with this illegal arrest. He is taken as a common

criminal and haled into the court of judicature. He is not told why He is charged. In fact, they did not have anything to charge Him with. They had already conspired together and determined that they were going to get rid of Jesus. And so, they illegally arrested Him and brought Him in.

If that were to happen today, as in the case of Russ Faria, you would have to feel bad for Russ Faria. He spent four years in prison for a crime he did not commit. Now, the woman that actually did it – Pam Hupp, I believe, did it – is going to finally stand trial in July of this coming year (2023). And the evidence was there. I do not want to speak ill of any of the prosecutors, but you can do your own research on the case. Wow, Russ Faria was wrongfully convicted. Now thankfully, he was not put to death.

But Jesus Christ was wrongfully convicted, illegally arrested, and murdered. And you know what? He did it for us. He submitted Himself to that treatment. We go back to the verses that we read this morning in our opening verses in Mark, chapter 9. We see that Jesus Christ said in verse 31, **“The Son of man is delivered into the hands of men, and they shall kill him; and after that he is killed, he shall rise the third day.”** And He certainly did. We know all that to be true.

There is much to study concerning the murder of Jesus. Today we looked at the murder of Jesus in light of His illegal arrest. We considered the Jewish autonomy in court proceedings as the first element that contributed to that illegal arrest. We looked at the religious authorities’ conspiracy to murder Jesus, and

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there is no doubt the proof is there. And then thirdly, we thought about the abandonment of Jewish legal procedure. They just threw the law out the window and said, "We are going to do what we can to get this guy." Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for us, endured all of this. I would be willing to say that if you were illegally arrested, you would be calling whatever newspaper you would want and be on all the television stations. You would want to cry injustice, and rightfully so. And yet Jesus endured it on our behalf. In the coming weeks, we will study more on the murder of Jesus – next moving into the trial of Jesus.

(To be continued)



Timely Tweets

By
Sylvia Tweet

A Branch for Ladies

Blessed are the Peacemakers

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God" (Matt. 5:9).

Introduction: When we as Christian women learn to be peacemakers, others will see that we resemble our Father in heaven.

"We have peace with God" because our gracious and loving Lord has drawn us unto Himself and has saved our soul; we are

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Heavenly Hymns

"...Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:18-20). [This hymn was printed with permission from the Olmstead Baptist Church and written by Mary A. Lathbury in 1877. You may access their free-domain hymnal by going to www.olmsteadbaptistchurch.org/hymnal.pdf]

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DID YOU THINK TO PRAY?

1. Ere you left your room this morn-ing, Did you think to pray? In the name of
2. When you met with great temp-ta-tion, Did you think to pray? By His dy-ing
3. When your heart was filled with anger, Did you think to pray? Did you plead for
4. When sore tri-als came up - on you, Did you think to pray? When your soul was

Christ our Sav-ior, Did you sue for lov-ing fa - vor, As a shield to-day?
love and mer-it, Did you claim the Ho-ly Spir - it As your guide and stay?
grace, my brother, That you might for-give an-oth - er Who had crossed your way?
bowed in sor-row, Balm of Gil - ead did you bor - row, At the gates of day?

CHORUS.

Oh, how pray-ing rests the wear - y! Prayer will change the night to day;

So when life seems dark and drear - y, Don't for-get to pray.

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1) Why did Aaron sacrifice a goat on the Day of Atonement, instead of a lamb?

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Leviticus chapter 16 gives a detailed description of the proceedings that occurred on the Day of Atonement regarding the sacrifices that were to be offered by the high priest for sin and uncleanness in Israel. There are precise instructions regarding sacrifices offered for himself, individuals in Israel, the nation as a whole, and for the tabernacle itself. The overriding theme of the chapter points to the sacrificial work of the Lord Jesus Christ who was not only the sin bearer who died for the sins of His elect in His body on the tree, but also the only One qualified to put away their sins by the sacrifice of Himself. The offerings on the Day of Atonement were required to be repeated year after year to cover the sins of the nation corporately and individually (16:17). The sacrifices were offered by a sinful high priest who first had to atone for his own sins by offering, and then for the sins of the people. He was subject to death, and had to be replaced by another Levite. All the blood and sacrifices offered on the Day of Atonement through the years could not actually put away the sins of the Israelites, which is why the sacrifices and ceremonies had to be observed annually. The

proceedings typified the sacrifice of Christ in pictures and shadows, but only the perfect offering and blood shedding of the true Lamb of God could satisfy all the claims of God's justice and put away the sins of God's elect. The sacrifice of Christ was only offered once and was never to be repeated signifying that His sacrifice was deemed perfect and complete.

As I read the chapter I found it interesting that an offering of a lamb is never mentioned. Bullocks and goats were to be slain and offered, but no lambs. The question posed is one that I simply do not have an answer for. God chose to use 2 goats to typify the sin offering of the Lord Jesus Christ for His people. No reason is given or specified as to why goats are used instead of a lamb. It is one of many things about the Bible that is not clearly revealed. It is true that the Israelites observed the original Passover while they were in Egypt where a spotless lamb was to be killed, its blood sprinkled on the side posts and lintel of each home, and then roasted and eaten with bitter herbs. This observance marked their deliverance from Egypt and was to be practiced from then on by every Israelite family (Ex. 12:23-27). So why did God not command the high priest to use the blood of a lamb to sprinkle on the mercy seat instead of that of a goat on the Day of Atonement? The short answer is God clearly instructed Aaron to use the blood of the slain goat. Simply because it pleased the Lord to do

so. Deuteronomy 29:29 declares: "The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law." Things I do not know, that are not made plain, I simply apply this verse.

One thing is absolutely sure. The blood of the Passover lamb and the goat's blood offered on the Day of Atonement both typify the perfect and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ as revealed in His spotless life, the shedding of His precious blood when He bore our sins on the cross, His death, burial and resurrection. Only the perfect and finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ satisfied all the claims of justice and put away the sins of the elect. John 1:29 states: **"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world."** The Book of Hebrews is designed to show how much better the work and sacrifice of Christ is in comparison to the Old Testament sacrificial system. **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?...but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself"** (Heb. 9:12-14, 26b). **"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the**

body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins: But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Hebrews 10:10-14).

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I take it that the one asking the question is referring to Leviticus chapter 16, specifically (vv. 8-10).

"And Aaron shall cast lots upon the two goats; one lot for the LORD, and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat upon which the LORD's lot fell, and offer him for a sin offering. But the goat, on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat, shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make an atonement with him, and to let him go for a scapegoat into the wilderness" (Lev. 16:8-10).

The reason Aaron sacrificed a goat instead of a lamb, is because God told Aaron to do so (Leviticus 16:3) **"Thus shall Aaron come into the holy place: with a young bullock for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering."** As we can see, there were two goats. Aaron was told to sprinkle the blood of the one goat on the lid of the mercy seat on the Day of Atonement to cover over Israel's

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2) In Hebrews 6:18 it mentions two immutable things, but only one is mentioned: what is the other?

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The two things are in verse 17, **"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath"** (Heb 6:17). Gods counsel is forever, **"The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations"** (Psa. 33:11).

And His oaths are sure, **"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began"** (Tit. 1:2).

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The answer is found in Hebrews 6:17. **"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath."**

God "does not change": **"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed"** (Mal. 3:6). "...yea, let God be true, but every

man a liar; as it is written, **That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged"** (Rom. 3:4).

"That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us..." (Heb. 6:18). If God cannot lie, then all His promises are truth and therefore, what He has said, He "will do"!

So, the two immutable things that it must be are God's **"Promise and His oath"** these two things are unchangeable because God is unchanging in his person, purposes, promises, and passions. Immutable means unchangeable; changeless.

God's Word does not need any confirmation from someone or something. It is reliable because God Himself is faithful. God promised Abraham that He would bless and multiply his descendants. God also swore an oath to Abraham and his heirs to confirm His promise. **"By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as in a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise"** (Heb. 11:8-9).

We know this by what is recorded in Genesis 26. **"Sojourn**

in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed; Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws" (Gen. 26:3-5).

Once again, we hope the answer helps the one asking the question.

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Hebrews 6:17-20 states: **"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to shew unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil; Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec."**

The context reveals that the two immutable things are God's promise and His oath as revealed in His perfect, eternal, unchangeable counsel or will.

Before the world began God the Father entered into covenant with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. This Covenant of Grace involved God the Father choosing men to salvation in Christ. The Father gave the elect to Christ who promised to fulfill all covenant engagements necessary to redeem the elect. The Holy Spirit agreed to regenerate and give spiritual life to all those the Father chose and Christ redeemed, enabling them to repent and believe the Gospel in time.

The promise of eternal life to all those who believe the Gospel is absolutely sure and steadfast. All who have fled for refuge in Christ are possessors of eternal life based on the promise of God and the oath of God. Since it is impossible for God to lie there is no way He can or ever will go back on the promise He has made to believers in Christ. God's unchangeable oath insures the elect's safe entrance into grace and glory based solely on the finished work of Jesus Christ. Our strong consolation is bound up in the finished work of our great Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. He has secured eternal life for us through His death, burial, resurrection, and High Priestly intercession.

I like the comment of A.W. Pink:

"For the stay of our hearts and the full assurance of our faith, God has graciously given to us an irrevocable deed of settlement, namely, His promise followed by His oath, whereby the whole inheritance is infallibly secured unto every heir of promise. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but God's words never shall (Matt. 24:35). All the promise recorded in Scripture are but copies of God's assurances made to Christ for us from everlasting, so that

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Forum Question #1

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impurities, moral failings, and sin. One goat was a sin offering (scapegoat) and the other goat was a burnt offering.

The goat for the sin offering, as we know it, was the scapegoat (v. 8). Aaron would cast his lot, a lot for the Lord, and the other for the scapegoat (v. 8), and which ever goat the lot fell on that was the Lord's would be used as the burnt offering and the other lot is the one Aaron would use as the scapegoat.

But we want to observe the great fact that their sins were taken away. This was set forth by the scapegoat, Read (vv. 20-21). When that was done, you see, the great and wonderful atonement was finished, and the effects of it were set forth to the people. Now the first goat is the Lord Jesus Christ making atonement by his death for the sins of the people; the second is sent away into the wilderness, and nothing is heard of it any more forever. So, the first goat was a type of the atonement; the second is the type of the effect of the atonement. The second goat went away, after the first was slaughtered, carrying the sins of the people on its head, and so it sets forth, as a scapegoat, how our sins are carried away into the depth of the wilderness. Praise God for His mercy.

There is much more that could be said, but our prayers are that the question has been satisfied! We studied The Great Day of Atonement last year on Wednesday evening Bible Study taught by Elder Ray Sexton and myself, it was a wonderful study, I would encourage you, dear reader, to study it also!

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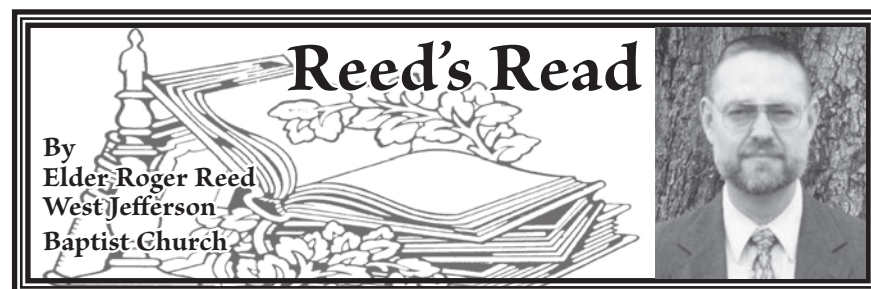
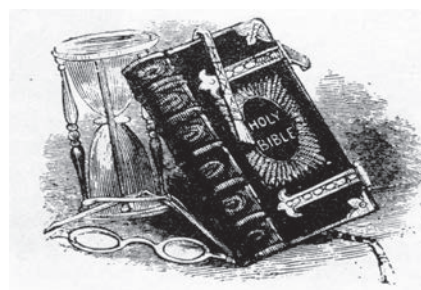
My opinion is that the goat was a type of Christ in human flesh. **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”** (II Cor. 5:21). This goat shows the atonement for sin, as the ground of justification.

We cannot separate the 2 goats for they are one offering, as the scape goat was a type of our Savior in the wilderness. **“Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil”** (Matt. 4:1). This goat shows Christ's victory, and the total removal of sin in the purification of the soul.

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 11) ♦

the Divine oaths and covenants mentioned in Holy Writ are but transcripts of the original Covenant and Oath between God and Christ before the foundation of the world. Note how the words ‘impossible for God to lie’ link up with ‘in hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began’ (Titus 1:2)!” (Exposition of Hebrews, page 353)



Laodicea: The Apostate Church

Revelation 3:14-22

For many years now, I have heard others say, “We are surely living in the Laodicea dispensation.” I would have to agree with them. I see churches falling by the wayside, because they refuse to let Jesus in.

I see churches that have no Thursday evening (it does not have to be Thursday evening; that is just when I have gone out in times past) visitation or witnessing program. It is probably because the members are too tired after working all day. But I almost could guarantee that if little Sally or Jonny had a volleyball or basketball game, they would not be too tired for that.

Church members need to find out where their hearts are, they probably have pushed Jesus out of their hearts like they have pushed him out of the church services!

This last letter to the Seven Churches is to Laodicea, which receives no commendation. The unfavorable condition in this church was lukewarmness: the members were neither hot nor cold (v. 15). The lukewarm person does not become greatly disturbed at hearing heretical teaching and is not vigorous in the defense of the truth. This spirit of indifference is the most tragic thing that can happen to a church. Is your church one of them??

The Name. The name “Laodicea” means “the rule of the people” and suggests a democratic

church that no longer follows spiritual leaders or the authority of the Word of God. The church is lukewarm, a condition that comes from mixing hot and cold. It is a church with truth that has been diluted with error. The tragedy is that this church is “rich” and knows not that it is poor, pitiful, blind, and naked. What a picture of the apostate church of today, with its prestige, wealth, and political power, yet all the while spiritually poor.

The City. The city of Laodicea was known for its wool, wealth, and medicine, so Christ used those images in verse 18. He wanted to give them the true riches of the Word of God, the garments of grace, and the ability to see spiritual things. There was something wrong with their values, their vesture, and their vision. If they would not repent, He was going to spew (spit) them out of His mouth.

John Gill has this to say, “This shows, how nauseous lukewarmness is to Christ, insomuch that on account of it he would not own and acknowledge her as his: but even cast her out, unchurch her and have no more any such imperfect church-state upon earth, as afterwards never will, this is the last; nor is there any church-state, or any remains of one in Laodicea; it is indeed quite uninhabited.”

Christ says, “I will spue you out of my mouth” (literally, ‘am about to’). Gill has much more to say about this, but I am not sure if

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Reed's Read

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church members would be much interested, and if you are that prideful and arrogant, then how sad that is!

I used to use coffee as an illustration of how lukewarmness tastes until I found out some people actually like lukewarm coffee. So let me give you another example of lukewarmness. I never knew this until I talked to a man who raised sheep, and when he would send the sheep to get butchered, I would buy a quarter or a half. He told me to never eat mutton at room temperature; he said to either eat it hot or cold. Well, he was right. I had some for supper one night, let it setting out, and went back later to eat some more. I spit it right back out, it was the most awful taste I had ever put in my mouth, so I got a real good idea of what the Lord meant by lukewarm. Hot it was delicious and cold it was good, but not at room temperature. Now that is not to say that some out there who raise sheep would eat mutton at room temperature, but what I had was awful.

The Misconception. Verse 20 is often used as a Gospel invitation, and this application is totally wrong. The basic interpretation is that Christ stands outside the door of the lukewarm church. This church has wealth and power, but no Christ. He is even willing to come into the church, if but one person will invite Him. How tragic that a church can become so lukewarm and proud that Christ has to leave and stand outside. They are totally indifferent toward Christ. He is left outside their plans, business, and their hearts.

The Laodicea Church of Today.

Just as these churches existed in John's day, so they all exist today. We have busy churches that have left their first love (Ephesus) that often end up as churches that are lukewarm toward Christ (Laodicea). False doctrine begins in a small way, but then it grows and infects the whole assembly. Yet, there is a remnant of true believers (the overcomers) in each church who are responsible to be faithful to Christ until He returns.

The Importance of the Spirit. Note, finally, the importance of the Word of God to the churches. Seven times Christ calls the churches to hear what the Spirit is saying. When churches stop listening to the voice of the Spirit through the Word and start listening to the voices of false teachers, they begin to turn away from the truth. We must not deny the faith (2:23), even if it costs us our lives. We must keep His Word (3:8, 10) and not deny His name. Apart from the Word of God, there is no life or hope for the churches.

Does the church you attend need a man to open up the door of the church (not the building door) and let Jesus in to sup with you? Do not delay time is running out!



A Great Mystery

(Continued from page 1) ♦

bodies; but there is something unique about Jesus' churches. They, consisting of Christ as head united with members having spiritual life, are bodies that possess spiritual life. They are not merely organizations, but are organisms. Webster's Dictionary defines an organization as "individuals systematically united for some work; a society," and an

organism as "an organized body or system; a living body." The Scriptural facts stated above force a multitude of implications in regard to church truths, some of which will be considered in the pages that follow.

Being aware of much recent controversy regarding our subject, and having very dear friends with opposing views, it seems especially difficult to address the issues to the extent I feel is necessary. Recognizing that most who have been exposed to the church authority and succession controversy may be weary from it, it is understood that this work will probably find little appreciation. It is not a matter that we can just ignore and hope to go away. We will either defend the truth or surrender it. It is of grave importance that we defend truth now and that such defense be recorded for the next generation. As we face the perilous times of these last days, when true Christianity and the Lord's churches are under attack from all about, it is desirable that there be as much unity among true Baptists as possible. We must, however, find our unity in truth or else the condition is worse than ever. When those who hold the truth compromise, they lose. It is with a desire that all Jesus' churches be united in defense of all truth that these pages are written. Every effort has been made to avoid offense or injury to anyone, without compromise of the truth or of what is felt must be said. If there is a failure in that regard, I humbly ask the reader to excuse it as the inability to adequately express myself.

Chapter I

THE FOUNDATION

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying,

Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:13-18).

The Roman Catholic interpretation of these verses is that Jesus was saying, "Peter, your name means **"A stone"** (John 1:42) and upon you I will build my church." They allege that Peter was the first pope at Rome and that his authority is passed on to the popes who follow by succession. They teach that tradition and the decrees of the pope are of equal weight with the Bible and that whatever is bound or loosed by "the Church" will dictate that which is bound or loosed in heaven.

The typical Protestant interpretation is that Jesus was saying, "Peter, the truth that you have spoken is the rock upon which I will build my church." Thus, it is allowed that all who believe and confess that Jesus is **"the Christ, the Son of the living God"** are in a universal invisible church.

The Baptist interpretation is that Jesus was declaring that He, Himself, was the rock upon which He would build His church. There are many verses throughout Exodus, Numbers, Deuteronomy,

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1st and 2nd Samuel, the Psalms, and Isaiah that refer to Christ and to God as **“the Rock”** and as **“my rock.”** In Exodus 17 and Numbers 20, the rock in the wilderness is seen as a type of Christ. That rock in the wilderness is referred to in I Corinthians 10:4 which says that **“that Rock was Christ.”** The prophecy of Isaiah 8:13-15 and 28:16 refer to Christ as **“a stone of stumbling,”** a **“rock of offence,”** a **“precious corner stone,”** and **“a sure foundation,”** as is verified by Romans 9:33. Matthew 21:42 says: **“Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord’s doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?”**

Psalms 118:22-23 says: **“The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD’s doing; it is marvellous in our eyes.”**

I Peter 2:5-8 describes a church as **“lively stones”** that **“are built up a spiritual house,”** with Jesus being the **“chief corner stone.”** Ephesians 2:20-22 speaks of a church as being **“...built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.”**

It is essential that **“...the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth”** (I Tim. 3:15) be built upon a firm foundation. Jesus said, **“...upon this rock I**

will build my church.” That rock was Christ.

Chapter 2

The Building Fitly Framed

John 1:6 says, **“There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.”** In John 1:26, 31, and 33 it is shown that God sent John to baptize **“with water.”** The baptism administered by John **“with water”** was **“from heaven.”** John was sent by God to baptize with water, and he was the only one that was sent or authorized to do so.

Matthew 3:13-17 says: **“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”**

John 1:32-34 says: **“And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.”**

John baptized **“with water”** and Jesus later baptized **“with the Holy ghost.”** The first part of verse 33 speaks of John as the

administrator of a baptism and water as the element. The last part of the verse speaks of Jesus as the administrator of a baptism, with the Holy Ghost as the element. Jesus walked sixty miles to be baptized by John because he was the only one authorized to do so at that time. It was not then, and is not now, sufficient to receive baptism only from someone else that had or has been properly baptized. John had already baptized others, and if proper baptism could be obtained merely by another baptized individual, Jesus could have saved much time and travel by receiving His baptism from one of John’s disciples. If baptism is to be valid, it must be administered by those with proper authority to do so. The authority to baptize is **“not”** passed on by baptism. Possession of scriptural baptism does not give an individual the authority to baptize. In Acts 19, Paul came across some persons that the Bible calls **“disciples,”** who had probably been baptized by Apollos. Apollos had apparently been properly baptized by John, but had no authority to baptize others. Paul rebaptized them. There can be no succession of scriptural baptism without the succession of authority to baptize.

While on earth, Jesus organized a church (Matt. 16:18-19) with **“himself being the chief corner stone,”** and with **“the foundation of the apostles and prophets”** (Eph. 2:19-22). That church can be seen existing and in operation in Matthew 18:15-18. Jesus ordained twelve members of that church as apostles and gave them authority to baptize. At a later time He ordained seventy others in that church. Before His ascension, Jesus gave a commission and the authority to baptize to either a person, some persons, or

to something (Matt. 28:18-20). It is clear, from Matthew 28:20, that it was Jesus’ intention that that authority would be perpetuated **“always, even to the end of the world.”** If Jesus gave the authority to baptize to some person, the ordinance of baptism died with the death of that person. If Jesus gave the authority to baptize only to the apostles, as apostles, that authority died with the last apostle. An apostle had to have been an eye witness of Christ (Acts 1:21-22 and I Cor. 15:8-9), so there can be no apostolic succession. The apostles were used in the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20) and the foundation must not be re-laid. Jesus wisely gave the authority to His church to be passed on to those churches He would later build by succession from that first one.

Man-made churches have no authority to, and cannot, administer a baptism that is acceptable unto God. To reject scriptural baptism is to reject the counsel of God (Luke 7:29-30). No man can please God while rejecting His counsel. Valid baptism is required for entrance into one of the Lord’s churches. In Luke 11:23, Jesus said, **“He that is not with me is against me: and he that gathereth not with me scattereth.”**

As was seen earlier, it was said that Jesus would baptize with the Holy Ghost. In John 1:33, John said: **“And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.”**

In Mark 1:8, John said: **“I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you**

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A Great Mystery

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with the Holy Ghost."

In Acts 1:5, it is recorded that Jesus, speaking to the church He had built, said: **"For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."**

That baptism with the Holy Ghost was "not" something that was administered by the Holy Ghost. It was an act that was performed or administered by Jesus. It was an immersion in the Holy Ghost, as the baptism administered by John was an immersion in water. The baptism with the Holy Ghost was not administered to people as individuals. It was administered to a church, corporately. It was not something that was promised to begin occurring on a regular basis **"not many days hence."** It was promised to occur, to be administered, **"not many days hence."** It is not something that was, or is, administered to an individual at conversion, and does "not" place one into any kind of universal invisible church. There is no such thing. I Corinthians 12:13 is sometimes thought to teach the contrary, but it is speaking of water baptism received by the leading of the Holy Spirit. The verse teaches that by the leading of the Holy Spirit we, both Jews and Gentiles, are baptized with water into one body, a local visible church such as the one at Corinth. The verses that follow in I Corinthians 12:14-27, speak of **"the foot," "the hand," "the ear," "the eye," "the head," "the feet,"** and **"the body."** Those verses are obviously referring to a physical, human body as an illustration of a church. If verses 14-27 are interpreted consistently with verse 13, and **"one body"** in

verse 13 is defined as a universal invisible body, verses 14;17 are rendered totally meaningless. The terms, **"one body"** and **"the body"** do not imply a universal invisible body any more than **"the eye"** or **"the foot"** implies universal invisible members or body parts. The terms are used generically. Similarly, in Ephesians 5:23, the terms, **"the husband," "the wife,"** and **"the church"** are spoken of in a generic sense. In that verse, nothing universal and invisible is implied by **"the church"** any more than is by **"the husband"** or **"the wife."**

In Acts 2, we have the record of Jesus baptizing the church He built with the Holy Ghost, just as He had promised. It was an accreditation or showing of His approval of His church before men. It was proof and assurance that He was still with it. Verse 16 says, **"But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel,"** in Joel 2:28, where God said, **"I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh..."** (Jew and Gentile, male and female). There was a similar immersion in the Holy Spirit of those Gentiles who were saved at Cornelius' house in Acts 10, to demonstrate God's approval that they also could be baptized and organized into a church of Christ's. It is Christ's design that His approval, authorization, and accreditation of His successive churches be demonstrated by the deliberate action and intention of an already existing, or "mother church." If two or three scripturally baptized believers could organize themselves into a true church, separate and apart from the action and intent or approval of another church, with the only authority coming "vertically," as many Baptists are now teaching, there would be the need of repeated demonstrations

like that on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

Chapter 3 ADDING AND MULTIPLYING

The command to teach those who have been baptized to observe "all" things whatsoever Christ has commanded ultimately necessitates having the authority to correctively discipline those that are to be taught. Such authority has, of course, been given to none other than the Lord's churches. These things being so, the command to teach those baptized to observe all things whatsoever Christ has commanded necessarily and strongly implies that it is by baptism that the Lord adds believers to His churches. **"For by (the leading of) one Spirit are we all baptized (with water) into one body, (like the church at Corinth) whether we be Jews or Gentiles..."** (I Cor. 12:13).

In the effort to advance, or to defend, the notion that baptism is a gospel ordinance rather than a church ordinance, it has sometimes been taught that persons are not added to a church by baptism, but that baptism is only a pre-requisite to church membership, and that the adding is done afterwards. To support that view, it is argued that the first members of the first church were not baptized "into" that church but that they were baptized in preparation for their being added to it. That was, of course, the case, but that does not disprove the scripture teaching that, since His departure, Christ adds persons to His churches by the administration of water baptism any more than the fact that God formed Adam from the dust of the ground disproves the propriety and even the absolute necessity of the process by which

God forms human beings today. Genesis 2:7 says, **"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul."** In verses 21 and 22 of that chapter, we read that God took one of Adam's ribs, **"And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman..."** In Genesis 1:28, God gave that man and woman a commission to **"Be fruitful, and multiply."** Although we realize that men today are not formed from the dust of the ground in the way that Adam was, and wives are not formed from men's ribs in the way that Eve was, those who believe the Bible will agree that it is God who forms and gives life to every human being. Isaiah 44:24 says, **"Thus saith the LORD, thy redeemer, and he that formed thee from the womb, I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself."** So it is that, although Christ added some of the first members to His first church after they had been baptized, it is by water baptism administered by His churches that Christ has ordained as a manner in which He adds believers to His churches since His ascension.

The baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch by Philip is sometimes cited as an alleged case of one being baptized without being baptized into a church. Philip is named in Acts as one of the seven who were ordained by the church at Jerusalem. In Acts 6:6, we read that the church set the seven before the apostles, and when the church had prayed, they laid their hands on them. In the next two chapters we see Philip and Stephen, another of the seven,

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A Great Mystery

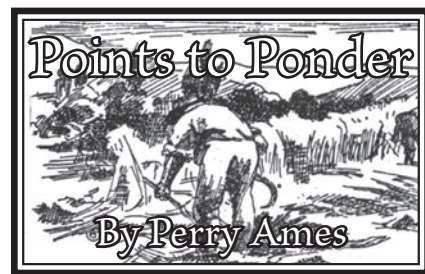
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preaching with the approval of the church at Jerusalem. The fact that **“the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more”** presents no problem. Philip was an evangelist (Acts 21:8) and was no doubt away from Jerusalem much of the time as he **“preached the gospel in many villages of the Samaritans”** (Acts 8:25). Immediately after baptizing the eunuch, **“But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea”** (Acts 8:40). Considering the way God so miraculously sent Philip to the eunuch, and then caught him away afterward, it should not be so difficult to believe that God caused and enabled the church at Jerusalem to follow up in the obedience of teaching the new member to observe all things whatsoever Christ had commanded, and to take responsibility for him, until such time as he could be placed into another church. There may very well have already been a church organized near where the eunuch lived. Let us not forget that besides the twelve apostles and the seven deacons, there were the **“other seventy”** that Jesus Himself appointed and **“sent them two and two.”** We have no record that their ordination was ever revoked. Whatever the case, I think the prophecy of Isaiah 56:3-8 indicates that God gave the eunuch a church to worship and serve Him in and to assemble with. The fact that Philip was not seen any more, by the eunuch, shows that the commission was given to the churches rather than to apostles or preachers.

After God saved Saul, He sent him to Damascus where he was baptized into the church there at Damascus. **“Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus”** (Acts 9:19). Verse 23 says that it was **“many days.”** Verse 26 says, **“And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples”** (the church at Jerusalem).

Some may wish to doubt the existence of a church at Damascus, or of any churches, at that time, other than the one at Jerusalem, but verse 31 of that same chapter clearly indicates that there were a number of churches throughout a large area. Verse 31 says: **“Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.”**

The fact that **“the churches”** (plural) had rest, were edified, and multiplied is proof that they existed, for they could not have had rest nor been edified and multiplied, had they not been already in existence. Members of those churches had been persecuted by Saul; now they **“had rest”**.



YEA! VANILLA
(Genesis chapter 1)

Do you like vanilla? I do! Most people do but they do not know the source of vanilla. So, a

good question to ask is, “Do you know where vanilla comes from?” The closest that I have ever had anyone come to telling me is that it comes from vanilla beans but they do not know the bean comes from the vanilla orchid.

This is a history and science lesson all rolled into a very interesting problem that begs an answer from evolutionists/Darwinists.

Let us get started. Our history lesson begins when the Spanish conquistador Herman Cortes came to Mexico in the 1520s. He found the Aztec Indians using vanilla and when the Spaniards tried vanilla, “they liked it”! Now, the Spaniards had a problem, they liked vanilla but it was not like they could just sail the ocean blue and get some whenever they had a hankering for a little vanilla. So they learned from the Aztecs, when and how to collect the vanilla bean pods and how they dried, smashed and fermented the beans to make vanilla.

When the Spaniards had learned all about the vanilla making process they brought vanilla orchids back home to Spain. They planned to have home grown vanilla. “Yeah!” But even though they grew plants they could not get them to produce a single bean. For over 300 years the Spaniards grew vanilla orchids from cuttings hoping that they could produce vanilla beans but their attempts were futile. They never harvested a single bean.

In 1837 Belgian botanist Charles Morren set about to solve the riddle of “Why did the Spaniards’ orchids not produce beans?” He went to Mexico to learn why the Spaniards were not able to harvest beans from their Spain grown vanilla orchids. After a considerable amount of time in Mexico, Charles discovered there

was a symbiotic relationship between the vanilla orchid and the Melipona bee.

Charles Morren learned that the Melipona bee only feeds on the nectar and pollen of the vanilla orchid and that the Melipona bee is the only one of God’s creatures that can naturally pollinate the vanilla orchid.

Charles developed a method to pollinate the vanilla orchid but it was not financially feasible.

However, in 1841 a 12 year old slave boy, Edmond Abius living on the French island of Reunion in the Indian Ocean discovered that the orchid could be hand pollinated with a small wooden stick. Hand pollination made it possible to produce vanilla in many parts of the world.

Now ponder this; the theory of evolution requires long periods of time but we are talking about a plant and an insect that neither one can survive without the other. To believe they evolved together without any empirical evidence requires a greater act of religious belief than to believe the Bible. Remember, God’s Word tells us ten (10) times in Genesis chapter 1, that His creation is to bring forth after its own kind. The law of nature and nature’s God has never been broken despite what humanists/Darwinists might believe or teach.



Timely Tweets

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forgiven and cleansed from our sins (Rom. 5:1). It follows that we would show the same concern and lovingkindness toward others and seek peace. “God gives us a new nature” and leads us in paths of righteousness. The Scripture is

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Timely Tweets

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a light to our path and we follow Him by the enabling power of the Holy Spirit. He provides us with everything we need for eternal life and also godliness (II Pet. 2:3).

"We must seek peace with others" with mercy and humility to edify and encourage them. As Christian women, we are called to die to self, to remember Lot's wife who looked back, and to put off the old man which is self-centered. **"Only by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom"** (Prov. 13:10). **"If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men"** (Rom. 12:18). **"Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves"** (Phil. 2:3).

"God does not intend for Christian women to seek peace at any cost," because the truth will cause divisions. **"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword... And a man's foes shall be they of his own household"** (Matt. 10:34-36).

When Jesus resisted the temptations of Satan, He simply reminded Himself of the law of God and refused to submit to him. The law is our safety net as well, (Psalm 1:1-3).

Seeking peace does not mean abandoning our convictions. Sometimes we can just refuse to comply and run from sin, as Joseph did when tempted by Potiphar's wife. **"Depart from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it"** (Psa. 34:14). **"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding"** (Prov. 23:23).

How can we properly resist sin and false doctrine while seeking peace? It will be necessary to speak against sin, but reproof does not mean speaking offensively with bad language, insults, or name-calling. Our opposition to sin and false doctrine must be done with an attitude of patience and with the Scripture. **"They that forsake the law praise the wicked: but such as keep the law contend with them"** (Prov. 28:4). **"And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them"** (Eph. 5:11). **"Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted"** (Gal. 6:1). **"...reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine"** (II Tim. 4:2).

Conclusion: As Christian women, may our thoughts and speech glorify our Lord and Savior; may we promote peace with our family and others, and not provoke each other to wrath. **"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer"** (Psa. 19:14). **"She openeth her mouth with wisdom; and in her tongue is the law of kindness"** (Prov. 31:26).

Ask yourself, "Am I a peacemaker?" If the answer is no, then ask yourself about salvation. **"For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace"** (Jas. 3:16-18).

"Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another" (Rom. 14:19).

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance..." (Gal. 5:22-23).

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints" (I Cor. 14:33).

"Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord" (Heb. 12:14).



Plodding Through Proverbs

By Elder Tom Ross
Chesapeake, OH



Plodding Through 29:25
Proverbs, today's Adult SS lesson in manuscript:

"The fear of man bringeth a snare: but whoso putteth his trust in the LORD shall be safe" (29:25).

What a sad commentary on man that he fears other men rather than the true and living God. The fear of man is a terrible trap of Satan that paralyzes many from doing what is right and standing up for what is true. The fear of man caused Abraham to lie about his wife even though God had promised to bless him immeasurably. The fear of man caused Peter to deny the Lord three times even though he had walked with Him for over three years and saw numerous displays of miraculous power. How strong must be the snare of the fear of man! Even the most spiritual and boldest of men have been bound by its grip. Dear Christian reader, how many times has the fear of man prevented you from witnessing to the lost? How many times has the fear of man caused you to remain silent while the ungodly boldly boast of their

wicked deeds? Preacher, how often have you failed to preach the truth fearing that you might offend one of your hearers? Let us remember that every time we forsake our duty to God in order to gain the favor of men we are in violation of the principle set forth in Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man." Paul reasoned thusly with the Galatians: "For do I now persuade men or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ" (Gal. 1:10).

Why do we so readily get caught in the snare of fear? Often we fear we are going to suffer ridicule or lose the esteem of men. What flimsy excuses that will never stand the test of eternity! We should be willing to lose everything for the glory of Christ. He is the One who left everything to suffer the ridicule, hatred, and mocking of wicked men. Jesus is the One who was willing to offer His body, His soul, His blood, His merits, His righteousness on the

♦ (Continued on page 18)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

6-1-2024 to 6-30-2024

Beginning Balance 12,590.37

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	750.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC	100.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
S. G. B. C., Wellington, KS	200.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV	400.00
Berea B.C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Big Creek B.C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Victory B. C., Courtland VA	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin KY	100.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	45.00
Tim/Carol Willett Cottonwood Shores, TX	125.00
Portland B.C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN	100.00
Briar Creek B.C., Williamsburg, KY	150.00
Parkway Landmark B.C., Springfield, OR	100.00
West Jefferson B.C., West Jefferson, OH...	100.00
Bobby Watkins, Olmstead, KY	76.00
S.G.B.C., Texarkana, TX	100.00
Eld. Lyle Thomas, San Jose, IL	30.00
Paul Kirkpatrick, Antioch, TN	50.00
Grace B.C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
S.G.B.C., Silsbee, TX	30.00
Eve Knowles, Scarborough, ME	100.00

Subscriptions	30.00
Anonymous	125.00
Div. Checks.....	150.00
Sub Total.....	3,471.00
TOTAL.....	\$16,061.37

EXPENDITURES:

Printing	807.90
Postage:	567.82
Wages	2,000.00
FICA	153.00
Div. Checks	150.00
Misc	199.94
Total Expenditures	3,878.66
ENDING BALANCE	12,182.71



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

6-1-2024 to 6-30-2024

Beginning Balance 6,850.75

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	150.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	350.00
Interst.....	0.54
TOTAL.....	7,201.29

EXPENDITURES:

Radio time	354.96
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	354.96
ENDING BALANCE	6,846.33

Plodding Through..

(Continued from page 17) ♦

cruel tree of cursing in the stead of unworthy sinners. Jesus loved us so much He did not fear to enter into the fury of the Father's wrath in order to save us from the guilt and penalty of our sins! If we truly understood the magnitude of our Great Saviour's finished work we would gladly say with the blessed apostle: "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ" (Phil. 3:8). What holy boldness would fill our hearts if we were overwhelmed with love for Jesus Christ! We would be unstoppable if only we were filled to overflowing with the power of the Holy Spirit. The early churches were so inflamed with love for Christ they had an earnest desire to serve and obey Him no matter what the cost.

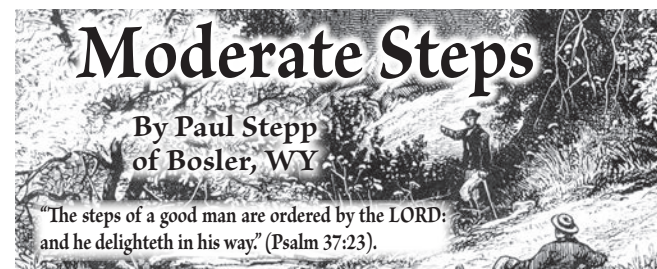
How do we conquer the soul crushing fear of man? We trust in the Lord! We believe His Word. We live by faith knowing that His Word is true and that we belong to Him. Our safety is not found in men! Rather, we are only safe when we are trusting fully in our Great God. He will guide! He will strengthen! He will provide! He will protect! We can rest safely in the promise of Proverbs 3:5-6: "Trust in the LORD with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." Psalm 27:1 declares: "The LORD is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The LORD is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

Charles Bridges wrote:

"Thank God—there is a way

of deliverance. Faith unbinds the soul from fear...Faith gives power to prayer. The strength from prayer makes us cheerful in obedience, and resolute in trial. Here is safety, strength, courage, peace. Nothing but faith gives the victory; but the victory of faith is complete. He only who putteth his trust in the Lord, is prepared when God and man are at contraries, to 'obey God rather than man' (Acts 4:19). A secret union with God is implanted in the soul by this faith; an union as mighty, as it is secret; a sacred spring of life—the energy of God Himself (Gal. 2:20); triumphant therefore in the mightiest conflict with the flesh. The man, dependent on the

world for happiness, is in bondage. The servant of God is in liberty. It matters not to him, whether the world smile or frown. He is safe, beyond its reach, set on high. Faith brings him to his strong tower (Prov. 18:10). There he is 'kept by the power of God unto salvation' (I Pet. 1:5). Fear brings us into the snare. Faith brings liberty, safety, exaltation. Oh! thou God of power and grace, may my soul praise thee for this mighty deliverance, this joyous freedom! May I never be ashamed of my Master! May I be bound to His people, and glory in His cross (Gal. 6:14)!" (pages 586-587)



CUT TO THE HEART

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? ...When they heard that, they were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them. ...When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth. ...And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. ...Thus my heart was grieved, and I was pricked in my reins" (Acts 2:37; 5:33; 7:54; 9:5 Psa. 73:21).

When the Gospel is proclaimed to the world of men, the hearts of some men are cut

in such a fashion that there is a furious and violent response. The Word that comes from God infuriates some; enrages some; inspires some to hatred and violence; overwhelms some with guilt and suspicion to the point that they cannot tolerate the sound of the Words of God or the presence of the people of God who proclaim such a Word.

But then, when the Word of God is proclaimed to some other persons, the hearts of men are cut – but not in such a violent way; instead, the cut can be described as more like a poke or a prick; the prick induces a more measured response. The response from these persons is to acknowledge a fault; to admit guilt; to express sorrow for the injury and offense done to God and others; a pressing need to

♦ (Continued on page 19)

Moderate Steps

(Continued from page 18) ♦

repent; a need to hear more and to know more; a respect and love for the Word and for the God Who sent the Word; a desire to hear and know the person who brings the blessed Word of repentance and faith. Indeed, the hearts of some are melted, are molded, are melded with God and unto God! Some are called out to repentance and faith! What a marvelous and heavenly response, in those who are destined for, and called out unto the salvation of their souls!

The Wicked Heart

If and when the Gospel is presented to one that has a hardened heart (Acts 7:51), he will not accept it. If the Gospel is presented to one whose ears are not opened (Acts 7:51, 57), they will not hear it. I think that it is an amazing testimony to the depravity of man that we see related to us, especially in the case of the murder of Stephen. The depravity of man is so complete that he participates in his own destruction. Oftentimes we will attribute the blinding and the hardening to the hand of Satan, but really man will help Satan out as much as he is able. Notice that in the case of Stephen that the people carried this spiritual thought represented to us in Isaiah 6 to a physical nature. In other words, they even sought to stop their physical ears (Acts 7:57) so that they might not be afflicted with the sounds that the Word of God might make in their hearing. What a miserable condition we are all of us in! How can any man expect to save a soul from amongst this humanity, when such a basic and complete separation exists! We cannot save even one through our own efforts.

We cannot save even one that we coerce into coming forward to the altar. It is God and God alone that can save. The change that takes place is one that must take place at the very core and center of our being. We cannot reach that place inside of man where the change must take place. But God can. That is why, to me, the work of Salvation in the heart of wicked man is the greatest and most wonderful of all miracles that has ever been performed by God (Jer. 17:9; Isa. 6:9-10; Heb. 11:37)!

The Heart that God Gives Man

It is amazing to consider these chapters in Acts. It is the same message that is preached by all the apostles and by Stephen. Peter told the people on the Day of Pentecost that they were guilty. In fact he told them that ye have crucified the Lord Jesus Christ. Yet, instead of invoking a violent and terrible response, the people cried out, "What shall we do?" They saw that indeed they were guilty, and they repented of their sins. The Jews in the case of Stephen were told that that they were the betrayers and murderers of the Just One. Their response was to gnash on him with their teeth. The message is the same in all of our accounts that we have looked at today. It is only that the hearts are different when we compare the cases today. What made them different was God. This is no different then what the Lord told Nicodemus when He said **"..Ye must be born again"** (John 3:7). We must have the new heart within us or we cannot do other than what the men did in Acts 7. Even the Apostle Paul, when he was yet called Saul, could not do anything other than what he did, because he did not have the new heart – he was not born again (Ezek. 36:26; Jer. 20:9; John 3:3; Acts 4:12; Rom. 10:8-11).

Baptist History



Taken from *This Day in Baptist History*
Written by E. Wayne Thompson and David L. Cummins

HE LIVED UP TO HIS NAME

(Proverbs 22)

Dr. A. J. Gordon's father was named after John Calvin the theological systematist, but Gordon, at his birth in New Hampshire, April 19, 1836, was named for the first American Baptist Missionary to Burma, Adoniram Judson. At the age of fifteen, he came into vital union with Jesus Christ as his Savior. Upon completing his education and theological training, he was ordained and became the pastor at Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. From 1867 he was sought for the pastorate of Clarendon Street Baptist Church, Boston, but did not accept the position until late in 1869. The only stipulation in accepting the call to this church was the replacement of the paid choir by congregational singing. He was a hymn writer, a composer of hymn tunes, and a compiler of hymnals.

Dr. Gordon was well named, and certainly his naming was bathed in much prayer. His most influential work was related to world evangelism. Over one-half of his travels were related to missions. He served for over twenty years as a member of the board or as executive chairman of the American Baptist Missionary Union. Although he favored sound financial support, he also emphasized the faith element in missions.

Dr. Gordon was dominated by the conviction that nothing is practical except the spiritual, and nothing is spiritual unless it is practical. He became greatly persuaded through his own experience and study of the Bible that the new birth by the Holy Spirit which effects the union of a believer with Jesus Christ is essential. He participated in Dwight L. Moody's evangelistic meetings and was a consistent soul-winner and evangelistic preacher himself. Gordon understood the absolute necessity of the power of the Holy Spirit in carrying on the work of world evangelism and soul-winning. He understood that all teaching and ministering of the Word was futile apart from the power of the Holy Spirit. He had many lectures published on this subject including *The Holy Spirit in Missions*.

Gordon was an apologist for biblical Christianity against Darwinism, agnosticism, Unitarianism, transcendentalism, Christian Science, baptismal regeneration, and the influence of materialism in the evangelical churches of his day.

Dr. Gordon was a fundamentalist before fundamentalism. He held that the Bible was inerrant and infallible, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the believer was continual, the second coming of Jesus Christ was imminent and premillennial.

♦ (Continued on page 20)

Baptist History

(Continued from page 19) ♦

Dr. Gordon's gravestone reflects his blessed hope: "Pastor A. J. Gordon: 1836-1895, 'Until He Come.'"



**Quotes
from
Brother
Ritechus
N.
Dignation**
by Joseph Harris

3 WIT AND WISDOM

Some folks are always sayin' "Live and let live, accept people and their lifestyle without judgin' them." Well, there is too much lettin' and allowin' going on today. What you condone, you endorse, and what you endorse you promote. Remember, the next time you let wickedness prevail without a fuss, you promoted it.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

Grace Baptist Church of Gladwin, MI is seeking to start a mission work in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina. We are also seeking a sound preacher to go there. If you are interested and feel led of the Lord please contact Pastor Sam Wilson at 989-701-5564. You may also contact Brother Tom Coffee, who is currently working in the area at 843-254-3018.

This ministry currently has a blog written by Bro. Coffee that can be read online at <https://thefaithfulofgod.com/blog/>

The Maranatha Missionary

Baptist Church located at 14460 Ravenna Avenue, Alliance, OH, 44601, is seeking a pastor. The church was organized in 1981 and currently has seven members that are grounded in sound Baptist doctrine. Any interested elder can contact Brother Denny Morgan at dennymatco@gmail.com or call (330) 324-3038.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact the church in writing at SGBC, 400 N. Main St., Caldwell, KS 67022, or by phone Brother Darin Wiley 620-863-2431.

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in need of a pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

The Lord's Baptist Church in Tacoma, Washington is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact Gaylen Russell at 360-879-5565 (home) or 253-495-4567 (cell) or by Email: gaylenr@rainierconnect.com.

Bethel Baptist Church, which is located at 2603 Penfield, Pasadena, TX 77506, is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elders should call Brother Risinger at 832-564-6350 which is his cell phone or you can call him at home at 281-476-5099.

The Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL by

God's grace is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace, Landmark, Independent, Missionary, KJV Bible in faith and practice. If you desire a copy of our Articles of Faith please let us know. Any interested Elder of like faith may contact: Glenn Gilbreath (256) 476-1033 or Mike Gibson (256) 303-7747.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church in Brownsburg, Indiana is in need of a pastor. The church firmly believes in the Sovereignty of God, the doctrines of Grace and the perpetuity of the New Testament Church. Interested brethren should contact Chris Rainey at 317-727-4755.

Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL will be hosting a Bible Conference September 21-22, 2024. Services begin Saturday at 10am, Noon meal, and 2:30pm. Sunday at 10am, Noon meal.

Speakers will be: Jonathan Bailess; Clint Keith; Wesley Titus. If you are interested in worshipping with us and would like more information, please contact Bro. Glenn Gilbreath (256-476-1033) or Bro. Mike Gibson (256-303-7747). We meet at 202 Mill Rd. Decatur, AL. All are invited to attend for a joyous time of fellowship and preaching of the Word of God.



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