

# 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

## None Righteous, None Good, Considering the Doctrine of Depravity

By Mel Kimberlin  
of Fairview Heights, Illinois

It is a blessed day when one realizes there is none righteous, none good! It is not uncommon for a most vile criminal to say, "I am not a bad person." I work a secular job as a prosecutor, and I am privileged to represent the people of Saint Clair County, Illinois. In one case, I prosecuted a defendant who had committed a vicious attack on his girlfriend.



The brutal attack was caught on video. At his sentencing hearing, the judge sentenced the defendant to eight years in prison. The defendant went wild. He screamed at the judge, "I am a King, I am a great man, I am better than going away to prison

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## Christ the Mediator

By Joseph M. Sidders  
of Guntown, Mississippi

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time" (I Tim. 2:5-6).

A title that might be better for this topic comes right from Hebrews 9. Which says "**How much more shall the blood of Christ...purge your conscience from dead works** [in order] to



serve the living God?" All good things past, present, and to come, were, and are, founded upon the priestly office of Christ and come to us from thence. Our perfect High Priest entered into was sacrificed only "once" as a perfect Sacrifice and has obtained eternal redemption for all eternity for the elect of God. The Holy Ghost

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## The Undeniable Hell of God

By Matthew Stepp  
of Wayne, West Virginia

"Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high. As many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men" (Isa. 52:13-14).

One of the most terrible evidences of Hell is in this verse, where Jesus Christ endured and "survived" the eternal death torments of Hell during the three terrible hours of darkness on the cross, as God the Father "...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).

The physical crucifixion alone, which other martyrs have suffered, cannot explain Isaiah's "marred visage...more than any man" until we equate the eternal torment debt of each of God's precious elect compoundly compressed upon Him. What a terrible infliction of judgment! Viewing through the windows of Hell from Heaven, again with the

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## Christ Coming for His Saints is Imminent

T. P. Simmons  
(1898 - 1969)

In our first article we trust we successfully proved that Christ's coming is to be premillennial. We undertake now to show that Christ's appearance in the air to catch away both his dead and living saints (as described in I Thess. 4:15-18) is imminent. We are not making any special effort in any of these articles to reply to any objections to our views. We have felt best to confine ourselves mainly to positive proof for our



position and leave objections to be advanced by our readers. We urge our readers to write us concerning objections.

The reader is asked to read this article with both an open Bible and an open heart. Read for yourself all the references. For the sake of clearness, we are submitting and attempting to prove three propositions in this article. They are as follows:

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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.

# Christ...Mediator

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further signified and showed that the Old Testament sacrifices only freed the outward man from ceremonial uncleanness and fitted him for some outward privileges. What we look at here today is Christ as our Mediator and the obtaining of our eternal redemption.

First let us comment on "how eternal redemption was first obtained." **"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; 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"** (Heb. 9:11-14)? Much like with the Levitical offerings of the priests of old, the covenant or testament had to be sealed in blood. The offerings then rolled sins forward toward a day of eternal atoning, that day on Calvary when the Lord Jesus bore our sins upon the cross and declared that the work was "finished." This Levitical offering had a **limited capacity** and therefore it had to be repeated. In order that eternal redemption, or redemption without capacity, be obtained it must be offered without sin.

Though the offerings of old were to be without blemish, he who made the offerings themselves

surely was not. The priests themselves had to be anointed. The offerings had to be cleansed and we can see the evidence of that in reading through Exodus 29 (for the good proofers here of the Berea Baptist Banner I will not labor to print the entire chapter here); we see the evidence of a needful cleansing throughout the entire chapter. Hebrews 9:1-10 **"Then verily the first covenant had also ordinances of divine service, and a worldly sanctuary. For there was a tabernacle made; the first, wherein was the candlestick, and the table, and the shewbread; which is called the sanctuary. And after the second veil, the tabernacle which is called the Holiest of all; Which had the golden censer, and the ark of the covenant overlaid round about with gold, wherein was the golden pot that had manna, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the tables of the covenant; And over it the cherubims of glory shadowing the mercyseat; of which we cannot now speak particularly. Now when these things were thus ordained, the priests went always into the first tabernacle, accomplishing the service of God. But into the second went the high priest alone once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people: The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing: Which was a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience; Which stood only in meats and drinks, and**

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# Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of  
Texarkana, Texas

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" (Ephesians 1:13).



## Waiting With Patience on the Lord

**"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it"** (Rom. 8:23-25).

God has given every believer something special in our salvation, "hope," and as Christians we need to keep that hope in our hearts. God said about hope, **"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen"** (Heb. 11:1). Hope is in our Father and His blessed Son Jesus Christ, that one day we will be in heaven and enjoy our new home with our Father and our Saviour for all eternity. As believers we cannot see this hope, we do not see God, Jesus, or heaven, therefore it is called "hope" because God said, **"...things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."** If you want to see these things then they are not hope, because hope comes from faith, hope is not seen, **"...but hope that is seen is not hope..."** This is why we have faith, we believe in God Who we cannot see; Jesus Who we cannot see; we have hope of being in Heaven which we cannot see. Remember, **"...faith is the substance of things hoped for..."** therefore our hope is

powered by our faith. Our faith in God and His Word builds up hope in where our future is, our faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour builds our hope for a heavenly future. God said we are, **"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"** (Titus 2:13).

Our hope is in the glorious coming of Jesus Christ, it is in God, it is in being in heaven soon. Our hope is not in this world or the things or people of it. The second coming of Jesus Christ has been talked about since Jesus ascended into the heavens after His resurrection. Today, more than two thousand years later, we still have faith in His coming, which gives us hope. The lost world has no faith and therefore they have no hope. No hope in Jesus as Saviour, no hope in God, no hope of heaven, their only hope is in this wicked world. Since faith gives the believer hope in things not seen, we may know that we shall have something much greater after this life, something much greater than all things this world can offer. It is a blessing from God to know, **"And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him. For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God. And whatsoever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, and**

**do those things that are pleasing in his sight"** (I John 3:19 - 22).

Our faith in our Great God and our Glorious Saviour gives us all this hope. That we may know, yes that we may know, that even if our own hearts fail us, God is keeping our hope alive, we know that the work we do for the Lord is not in vain, and to know that God hears and answers all our prayers as He graciously wills.

Knowing this is a blessing, a gift from God; therefore, we are to wait on the Lord patiently, for God's glorious gifts. We are not to lose faith in God or the things that are to be, patience is a must. We must work hard to keep our lamps trimmed and ready because we never know in a second, we might see Jesus face to face. Please keep these scriptures in your heart at all times, **"My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; Knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing"** (James 1:2-4). No matter what life brings, trust the Lord in all things and **"...let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing."**

(Randy Johnson is pastor of the Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Texarkana, Texas.)



## Christ...Mediator

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**divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation"** (Heb. 9:1-10).

What was it that Paul was writing to the Corinthians about? It was not the sacrifice that was offered (Christ) but those who were dishonoring it: **"Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth**

**the whole lump? Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth"** (I Cor. 5:6-8).

Secondly, "how shall eternal redemption be kept?" **"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? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance"** (Heb. 9:14-15). The totally depraved handling a gift of absolute holiness, such as salvation, that would not be fit! How could we not mess that up when our very desire is to be rid of sinlessness and feed the flesh?

The blood of Jesus is the life of the gospel, and it is a gift to us, praise God! For us to have the gift we would need to be cleansed and have our old sins atoned for. For us to keep this gift our present and future sins would also need to be cleansed and atoned for, because we know that just a little leaven leaveneth (corrupts or spoileth) the whole lump!

Charles Spurgeon "It was absolutely needful that guilt should be atoned for, and therefore, Jesus became a mediator. Nothing short of this could secure the eternal inheritance for those who are called. Take away the atonement

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# Christ...Mediator

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and you have robbed our Lord of His greatest reason for being a mediator at all. We love and live upon the truth of His atoning death." To atone for the wrath of God, which is the inheritance of our sin, Jesus had to die for sins past and mediate the sins of our future through the power of that sacrifice.

Finally we must note that "death was necessary to keep the promise, not ever-repeating death, but rather a death that was everlasting!" **"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth. Whereupon neither the first testament was dedicated without blood. For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence**

**of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation"** (Heb. 9:16-28).

A person's "will and testament" is what he wills to happen with what he is leaving behind and goes into effect when the testator dies. Jesus was leaving behind the blessings of the Gospel and He had to die to secure them to us. Jesus was not dying for types or levels or even incidents of sin but rather He was purging its reality. Though a Child of the King would continue to sin, he also continues to recognize it; he continues to feel the chastening of the Father to repent. Praise the Lord!

The Catholics would have you believe that their priests are anointed so that they can administer the sacrifice of Jesus anew every mass. This is not what the Scriptures say. This also is not what a mediator is. This term "mediator" is defined by Strong as "one who intervenes between two, either in order to make or restore peace and friendship, or form a compact, or for ratifying a covenant." It is not some dead thing that can be made alive and slain again for the weakness of man but some living Person that "intervenes" between us the sinner and God the Father our Judge, "Praise the Lord!"

It is a desperate thing and not

one of faith to want to kill again and again this vicarious sacrifice due to our weaknesses. It is not a thing of strength or power but an act of fear and weakness. God said that Christ's offering upon the cross once for the sins of the many was enough. Do we look for Him in faith? Do we trust in the security of His sacrifice? Surely we believe He is dead in the flesh, but do we yet believe that He has risen and is seated even now at the right hand of the Father?

I beg your patience now as I offer this simple example, consider please my laptop. To keep the laptop I used to type this charged and working it had to stay with the source in some capacity. I can unplug it for a while, sure, but eventually its power will wear out and it will need to be plugged in again in order to be restored. I can charge it over and over again to keep it going but it will never outlast its battery. The battery needs power to keep performing. As believers we are like this laptop. On the day our salvation was made known to us we were fully charged to live for Jesus. We donned our "What Would Jesus Do" bracelets, and fancy Bible covers, and perhaps we were even born-again trendsetters, ready to run to church for every service. As time passes and sin begins to add to the load of our charge we seem to lose that zeal. We still love to be restored so that we can perform as we should, but we have no ability to do that on our own. We must find the storehouse of life-everlasting and recharge our cells through repentance; cycling out fear and doubt and cycling in grace and love. As the writer says in Hebrews 13:5-6 the Lord has said, **"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee...The Lord is my helper [my mediator or One-who-intervenes] and I will not**

**fear what man shall do unto me."** Praise this Lord for His intervening that allows me to once again cry out "Abba, Father!"



## Christ Coming

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**Christ's coming is to consist of two phases**

Christ is coming as a bridegroom for His bride (Matt. 25:1-13), coming in the air to catch up His own to meet Him (I Thess. 4:15-18); and He is coming as a destroyer (II Thess. 1:8-9; 2:8), as a judge (Matt. 25:31-46), and as a king to conquer and to reign (Zech. 14:1-9; Rev. 20:1-5). The first two Scriptures represent the first phase of His coming, and the latter ones the second phase.

**The two phases of Christ's coming are to be separated by a considerable period of time**

We suppose all believers in the personal coming of Christ will agree with us that His coming is to consist of two phases. But some believe the two phases will occur in immediate connection with each other. In other words, they believe Christ will appear in the air, at which time both His dead and living saints will be changed and caught up to meet Him; and that then He will immediately come on to the earth with them to judge the world and to set up His millennial reign. The proposition we are now attempting to prove is that these two phases of Christ's coming will not occur in immediate connection with each other, but that they will be separated by a considerable period of time. We believe the great tribulation (Matt. 2:21; Rev. 7:14) will intervene between the two phases of Christ's coming. We offer the following proofs for the

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# Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of  
Clendenin, West Virginia

"Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it" (Matthew 7:14).

## Inherit the Wind

**"He that troubleth his own house shall inherit the wind"** (Prov. 11:29).

I would rather walk ten miles to avoid senseless trouble than to ride a mile into it. Eliphaz hit the nail on the head when he said, **"... man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward"** (Job 5:7), and I have more trouble in my life than suits me now, so why would I want to add to my own misery? But apparently, there are a special few who just do not have enough problems in their life so they have to get some of their own making. They must get out of bed, bored to tears, and stir up a heap of trouble to pass the time. The more likely explanation is that a fool does not understand the consequences of his actions. People (most people, most of the time) do not want trouble in their life but they have a funny way to go about it because living contrary to God's way is a sure-fire path to misery now, and poverty for the future. Sin, today, troubles the house and will eventually bring it down.

If you bring trouble home, you are destroying the future of your own house. How can you expect God to bless your rebellion? The Lord has set before us the path of blessing and the path of judgment (Psalm 1) and having a respect for the Bible, but not following Christ's Word is going to bring trouble home. Venerating the book but having enough dust on the cover to write "damnation" across it, as the preacher said, is a sure way to bring your house to

ruin.

You can trouble your house by who you bring home. There are many pious people who would not let a blasphemer abide for very long in their living room or refuse to let a man mock God before their family, unless, of course, he is on television. That is different. Do you think you can bring ungodly people into your home night after night to instruct you and then reap the fruit of righteousness?

You can trouble your house by who you keep out of it. Some take great pains to keep people and trouble out of their house. They build fences, put up signs, install security systems, and have a dog on patrol. They remain vigilantly armed to the teeth ready to keep problems out, but they trouble their house because Christ is not in the home. They trust in their strength and their armory. They trust in their valiance and their bullets. But if Christ is not in the home, or the heart, then your fortress is built on sand and will crumble. God is the founder of



the home (Gen. 2:23-24). The Lord is the leader of the family (I Corinthians 11:3). And Christ is the provider and sustainer of the house (Psa. 127:1). So to shut the closet door and not seek the Lord's face in the home is to trouble the home and inherit the wind.

It is bad enough to trouble your own house, but some have the gumption to try and bring trouble to the Lord's house. The soul foolish enough to bring trouble to the Lord's house will inherit a whole lot more than wind.

(Doug Newell IV is pastor of the Buffalo Valley Baptist Church of Clay, West Virginia.)



## None Righteous

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for 8 years!" Sadly, his high view of self is not uncommon. Consider the results of a recent survey of United States citizens conducted in May of this year. Eighty-two percent of respondents said they believe that humankind is inherently good.

Three out of four believe that they are fundamentally a good person. Forty-six percent believe they are a "better" person than everyone else they know. This is a problem!

The Apostle Paul addressed this problem when he wrote his epistle to the Roman church. Paul's writing diametrically opposes man's high view of self. In so doing, Paul teaches the doctrine of depravity. Paul emphatically teaches that man is far from being a righteous, or good, person. In fact, Paul tells us that man is depraved. Man's depravity is much misunderstood, but it is critical to understanding soteriology (the doctrine of salvation). Examining this doctrine ultimately leads us to understand man's horrible condition, and then, to ascribe

God the glory that He alone deserves. So, let us examine the doctrine of depravity. There are four aspects to this doctrine that we must address.

First, we begin by offering an explanation of the doctrine. What are we talking about when we use the term "depravity"? Webster's 1828 Dictionary offers a good starting point in defining the word. According to Webster, the word "depravity" means "corrupt; wicked; destitute of holiness or good principles." Thus, depravity is just the opposite of goodness.

Just understanding the meaning of the word does not help us to fully explain the doctrine. What have others previously said that will help us gain insight? Brother C.D. Cole, wrote that, "Depravity means the moral corruption of human nature; it refers to the state of sinfulness natural to the unregenerate." Augustus H. Strong, in his epic work on Systematic Theology, opined, "By this we mean, on the one hand, the lack of original righteousness or of holy affection toward God and, on the other hand, the corruption of the moral nature or bias toward evil." Our dear brother, Tom Ross, wrote, "Every man is completely ruined and spiritually corrupt."

With these thoughts in mind, we conclude that in the fall, man lost his original state of moral uprightness with God. He is now estranged, and he cannot do anything to restore himself to a right relationship with God. Man is in dire peril!

Now, let us consider what the Scriptures teach about depravity. How is it described? The Bible is clear in terms of its description of depravity. In Romans 3:9-18, Paul describes man in this way: **"What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before**

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# None Righteous

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**proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways: And the way of peace have they not known: There is no fear of God before their eyes.**" Paul is using David's description of man as outlined in Psalm 14: 1-3: **"The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."** It is clear, then, that man is wrong! He is "not" righteous! He is not good! He is corrupt, wicked, and wants nothing to do with God. Man is depraved.

Having considered an explanation of the doctrine, we next turn our thoughts to the extent of depravity. How far does man's depravity reach? Is there "some" good remaining in man? Upon investigation, we again discover that man is lacking. In fact, man is entirely depraved. This aspect of the doctrine is

usually referred to as "total" depravity. This is true because, as it relates to depravity, all human faculties are affected. Consider that man's intellect is depraved (Jer. 4:22). His heart is depraved (Jer. 17:9). His mind is depraved (Col. 1:21). And yes, his will is depraved (Psa. 10:4).

Before moving on, we must address a very important issue. The fact that man is totally depraved does "not" mean that man's behavior is as corrupt as it could be. Brother H. B. Smith wrote, "By total depravity it is never meant that men are as bad as they can be nor that they have not, in their natural condition, certain amiable qualities, nor that they may not have virtues in a limited sense."

Brother C. D. Cole used an illustration that is helpful in understanding this reality. Consider that the decomposition of a body which has been dead for a day is not as corrupt as a body that has been dead for a week. Yet, both bodies are dead. Our office recently had a case where a woman concealed her dead mother's body in an upstairs bedroom for over a year. First responders could hardly stand the stench of the room. Yet, someone who had been dead only moments, would be just as dead as this woman's poor mother. You see, the reality is that the most lost, religious person is as depraved as the vilest criminal.

Man's entire total depravity also means that his depravity is exhaustive. In other words, it is "universal." By this, we mean that all men are entirely depraved. There is "none" righteous. There is "none" that doeth good, no not one. Paul describes this extent in Romans 3:9-12. The Jew was just as depraved as the dead Gentile dog.

Dear reader, do you see man's natural condition? Do you embrace this truth? If you are not convinced, let us move on to a third aspect of the doctrine of depravity. What about the effects of depravity? What are the implications of depravity?

Man has an ill will towards God. Man is not neutral in his approach to God. Man has a hostility towards God (Rom. 8:7). Man is filled with ingratitude towards God. He does not thank and glorify God as he should (Rom. 1:21). Man is also burdened with an inability; he cannot bring himself into conformity to God's law. He cannot change his fundamental preference for self and sin. He cannot comply with God's great requirements to love Him supremely, and then to love our fellow man (Matt. 22:37-44). Man cannot conjure up a supreme love for God and love for others (Jer. 13:23).

The truth is that man is spiritually dead, blind and deaf (Matt. 13:14-16). John rightly wrote, **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him ..."** (John 6:44). Brother Spurgeon summed it up best when he wrote, "What a picture of our race is this! Save only where grace reigns, there is none that doeth good; humanity, fallen and debased, is a desert without an oasis, a night without a star, a dunghill without a jewel, a hell without a bottom."

Friends, this would be a dark and gloomy note to end on, and thankfully, we do not end our discussion here! There is yet another aspect of depravity that we must think about. You see, the Bible teaches that there is an exhortation made to the depraved. There is hope for the most depraved sinner! This truth is comforting to all men.

First, to the languishing saint: Oh, believer, do not make the mistake of thinking that your depravity has been eradicated simply because you have been born again. The godliest saint still contends with that old man, the flesh. When we struggle with our depravity, there is comforting relief. It is the same relief that God provided for the lost sinner.

In Roman times, a murderer that was found guilty was condemned to "the body of death." The victim of the murder was strapped to the back of the condemned ... the two of them back-to-back. The living man, with a dead body strapped to his back, would actually feel the rotting, putrid, corrupting, body against his. And yet, he was forced to drag that body with him wherever he went. The decomposing body, oozing and rotting, would unleash its sentence of death into the body of the murderer. The result caused a slow and painful death. Further, under threat of the penalty of death, no one was permitted to remove the corpse from the body of the condemned murderer.

What a picture we see in this! What is the solution for the languishing saint and the lost sinner? None but Christ! Paul wrote, **"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord ..."** (Romans 7:24-25)

In conclusion, man's high view of self is unwarranted. It is unjustified. Man is not alright. He is depraved. All men everywhere are completely depraved. It is true ... there is none righteous, none good. May God lead us to embrace this reality, and by His grace, flee to the only remedy – Jesus Christ the righteous!

 **END** 



# Hell of God

(Continued from page 1) ♦

prophet Isaiah, those suffering what Christ bore for us are called but “carcasses.” Oh, what altered visages those folk have undergone, in this graphic revelation of what Hell did to our Saviour! **“And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the LORD. And they shall go forth and look upon the carcasses of the men that have transgressed against me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh”** (Isa. 66:23-24). Selah! Think about it!

I do not think the horrors of Hell are remotely comprehensible to our minds. When we do understand even the least of those terrors, we inevitably shrink away from further comprehension. It actually is necessary, though, for us to understand the Holiness of God, and to find an illustration of how much He hates sin and unrighteousness. To understand the terribleness of those torments, should cause us to have a holy vigor to preach the gospel to the lost in this world, and give us a “burning” desire to save those poor wretches headed blindly toward such oblivion.

I have had some Arminians criticize the Bible’s teachings on sovereign grace because of Hell. It is “true” that God has unconditionally elected and **“...chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure**

**of his will, To the praise of the glory of his (Sovereign) grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved”** (Eph. 1:4-6). But they will “deny” this, and use the argument, that they do not believe in a God that would “arbitrarily” choose to save some from the horrors of Hell; and then damn the rest of humanity to that terrible place of eternally charred and warped visages... They will argue that a God of Love would save “all” of humanity, not just a select few. And then some will go so far with this “god of Love”, as to believe in a universal redemption and follow that us with a universal salvation that eliminates the need for Hell. That is clearly unscriptural, because God’s Word has too many references of Hell, eternal fire, holy justice and suffering for sin. Selah! Undeniable! **“And if thy hand offend thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands to go into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched: Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched”** (Mark 9:43-44). **“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.**

**And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire”** (Rev. 20:11-15).

Most modern Christians will not go that far - de facto denying Hell. They see that as unsupportable. However, they still cannot wrap their minds around God’s sovereignty in grace, so they yet deny election and predestination unto salvation based on the foreknowledge of God. Their blatant response to the truth of sovereign grace is to veer from Scripture, and instead of laying the “blame” upon God for sending untold millions of men and women into Hell, they blame the “decisions” of man, rather than the “nature” of man for their individual and ultimate tumble into that horrific Judgment. Their “easy believism” unscripturally, not only places their salvation at man’s own volition, but also the responsibility to avoid Hell. They soothe their own “doctrinal consciences” with the invalid reassurance that, “God wanted to save them, too, but they just would not listen to His gospel.” Then they feel like they can turn on us sovereign gracer’s and complain that our “scriptural” exegesis on salvation, makes God out to be a monster! One that “could” save everyone but chooses not to do so, selah! How do we answer that?

Well, there are many different Scriptures that would deny their theology of “a God that tries to save everyone, but can not...” And we often do that. (Dan. 4:35; Isa. 46:9-11; II Tim. 1:9; I Pet. 1:2; John 6:39, 44 and more...). I think sometimes we need to poke the weakness of their argument and turn the tables on them by telling them that they have the same “problem” that they are trying to foist upon us (not really a problem at all, if we take the first

tack and prove the Sovereignty of God!). How will most Christians respond if we tell them that they have not really solved the problem of God’s sovereignty over Hell, with their decisionism that tries to put the onus on men’s decisions?

You see, all they have done is punt the ball further down the road without dealing with the ultimate question of Hell’s Saviour. If they believe that God saves the ones that make a decision for Christ, but does not save those unwitting sinners that either have never heard the Gospel, or even that have never really understood the terrible consequences of ignoring Hell; then I would argue, they still have the same problem of a monstrous God.

Picture with me the arrival into Hell of one of those in the Wayne County obituary page today. Having heard and rejected the Gospel, they have no excuse except ignorance (and not making that most important of all decisions, the modern evangelist exclaims!). But would they not immediately, after less than five minutes, cry out, “I never knew it would be this bad!” Not three hours, not three thousand years! Three minutes, beloved reader!

But God did! God “knew” it would be this bad! And beyond that, He knew that these poor wretches could in no way have understood how bad it would be! Most modern assemblies do not even preach “fire and brimstone” messages anymore, and God “knows” it!

So, I believe these deniers of election are still going to have to put the onus back on God. Because what kind of tender-hearted and loving heavenly Father is going to allow these poor souls to suffer on and on for not making a decision

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# Hell of God

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that they had no idea what the ultimate consequences would entail! Can you hear them cry, "If you had only told me how "bad" it was going to be, I would have repented!?" I mean, if even our "human hearts" are touched by such a plea, how could not thousandfold the tender heart of God...? If He was a loving Father, even as much of a Father as we humans are; we will "often" override the will of wayward children and "do what is best for them, in spite of their rebellion." A God of love would override the free will of His children and make sure that provision was made for them so they would not go to Hell! If He truly knows the horrors of Hell, their Ignorance and their weaknesses, the onus is still on Him, beloved reader. You can not punt... God is "still" in charge and it is still His choice to Judge.

The argument that "well, they did not repent" and so God is "bound" by His holiness to throw them into Hell, is "exactly" what we "sovereign gracers" say. You have not proven a single Calvinist wrong! You have just unscripturally moved the line to where it suits you! The line of holiness is inevitably going to be the Scriptural answer no matter where one draws the line, so why not leave it where God and the Bible puts it? Instead of disregarding clear scriptures, and putting the "choice" of Heaven and Hell into the hands of unregenerate and dead men, why not leave the election and predestination in the hands of a sovereign God, Who viewed this Earth of irreconcilable sinners, and STILL elected to exhibit His sovereign mercy upon a multitude

that no man can number? That He left so many sinners to their own reprobate desires, lusts and destiny, is something that only the holiness of God can answer. You are right - they did not repent. They never showed faith. And Hell is the infinite penalty of infinite abrogation of God's holiness.

How come they do not believe that? Once one understands the unbelievable terribleness of Hell, there is "no one" that can say that a God of love would not do every thing in His power to stop folk from going there. Honestly, if love is the ultimate attribute of God, then logically, there could never be a Hell. End of discussion. Selah! Think about "that"!

Since there is a Hell that really torments, that really burns and consumes, and never gives a moment's relief for three billion years and then three billion more, and more and more. There must be something more authoritative than love. According to Scripture, that "more compelling something" is righteousness, usually denoted as the holiness of God. God is love, I know. Plenty of verses for that, but God is mainly Holy. To understand the difference in potency and relevance, watch this: His love is holy and pure. Always! But God does not love everything; He hates sin and sinners. **"The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity. Thou shalt destroy them that speak leasing: the LORD will abhor the bloody and deceitful man"** (Ps. 5:5-6). On the other hand, though, God is "always" holy and righteous, eh? When He loves, it is a Holy Love. When He hates it is a holy hatred! One could continue down the list: When He has mercy, it is a holy and just mercy. When He judges, whether it is a "cup of cold

water, only," or it is eating the fruit of the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil, it is going to be holy justice! Theologically, (study of God) it must be stated that the underlying attribute of God is His righteousness, His holy nature. Always and forever it will never be denied, overlooked, or overwhelmed. Sovereignty in His deity is going to equal holiness. He may not love Esau, but He will be righteous by him.

Everything answers to His Holiness. It is the chant of the Seraphim 24/7 around the throne of God in Isaiah 6:3, and Revelation 4:8 **"And the four beasts had each of them six wings about him; and they were full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come."** Whether there is a Heaven or a Hell, it will be holy. No other attribute of God can defy this one. Now, why does He do what He does? What motivates God? Holiness and righteousness are not emotions, but rather integral parts of God's nature. As we delve into purposes, yeah, they are going to be holy and right, but what will this Holy God do? That is where the emotions of God are on display. Particularly in our thoughts here about salvation, and especially, salvation from Hell. Well, holy hatred is what motivates the act of justice in condemning sinners to an eternal lake of fire, but Holy love is the reason He predestinated the population of Heaven.

Holy love is one of God's more prominent attributes. **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life"** (John 3:16). Even in this much abused text, He

does not love indiscriminately! The text says, **"God so loved"**, in this manner loved, that He gave His Son! That is "how" He loved, but the verse is not finished yet. **"God so loved"** that **"whosoever believeth...should not perish"**, and the rhetorical question being answered, that although God loved and "Whosoever believed would not perish," all of the rest would perish, that is...because both God's love and wrath were particular and holy - just/justified. Love was applied only to those whom He loved from before the foundation of the world (and them alone), those whom Christ died for on Calvary (and them alone), and those the Holy Ghost regenerates at the appointed time of new births (and them alone) because those are the only ones that will repent and believe... God's love is righteous. Study it out, **"These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. ...I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word"** (John 17:1-2,6).

That is the amazing thing about grace. It is holy, too, but God could "not" love us the way we were in Adam's fall. Love could not save us without holiness. The particular redemption and limited atonement of Jesus Christ "paid" the holiness debt that we could not. He went to Hell because He loved us, but He "had" to go to Hell because He is holy and that was the only way

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# Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of  
Guntown, Mississippi

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass: Because I will publish the name of the LORD: ascribe ye greatness unto our God" (Deuteronomy 32:2-3).



## A Deepening of the Spiritual Life

**"For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace"** (Rom. 8:6).

Paul's letter to the Romans is a fantastic place for a new believer in Jesus Christ to start his or her own personal reading. In the first few chapters he lays out the facts of the Gospel; who Jesus was and what He came to do. After speaking of the Son of God's planned sacrifice on the cross for the salvation and freedom of His people, Paul then gave them the greatest news of all, that "God is no respecter of persons"! Now this does not mean that God disrespects all people, quite the contrary! This means that the free gift of salvation is not limited by anything! It means that all who Jesus Christ died for can and will be saved! His death, burial, and resurrection made it possible for all who are weak and are "heavy laden" to come to Him and He will give them rest (Matthew 11:28)!

Do you find yourself "heavy laden" today? Jesus was speaking there in Matthew chapter 11 to the folks like you and me who, at times, have found the end of ourselves. We have done all we can do to solve our personal money crisis. We have done all we can do to stay in peak physical shape in hopes of avoiding the latest cause of cancer, heart disease or even the flu. We have done all we can do to make those we care about happy. We may have even done all

that is within our power to make those we do not care about happy. At the end of the day we have discovered that in each scenario it is never enough! All that we can do of our own strength never seems to move the needle! Jesus is speaking to you there in the Gospel of Matthew as He went on to say in Matthew 11:29-30 **"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."**

Jesus, whom Paul was writing to the Romans about, came to suffer and die on the cross so that your burdens might be lessened. That is right! Pretty selfless right? Not only did He do all of the work and shout "It is finished!" as He gave His own life, but He left behind a story for us. As we read His story, we grow. As we share His story, it saves lives...and we continue to grow! As we study the lives of those who faithfully shared His story, we grow even more! His words there in Matthew 11 once again come to mind, **"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me..."**

This is what the verse there in Romans is telling us: live for Him, have your mind set on Him, and you will know peace and be able to live life to the fullest! Colossians 3:2-3 says to **"Set your affections (or thoughts) on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead (meaning this life is temporary and out of your control), and**

**your life is hid** (purchased by His sacrifice and kept safe) **with Christ in God."** The deeper we go into this spiritual life, the more we will desire to hear that final trump and see our blessed Saviour coming for us in the air. **"...Even so, come, Lord Jesus"** (Rev. 22:20).



## Hell of God

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to make us Holy! Check it out! First we have Romans 3:23, **"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"** and then we have Holiness in the verses that follow **"Being justified freely by his (Holy and Sovereign) grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just (Holy), and the justifier (Holifier) of him which believeth in Jesus"** (vs. 24-26).

Will I ever understand why God has a Hell? Why a God, Who could have saved everyone from that terrible destination did not? No. I mean, I understand "why," that is simple...we deserved it. We have earned Hell by our every disobedience. The rich man in Luke 16 never quibbles about that. The thief on the cross never questioned his just desserts; the faith of the latter just exhibits the grace of God.

Why grace for some; why for me and not others, why not for all? Terrible and monstrous considerations, yeah. How would we know how much He loved us, if we did not know the horrific death that He saved us from? How would we ever glorify properly

all of His marvelous attributes, including mercy and judgment? The Apostle Paul answers this deep question of limited grace profoundly in **"What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness (unholiness) with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that (Free) willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? (Here is the crux of Hell's existence) What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath (Hellbound sinners) fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore (predestinated) prepared unto glory, Even us (the elect), whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles"** (Rom. 9:14-24).

Paul does not skip the sovereignty of God. He does not

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# Hell of God

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even flinch. He, along with all the prophets of God merely echo the LORD Jesus Christ as we see in Matthew 11:25-26, **“At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father: for so it seemed good (righteous) in thy sight.”**

All I know is what the Bible provides. Just what He has done for me. God is Good. Because He is holy and always righteous. How about you? Has He been holy to you? One thing I can tell you is that the gift is free. You do not have to go to Hell and suffer those torments. Today is the day of salvation. If the Holy Ghost is convicting you of your sins, beloved reader, come to Christ. I know, He does not give that gift of repentance and faith to everyone. Many are perishing, because they are ignoring the gospel call. Do not blame God if you continue to reject His command to repent! If you end up in Hell, it is going to be bad. Come to the holy and merciful Saviour! **“Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light”** (Matt. 11:28-30). Selah! Think about it!



# Christ Coming

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contention that a period of time will intervene between the two phases of Christ's coming:

(1) The Scriptures that

describe the two phases strongly suggest a period of time between them. In the parable of the virgins, the saved (the wise virgins) are merely taken into the marriage, and the lost (the foolish virgins) are merely shut out. But in the description of the judgment (Matt. 25:31-46) the righteous inherit the kingdom, and the wicked are cast into everlasting fire. In the parable of the virgins the saved are taken from among the lost, but in the judgment in the end of the age, the wicked are to be severed from among the just (Matt. 13:49). Will Christ come as a bridegroom, taking His people with Him into the marriage, and then bring them back to earth and cause them to stand in judgment with the wicked of the earth? This would be strange treatment of the bride on the part of the bridegroom! After believers have been already glorified (I Thess. 4:15-18; I Cor. 15:51,52) will they be brought back into judgment with sinners in the flesh? Such a thought is a rank absurdity. And what could be the purpose of such a procedure? Why bring the raptured and glorified saints back and make a separation between them and the wicked after they have been already taken out of the earth? Is it not quite clear that those represented by the wise virgins, and the ones referred to in I Thess. 4:15-18, are not the same ones that are depicted on the right hand of Christ in the judgment scene of Matt. 25:31-46? We believe so. And this can be accounted for only on the grounds of a period of time between the rapture (catching away) of the saints and the judgment of the nations (Matt. 25:31-46). This means then that there must be a period of time between the two phases of Christ's coming.

(2) For our second reason for

believing there will be a period of time between the two phases of Christ's coming we turn to II Thess. 2:3-9. In this Scripture we have presented to us the gruesome picture of the Man of Sin. We take the Man of Sin to be an actual personality, and not the mere embodiment of a principle or spirit by some group or institution. The Scripture expressly and distinctly calls him a man, and there is no good reason for taking it otherwise than literally. No group or institution can do what it is said the Man of Sin will do. Besides, we think it is clear that the Man of Sin and the Beast of Revelation (Rev. 13; 17; 19:19-20; 20:10) are identical. And that the beast is a personal being is shown by the fact that he is to be cast into the lake of fire with the Devil (Rev. 20:10). There is no more reason for denying the personality of the Man of Sin than there is for denying the personality of the devil.

With this much said, let it be noted that as yet no individual that fulfilled the description of the Man of Sin has been revealed on the earth. He is yet to be revealed. And his revelation is now being hindered by some person. (Note the masculine pronoun in verse 7). Who is this hinderer? Our certain conviction is that in the full light of Scripture he can be no other than the Holy Spirit indwelling every true believer (I Cor. 6:19) and every true New Testament Church (I Cor. 3:16). This being true, the taking out of the way of the hinderer will mean the taking out of the earth of every true believer, which will, of course, mean the removal of every true New Testament church. This must be done before the Man of Sin can be revealed, and the Man of Sin must be revealed before the coming of Christ to

the earth. Then, since believers will not be taken out of the earth until the first phase of Christ's coming, there must be space enough between the two phases of Christ's coming for the Man of Sin to be revealed and to run his course.

**Our third proof for the contention that a space of time will intervene between the two phases of Christ's coming is found in Rev. 7:1-8**

In this Scripture we have the sealing of the servants of God. And we find that the sealed Ones consist of **“an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.”** This is manifestly a literal statement, and we take it so. Scripture ought to be taken literally and in its simplest sense, unless the very passage under consideration, or the context, demands another sense. This rule ought to be applied to the book of Revelation the same as to any other book in the Bible. Away with that arbitrary spiritualizing that savors not of the things that be of God, but that instead savors of the liberalism of Modernism! Both passages under consideration and the context favor a literal interpretation here. So at this time God will have no servants on the earth, except Jews! What has become of Gentile believers (together with previous Jewish believers)? They have gone in with the bridegroom to the marriage (Matt. 25:10)!

Christ has appeared in the air, and all His dead and living saints have been caught up to meet Him (I Thess. 4:15-18)!! The first phase of Christ's coming has already taken place. We see the second phase of His coming pictured in Rev. 19:11-20:5. Therefore, all

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# Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of  
Plant City, Florida



## SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON - BIBLE SURVEY #29

### The Book of Esther

**AIM:** Over-View of the Book of Esther

**INTRODUCTION:** We now look at the 17th book of the Bible; the 12th in the Historical Section: Esther.

**I. AUTHOR:** Unknown. Probably Mordecai

**II. THEME:** The Providence of God, by which we mean, the power vast reaches of God's hand in the lives of the inhabitants of this world.

**III. Chronology:** Fit between chapters 6 and 7 of Ezra.

**IV. Interesting Notes:** The book of Esther deals with the Providence of God while making no mention of God by name. His Name or Titles are never mentioned, yet He is on every page.

**V. Summarization:** The nation of Israel is in captivity. yet, as God foretold, some had returned to the Promised Land. There were some who did not return. A wicked man, Haman, designs a plot to kill all the Jews throughout the Persian Empire. Yet, even before this took place, God had prepared to deliver His people from the devisement of this wicked Haman. God in His providence, had set Esther as Queen of Persia, to deliver His people from the plot of that wicked man.

**VI. Outline:** A basic outline of the book of Esther is as follows.

1. The Threat Against God's People
  - a) The Providence of God sets things in motion—1:1-2:20
    - i) Removal of Vashti: 1:1-22
    - ii) Esther becomes queen: 2:1-20
  - b) Mordecai & Haman—2:21-4:17
    - i) Mordecai saves the king's life & is promoted: 2:21-23
    - ii) Haman's wicked plot to kill Mordecai: 3:1-15
    - iii) Mordecai cries unto God: 4:1-9
    - iv) Mordecai instructs Esther: 4:10-17
2. The Salvation of the Jews
  - a) Esther before the king: 5:1-14
  - b) God's providence in the life of the Persian king: 6:1-3
  - c) Mordecai honored by the king: 6:4-14
  - d) Esther before the king (Part 2): 7:1-6
  - e) Haman hung on gallows he built for Mordecai: 7:7-10
3. Israel Defeats Their Enemies:
  - a) The king's Decree: 8:1-17
  - b) The Jews slay their enemies: 9:1-16
  - c) Israel praises God: 9:17-32
    - i) Feast of Purim instituted
  - d) Mordecai exalted: 10:1-3

### VII. Key Person(s):

1. God: Although never mentioned in all of the book, He is the central person, bringing to pass His will. He is the one removing and setting up queens as He sees fit.

2. Ahasuerus: Esth.1:1—he is the king of the Persian Empire. Yet,

even he was under the control of the King of kings (Proverbs 21:1). The Lord uses whom He wills to bring about His purpose and plan. Even the unregenerated king of a heathen nation (Romans 8:28).

3. Mordecai: He is the central individual in this book. It is through him that God works. In refusing to pay obeisance unto a man, Mordecai's faith insulted a wicked individual, Haman. Mordecai showed great faith and reliance upon God knowing it is the Lord alone to who we can turn to in distress (Esth. 4:1-3).

a) Name means "little man" or "worshipper of mars".

b) Mordecai was a student of God's providence. This is made known in his words to Esther (Esth. 4:13-14). We ought all to be students of God and His providence in the world we inhabit, in our church(es), in our own personal homes, and personal lives.

4. Haman: Esth. 3:1-5—An Agagite (See Numbers 24:7; I Sam. 15:8; Agagite is descendant of Agag. Agagite = I will overtop). He is a wicked fellow who is taken in his own snare. He despised Mordecai and sought to kill him with a wicked plot to kill all of Mordecai's people. He despised Mordecai because Mordecai would not revere Haman; thus, Haman despised Mordecai's God who had commanded such.

5. Fellow Jews: Esth. 4:16—We find that other Jews prayed and fasted for Esther that she might have the strength to go in and appear unto the king, that her petition might be made known of the plot against the Jews. It is imperative that we understand that the prayers of God's people are vital to the success of the work whereunto God hath sent us in His providence (II Thessalonians 3:1).

6. Esther: Esth. 2:7-20. Hadassah (means "myrtle"; this is her Hebrew name). Esther (means "star"). It is through her that God would deliver His people from the wickedness of one man. Esther in some ways is likened unto the Lord's church, through the preaching of God's Word are men delivered from wickedness of sin.

*(Nathaniel Hille is pastor of the Bible Baptist Church of Plant City, Florida.)*

## Christ Coming

*(Continued from page 10) ♦*

that is predicted from Rev. 7 (and probably from the beginning of chapter 6) to Rev. 19:11 must transpire between the two phases of Christ's coming. We think these chapters of Revelation describe the events of the great tribulation period.

### The first phase of Christ's coming is imminent

We have now shown that Christ's coming is to consist of two phases, and that these phases are to be separated by a period of time. We undertake here to prove that the first phase of His coming is imminent. Note that we are not

attempting to prove that Christ's coming in judgment and to reign is imminent. So far as we know, all unfulfilled prophecies referring to this age (and there are many), without violence to them or any other Scriptures, may be fulfilled in the interim between the two phases of Christ's coming. They must be fulfilled before the second phase of Christ's coming, but we know of no prophecy that must be fulfilled before Christ comes for His Bride.

Webster defines the word imminent as meaning "threatening to occur immediately; near at hand; impending." We maintain that this is exactly the way God has taught in His Word that believers

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## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

*Submit your questions on any Bible topic.*

1. Is the so-called "Christmas" holiday scriptural? If not, can our participation be defended by modern-day Christians today?

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There is no scriptural basis for Baptists celebrating a Catholic holy day. There are scriptures that command and exhort the setting aside of the Lord's Day (Deut. 5:12-14) and also to observe and celebrate the Lord's death: I Cor. 11:24-25 "And when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me." But there are absolutely zero positive scriptures for the observance of His birth. Selah! Think about it!

There is no justification for sanctifying December 25<sup>th</sup> either. Luke 2:8 "And there were in the same country shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night." Shepherds would not be out in the fields past the month of October, and Augustus Caesar would certainly not have had the folk in his provinces traveling in the middle of winter, which is the very reason Joseph and Mary found themselves in Bethlehem in the first place! No, the Lord was not born in December--do not deceive anyone about that!

Thirdly, there is no excuse for putting up an X-mass tree. The Bible clearly condemns this practice, and any honest believer looking for God's will (in the Bible, at least!) should have a guilty pricking of their conscience as they read Jer. 10:3-4, "For the customs of the people are vain: for one cutteth a tree out of the forest, the work of the hands of the workman, with the axe. They deck it with silver and with gold; they fasten it with nails and with hammers, that it move not." And fourthly, there can be no rationalization for the rampant gift-giving to everyone except the birthday boy! There are no coincidences in the Bible, and the Holy Spirit condemns a yet future December 25<sup>th</sup> celebration in Rev. 11:10, "And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth." Can any true Christian look the Lord in the eyes on judgment day, and tell Him that they didn't know better than to pair His holy name with a Catholic mass and read these passages and ignore them: 'LORD, you understand, I'm sure...' Selah?

The indefensible celebration of X-mass by Baptists is an abominable validation of the Catholic mass. Unwitting? Perhaps in a very few cases, but I wonder if any true saint of God's New Testament churches would have the temerity to wish our Saviour a "Merry X-Mass" if He were to stop by during this

plagued holiday season? Oh, to see the disappointment in His holy eyes! Luke 22:60-62, "And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly." It'll be too late then, to do anything but bitterly weep over our blasphemy of His name, but it's not too late now for shameless Baptists to abstain from this holy day abomination.

There are so many "lies" and "deceptive interpretations" around this Catholic holiday, that anyone celebrating it, is complicit in perpetuating. Three times in the story of the wise men, Herod, the wicked one, is noted as being "diligent" in searching for the Truth of the Birth of the King. Can we not at least be as diligent as this lost man? Matt. 2:16, "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth, and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time which he had diligently inquired of the wise men." Herod's nativity scene would not have mixed a newborn child with the Magi! If we diligently search Scripture, we will find the shepherds found a newborn baby in a stable manger, but the wise men found a "young child" in a "house." Why let these lies stand, when you'd surely tell folk that Jesus could not have been crucified on another Catholic holy day of "Good Friday" and still be in the grave for three days and nights before the first day of the week. Oh, yeah, most of Christendom goes along with the Catholics on

that holiday, too. Oh, this most uneducated and blithely ignorant generation of Baptists! How awful that Samson's lack of diligence contrived to make Dagon look good, and how awful that our lack of due diligence would make Herod the abortionist look "diligent." Selah! Think about it! The list goes on: Parents should be encouraged to denounce Santa Claus or St. Nicholas as an omniscient and omnipresent demi-god. But how many do? Divine attributes that belong only to God being parceled out to others is blatant polytheism and deceives folks into believing there are more ways to Heaven than just our Lord Jesus Christ! As we pair ourselves with the worldly celebrations, it is not enough to try to "put Christ back in X-Mass"? He never was in this Catholic church celebration! It was all about Satan making his followers comfortable in his copycat Romish church! Can any deny it is the same today? To make Baptists feel comfortable in his copycat holy days? Jn. 8:44, "...He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

The question is appropriately asked "whether any can justify their celebration of December 25<sup>th</sup>?" God answers it personally, so you don't have to take it from me: Luke 16:15. "And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." This last thought concerns the predominant elephant in the room; the gift-giving of "presents" at this holiday. The main focus

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## The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What should I teach my lost children (young and old) about the coming rapture?

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Teach them Jesus is coming! It is the heart of God's Word and the dominant theme of Scripture! His return is imminent and nothing but the timing of God's eternal foreordination precludes His coming! I Thess. 4:14-17, "For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so...we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

We need to make sure our lost children (and all others) know that Jesus is coming to judge this world of our sins and also our service as Christians. Jesus went up into the clouds in Acts 1:9-11, "And...while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And... behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen

him go into heaven." John, then gives a wonderful picture sixty-some years later of Christ Jesus readying His Return on the other side of that cloud in Rev. 14:14-20, "And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud, Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." (Raptured! The next Angel fulfills God's great tribulational purposes unto the "reaping" of evil Armageddon) "And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. ...And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God. And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horse bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." Tell them judgment is coming! Selah! Think about it! There is no other more important message for our children!

Warn the lost of this world to pay attention to the validity of Bible prophecy. The restoration of Israel as a nation is a prominent theme of the day of the Lord! Jesus, Himself proclaims a particular warning to the generation that sees Israel restored as a fig tree in



Caleb Newell, 2021

spring in Matt. 24:32-42, "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: So likewise ye, when ye shall see all these things, know that it is near, even at the doors. Verily I say unto you, This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away. But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only. But as the days of Noe were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come." These verses should be a solemn warning to those not saved by the grace of God. Do not fool around with the important message of the Gospel! "This generation shall not pass..." is speaking of ours, by God's grace!

The Day of Gentile salvation

is coming to a quick and horrific close at the time of the rapture. Unless you're a Hebrew, there is no real hope of salvation in the seven years of Jacob's trouble, also known as "Daniel's Seventieth Week." So many deceived folks think they will be able to recognize the rapture and make an adjustment in their belief system after the disappearance of raptured Christianity. Well, the extended family of Noah had no time for such a reappraisal of priorities, beloved reader! And the Apostle Paul says those "Left Behind" at the Rapture will "all" without exception believe the lie of the AntiChrist in II Thess. 2:10-12, "And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved (Raptured). And for this cause God shall send them (Left Behind) strong delusion, that they should believe a (Satanic) lie: That they all (without the exception of you?) might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." Don't wait, oh unbeliever! Repent today! Trust the Lord before the sun sets! The rapture is not meant to save sinners, but only God's children! Become a child of God today! Selah! Think about it!

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## Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

and the financial planning of this holy day have nothing to do with Jesus Christ. Folks are not setting money aside for church tithing or giving to the Lord's work. When physical gifts become the focus of a celebration, it is inexcusable to continue to call it "unto the LORD". Many Christians go into debt to keep up with this perfidious foolishness. Ask the majority of children what they are looking forward to on that morning, and the name of Jesus will be eerily absent from their lips. How have they spent the days leading up to the 25<sup>th</sup> of December? How many sales have they visited, but neglected the Lord's House? No excuses, rationalization, customs or justifications, beloved reader! There are zero reasons to elevate this "season" more powerfully above any other "season of God's Workings". Selah! Think about it!



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Xmas (Christmas) is in no way Scriptural! Xmas (Christmas) is a Catholic holiday not a Baptist one! In fact, Xmas dates back to old Babylon religion. The word itself should throw up some red flags. Christmas is a catholic word for Christ-Mass. Are you catholic?

According to the Encarta Encyclopedia, Christmas originated in the 4th century as a Christian substitute for pagan celebrations of the winter

solstice. Before the introduction of Christmas, each year beginning on December 17 Romans honored Saturn, the ancient god of agriculture, in a festival called Saturnalia (Sat-ur-na-li-a). This festival lasted for seven days and included the winter solstice, which usually occurred around December 25 on the ancient Julian calendar. During Saturnalia (Sat-ur-na-li-a) the Romans feasted, postponed all business and warfare, exchanged gifts, and temporarily freed their slaves. Many Romans also celebrated the lengthening of daylight following the winter solstice by participating in rituals to glorify Mithra, the ancient Persian god of light. These and other winter festivities continued through January 1, the festival of Kalends, when Romans marked the day of the new moon and the first day of the month and year. Although the Gospels describe Jesus' birth in detail, they never mention the date, so historians do not know on what date he was born. The Roman Catholic Church chose December 25 as the day for the Feast of the Nativity in order to give Christian meaning to existing pagan rituals. For example, the Church replaced festivities honoring the birth of Mithra, the god of light, with festivities to commemorate the birth of Jesus, whom the Bible calls the light of the world. The Catholic Church hoped to draw pagans into its religion by allowing them to continue their revelry while simultaneously honoring the birthday of Jesus.

I'm not going to spend much time on this because every Baptist needs to study this pagan holiday for themselves so they can see the truth. The origin goes as far back as the Babylonian Empire I want quote from E.G. Cook: in his article What Is Christmas!

"In Babylon, that great heathen Chaldean city, pagan religion reached its peak so far as ancient history was concerned. Here in Babylon the queen of heaven and her son had their beginnings in the persons of Semeramis (The title "Queen of Heaven" by which many Catholics refer to Mary, was first used of Semeramis, wife of Nimrod the founder of Babylon), and her son, Tammuz (Ezekiel 8:13-15).

When Belshazzar was slain (Daniel 5:30) and the Chaldeans defeated by Darius, the Mede, it seems the capital of the pagan religious world was moved from Babylon to Pergamos. Later, at the death of Attalus III, Phrygia was given to the Roman Empire in 133 B.C. The Babylonian pagan worship was then removed to Rome where Semeramis and Tammuz became Fortuna and Jupiter. This queen of heaven and her son became the very heart of pagan, or idol worship throughout the world. They were called by different names in different countries. In Egypt they were Isis and Osiris, etc., but they were all the same queen of heaven and her son. All of these were dumped into Christmas under the new name of Mary and Jesus. Now with all the ingredients in Christmas, it is time to look for the reason why Christmas must be in December. Even back in ancient Babylon the birth of Tammuz was celebrated in our December. The heathen sun worshipers throughout the northern hemisphere all celebrated the rebirth of the sun at the time of its turning back toward the North, that is about December 25. These heathen people had been brought into the Catholic Church, mainly through the efforts of Constantine the great. They were still just as heathen as they were before

they were incorporated into the Catholic Church, and they were going to continue celebrating this great feast at this same time. It did not matter too much what their god was called. It was still a representative of their sacred god, the sun. But the time of their feast could not be changed, because the sun starts on his return toward the North at only one time of the year. Even old Satan, with the help of all his able efficient coworkers, could not change that time. Therefore, Christmas had to be December 25, whether the shepherds were out that night with their flocks or not." Jeremiah 7:18, **"The children gather wood, and the fathers kindle the fire, and the women knead their dough, to make cakes to the queen of heaven, and to pour out drink offerings unto other gods, that they may provoke me to anger."**

The second part of this question is, if it's not Scriptural be defended by modern-day Christians today? The answer is very simple, it absolutely can not be defended if the Bible is used there is NO WAY. And if you are having trouble with someone, you let me know and I'll come to your house and take the Bible to prove it. The Berea Baptist Church Bookstore has at least two books I know of, maybe more that will be proof enough that Christmas is not Scriptural.

I want to leave you with this thought, men and women are looking forward to the so-called Christian holiday Christmas. They will get time off work, congress will shut down for a couple of weeks and there will be all kind of parties at work and there will be drinking and all sorts of sin, adultery, fornication, lying and cheating all in the name

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# Forum Question #1

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of celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ. People love this holiday for that, but tell me why every other time of the year they hate the name of Jesus and want to remove it from everywhere. The lost say, take Christ out of Christmas, the Christian says put Christ back in Christmas. Baptist should say, "DON'T DO IT AT ALL" because Christ was never in it! God Bless!



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No, there is no command from Scripture to celebrate December 25th as the date of Christ's birth and incarnation. There is no proof from Scripture or historical records that Jesus Christ was born on that day. The Roman Catholic Church simply took the pagan celebration of the winter solstice and put the name "Christmas" to it. Jesus Christ is nowhere joined to the Old Whore's celebration of the cannibalistic mass. Therefore, it is a serious error to put the holy name of Jesus Christ with the unscriptural notion of the mass. Furthermore, Santa Claus, Christmas trees, and the worship of Mary is nowhere to be found in the Word of God. These are all unscriptural inventions of men and are not to be celebrated.

However, let us never dismiss or downplay the portions of Holy Scripture that deal with the incarnation and birth of the holy Son of God just because

the religious world has it all wrong. If Jesus Christ would not have been born of a virgin and took upon Himself the likeness of men, there would be no redemption or salvation from sin. Interestingly enough the first mention of the redemptive work of Christ in the New Testament is included in the announcement of His birth. Matthew 1:20-23 declares: **"But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us."**

There are Scriptures which point out that there was great joy, worship, and adoration associated with the first Advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. Mary and her cousin, Elisabeth, were rejoicing together while Mary was carrying the Son of God in her virgin womb. At the same time, Elisabeth was carrying John the Baptist in her womb, and when he heard the salutation of Mary exalting the Lord Jesus, he leaped in her womb: **"And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to**

**me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? For, lo, as soon as the voice of thy salutation sounded in mine ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. And blessed is she that believed: for there shall be a performance of those things which were told her from the Lord"** (Luke 1:41-45). Elisabeth was said to have been filled with the Holy Ghost when she made this glorious pronouncement. Mary responded to the spiritual truths uttered by Elisabeth in Luke 1:46-55: **"And Mary said, My soul doth magnify the Lord, And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour. For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name. And his mercy is on them that fear him from generation to generation. He hath shewed strength with his arm; he hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath holpen his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy; As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed forever."** Both of these dear sisters were rejoicing in the prospect of fulfilled prophecy regarding the Messiah, the Lord Jesus! They both acknowledged Him as Lord and Saviour!

Later, immediately after the Lord Jesus was born, the angel of the Lord appeared unto shepherds who were abiding in the field with their flock and said: **"...Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is**

**born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men...And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them"** (Luke 2:10-14, 20). Again we find that the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ was characterized by angels and men worshipping, exalting, and glorifying the Saviour.

After the days of purification were over, Mary and Joseph took the Lord Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord following the law of the Lord. The Holy Ghost filled godly old Simeon, and he began to exalt and rejoice in the Lord as the Scriptures reveal: **"And, behold, there was a man in Jerusalem, whose name was Simeon; and the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel: and the Holy Ghost was upon him. And it was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ. And he came by the Spirit into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, to do for him after the custom of the law, Then took he him up in his arms, and blessed God, and said, Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word: For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people; A light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy**

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# Christ Coming

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should regard the coming of their Lord to receive them unto himself. The Scripture presents this event as ever “near at hand,” and that, therefore, believers should ever be prepared for it and in the attitude of watchful expectancy. Note the following passages:

(1) Mark 13:35, 36—**“Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the Master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.”** Thayer says that the meaning of “watch” in this and similar passages is “to take heed, lest through remissness and indolence some destructive calamity overtake one.” Can there be any sensible reason for watching for an event, unless, so far as we know, it may take place now?

(2) James 5:8—**“Be ye also patient; stablish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh.”** The Greek word for “draweth nigh” is in the pluperfect tense, and means, according to Thayer, “has come nigh, is at hand.” A similar form of the same word is said by Thayer to be used “concerning things imminent and soon to come to pass.” The verb in the above passage is translated “is at hand” nine times in the King James Version. Matt. 26:46 furnishes a good example of its use.

(3) Rev. 22:12—**“...Behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.”** The word in this passage for “quickly” does not mean suddenly, as some would have it; but it means “quickly, speedily, without delay” (Thayer). Good samples of its use may be found in Matt. 5:25;

28:7,8; Mark 16:8; John 11:29. In the above passage, the coming of Christ is spoken of as God sees it; and a thousand years is as one day with God (I Pet. 3:8). And it is so represented that the time of it may be uncertain to believers. So far as they know it may occur at any moment. Therefore, to them it is ever imminent.

Many passages show the practical value of a belief in the imminent coming of Christ. Prominent among them is James 5:8 as given above. This passage shows that a belief in the imminent coming of Christ is an incentive to patience and strength in the midst of suffering and affliction. Selah.

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## Forum Question #2

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Deuteronomy 6:4-7, **“Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”**

I used to believe that we should

go easy on our children when they are young and give them things as they get old enough to handle it, but I don't believe that anymore. They should be told the horror that is coming after the rapture, we don't know how long we'll have them, they could die tomorrow. They should be taught there is an evil wicked being called Satan that old devil. They should be taught what the rapture is and don't hold nothing back. Then they should be taught of the wrath that God is going to pour out to this old wicked world and how terrible it will be for those that are without Jesus.

I know many parents are saying, well that's just cruel and wrong. So, what do you want to do sugar coat the events that are about to happen? I just wrote an article on Halloween; don't many parents tell their children scary stories? Well of course they do trying to scare them just for the fun of it. There's nothing going to fun about the Seven Year Tribulation.

I know this sounds cruel, but I think everyone young and old should be told about these things until they shake in their boots, and I'll go as far to tell them as I said about the horror until they wet themselves. Now you may think me out of my mind, but let me tell you two stories.

When I was a Freshman in High School, we went to a haunted house set up by the students at Halloween and they had tunnels made out of cardboard boxes. There was an eight-grade girl in front of me that was so scared that she was crying and she wet herself, and so I calmed her down and got her out of there. Dear reader those were just cardboard boxes, that's nothing like the wrath to come (I Thessalonians 1:10) **“And to wait for his Son from heaven, whom**

**he raised from the dead, even Jesus, which delivered us from the wrath to come.”;** (Revelation 6:17) **“For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”**

Second story! My grandson lost his mother when he was nine, I believe. Our son and her had divorced several years earlier, but anyway our son got custody and they just lived up the road and I had to pick him up one day and take him home, and on the way home I was telling him that I believed his mom was in heaven because she made a profession of faith and I baptized her into the church I was pastoring at the time. But I then started tell him (I think he was ten or eleven) about the Rapture and what it would be like if people didn't believe in Jesus that were left here. Well, he jumped up in his seat and started to shake and cry and said I don't want to die. So, I calmed him down, and then he was okay. Even though I felt lead to do it, I had my doubts that I should have waited. But now looking back, I am so glad I did. Because his first year of college Brandon called me on the phone and said, guess what grandpa, I said what, Brandon said, the Lord had just saved him and he believed that Jesus died for him on the cross. Look folks, no greater words were ever spoken in my ears than to hear the Lord had saved my grandson!

What God has done with our grandson is totally amazing, more than that it's a miracle. So, if you scare them until they wet themselves it will be well worth it when you hear them tell you the Lord has saved them.

All you have to do is tell them the truth, the whole counsel of God, and God will do the rest. God Bless!

♦ (Continued on page 17)



## Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 15) ♦

**people Israel**" (Luke 2:25-32).

In each of the foregoing examples, every time the incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ was referenced, rejoicing, worship, praise, and the filling of the Holy Ghost were all present. We should rejoice in the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ every single day. Our hearts should thrill every time we read of the prophecies that were precisely fulfilled at His birth and incarnation. We should marvel at the miracle of the virgin birth of the Lord Jesus. We should be humbled that God became man in order to redeem His people. We should meditate and think deeply upon the Word becoming flesh, living a perfect life, submissively going to the cruel cross of Calvary to bear our sins in His perfect body, shedding His precious blood on our behalf, dying in our stead as a holy sacrifice, being buried in a new tomb for three days, and then rising from the grave victorious!

Over the past 41 years I have learned not to allow the month of December to rob me of my joy in Christ. I am not going to allow the false worship of the world to cause me to be bitter and sullen at that time of the year. I am going to take every opportunity afforded to exalt the name and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to live each day joyfully trusting in the Lord to direct my path. My desire is to reflect the light and the glory of Christ to a world that loves darkness and sin.



## Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 16) ♦

Deuteronomy 6:4-7, "**Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God is**

**one LORD: And thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might. And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up."**



Tom Ross  
6339 County Rd. 15  
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45680

Pastor  
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45619

Teach your lost children, young and old, that the coming of the Lord is an imminent event, meaning that it could occur at any moment. Mark 13:32-33 states: "**But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father. Take ye heed, watch and pray: for ye know not when the time is.**" Lost children are depraved and sinful, so they are responsible to repent and believe the Gospel of Christ in order to be saved from the wrath to come.

The very first thing I said to my children and grandchildren when I held them in my arms the first time was: "**Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me**" (John 14:6). I plainly told them from the beginning that they were sinners in need of a Saviour. I have never found what some call an age of accountability in the Bible. There may be one in the mind of God, but it has not been revealed to

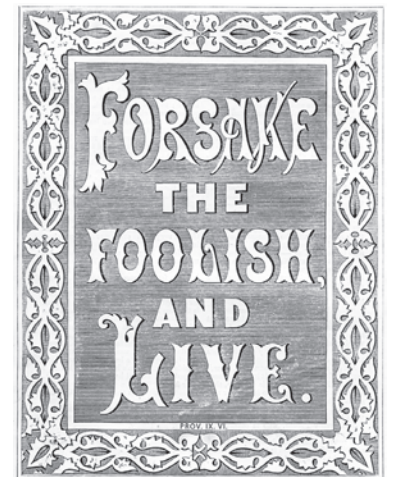
me. Therefore, I act on what I do know. I have them memorize Scriptures, praying that the Holy Spirit will make the truth of the Word and the Gospel of Christ effectual in their hearts. I often quote Acts 4:12: "**Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.**" I tell them the truth about the consequences of not believing the message of the Gospel as revealed in John 3:36: "**He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.**" Without Christ they will suffer an eternity in the Lake of Fire.

I am sure there are some who may object to the answers given. I have heard philosophical questions about what happens to children if they are left behind when their parents are taken away in the rapture of the saints. What happens to them? Does God make some allowance and show them mercy? Frankly, I do not know, but I am trusting a sovereign God to do what is right, true, and just. If I am going to err with an opinion, I would say that God makes some provision for infants and young children in the rapture. Due to the merciful nature of God, I choose to believe that He will reveal His grace in them and take them up with their believing parents. But since I do not have a specific Scripture to support my opinion, I feel safe in telling them to repent and believe the Gospel.

I have spent my entire adult life, since the age of 21, striving to be a faithful and credible witness to the lost by sharing with them the saving Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. When God blessed my wife and me with children, we both began the lifelong process

of teaching and training them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. We shared Scriptures with them, prayed with them, sang with them, memorized Scripture together, preached the Gospel to them, warned them of the consequences of dying without Christ, and the reality of Hell. We faithfully raised them in the Lord's church, consistently and perseveringly attending every service (unless providentially hindered) through the years. All three have professed Christ as Lord and Saviour.

They are now teaching and training their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord and impressing upon them the importance of faith in the Gospel of the grace of God. We are praying fervently that God will save all of our grandchildren and give them a genuine desire to love and follow the Lord Jesus Christ. This is all I know to tell you on how to instruct your children in light of the imminent return of the Lord Jesus Christ. Live each day on purpose as a faithful and credible witness of the power of the Gospel in your life. Pray that God will reveal the truth, as it is in Jesus, to your children at an early age.



## Forum EXTRA

Editor's Note: Last month we did not get Bro. Reed's answers in time for publication. So as an extra we have published them this month.

Roger Reed  
20 Ledgewood Dr.  
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Missionary of  
West Jefferson  
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Mission  
47 S. Heath Lane,  
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### 1. Is the Thanksgiving holiday scriptural?

Leviticus 7:12 **"If he offer it for a thanksgiving, then he shall offer with the sacrifice of thanksgiving unleavened cakes mingled with oil, and unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and cakes mingled with oil, of fine flour, fried."**

The Word **"Thanksgiving"** appears twenty-eight times in the Bible. The Word **"Thankful"** appears three times as listed below. Psalms 100:4, **"Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name."** In Romans 1:21 it says **"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."** Colossians 3:15 says **"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful."**

I think this is enough to answer the question here asked. First let me say I am against celebrating all holidays, for there are none that are Scriptural, but one, and that is **"Thanksgiving"**, so yes, I believe it is scriptural. But if done in the right manner and in the proper way that it was originally done.

There is too much garbage and commercialism in what we call **"Thanksgiving"** today! But everything is corrupt today! I tell my congregation every Sunday before **"Thanksgiving"** to remember the true meaning of **"Thanksgiving"** and remember the reason for it, as they sit around their table with their families, and before they are about to be a gluten and make a pig of themselves.

Is **"Thanksgiving"** Scriptural? Here is the command, I Thessalonians 5:18 **"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."** I see nothing wrong in having that day set aside to be thankful.

Now, let's examine some things about **"Thanksgiving"**! Numbers 14:8 **"If the LORD delight in us, then he will bring us into this land, and give it us; a land which floweth with milk and honey."** That was God's promise to Israel and they crossed over Jordan into that land. God has done the same for us and gave us what was once a beautiful country America and brought us out of the rule of the King of England. But sad to say we didn't keep the land that God allowed us to live in the way we should have. Always keep in mind even religious men are still depraved in their nature.

The English colonists we call Pilgrims celebrated days of thanksgiving as part of their religion. But these were days of prayer, not days of feasting. Our national holiday really stems from the feast held in the autumn of 1621 by the Pilgrims and the Wampanoag to celebrate the colony's first successful harvest.

During the reign of Elizabeth I, the English Parliament introduced a series of measures intended to reform the theology and rituals of the Church of

England established during the reign of her father, Henry VIII. But some Protestants believed that these reforms had not gone far enough. These Protestants believed that the Church of England was hopelessly corrupt and incapable of reform. They felt their only option was to leave the church and create new, separate churches (True Baptists are not Protestants, keep that in mind).

Known as **"separatists,"** these Puritans left their homeland and in 1609 moved to Leiden, Holland, where they hoped to worship freely, without harassment from church authorities. Some members of the Leiden church returned to England, and on Aug. 5, 1620, they sailed for America on the ship the Mayflower. Only 44 of these passengers were Pilgrims, or **"Saints,"** as they called themselves.

Over time, the Pilgrims who clung to Plymouth's rocky shores were absorbed into the Puritans of the Massachusetts Bay Colony. Like the Pilgrims, the Puritans believed that the Church of England needed to be reformed, but they elected to remain within the church, rather than separate from it. They arrived by the thousands, then the tens of thousands, building a thriving religious community that profoundly shaped American ideas of liberty of conscience, the nature of individual spiritual experience and the notion of Americans as a chosen people. The Pilgrims' legacy is less robust, yet they live on in historical memory, immortalized by a national holiday that commemorates their thanksgiving, but forgets the hardships they suffered and their eventual betrayal of their Indian allies. Our early history is not all it's cracked up to be. If you really want to know the truth read **"The**

First Baptist Church in America, Not Founded by Roger Williams" by Graves and Adlam.

I thank God for the freedom I have had these 70 years, but unfortunately, we are slowly losing our freedoms that we once had. The thing is, there's no more lands we can run too flowing with milk and honey, we had our chance.

But Praise God, there is one more land that is flowing with milk and honey, but the only way you can get there is by the shed blood of Jesus Christ John 3:3, **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."**

If you can be Thankful on **"Thanksgiving"** Day for the land God gave us to have religious freedom, remembering (1 Thessalonians 5:18 KJV) **"In every thing give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."** then we do well in the sight of God. If not then remember (Romans 1:21 KJV) **"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened."** God Bless!

### 2. Could you briefly comment on I Thessalonians 5:21?

I am always leery of a question that is asked of us to be answered briefly. Can any part of the Bible be answered in a brief manner without being expounded on? Asking a Baptist Preacher to briefly commit on a verse a Scripture is like saying **"sick-em"** to a Bulldog. In other words, you have just inspired the preacher to do the opposite, you may get a

◊ (Continued on page 19)



# Forum EXTRA

(Continued from page 18) ♦

longer answer here than you were hoping for.

But for me, at this time, I will give the questioner exactly what they have asked for. I Thessalonians 5:21 **"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good"** The verse is calling for us to carefully examine and not downgrade or assume what the verse or chapter means. Holy Writ should be taken seriously, and all effort should be made to the verse or chapter's meaning. The Word preached should be carefully examined Acts 17:10-11 **"And the brethren immediately sent away Paul and Silas by night unto Berea: who coming thither went into the synagogue of the Jews. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so."**

What is found to be **"good"** is to be wholeheartedly embraced. What is **"evil"** or unbiblical should be rejected II Timothy 2:15 **"Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."** God Bless!



## From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell  
(1941 - 2002)



### A Man-Made God

**"Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me;"** (Ex. 20:3-5).

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

The Holy Scriptures prohibit us from worshipping any man-made God. When you mention an idol, most people think of a heathen bowing before some stone image in the jungle. But, idolatry is putting any object in the place of God or before God. At this season I fear many people are guilty of worshipping a man-made god, either knowingly or unknowingly. Santa Claus has become a God-substitute. Although people say they are celebrating the birth of Jesus Christ, it is a known fact that Santa Claus is mentioned more in most homes than Jesus Christ.

At this season of the year, little children are told Santa Claus is coming to town. We see images of him with his white beard, dressed in a red suit, riding in his sleigh drawn by eight reindeer. Parents and grandparents say it would be wrong to rob little children

of their belief in Santa Claus.

The observant Christian can see that it is Santa Claus the myth, not Christ the reality, who is the center of attraction at this time of the year. Christmas could not survive without Santa Claus.

#### ORIGIN OF SANTA CLAUS

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

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

♦ (Continued on page 21)

#### BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

##### Financial Report

10-1-2021 to 10-31-2021

Beginning Balance ..... \$2172.17

#### RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	500.00
S.G. B. C. Silsbee Tx .....	60.00
Berea B. C., Stonington. IL .....	560.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX .....	50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV .....	700.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX ....	100.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL .....	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	100.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI .....	50.00
Grace B. C., Germantown, NC .....	50.00
Grace Missionary B. C., Tulsa, OK .....	50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV .....	300.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC .....	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY .....	35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Cheapeake, OH .....	1,100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL .....	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR .....	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS ....	100.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA .....	25.00
Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV .....	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY .....	150.00
Emmanuel MBC, Oldtown, KY .....	200.00
N. T. B. C. Goshen, IN .....	50.00
Northside B. C., Oakdale, LA .....	300.00
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield, OR .....	200.00

(\$2,300 of this total was sent in memory of Brother Christopher Cockrell and we want to thank you all so much for your prayers and kindness!)

Divided Checks.....	350.00
Subscriptions .....	74.00
Anonymous .....	200.00
Sub Total .....	\$5579.00
TOTAL .....	\$7751.17

#### EXPENDITURES:

Postage .....	619.06
Printing.....	459.10
Wages .....	1550.00
FICA .....	175.90
Supplies .....	0
Div Cks.....	350.00
Total Expenditures .....	\$3,154.06
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$4597.11



#### BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

##### Financial Report

10-1-2021 to 10-31-2021

Beginning Balance ..... \$3,542.05

#### RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS .....	225.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Sumas, WA .....	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY .....	100.00
.....	425.00
TOTAL.....	3967.05

#### EXPENDITURES:

Radio time.....	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES .....	363.98
.....	.....
Interest .....	+0.03
ENDING BALANCE .....	\$3,603.10



# The Kentucky Baptist and the Burning Coals of Truth



C. D. Cole  
(1885 - 1968)

## Is Foot-Washing a Church Ordinance?



Is the washing of the saint's feet a church ordinance? On that memorable and portentous occasion, when our Lord washed His disciples' feet, saying: **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye ought also to wash one another's feet"** (John 13:14), was He instituting an ordinance to be observed by His churches during His absence? In reply to this question, human opinion is divided. The anti-missionary denomination, the General Baptists, and some Missionary Baptists believe ill and practice "foot-washing" as a church ordinance. The writer distinctly recalls having read in the Illinois Baptist a few years ago that the Concord Baptist Church had observed the ordinance of washing the saints' feet. And, no doubt, there are many individual members of Baptist churches who wonder why their church does not observe foot-washing. The writer, early in his ministry, faced this question with the resolve that, if the Scriptures so taught, he would recommend its observance to his church. In this article we give a "reason for the hope that is in us" in the hope that others may come to have a scriptural motive for their attitude toward foot-washing as a church ordinance. We contend that foot-washing is not a church ordinance for the following reasons:

Nothing is said about foot-

washing as a church ordinance in any of the church epistles. Surely if foot-washing was meant to be observed as a church ordinance, there would have been something said in the church epistles concerning its observance. We find ample instructions in the epistles to the churches relative to the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's Supper, but not a word do we find about foot-washing.

It is not needed to picture the gospel of a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour. Baptism and the Lord's Supper preach the gospel. Baptism is a picture of the burial and resurrection of our Lord, while the supper shows His death till He comes. These set forth a full gospel, and there is no need for a third ordinance.

Where the washing of feet is mentioned in the New Testament it is an example of lowly service, but this is not true when it is practiced as a church ordinance. Where foot-washing is observed as a church ordinance, no service is rendered; for those who practice it are careful to see that their feet are clean before going to observe the ordinance. So, whatever the motive may be, it is a mere ceremony, and no service is rendered.

I Timothy 5:10 shows that foot-washing was not practiced as a church ordinance. This Scripture gives the qualifications necessary for a widow in order that she might be placed on the

charity roll of the church. These qualifications require that she must have washed the saints' feet. Now if foot-washing had been observed as a church ordinance, every member would have practiced it; and it would have been superfluous to specify it as a qualification for support from the church. This passage makes it clear that foot-washing was "only" an act of humble service in the home. And again, we remind our readers that no service is done when foot-washing is observed as an ordinance in the church.

We come now to notice the thirteenth chapter of John, where we have the record of Christ washing the disciples' feet; after which He said to them: **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."** To prepare us for all understanding of this passage we want to notice the use of the word "water" throughout John's gospel. In the third chapter, where we have our Lord's conversation with Nicodemus, we read in verse five: **"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God"** (John 3:5). Water is here used in a figurative sense, referring to a spiritual birth. In the fourth chapter we have Christ's words to the woman at the well. There Christ said: **"...whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst..."** (v. 14). Here it is evident that water is used to represent that which is spiritual and is not to be taken literally. In the seventh chapter we have the recorded utterance of Christ at the feast of the Passover.

Here we read: **"In the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus**

**stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive..."** (John 7:37-39). Here it is expressly stated that water is a figure of the Holy Spirit. In the fifteenth chapter and third verse our Lord told His disciples that they were clean through the Word. The water that had cleansed them was the Word of God. Now, a careful reading of the thirteenth chapter will show that its use there is in harmony with the way it is used in every other place in John's Gospel. Jesus Christ is giving, as it were, an illustrated address on the necessity of spiritual cleansing for His disciples. But the disciples were dull of comprehension and did not get the intended lesson. When Peter expressed surprise that his Lord should wash his feet, Christ said: **"...What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter"** (John 13:7). Peter did know that Christ proposed to render lowly and menial service, but he did not understand the spiritual significance of His action. Peter said: **"Thou shalt never wash my feet"** (John 13:8). To which Christ replied: **"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."** In these words, Christ was emphasizing a need deeper than mere physical cleanliness. He was referring to the need of spiritual cleansing in order that Peter might have part with Him (not in Him). To have part in Christ is to receive the legal benefits of His shed blood. Every believer has this once for all. To have a part with Him is to have fellowship with Him in service. To have this, we must take care of our

◊ (Continued on page 22)



# Man-Made God

(Continued from page 19) ♦

not get married. This story may have started the custom of giving gifts at Christmas." (Vol. 12, p. 5680)

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

Santa Claus has many different names in various countries of the world. Saint Nicholas in America is now called Santa Claus. The Dutch children shortened "Nicholas" to "Claus," and the Spanish influence in the Netherlands changed "Saint" to "Santa." In Germany he is called Kris Kringle and in France Pere Noel (Father Christmas).

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

414-415)

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

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

## SANTA CLAUS: AN ANTICHRIST

The average person would have

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

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

You better watch out, you better not cry, Better not pout, I'm telling you why—Santa Claus is coming town!

He's making a list and checking it twice, Gonna find out who's naughty and nice—Santa Claus is coming to town!

He sees you when you're sleeping, He knows when you're awake, He knows if you've been bad or good—So be good for goodness sake!

Oh! You better watch out, you better not cry, Better not pout, I'm telling you why—Santa Claus is coming to town!

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

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

Christ is unchangeable (Heb 13:8). Santa Claus has not aged in 1,700 years. He is no older now than when I was a little child. He

still looks the same today as he did a hundred years ago.

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

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

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

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

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

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

Christ is just (I Peter 3:18), but so is Santa Claus, his mythical substitute. "You better watch out, you better not cry, better not pout, I'm telling you why—Santa

♦ (Continued on page 23)

# Foot-Washing

(Continued from page 20) ♦

walk in this world, and provision must be made for our failure as we contract defilement in the way. In many passages, both in the Old and in the New Testaments, our feet are made to stand for our conduct. Take the following for examples: **"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD: and he delighteth in his way"** (Psa. 37:23). **"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path"** (Psa. 119:105). **"If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit"** (Gal. 5:25).

**"Simon Peter saith unto Him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head"** (John 13: 9). This is further proof of Peter's dullness, and of the truth of our Lord's assertion that he would not understand his action. **"Jesus saith to him, He that is washed [Gr. Loud] needeth not save to wash [Gr. nipto] his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all. For He knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean"** (John 13:10, 11). It is clear that the ultimate reference in these verses is to spiritual cleansing. Christ was saying, metaphorically, that he that has had the bath of regeneration will only need to have his walk cleansed, and that all of them are clean, in respect to regeneration, save one. As to physical cleanliness, no doubt, Judas was as immaculate as the others. How obviously plain it is, then, that Christ was illustrating their need of spiritual restoration by washing the feet that had become soiled since they last bathed. The incident is prophetic of a fall and a failure, and of the gracious provision made therefore.

Let us now compare the passage

that has been set before us with Luke 22:31-34, which reads: **"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat; But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren. And he said unto Him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death. And he said, I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me."** Thus, in plain words, the Lord Jesus prophesied Peter's fall and restoration; and urges him, when he is converted (restored)—that is, when he has his feet washed spiritually, to strengthen his brethren. How soon the words of our Lord came true. Peter sinned grievously. Communion between him and his Lord was broken. He goes back to his old trade, as do the others (John 21:3). They now have no part with Him. But grace will not let them go. That power and love that effected their salvation, will also accomplish their restoration. Peter must learn the meaning of the foot-washing incident.

**"...Thou shalt know hereafter."** In spite of his sad failure. Peter was to have part with his Lord in the blessing of others. He was to be converted (restored to fellowship with Christ), and then was to strengthen his brethren. When we find him in the twenty-first chapter of John, he is about to have his feet washed spiritually. After returning to their nets, they fished all night and caught nothing. On the following morning, Jesus appears to them and proceeds with the blessed work of restoration, which had been so strikingly illustrated by the washing of their feet.

**"So when they had dined,**

**Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep"** (John 21:15-17). How unspeakably blessed is all this Our Lord had said: **"...If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me."** Here he washes Peter's feet and gives him part with Him.

Let us note two or three things in connection with the above passage: First, restoration to fellowship with Christ involves grief and confession. Our Lord brought Peter face to face with his sin and proud boast. He was grieved and humbled and filled with the spirit of confession. And such a spirit is essential to every restoration after a fall. This is strikingly exemplified in the case of David when he said: "I have sinned." **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness"** (I John 1:9). Second, there is a play in the use of the word "love." In the heart-searching question Christ put to Peter, He first used the strong word for love (Gr. agapao), the word used in John 3:16. In Peter's reply, he used the weaker word for love (Gr. Phileo). He no longer boasted of his superior love for his Master, but he did insist

that he loved him a little. The third time Christ put the question to him, he comes down to Peter's word for love, and asks if he really loves Him a little. And then, with a consciousness that he could not impose upon his Lord, he said: **"Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee."** Peter would not boast, but he would stick to it that he did love his Lord and Master. May grace be given to both writer and reader to do the same.

Now, let us, in concluding, return to John 13. **"If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you"** (vs. 14-15). Christ set an example of lowly service that should be followed by His people. And we are following His example when we stoop to do menial service for one another. But, this does not exhaust the meaning of His command. We are to seek the restoration of a fallen brother. As Paul says in Gal. 6:1: **"Brethren, if 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."** But alas! how few undertake such service in behalf of a sinning brother. How sadly the erring one is neglected! How few are qualified to perform such a work—**"ye which are spiritual."** Still fewer go at it in the divinely specified way—**"in the spirit of meekness."** To wash a brother's feet, we must get down on our knees. No holier-than-thou spirit will do. Oh! that our Lord and Master may wash our feet daily and give us part with Him in washing the feet of our brethren. And may the erring brother be **"easy to be entreated"** (James

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# Foot-Washing

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3:17). Oh! the dirty feet that need to be washed. It is the source from which all our troubles come. No child of God can be happy with dirty feet. Lord, restore unto Thy people the joy of Thy salvation.

(This article was taken from *The Baptist Examiner* Vol. 1, No 3 from May 1, 1931)



# Man-Made God

(Continued from page 21) ♦

Claus is coming to town." Santa is coming in the character of a judge to examine the conduct of little children. He is a rewarder and punisher like Christ. Boys and girls must live to please him if they want their stockings filled.

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

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

## SANTA CLAUS: HARMFUL TO CHILDREN

Santa Claus is a lie. There is no such person. It is to be seriously doubted that the man Saint Nicholas ever existed. *The Encyclopedia Britannica* says, "His existence is not attested by any historical document, so nothing certain is known of his life." (Vol. 16, p. 477) There is no such thing as a man who rides in a sleigh pulled by eight reindeer up in the sky. Reindeer might pull a sleigh on the ground, but never in the air.

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

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

Parents punish their children for lying to them about things, but then they turn around and lie to the children about Santa Claus. How inconsistent and foolish. No wonder there is a generation gap! No wonder children grow up to believe Christ is a myth. Such lies destroy the child's faith in his parents. He finds out that Santa,

a man with God-like attributes, is a fake. He then thinks that Santa is for little kids, and Christ is for big kids!

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

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

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

Claus is just another form of Arminianism.

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

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

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

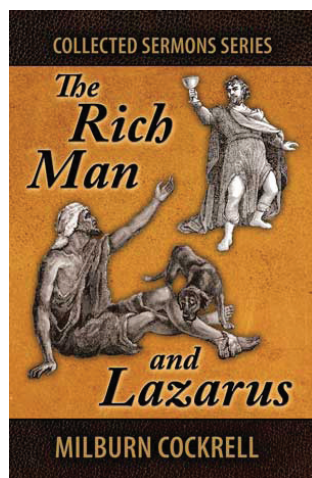
*Dear Santa Claus:*

*You'll probably be surprised to receive this letter from an adult. You may be even more surprised as you read it to find that the writer is neither a maiden aunt nor a disgruntled bachelor. I'm a young mother.*

*It isn't my intention, Santa, to hurt your feelings. You see, my family has paid tribute to you for many past Christmases: my husband and I when we were in our childhood; now our children who are 6, 4, and 2. They still care for you. How much they care has really proved a problem in recent years. It is threatening to happen again this holiday season. Our children worship you. They speak of you constantly. They watch diligently for your December 25 appearance. Can you tell us, Santa, what you have done to deserve this faithfulness for two generations?*

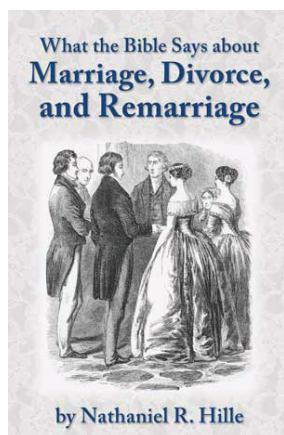
♦ (Continued on page 24)

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## Man-Made God

(Continued from page 23) ♦

Can you promise any future consideration in exchange for past loyalties?

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

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

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

yes, the times of crisis also.

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

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

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

Farewell,

A Young Mother



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Silsbee, TX is hosting a meeting December 17-19. Should you have an interest in attending and require directions or accommodations suggestions please contact Pastor Joe Newell at 225-772-9158.

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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 interest elder can contact Brother Denny Morgan at [dennymatco@gmail.com](mailto:dennymatco@gmail.com) or call (330) 324-3038.

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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.

\*\*\*\*\*

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](mailto:gaylenr@rainierconnect.com).

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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.

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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.



We hear at the Banner are looking for audio copies of Elder Milburn Cockrell's series on Revelation. We are specifically looking for his teachings on Revelation 13:1-8. If you happen to have this audio please contact us through our email: [request@bereabaptistchurch.org](mailto:request@bereabaptistchurch.org)

Thank you!