

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

The Golden Age

By Arthur W. Pink (1886 - 1952)
& Luther C. Peak (1908 - 2004)

INTRODUCTION

From the remotest antiquity men have longed for and talked of a Golden Age, of an age in which righteousness and peace shall prevail, and oppression and war shall cease. None are satisfied with present conditions; all are hoping for better and brighter days to come. But upon what are these hopes based? To this question a variety of answers have to be returned. With the majority of people, no doubt, the wish is further to the thought---they desire to see the introduction of better conditions, and therefore they look forward to the time when this desire will be realized. But a hope grounded on nothing more than desire may prove to be only a credulous fancy, a beautiful dream never to be materialized. Moreover **"hope deferred maketh the heart sick"** (Prov. 13:12). A desire long cherished and which fails to be realized, ends in disappointment and despair. But with each generation there is born afresh

the impulse to look toward the future with eager longing and with yearning for the dawn of a better day. And so it is that all through the centuries there has been preserved the well-nigh universal expectation of a coming era of bliss, an era when the dark clouds of adversity and sorrow shall flee away, and when the sun shall shine upon a scene of prosperity and joy. Poets have sung of it, politicians have dreamed about it, reformers have discussed it, and in all lands eager eyes have been turned toward it.

The only ground upon which the intelligent Christian bases his hopes is the written Word of God. He must have a **"thus saith the Lord."** Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God (Rom. 10:17). All real faith rests upon the Holy Scriptures. And surely this is not unreasonable. We know, and can know, absolutely nothing about the future except what God has been pleased to

◊ (Continued on page 2)

The Raven and the Dove

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia



meant for us to consider and study, or why else would the great Creator have put them in His book? Selah! Think about it!

"And it came to pass at the end of forty days, that Noah opened the window of the ark which he had made: And he sent forth a raven, which went forth to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth. Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground" (Gen. 8:6-8).

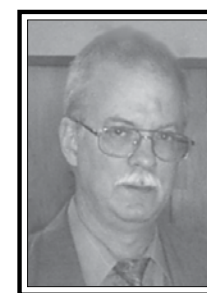
Lots of pictures in the Old Testament give us a fresh handle on things occurring in our lives today. And these pictures are

Consider the raven and the dove. Why did Noah pick these two? Or better yet asked, what purpose did God have in having Noah select these two birds to both send out, and then record for future generations the outcome? Perhaps a couple of thoughts to

◊ (Continued on page 16)

Why A Crown of Thornes?

By Lucien J. LeSage Jr.
of Pride, Louisiana



"And when they had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews" (Matt. 27:29).

Well, it is obvious that the soldiers did this to mock Jesus. He was said to be the **"King of the Jews"** and a king should have a crown and so they plaited Him one made of thorns. They had put a scarlet robe on Him and placed a reed in His hand for a king's scepter. Secondly, they meant it to inflict pain upon Him. He had

been scourged and now they would inflict pain to His head. So we see the intentions of men, but what about the intentions

of His Father? We know that the Bible tells us that **"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief..."** (Isa. 53:10). I am reminded of what Joseph told his brothers. **"But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive"** (Gen. 50:20).

◊ (Continued on page 11)

February 5, 2018
Volume XXXVIII, Number 2

Whole Number 463
Editor: Christopher Cockrell
Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia Cockrell

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

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

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

The publication of an article does not necessarily mean the editor is in complete agreement with the writer, nor does it mean he endorses all this person may have written on other subjects.

COPYING PRIVILEGES: Unless otherwise stated any article published in this paper may be copied by other publications, provided they give proper credit line stating that such was copied from this publication, and the date of publication; provided that such materials are not published for profit. If we are not on an exchange list with the publication copying, it is requested that a copy of the issue containing the article be sent to our address. All copyrighted materials may not be copied without written consent.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - U.S.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45
PLANNING TO MOVE? Notify us three weeks in

advance. The post office will only forward periodical mail for 90 days. They charge us \$.70 for each "change of address" they have to send us. Please save us this expense and the post office time.

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

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

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

A PAPER WITHOUT SUBSCRIPTION: Some times people write to us and say that they did not subscribe for the BBB. They are receiving our paper because someone else has paid for their subscription.

We trust the BBB will be received as an outstretched hand to you. Take what you find helpful and discard what you cannot use. If you do not want to receive such a gift subscription, please write to us. We are happy to cancel such a subscription. We do not want to go where we are not wanted.

DISCLAIMER: The Editor assumes that the articles submitted for publication in the BBB are written by the person whose name they bear, unless otherwise indicated by a quote from another writer. However, the Editor cannot personally guarantee that this is the case in all articles which appear in the BBB.

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.

The Golden Age

(Continued from page 1) ♦

reveal to us. Outside of this all is but speculation and guesswork, speculation which is worthless and guesswork which is futile. What do the wisest of men know concerning the morrow? He knoweth not what a day may bring forth (Prov. 27:1). Before us all there hangs an impenetrable veil which no mental acumen can pierce. Whenever man attempts to forecast the future he does but expose his ignorance and folly. During the last few years men have sought, again and again, to turn prophets, but only to show their powerlessness to invade a sphere of knowledge entirely beyond the reach of finite intelligence, and to demonstrate by way of contrast the value of inspired prophecy.

When we turn to God's Word we find much revealed concerning the Age to come. There we learn what is to precede it and prepare the way for it. There we are told how it is to be ushered in. There we discover the exact length of its duration. There we have described its distinctive features, the principles of its administration, the character of its economy. There is depicted its joys and glories, its uniqueness and blessedness. And vastly different are these from the conceptions and speculations of men. The Millennial era is not to be the time of unbridled human selfishness. The Coming Age will not witness the top-stone laid upon the successful achievements of the proud schemes of the human heart. No, in that day the loftiness of man shall be laid low and the Lord alone shall be exalted. In that day men will realize their blessings and prosperity depend upon their obedience to the Law which shall go forth from Jerusalem. In that

day the nations shall be made to know that the source of all blessings is in subjection to the King that shall reign there.

The Millennium, or Kingdom Age, is that era in the future history of the world when the Lord Jesus shall receive from God the rule and government of the earth. This era is to last one thousand years. No less than six times in the first seven verses of Revelation 20 we find this expression "**the thousand years.**" They are, of course, to be understood literally, as defining the duration of Christ's earthly reign. While it is true that Revelation 20 is the only Scripture which specifically mentions the thousand years, yet there are many passages, both in the Old and New Testaments, that set forth the character and describe the blessings of the Age to come. In fact so numerous are the Scriptures which treat of and bear upon the Coming Age that our chief difficulty is to classify them. It would seem that there are more passages dealing, directly and indirectly, with the next Dispensation than with any other separate subject or period treated of in God's Word. For almost three thousand years God has been directing the eyes of His people toward the future, to teach them to walk by faith and not to be occupied with the present things of sense and sight. God would have us anticipate and appropriate the blessedness of the things which He has been pleased to reveal, and revel in those things which must shortly come to pass. Instead of being occupied, unduly, with the evil around us, He would have us look forward to the time when much of the evil shall be removed, and when the remainder shall, largely, be held in subjection by the rule of the Iron

♦ (Continued on page 3)

Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	95.9.....	3,000 FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680.....	5,000 AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	101.9	3,000 FM
KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550.....	5,000 AM
KPRV, Heavener, OK	Sunday 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.	92.5	6,000 FM
WQRL, Benton, IL.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	106.3	12,500 FM

Berea Baptist Banner
PO Box 39

Mantachie, Mississippi
38855

(662) 282 - 7794

www.bereabaptistchurch.org

request@bereabaptistchurch.org
bbchurch@nexband.com

Planning a move?

Please let us know your new address. The post office charges us \$.59 for each returned wrong address.

FALLEN TO SLEEP WAITING ON THE MAIL?



Look at your mailing label on the front page of this month's paper. If you see above your name "Expires 2/2018" then this will be your last issue. So do not dose off while waiting for the mailman! Renew now so you will not miss next month's *Banner*.

The Golden Age

(Continued from page 2) ♦

Rod.

The Millennium is referred to in the Scriptures under various titles, each of which contributes its own light to our understanding of its scope and character. In Matthew 19:28 the Millennium is spoken of as "The Regeneration." This denomination views the earthward character of the Coming Age. The earth is to be born again as it were: old things will pass away and behold all things will become new. This planet, which for six thousand years has groaned beneath its burden of sorrow, shall be rejuvenated. This planet, which for sixty centuries has been but a giant graveyard, shall be endued with new life, so much so that even the desert place shall be made to rejoice and the wilderness blossom as the rose. The force and aptness of this title also appears in that as every birth is preceded by travail so it will be with the ushering in of the Coming Age. It, too, shall be brought about by sharp travail. Indeed, this very term is used by Christ when speaking of the Tribulation period which shall immediately precede the Millennium---the literal rendering of the Greek in Matthew 24:8 is **"All these are the beginning of the birth pangs."** Hence the appropriateness of styling the Age which issues forth from the travail pangs of the Tribulation the "Regeneration."

**THE MILLENNIUM IS
TERMED "THE LAST DAY"**
(John 6:40)

This denomination looks at the dispensational place of the Coming Age. It will be the closing Day of this earth's Week. It will, so far as this earth is concerned, be the anti-type fulfillment of the Sabbath. It will be the time

when creation, shall at last "rest" from its protracted groaning. A hint of this was given at the beginning, when God after six days labour, rested from all the works of His hands. Viewing the seven days of the first week in the light of that inspired word **"One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"** (II Pet. 3:8), we gather that earth's history was to be completed in seven thousand years. Six thousand years will have passed since the time when the first Adam made his appearance on earth till the time when the last Adam appears on earth in power and glory to reign in righteousness for a thousand years. This thousand years reign will be earth's **"Last Day."**

**THE MILLENNIUM IS
TERMED "THE TIMES OF
REFRESHING"** (Acts 3:19).

This denomination speaks of the blessedness of the Coming Age. The Greek word here rendered **"refreshing"** is anapsn, and signifies "cooling." It tells of the blessed reviving which shall be wrought in and on God's handiwork. It points a contrast from the preceding Ages. It suggests the new life and fertility which follows a bountiful shower after a long drought. It intimates the beneficent results which will succeed the removal of Satan from the principdom of this world to the rule of the Lord of Glory in his stead. It will be not only a time of refreshing for the earth itself, but for Israel, for the nations, and may we not say, reverently, for God Himself. Yes, the personal presence on earth of the Lord of Life, the word of Jehovah Himself going forth from Jerusalem, the missionary activities of Israel in that day, and the flowing out of the knowledge of the Lord till the whole earth shall be covered

by it as the waters cover the sea, will indeed issue in **"times of refreshing."**

**THE MILLENNIUM IS
CALLED "THE TIMES OF
THE RESTITUTION OF
ALL THINGS, WHICH GOD
HATH SPOKEN BY THE
MOUTH OF ALL HIS HOLY
PROPHETS SINCE THE
WORLD BEGAN"** (Acts 3:21).

This denomination views the results which will be brought about in the Coming Age, for of the next age, be it noted, and not of the Eternal State, Acts 3:21 speaks. It is the restitution only of those things spoken of by all God's prophets. We call attention to this limitation because there have been those who have quoted the first part of this utterance and have based upon it a theory which ignores and sets aside the qualifying clause which immediately follows, and which guards it against a perverted application. The Old Testament prophets knew nothing of any future "restitution" of Satan and the wicked. Universalism finds no support in the Scriptures of Truth. That which is to be "restored" in the Millennium is the earth to a condition of fertility and blessedness approximating to the Edenic state. Israel is to be "restored" to the place of God's favor as His peculiar and covenant people. The duration of human life will be "restored" to that which equals and surpasses the longevity of the patriarchs before the Flood. The animal creation will be "restored" to its state before the effects of the curse were visited upon it. The sun and moon shall be "restored," probably to their pristine glory, for in the Age to come their light will be increased sevenfold.

**THE MILLENNIUM
IS TERMED "THE**

**DISPENSATION OF THE
FULNESS OF TIMES"** (Eph.
1:10).

This denomination marks the relation of the Coming Age to God. It reveals the connection between it and the Ages which have preceded it. It tells how the Millennium is the goal toward which the other Ages have moved. It points to the completion of the purpose of God concerning the earth. The force of this expression may be gathered from the similar one found in Galatians 4:4, **"When the fulness of the time was come God sent forth His Son."** The fulness of time signifies ripeness of opportunity and consummation of need. The first advent of Christ and the proclamation of His Gospel introduced a new era, but it also marked the climax of the old. The world was prepared through long processes for the coming of the One and the preaching of the other. From Eden to Bethlehem the centuries were preparing for the advent of Immanuel. As the processes of creation prepared the earth for man so all history prepared the way for the birth of the Saviour. The Holy Scriptures focus the preparation in one race, but all peoples shared in the process. Outside the elect nation, God was at work, and all streams converged to one center. As it was in connection with the first advent, so it is concerning the second. Just as there was a definite and unmistakable movement in all history making ready the way for the Dispensation of Grace, so is there a similar one going on now making ready the world for the Dispensation of Glory. Just as the world's urgent need was fully demonstrated before the Saviour appeared among men so shall it be ere He comes back as the Prince

♦ (Continued on page 4)

The Golden Age

(Continued from page 3) ♦

of Peace to take the government upon His shoulder.

THE MILLENNIUM IS KNOWN AS "THE DAY OF CHRIST" (Phil. 1:6).

This denomination calls attention to the exaltation and glory of the King Himself. When our blessed Lord was here before, He was despised and hated: He came to His own and His own received Him not. And outside of the company of God's elect, He has been despised ever since. At His birth there was no room for Him in the inn, and ever since there has been no room for Him in the schemes and plans of men. The interval of His absence from the earth is known as "Man's Day" (I Cor. 4:3). But Man's Day is not to last forever. God has defined its limits, and has decreed that it shall be followed by "The Day of Christ." Then shall the Holy One of God come into His own. Then shall He enter into His possession. Then shall His glory be displayed. Then shall His authority be universally owned. Then shall His enemies be made His footstool. Then shall He reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. For a thousand years the nations shall bow before His sceptre **"And the Lord shall be King over all the earth: in that day shall there be one Lord, and His name one"** (Zech. 14:9).

THE MILLENNIUM IS STYLED "THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST" (Rev. 11:15).

This denomination has reference to the personal dominion and majesty of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ. Long before the incarnation God made known through His prophets that His Son should be the Head of a Kingdom. Not a spiritual and heavenly

kingdom, but a literal and earthly one. In Jeremiah 23:5 we read **"Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth."** And again we are told **"And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed"** (Dan. 7:14). The time when these promises were to be made good had not arrived when Christ was here before: then was the period of His humiliation; but when He returns it shall be in power and glory. Satan offered to Him all the kingdoms of the earth, but not from him would He receive them; nor had the appointed time arrived; still less could He accept them on the terms named by the great Adversary. But the hour is near when it shall be said **"The kingdom of this world is become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ: and He shall reign for ever and ever"** (Rev. 11:15 R.V.). The Kingdom over which Christ shall reign is that which God **"prepared"** before the foundation of the world (Matt. 25:34). It is known as **"the kingdom of heaven"** (Matt. 3:2); the "Kingdom of the Son of Man" (Matt. 16:28); the **"kingdom of God"** (Luke 19:11); the "Kingdom of David" (Mark 11:10).

As to what will lead up to and bring in the Millennium there has been wide difference of opinion. Not that the Scriptures do not speak plainly on this point; they do. But in many instances the plain teaching of God's Word is set aside by the fancies and theorizings of men. Men of the

world suppose that an Age of prosperity and blessing can be produced by political legislation and social reform. It is held that the present ills may be removed by man's own efforts. We are told that our present troubles are the result of ignorance and selfishness, and that what is needed to remove them is education and the propagation and practice of nobler ideals. The theory of evolution is applied to human history, and its advocates declare the race is steadily climbing to a higher plane of existence. These apostles of progress boast loudly of the advances made by civilization. Attention is called to the inventions of the last century, the discoveries of science, the spread of knowledge, and the wonderful things man expects to do in the near future. According to this view all that is needed is a wider belief in "the Brotherhood of Man" and a putting into practice of the golden rule, and lo, the Golden Age will be here--ushered in by man himself. But surely it needs little penetration of mind to see the vanity of such a dream. Apart from Divine revelation, human observation and experience refute this theory. God has given men six thousand years to work out their schemes, and what are the results? Human selfishness is as real, as apparent, as universal as ever it was. Greed and graft are more noticeable now than ever before. Politics, instead of improving as education advances, were never more corrupt. Crime is on the increase, lawlessness abounds on every side, in the home, the churches, and the State. Never was there less contentment. With all our inventions and discoveries there is as much sickness and sorrow as ever before, and death is just as prevalent and invincible.

But if this idle dream of man bringing in the Millennium by his own efforts is dispelled by the sober and solemn facts of life, still less will it bear examination in the light of Scripture. Again and again is the question asked in the Word of God, Can an evil tree bring forth good fruit? Can thorns produce figs? Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Can an unclean thing bring forth that which is clean? The theory of evolution and the dreams of reformers ignore the awful fact of human depravity. Man is a fallen being. His heart is desperately wicked, and no amount of education or reformation can improve it. The trouble is too deep-seated for the hand of the creature to reach. Legislation may regulate human actions but it cannot change human nature. Moreover, the preachers of human progress fail to take account of Satan. How can there be any radical change in human affairs while the Devil is at large? What hope is there for this poor world while Satan is its Prince? What improvement is possible while the Evil One is blinding the minds of those that believe not and leading them captive at his will? No; if help is to come to man it must come from outside of himself. If Satan is to be removed from these scenes Divine interposition is imperative. There can be no millennial era of blessing until Christ returns to the earth and takes the government on His shoulder.

What will lead up to and bring in the Millennium? One other theory must be noted ere we give the answer of Scripture. Above we have looked at the answer returned by leading men of the world, what then is the concept held generally by the churches? On

♦ (Continued on page 6)

Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



Preparing for the Coming of the Lord

I Thessalonians 4:1-18 (v. 15)

We have before us the grand subject of "The Coming of the Lord." The phrase recorded for us in I Thessalonians 4:15, **"the coming of the Lord"** is also used two times in the book of James (James 5:7-8). Based on the context, we know that this phrase is in reference to the event also referred to as the rapture, the second coming of Christ, the second advent, and the first resurrection. We believe it is the next event on "God's Time-Clock." This phrase: "God's Time-Clock" speaks of those major events in the plan of God—"Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ" (Titus 2:13).

THE FACT OF THE LORD'S COMING

Although there are many scoffers about this subject, the Scriptures declare plainly the coming of the Lord. **"For yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry"** (Heb. 10:37). We use the phrase, "while the Lord tarries," simple to show that we are awaiting the coming of the Lord Jesus. Humanly speaking He is tarrying, delaying His coming. Yet, according to God's time-clock, we have not arrived at His coming. When we have reached the appointed time, rest assure that He will NOT tarry, but He will come, even as He came at the appointed time in His first advent.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3); **"And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as he went up, 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"** (Acts 1:10-11). In the book of Revelation, John the apostle is called to **"come up hither"** (Rev. 4:1). This is a likeness unto the description given us in I Thessalonians 4:16-17. There is a great similarity between the resurrection of Lazarus and the resurrection which shall take place at the coming of the Lord (John 11:43). The Lord shall call for all of His redeemed to **"Come forth"** or **"come up hither"** that we might be with Him for all eternity. And so when men say, **"Where is the promise of his coming?"** (II Peter 3:4), let us reply: **"It is in the Scriptures!"** **"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us"** (II Cor. 1:20).

THE SEASON OF HIS COMING

First, when it comes to the coming of the Lord, we must be

aware of this verse: **"But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only"** (Matt. 24:36). The Lord has never revealed the day or the hour. However, the Lord has revealed the "season" in which the Lord shall return for His people.

As The Days of Noah: Matthew 24:37-42. The days of Noah are described. People will be going on with their lives as if nothing is going to happen. The minority will be preparing for the return of the Lord. Few shall be saved in that day. Yet, we find that the key is that folks will be living their lives like the world is going to continue for ever (II Peter 3:4).

As The Days of Lot: Luke 17:26-29. The days of Lot were very similar to the days of Noah. They were extremely wicked. There we saw that men were extremely lawless. We find that there were rapes, homosexuality, man and woman stealing, why even the saved (righteous Lot) was living according to the standard of the world.

The Church Age: Luke 18:8; Revelation 3:14-22. Here we see the Lord's church at Laodicea. She is in a luke-warm state. This was a literal church. Yet it is also a type in which the Lord's churches may become. Praise the Lord, it is curable! Yet, when compared with Luke 18:8, we get a glimpse that this will be more prevalent than other churches when the Lord comes again.

The State of Man: II Timothy 3:1-7. The Holy Spirit gives unto Paul a description of the state of man in these last days. While one would not be surprised to see lost man doing these things. However, we find saints involved in such things as well.

Prophecy: Matthew 24:6-7. Here we read of so-called "natural

phenomenons," wars and rumors of wars, pestilence all taking place. **"But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book, even to the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased"** (Dan. 12:4). Beloved, it is an amazing thing how you can get on an airplane and travel just about anywhere in the world you want to. He says as well **"knowledge shall be increased."** We know a lot today. Our knowledge of creation, or the human body, medical, psychologically, etc. has increased so much. It has increased exponentially in the last 60 years. Greater increases in knowledge since World War II, than all the years before it, or so it seems. These are not bad only that it is a "sign of the times."

Beloved, based on Scripture, the Lord Jesus could come at any moment. Are you prepared for Him to come?

PREPARING FOR HIS COMING

Are You Saved?—II Corinthians 6:2: **"(For he saith, I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I succored [helped] thee; behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation)"** Beloved, the best, or first thing that one can and must do to prepare for the coming of the Lord Jesus, is to be saved today! To **"make your calling and election sure"** (II Peter 1:10). I realize there is a notion that folks will have another opportunity, but there is no basis for that in the Scriptures. That is a lie of the devil himself. **"And the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent, Because he hath appointed a day, in the which he will judge the**

◊ (Continued on page 6)

Little Hills

(Continued from page 5) ♦

world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof which he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead" (Acts 17:30-31). There will be no more opportunities when once the Master of the house has risen and shut the door. Listen to Luke 13:25, **"When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are."** And so we urge you, we beseech you, we plead with you, we reason with you from the Scriptures that, "While it is called today, hear his voice, harden not your hearts through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13-15), but **"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near"** (Isa. 55:6).

The Saints To Prepare For His Coming— Titus 2:11-15; I John 3:2-3---v. 3: **"And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure."** This hope, refers to the assurance, expectation, confidence, that when the Lord appears in the air, you will be made like Him. Do you have that assurance? If so, then you need to be purifying yourself, not better than others, but even as He is pure. You see the standard is still the Christ of God. The word "purify" means "to cleanse morally the heart and soul, to be chaste, free from defilement." Paul reprov'd the saints at Rome concerning the same thing (Rom. 13:11-14).

Labor For The Lord: Matthew 25:14-30---v. 19: **"After a long time the lord of those servants**

cometh, and reckoneth with them." Beloved, there is a day of reckoning coming. A day when God will test the degrees of our faithfulness and/or unfaithfulness. The Bible teaches that you are slaves, servants, bond-servants to the Lord. He purchased us out of the slave market and we are bound unto Him. He has gone on a journey, yonder up to glory to appear before the Father on our behalf. And He has given us charge, not left us in charge, but given us charge over His house, His vineyard. And His charge is to preach the gospel to every creature, to maintain these ancient landmarks, to grow spiritually in the Lord, to put off the old man, and to put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Beloved, that day of reckoning is approaching fast. **"For we must all [saved] appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he that done, whether it be good or bad. Knowing, therefore, the terror of the Lord, we persuade men; but we are made manifest unto God, and I trust also are made manifest in your consciences"** (II Cor. 5:10-11).

CLOSING

Whether one is saved or lost, we all need to prepare for the Lord to return. I pray that you are not among the "scoffers" saying **"Where is the promise of His coming?"** (II Peter 3:4). For Scripture declares it. I pray that we are all preparing for the return of the Lord. While we know the season of His coming we know not when it will take place. The Bible tells us that it will be sudden and unexpected, just as it was in the days of Noah and Lot. Why, there will be saints that are raptured home unexpectedly.

Yet, let the redeemed of the

Lord say with John the apostle, **"...Even so, come, Lord Jesus"** (Rev. 22:20). Are you prepared? If you are saved in Christ Jesus, if you are in Him by faith and not of works, then you have **BEGUN TO BE PREPARED!** Let us keep preparing till He comes.



The Golden Age

(Continued from page 4) ♦

this point professing Christians are divided into two parties, known as pre-millennialists and post-millennialists. By far the greater number of preachers are post-millennialists. Post-millennialists believe that Christ will not return till after the Millennium. They believe in a Millennium without Christ. They believe in a Millennium brought about by missionary activities, by the preaching of the Gospel, by the prayers of the saints, by the efforts of the churches. They think that ultimately the Church will convert the world. This theory of post-millennialism is expressed in different ways and with various modifications and amplifications, but all the post-millennialists are agreed that the Kingdom is to be brought in by the united efforts of the churches. They are also unanimous in interpreting the Messianic prophecies in a non-literal sense. The Kingdom they look for is to be a spiritual one not a literal. Christ's rule is to be internal not external. The King is to govern from Heaven and not to reign on earth.

Post-millennialists imagine they can see in present day conditions promise of the early realization of their hopes. They believe that great progress has already been made in the Christianizing of the world. They point to the enormous development made

in missionary activities during the past century. They tell of the advances made in modern scholarship. They boast of the spread of the spirit of liberalism now abroad in the churches, of the breaking down of sectarian barriers, of the prospects of a united Christendom. They call attention to the multiplication of our colleges and seminaries, of the increase in church membership, and of the immense wealth of the leading denominations. All these things are regarded as good omens of the future. But all is not gold that glitters. The theory of post-millennialism, like the theory of political and social reformers, must be examined in the light of Holy Scriptures. The things we are asked to admire, and to regard as so many signs of an approaching Millennium produced by the churches, must be weighed "in the balance of the sanctuary."

Close inspection of modern religious conditions should soon convince any impartial inquirer that things are far otherwise than our post-millennial friends would have us believe. Instead of spiritual conditions being better now than they were a few generations back they are far worse. True, missionary activities have greatly increased, but have they kept pace with earth's population? No, indeed. There are many millions more of human beings alive on the earth today who have never heard the name of Christ than there were a century ago. Moreover, an ever increasing number of those who go out as missionaries instead of preaching Christ as the alone Saviour for lost sinners are, sad to say, preaching anything and everything but this. And what of conditions at home? True, we have more colleges and seminaries, but what is being taught in them?

♦ (Continued on page 7)

The Golden Age

(Continued from page 6) ♦

For the most part that which is directed against undermining the faith once delivered to the saints. Those who are being prepared for the ministry are, only too often, being taught to doubt the Divine inspiration and authority of the Holy Scriptures. The neology and higher criticism of Germany have been widely adopted in America and Britain. And what of individual life? True, there is much boasting, much activity, and much giving, but what of the things which are vital to spirituality? What of the prayer life of our churches? What of the removal of the family altar from thousands of our homes? What of the elimination of the Bible from our day schools? And again, if present conditions are an advance on previous ones and indicate further improvement in the near future, why is it that thousands of earnest Christians are deploring the spiritual lethargy in their churches and are crying to God for a Revival!

But our final court of appeal is not human observation and experience but the inspired and infallible teaching of the Word of God. Where in the Scriptures is there any promise of the coming Age of Glory being ushered in by the efforts of the church? Where in the Scriptures is there any declaration that the Church will convert the world? True, we are commanded to preach the Gospel to every creature, but where are we told that the time shall come when all men, or even a majority of men, will believe it? Instead of the Scriptures setting before us such a prospect, they plainly foretell the very reverse. The more sure Word of Prophecy warns us that this Age is to end not with a worldwide

outpouring of the Holy Spirit, but with the outpouring of the vials of God's wrath. The Saviour Himself taught that in the closing days of this Dispensation the love of many would wax cold, that false christs and false prophets should arise and deceive many, that there should be wars and rumors of wars, nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom, and men's hearts should fail them for fear and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth. The same testimony was uniformly borne by the apostles. Through them God made known that in the last days of this Age perilous times should come, that **"men should be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof"** (II Tim. 3:1-5). Thus we find that instead of present day conditions showing the failure of God's purpose they only go to demonstrate that what He foreknew and foretold has come to pass exactly as He declared. It is not God but the professing church which has failed. Instead of the church converting the world, the world has converted the church. And this brings us, once more, to the point where we see that the only hope lies outside of man.

The Millennium is to be brought about by nothing else and nothing less than the personal return of Christ to this earth. Nothing short of Divine intervention can bring to an end the present age wherein abounds sin, selfishness and suffering. It was the personal

intervention of God which began the Edenic Dispensation. It was the personal intervention of God which began the Mosaic Dispensation. It was the personal intervention of God which began this Gospel Age. And it will be the personal intervention of God which shall bring in the Kingdom Dispensation. Nothing less than the personal return and presence of the Lord in manifested power and glory can remove Satan from this scene, can lift the curse from the groaning creation, can set up the Kingdom of God on earth, and can establish a reign of righteousness, peace and blessing.

There is no Kingdom where there is no King, and there can be no Millennium without Christ, no reign of peace without the presence of the Prince of Peace. It is in view of this that believers ought to cry with ever increasing earnestness. **"Come Lord Jesus."** Come to Thy people who will welcome Thee so eagerly; come to this poor world that needs Thee so sorely; come to Israel who are so wretched without Thee; come, and all creation shall break forth into praise and thanksgiving--- **"Even so, come Lord Jesus."**



A Remedy for Wandering Thoughts

By Richard Steele
(1629 - 1692)

"That ye may attend upon the Lord without distraction" (I Cor. 7:35).

The words of the text present us with a design that believers as often aim at, and yet miss, as any in the world; and which is so excellent and rare an attainment, that the Holy Ghost even makes two words on purpose to express it by, no where else found in the New Testament; **"...to attend upon the Lord without distraction."**

I. The matter what, **"attend upon the Lord."**

II. The manner how, **"without distraction."**

I. The matter what, **"attend upon the Lord."** The Greek word for **"attend"** in our copies, hath a remarkable elegancy in it. 1. That you may be fit and ready for God's service, that religion and religious duties may sit fitly on you, that you may be ready to serve the Lord in duty or suffering. A most

sweet frame of soul to be always bent and strung for the service of God. That man is **"meet for the master's use,"** that is **"prepared unto every good work"** (II Tim. 2:21). How many choice opportunities for instruction, for reproof, for charity, for prayer, do we hazard; yea, and lose, for want of a soul quick and ready to do our duty?

2. That you may be fixed and settled in His service. The word intimates such an inseparable cleaving, such a marriage of the mind to the Word of God, that we have in hand, as can by no means suffer a divorce. It should be as hard a matter to break off the heart from God in His service, being married to Him, and settled in holy duties, as it is to abstract the miser's soul from the world to which it is glued.

II. The manner how, **"without distraction."** The sense hereof is almost perverted by the emphasis of the former word. Yet this word

♦ (Continued on page 8)

A Remedy for

(Continued from page 7) ♦

is not without its great weight: and it speaks a quiet, unshaken, and immoveable frame of soul, which cannot be whirled about with vain trifles. The soul is never at that holy quiet, as when it is directly ascending and communing with the Lord; and therefore Satan exceedingly envies this celestial happiness of the saints, and if he cannot distract them from duty, be sure he will distract them in it; and this he doth very much by the world, and the business thereof. And therefore, saith the apostle, guide your condition so, in this suffering season, as that it may not misguide your hearts, in your attendance on the Lord; that you may not attend on yourselves, nor on others; but on Him who is the center of an ordinance, and your all in all.

Take the sum of all in this assertion, the main doctrine from the text, ---It is a Christian's duty to attend on the Lord without distractions.

I. A DISTRACTION DESCRIBED.

The first head will be to describe a distraction. A distraction is a secret wandering of the heart from God, in some duty in hand.

1. *It is a wandering.* As the remissness of our devotion shoots short, so distraction shoots awry. 'Tis said, Proverbs 27:8, "**As a bird that wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place.**" It is commonly known, the ready way to destroy the young in the shell, is discontinuance of heat; and to wander from our heavenly work, produces the dead offspring of unprofitable duties. It would be almost as easy to trace and follow the bird in his vagaries, as the volatile and intricate imaginations

of the heart. It is a digression; --- you that are curious to observe the minister in his digressions, how much more necessary is it to observe your own?

2. *It is secret,* in the heart. And this contracts the guilt and nature of hypocrisy upon a distraction; for we have a short and clear description of hypocrisy, which agrees too well with distractions, Matthew 15:7-8: "**This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.**" To have a bended knee, a craving eye, are choice expressions of duty; but without the impressions and attendance of the heart, are double iniquity and flat hypocrisy. How empty would our congregations be sometimes, if no more bodies were present than there are souls? And what abundance of sorry service hath our God, that nobody sees.

Yet how unknown soever these triflings of the mind are to others, or to ourselves, yet are they most palpable to the Lord, who sets our most "secret sins in the light of his countenance" (Ps. 90:8); and though these may seem small trifles, yet they fall under the rebuke of religion; and are as sinful as they are secret: good in secret is the best goodness; and secret sinfulness the worst sinfulness.

3. This wandering of the heart is from God, for God is the object of worship. "To pray aright is to pray before the Lord" (Zech. 7:21). "To give thanks aright is to give thanks before God" (Dan. 6:10): not in His sight only, for so you are when your hearts are worst; but good men looked on God when they spake to Him, as we look on men when we speak to them. Melancthon saith, he had heard Luther in his secret prayers, so pray, that one would verily think there were somebody in the room

with him to whom he spake.

4. This wandering is while some duty is in hand. That was a good answer of Nehemiah to his false friends, "**I am doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?**" (Neh. 6:3). He that is in a duty to God is about a very great work, and that work stands, or goes backward, every moment the heart is away; and why should a temporal vanity set back, and perhaps quite unravel your eternal concernment? How will that Spartan youth rise up in judgment against us, that holding the censer during Alexander's heathen sacrifices, would not stir his hand from its duty, though the burning coals fell thereon, and made his flesh to fry and smell in the presence of all the spectators?

II. THE KINDS OF DISTRACTIONS.

Our second duty will be to take a view of the kinds or sorts of distractions; and they are diversified: 1. From the fountain whence they flow. 2. From the matter whereof they consist. 3. From their adjuncts. For the first of them, you will find,

1. *Many of our distractions may justly be fathered on the Devil.* He is a spiritual substance, and is most properly conversant in spiritual sins; he is completely skilled in all thoughts whatsoever, and therefore what he imparts here is of his own. The high-priest Joshua could not be at his prayers for the Israel of God, but as Christ the angel of the covenant was on one hand, Satan was standing on the other, Zech. 3:1, and he was got at the readier hand, the right hand, the hand of action, that he might hinder him more dexterously in his devotion. And when Satan stands on the right hand, the prayer is in danger to become sin

(Ps. 109:6-7). When we are most serious before the Angel, the Devil is whispering at our elbow; and who can be dull and watchless, when God is on one hand, and Satan on the other?

The Devil is afraid of a serious lively prayer at his heart; he knows that can pull down in a minute what he hath been contriving for a thousand years; and therefore, if he cannot withhold us from holy duties, he will do his utmost to disturb us in them. Hence the vision of that holy man who in the whole market saw but one devil busy (for there Self was at hand, Satan had no need to bestir him;) but in the congregation there were multitudes of them: all their skill and power being little enough to ward off poor souls from Jesus Christ. Alas! we pray, and hear, and live as securely, as if there were no Devil at all.

And his suggestions in religious duties are usually more violent and impetuous, more dreadful and impious, than those which are of our own breeding; called therefore darts, and fiery darts of that wicked one. Though he lay these suggestions of his at thy door, yet they will be counted in the number of his sins and of thy afflictions.

2. *Our distractions proceed from the mind and understanding.* The vanity of the mind alienates us from the life of God, and from communion with Him. When a present and seasonable petition or instruction is conveyed through the ear into the understanding, it wantonly plays therewith, and takes occasion to run out on some contiguous notion; and from that to another and at length rests and dwells on some alien and unseasonable point, till the gales of the good Spirit, and the present matter be overpast. And thus by

♦ (Continued on page 9)

A Remedy for

(Continued from page 8) ♦

a default in the understanding, we seek not God, Psalm 53:2, nor find Him as we might; and that excellent faculty, which would penetrate into the divine mysteries, and should guide the will and heart unto God, by the *ignis fatuus* of its unmortified vanity, misleads us from the chief good, and entangles us in distractions. We read “of a filthiness of the spirit” (II Cor. 7:1), whereof surely this is a part, and must be cleansed in them that will “perfect holiness in the fear of God.”

3. *Some distractions proceed from the fancy, a most busy faculty, which is most unruly and least sanctified in a holy man.* Sometimes by the help of memory, stepping back into things past, she brings into the most solemn worship a thousand passages that are past and gone, and rolling them in the head, carries soul and all quite away from God: hence it is, you often hear them say, “such a thing came into my mind at sermon or prayer,” that was forgotten weeks or months before: yea, daring to re-act former sins by contemplative wickedness in the very sight of God, which doubles the guilt by repetition, and makes your former sins exceeding sinful. In this sense that is true, **“Better is the sight of the eyes than the wandering of desire”** (Eccl. 6:9); there is something more of evil in these second contemplations, than in the first commissions. Sometimes the fancy will create a world of figments or notions out of nothing, and multiply impertinent thoughts upon no ground, and to no purpose; and can sally out of the present matter to every adjacent business, and make a great ado to bring nothing

to pass. **“There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture’s eye hath not seen”** (Job 28:7); the fancy can find out such a way; thus God is not in all, hardly in any, of our thoughts, when we pretend to treat Him with the greatest solemnity.

And sometimes the fancy breeds distractions by forecasting things to come; so many a man can most easily, on the Sabbath, contrive his business for all the week after; and the poor woman in the corner of a prayer order the business of all the house for a day. Hence many an affair is cursed in our hands, by our unhappy contrivance thereof in the time of worship. Thus we have some saying (in their hearts no doubt), **“When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat?”** (Amos 8:5). And it is well if they have no companions in this assembly, who are making their hay, measuring their corn, counting their coin, if not providing for their lusts, while they seem earnest with the Lord negotiating for eternity.

4. *Our distractions in God’s worship are sometimes occasioned by our outward senses.* Most frequently by the eye; a wandering eye mostly hath a wandering heart; for when the eye discovers any new, pleasing, or ridiculous object, it presently brings news thereof unto the heart; and that debates and studies upon it, to the grieving of God’s Spirit, and cooling of our own: and when that is over, a fresh sight presents itself, and the eye is ready for that again, and leads the heart into a maze of follies. We read, **“My eye affecteth my heart because of all the daughters of my city”** (Lam. 3:51), that is with grief for their calamity. There is a reciprocal working it seems; the heart at first affects the eye, and the eye can

affect the heart with grief: even in like manner, when the sons or daughters of the city enter the assembly, the eye affects the heart; stirs, diverts, kindles the heart; and the heart corrupts, stains, and transmits its follies by the eye; the precious soul meanwhile suffering between them, and the holy God and His services being woefully slighted.

You resolve in this duty, I will not swerve from God, nor step aside into the least distraction; but you bolt the door and let your enemy in at the window. The thoughts that are shut out at the street-door steal in at the back door, if you do not as well “make a covenant with your eyes, as keep your feet, when you enter into the house of God.” In this sense the woman and man also have need of the covering of a holy and constant watch, **“because of the angels,”** the wicked children of hell, that ride abroad in the air, to carry away our hearts from God.

III. TO ATTEND ON THE LORD WITHOUT DISTRACTION IS OUR DUTY.

A. THE POSSIBILITY OF IT.

In the third place I shall prove, that to attend upon the Lord without distraction is our duty which will clearly follow, by demonstrating, 1. The possibility of it; 2. The necessity of it.

First, *It is possible thus to serve our God.* The sluggard, it is true, finds a lion in his way to every duty, and nothing is possible, because nothing is welcome. ---There is no duty so easy, but it is difficult to the negligent; none so hard, but it is easy through divine grace to the diligent. Perfection herein I assert not; but that we may attain it in the substance and sincerity thereof, is proved:

1. *From the precept of God.* The

wise and merciful God commands nothing, but He finds or makes it possible; His commands are not snares, but rules, yea and helps. When a master commands, power and assistance wait not on his commands; the servant’s strength must perform the master’s will: but here are the commands of a father, which when they outstrip his child’s strength, are still accompanied with his own assistance; and the chair which the weak child cannot bring in, he helps to fetch himself. Now behold the divine precept, **“Serve him in truth with all your heart”** (I Sam. 12:24). What truth is there, while we appear to serve the Lord, and indeed do not think upon Him at all! Or how is that with all the heart, while there is not half, nor any thereof many times! While we can pray, and plot, and think, and look, and begin our devotion only at the end of the duty. Our merciful Father will not impose an impracticable law upon us. It may by accident become impossible, but it is not so in itself.

2. In regard of *the power of God* it is possible. Ours is the duty, but His is the strength. God and His servant can do any thing. When you look on a hard task, and your heart fails you, raise your eye of faith, and you will find God the strength of your heart; **“I can do all things through Christ which strengthened me”** (Phil. 4:13): lo, here the omnipotency of a worm! If all things, that is all my duty, then this among the rest. But you will say, This was an apostle, a person of great strength and grace: yet still the acts were from the man, but the strength was from Christ; for the same person saith, **“Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves;**

♦ (Continued on page 10)

A Remedy for

(Continued from page 9) ♦

but our sufficiency is of God" (II Cor. 3:6). Who, though He be at the same time terrible out of His holy places, and darts His curses on them that do His work negligently, yet **"the God of Israel is he that giveth strength and power unto his people. Blessed be God"** (Ps. 68:35). He gives, that is, He is ready to give it out; but, alas! His stock lies almost dead by Him; and few sue to Him in good earnest. His power is at your service, and therefore serve yourselves of it.

3. In regard of *the promises of God*, this is possible. To every command there is a promise. The command finds us work, the promise finds us strength. As to this, some think that clause in our magna charta, Ezekiel 11:19, of one heart, is intended this way; wherein the Lord promiseth an united heart in His servants. A hypocrite hath more hearts than one; a heart for his pleasures, a heart for his pride, here and there his affections are straggling; now saith God I will give one heart. There is another promise, **"I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me"** (Jer. 32:40); neither in whole nor in part, unless the fault be in yourselves. Now these promises are amen in Christ, and do belong to every soul that is in Christ, who may claim and have the benefit of them.

4. Add hereunto *the experience* of many servants of God, who by a habit of holy watchfulness, have attained to considerable strength against these wanderings. Hope of relief makes many complain of their distractions, when fear of pride hinders them from divulging their attainments; and that which by the grace of God is

possible for others, with the same grace is possible for you.

B. THE NECESSITY OF IT.

SECONDLY, it is necessary, and therefore no doubt our duty, to attend on God without distractions. It not only may be done, but must be done. You will say, they are happy that can do it, but they may be safe enough that cannot; thus the heart and substance of religion is counted a high attainment but not a duty. I shall show therefore that this soul-attendance on the Lord is necessary.

1. *It is necessary to the essence or being of the duty.* As the soul is necessary to the being of a man, the body is no man, but a corpse without it; even so a solemn duty without it; even so a solemn duty with a wandering heart, is but a corpse of a duty. **"Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heavens"** (Lam. 3:41). The elevation of the hands signifies nothing, without lifting up the heart with them. If prayer be the lifting up of the heart, what are words without the heart? A man may spend the same time and the same words in a serious and in a heartless duty, and yet the latter stand for nothing for want of intenseness and attention. **"There is none that calleth upon thy name, that none stirreth up himself to take hold of thee"** (Isa. 64:7). If a man come to the services of God, and do not excite and stir up his soul to exercise grace, as a man will blow a dull fire, his faith, zeal, and humility; if he do not blow them up, but suffer his heart to run at random, the holy God counts all the rest as a cypher without a figure, it stands for nothing.

2. *It is necessary to comfort in the duty.* The service of God is a sweet pot of ointment of a most refreshing odour; the gracious soul is refreshed therein as a bed

of spices. Distractions are the dead flies (Eccl. 10:1), which dropping into this sweet ointment, cause it to send forth a noisome smell, displeasing to God and unpleasing to the soul. Where can the soul be better than with God? what sweeter company than that which angels keep, or pleasanter employment than conversing in Heaven? But wandering thoughts arise, and like a black cloud quite hide the sweet beams of that Sun of Righteousness from the soul, and then your comfort is gone. The sweetness of music consists in its harmony; when the strings are out of tune, or untunably touched, it is but a harsh sound, there is no music: wandering thoughts are like strings out of tune, there is no music in duty, the Holy Ghost goes away and likes it not; and the soul likes it not, is weary of it; there is no sweetness in that duty. It is a tried maxim, The more seriousness, the more sweetness; the nearer to God, the warmer and merrier is the soul, which inward comfort is some reward to the heart of a Christian, when his particular suit is denied; so that "in keeping of God's commandments there is a great reward." The choices of the Spirit's sealing comforts are bestowed in the lively service of God.

3. *It is necessary to the prosperity of a duty.* **"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me"** (Ps. 66:18). In God's service the soul should be regarding God alone. If I regard a corruption, instead of Christ, if when some vain object presents itself, I turn my back on God to treat with vanity, the Lord will not hear me, nor regard me. We read of the holy Hannah, that **"she spake in her heart: only her lips moved, but her voice was not heard"** (I Sam. 1:13); yet this wordless prayer did the business; lip-labor, if no more,

is but lost labour. The earnestness and labouring of the heart prevails. The Lord our God hath a book of remembrances for them that think on His name, while He turns the deaf ear to them that cry, Lord, Lord, and do not inwardly adore Him. In short, thus saith the Lord God, "Every man," child or not child, "that setteth up his idols in his heart, and cometh to the prophet," or sits demurely before the preacher, **"I the LORD will answer him that cometh according to the multitude of his idols"** (Ezek. 14:4). He that sets his heart on vanity, vanity shall be his recompense; if he will not affect his own heart, he shall never affect mine. He that withdraws his heart in asking, will find the Lord to withdraw His hand in giving what he asks.

IV. REASONS WHY WE OUGHT TO ATTEND ON THE LORD WITHOUT DISTRACTIONS.

1. *The greatness of God.* The greater the personage, the greater the reverence, and the more solemn your attendance should be. Hence, Elihu cries, **"Teach us what we shall say unto him, for we cannot order our speech by reason of darkness"** (Job 37:19). It is a bold adventure to speak to Him, what is it then to trifle with Him? wilt thou speak to God, nay pray to God, and not so much as look that way when thou speakest to Him? This is to put on Him the robes and title of a king, and use Him like a slave. A prince may converse with two or three of his servants at a time; but it is impudent for a servant to talk to two or three princes at a time. The great Jehovah can speak with thee, and a thousand more, and do all your errands at a time: but, alas, thou art too poor

♦ (Continued on page 11)

A Remedy for

(Continued from page 10) ♦

a worm to entertain the great Jehovah and other matters at once. We are His creatures. **“Thus saith the LORD, the Holy One of Israel, and his Maker”** (Isa. 45:11). If a servant must not be frivolous before his master, when he is receiving his commands, who dares be so before his Maker, who can easily reward or ruin us, as I can turn over a leaf in this Bible? This He Himself gives for the reason of that dreadful curse upon the “deceiver, that having a male in his flock, offers to God a corrupt thing. For I am a great king saith the LORD of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the heathen” (Mal. 1:14). Which of you will be thinking of your wives, or children, or business, when you are offering a petition to a great king, or run after feathers, when he is speaking his mind to you? Thou takest God to be such a one as thyself, or else thou wouldest never do it. Remember a great God must be worshipped with profound veneration, and the most serious affections. A man must worship God, as if he were in Heaven; oh! if thou wert there among those myriads of saints and angels, with what care, and humility, and earnestness, wouldest thou pour out thy heart to Him, or hear His words to thee.

2. *The holiness of God* is another reason, Who is so sacred, that an unholy thought is abomination to Him; most especially in His holy service. Who can by an eye of faith behold the “LORD sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filling the temple, and the seraphim crying one to another, and saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of Hosts” (Isa. 6:1-2), and suffer his heart to be ravished away with transitory

toys in such a sacred presence? Are the seraphim amazed at His holiness, and we untransported? Their thoughts are continually terminated upon Him, and should ours be always flinching from Him? The holy Lord of Hosts will not allow it. If you will not sanctify Him, He will sanctify Himself. If you that worship Him will not bear witness, by your serious attendance to His holiness, He must bear witness to it by His judgments on you; which, indeed, are not always visible, but ever certain; not a man in the congregation but the holy God is sanctified by Him, or upon Him. Little do we know what invisible dreadful effects there are of this daily in our congregations. And, if our dear Redeemer did not stand as a screen between us and His wrath, the best of us would quickly feel the effects of His displeasure.

And these are some of the reasons that confirm and enforce this practical doctrine, that we should **“...attend upon the Lord without distractions.”**



Crown of Thornes

(Continued from page 1) ♦

But why a crown of thorns? The soldiers perhaps could have made a crown of some other material to inflict pain, but they chose to plait one made of thorns. Why? Well, humanly speaking, perhaps because that was readily available. Spurgeon says that they could have plaited a “crown of straw, but they meant to pain Him.” However, I believe that our Sovereign God was in complete control of every aspect of the crucifixion and that thorns were meant to be His crown. He was **“delivered by the determinate council”** of almighty God as Peter tells us in Acts 2:23. That very crown of thorns was

purposed by God almighty and I believe for a reason.

The first place we read of thorns in the Bible is in connection with the curse from sin. In Genesis 3:18 we see that because of Adam’s transgression that God cursed the ground and said, **“thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee.”** Then there is another interesting place in the Bible that we see a thorny bush mentioned and that is when God appeared to Moses in the burning bush. In that passage we read that it was the **“angel”** of the Lord that spoke with him (see Exodus 3:2). But I also read in that same passage that **“God called unto him out of the midst of the bush”** and that the angel of the Lord said, **“I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.”** Who is this angel of the Lord? Why, He is the Son of God who is God. Now what is interesting is that the Hebrew word for “bush” means a “thorny bush.” Strong says “to prick.” So why would the Son of God appear in a thorny bush? Certainly a great glorious tree would perhaps seem more fitting but a thorny bush was what He chose. Then there was this fire that burned in the midst of the bush, yet it was not consumed. The Bible says that our God is a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29) and yet this bush was not consumed. I am reminded how that the Bible tells us that Jesus took His people’s sins upon Himself and suffered the wrath for sin and yet was not consumed and was able to bear it. So thorns again are connected with the curse and sin and Jesus was made to be sin. **“For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him”** (II Cor. 5:21).

So thorns are the curse for sin. But why place them upon

His head? As I said the soldiers had their reason but God had His reason. In Leviticus chapter 16 we read of the annual day of atonement in which two goats were selected. One was for a sin offering and one was to be the scapegoat. This was determined by the casting of lots by Aaron. Then we read, **“And when he hath made an end of reconciling the holy place, and the tabernacle of the congregation, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat: And Aaron shall lay both his hands UPON THE HEAD of the live goat, and confess over him all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their SINS, PUTTING THEM UPON THE HEAD OF THE GOAT, and shall send him away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness: And the goat shall bear upon him all their iniquities unto a land not inhabited: and he shall let go the goat in the wilderness”** (Lev. 16:20-22) (emph. LL).

That crown of thorns is the perfect picture of the sins of God’s elect being put upon the head of our substitute, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spurgeon said, “Christ had fought with sin from the day when He first stood foot to foot with it in the wilderness up to the time when He entered Pilate’s hall, and He had conquered it. As a witness that He had gained the victory, behold sin’s crown seized as a trophy! What was the crown of sin? Thorns. These sprang from the curse. **‘Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee,’** was the coronation of sin, and now Christ has taken away its crown, and put it on His own head. He has spoiled sin of its richest regalia, and He wears it Himself.”



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. When and why did Baptist churches start having a mid-week (Wednesday night) service?

Matthew Stepp
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor
Big Creek
Baptist Church
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570



The Biblical question could be better stated: When did Baptist churches stop having daily services (not just Wednesday, but including Monday-Saturday services)? Certainly, the book of Acts is a good place to start to find out when we are to worship our God in publicly attended services and it is undeniably and conclusively a daily meeting together of the First Baptist Church of Jerusalem. **"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. ...And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ. ...And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily. ...Therefore disputed he (Paul) in the synagogue with the Jews, and with the devout persons, and in the market daily with them that met with him. ...And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the**

things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing (preaching- Acts 20:7-9) daily in the school of one Tyrannus" (Acts 2:46-47; 5:42; 16:5; 17:17; 19:8-9). Selah! Think about it!

In fact, Christ set the example to His first ekklesia, as He rightly should have. **"And he went into the temple, and began to cast out them that sold therein, and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of thieves. And he taught daily in the temple..."** (Luke 19:45-47). Unless you were providentially hindered, would you want to miss one of these sessions/services in the house of God (cf: Luke 9:23; 22:53, II Cor. 11:28, Heb. 3:13)?

Beloved reader, the admonition for the Lord's New Testament Baptist Churches is to disciple and teach (Matt. 28:19-20). That can only happen as we congregate together. **"But speak thou the things which become sound doctrine: That the aged men be sober, grave, temperate, sound in faith, in charity, in patience. The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient**

to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed. Young men likewise exhort to be sober minded. In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity, Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you" (Titus 2:1-8). Some of this teaching may perhaps be done in private, but the majority necessitates the assembling of ourselves together. If done properly, it really must be done more daily than we are currently doing so. Selah! Think about it!

Take away our TV's, little leagues, hobbies and modernism, and you will drop right back into the previous ages, when the church and community took the high stage. "Honey, let us go on down to church tonight to meet with the others." In days gone by? Check it out! Virginia's *Laws Divine, Moral and Martial*, circa 1612, contained this provision: "All preachers or ministers within this our colonie, or colonies, shall in the ferts, where they are resident, after divine service, duly preach every Sabbath day in the forenoone, and catechise in the afternoone, and weekly say the divine service, twice every day, and preach every Wednesday, likewise every minister where his is resident..." According to the *Dictionary of Christianity in America*, "...the Puritans of the 1600's in America had a Sunday morning and a Sunday evening gathering time as well as a Thursday morning lecture. These practices almost certainly go back to the Puritans in England." An old record of a Baptist worship service from 1609, is a letter from Hughe and Anne Bromhead, who wrote: "The order of the

worshippe and government of oure church is . 1. we begynne wth A prayer, after reade some one or two chapters of the Bible gyve the sence thereof, and conferr vpon the same, that done we lay aside oure bookes, and after a solemne prayer made by the .1. speaker, he propoundeth some text owt of the Scripture, and prophecietieth owt of the same, by the space of one hower, or thre Quarters of an hower. ...This Morning exercise, begynes at eight of the clocke and continueth vnto twelve of the clocke the like course of exercise is observed in the afternowne from .2. of the clock vnto .5. or .6. of the Clocke." Eight hours of worship on Sunday! Wow! Praise the Lord!

I think our "modern" Baptist churches are letting down our memberships, by only having Sunday AM/PM services and a Wednesday PM service. We ought to daily, as much as possible have services and spiritual activities planned. I know some churches are more vigorous and it is to their credit. Why not have a Saturday breakfast, a Thursday visitation, a Tuesday Bible Study, a Friday and Monday youth, ladies or open meeting to teach, preach, study, revere and honor God through assiduous worship activities? May God give us the desire to worship Him more. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Missionary of
West Jefferson
Missionary Baptist
Mission
90 E. Main St.
West Jefferson, Ohio
43162



"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much

◇ (Continued on page 14)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Please comment on Hebrews 13:3, **“Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body.”**

Tom Ross
6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH
45680

Pastor
Mt. Pleasant
Baptist Church
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH
45619



This verse is included in a series of practical exhortations reminding the saints of God to love one another, to be hospitable and generous to others, and to have sympathy for those who are in prison. We are exhorted to remember those in bonds, or in prison, either justly or unjustly. We are called upon to have a genuine concern for those in bondage. In the first century, when this was written, Christians were often persecuted and imprisoned for their faith and unswerving allegiance to Christ. Paul probably had these persecuted Christians in mind as he wrote this verse. He knew first hand what it was to be bound and imprisoned for the cause of Christ. He no doubt also knew unbelievers who were bound that had need of sympathy and prayer. At least a believer who is in prison has real hope in Christ. Those who are in prison without Christ suffer a double bondage that leaves them without hope.

Paul urges us to identify with those who are bound as though we were also in the very same condition. I must confess that I was seized with conviction as I pondered the meaning of this verse. I have often prayed for prisoners and from time to time have

witnessed to them, sometimes I have corresponded with them, but rarely have I considered identifying with them in the manner which Paul subscribes. I have never spent a night in jail. It must be a horrible experience that is made worse by loneliness, lack of freedom, despair, and depression. Jesus gave us a similar exhortation regarding our treatment of others when He said: **“Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets”** (Matt. 7:12, cf. Luke 6:31). We often refer to this principle as The Golden Rule. How often have we applied this verse to those suffering the adversity of being bound?

Some commentators believe the reference to the body has to do with afflictions and adversity experienced in the literal human body. Others believe it has reference to those in the local church body by comparing this verse to the admonition of I Corinthians 12:25-26: **“That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it...”** Certainly, the context of Hebrews 13 could have application to the human body and the local church body as there are admonitions to be hospitable, as well as to obey the teaching of the ruling elders in the church (13:7, 17). However we may apply it, I believe the admonition is to show concern, sympathy, empathy, and

compassion to those who are in prison.

I really like the comment of John MacArthur on this verse:

“Sympathy is closely related to sustained love. It is easier to help others when we ourselves have needed help. It is easier to appreciate hunger when we have been hungry, loneliness when we have been lonely, and persecution when we have been persecuted. It is not that a Christian must experience starvation or extreme loneliness or imprisonment in order to be sympathetic to those who are experiencing these things. The point is that we should do our best to identify with those in need, to try to put ourselves in their places. We know that if we were starving, we would want someone to feed us, and that if we were imprisoned, we would want to be visited. We should do for them what we would want done for us were we in prison with them. It is the principle of Jesus’ golden rule...”

MacArthur also cites Aristides, the pagan orator who said of Christians:

“If they hear that any one of their number is in prison or in distress for the sake of their Christ’s name, they all render aid in his necessity, and if they can, they redeem him, to set him free.” (*The MacArthur New Testament Commentary on Hebrews*, pages 427-428).

TOM ROSS

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Missionary of
West Jefferson
Missionary Baptist
Mission
90 E. Main St.
West Jefferson, Ohio
43162



If you have a center text in your Bible you can see they have given other words for some in verse 3,

“in bonds” (center text reads) “in prison;” **“as bound with them”** (center text reads) “as if chained;” **“suffer adversity”** (center text reads) “are mistreated.” So if we read the verse with the center text words it would read Hebrews 13:3, “Remember them that are in prison, as if chained with them; and them which are mistreated, as being yourselves also in the body.”

In other words, believers should be able to identify or be understanding with the suffering of others because they also suffer physical (“in the body”) pain and hardship. I guess the best word to use here is “empathy,” put yourself in the other person’s shoes or situation. The definition of “empathy” is the psychological identification with or vicarious experiencing of the feelings, thoughts, or attitudes of another. It is not just sympathy, just feeling sorry for someone but really seeing it from their perspective and feeling what they feel. We should be sympathetic to others as well. Remember many of these folks the Hebrews writer is referring to, were those who were suffering for the Gospel’s sake and had been put in prison. We may yet before it is over be put in prison as well.

Andrew Murray in his book, *An Exposition of the Epistle to the Hebrews* put it very well concerning Hebrews 13:3 when he said, “We know so well in our own body that when one member suffers all the members suffer with it. The word points to loving union with Jesus and His body on earth as close and real. This feeling of sympathy may and must be as quick and real in the spiritual as in the natural body. We are to feel towards the prisoners and the persecuted as if we ourselves were

♦ (Continued on page 15)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

the more, as ye see the day approaching" (Heb. 10:25).

As far as I know, always! If you want me to put a date on it, I would say somewhere around A.D. 62 or earlier. This would be around the time when Luke wrote the book of Acts, and the early churches were being established everywhere.

I had a man say to me one time, "I do not see anywhere in the Bible that we should have church service any time but Sunday." Well I am about to show you, that that is not so.

Let me start with the opening Scripture. **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is..."** Just when should this be? Just on Sunday? It does not say only on Sunday! Though we know we are supposed to assemble ourselves together then. I always looked at the next part of the verse as there being more than just on Sunday, **"but exhorting one another: and so much the more..."** So how do we exhort someone **"more, as ye see the day approaching"**? Let me stop right here and explain **"the day approaching"** it is either death, judgment or the second coming of Christ. Either way the end. I always believed, too, that it was each approaching Lord's Day (Sunday) to **"exhort one another"** and get excited about going to church. So to answer the last question, how do we exhort someone **"more, as ye see the day approaching"**? Well, I would say to be together as a church as often as we can be. And that would in my minds thinking be Wednesday night services, or any day of the week for that matter.

Now I do not know if the questioner is asking the question about Wednesday night because

they do not want to go, therefore trying to prove there is no need for it, or is trying to show that there is a need for it to show someone else. But in any case, I believe there is enough evidence that we should probably be together every day. I mean just look at our world. We should be breaking the doors of the building down to get in for more learning. But sad to say that is not the case. Instead we are finding excuses for not having to go at all! We have so many distractions today, many of our own making. We are not the devoted people we should be because we have allowed other things to take the place of our service to a Holy, Sovereign God...to our shame. You be the judge, dear reader, and notice the word **"DAILY!"**

"And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved" (Acts 2:46-47).

"And a certain man lame from his mother's womb was carried, whom they laid daily at the gate of the temple which is called Beautiful, to ask alms of them that entered into the temple" (Acts 3:2).

"And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ" (Acts 5:42).

"And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily" (Acts 16:5).

"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" (Acts 17:11).

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin" (Heb. 3:13).

I think this more than supports a mid-week (Wednesday night) service. Now let me ask a question. Why would not we want a mid-week (Wednesday night) service where we could come and refresh ourselves from the wickedness and the evil of this world? One thing is for sure, Satan does not want us there at all. We did not use to have Wednesday service because of the long drive I had in rush hour traffic, until someone called begging me to have it. So, I made an adjustment, I drive almost a half hour longer to avoid that rush hour traffic, it takes me almost two hours but I believe it is worth it. The amazing thing was there are as many there on Wednesday night as there is on Sunday morning, praise the Lord!

Look, I'm not saying it is easy, it is very hard on the flesh, but it is refreshing and most needed to be in the Lord's house. If the early church could meet every day before Sunday, than we sure can meet one extra day through the week, Amen? I sure would hope so. Not because I have answered this question, but if you can read what I have written here and have no sorrow or regret, then I would suggest you examine your salvation. God Bless!

ROGER REED

Tom Ross
6339 County Rd. 15
South Point, OH
45680

Pastor
Mt. Pleasant
Baptist Church
6939 County Rd. 15
Chesapeake, OH
45619



I am sure that there are instances throughout history where Baptist churches held midweek services. The early churches in the book

of Acts often met daily in some form or fashion. However, the custom of having a Wednesday night or mid-week service came into vogue among Baptists in the 1700's and 1800's, especially in England and America. Though there is no definite command of Scripture to meet on Wednesday nights the custom probably grew out of a hunger for spiritual food, fellowship, and fervent prayer among the saints. The custom especially flourished in larger cities where people could walk a reasonable distance to attend prayer meeting and Bible Study. What many people fail to realize, prior to the 1950's, going to church was part of a social construct in England and America. It was where families in the community gathered. The church was often the hub of socialization, courting, activity, news, and information. As people became more mobile, and businesses and factories stayed open at night, the Wednesday night meetings began to suffer. The advent of the television and other forms of entertainment also caused many to abandon the tradition of mid-week services.

John Gill held Wednesday evening services from 1729 to 1756 as a means of preaching to non-members. The following quote is taken from a Memoir of John Gill in Volume One of *Sermons and Tracts*, pages xvii and xviii:

"The ministry of Mr. Gill being acceptable not only to his own people, but likewise to many in other churches, and of other denominations; some gentlemen moved among themselves to set up a lecture on some day of the week that they might have the opportunity of hearing him. Accordingly, several met

♦ (Continued on page 15)

Forum #1

(Continued from page 14) ♦

together, and forming themselves into a society, agreed to have a lecture on Wednesday evenings, and set on foot a subscription to support it. Upon their invitation, Mr. Gill undertook that lectureship, and continued in it with great constancy, applause, and usefulness. It was set up in the year 1729, and he continued preaching it (very rarely missing) until 1756, near twenty seven years: when he gave it up, by reason of age and multiplicity of work upon his hands; and preached a farewell sermon to the Society on Acts 26:22-23 which was published that year. This lecture was productive of many of his printed works; not only of single annual sermons on various subjects, but of whole treatises: as on the Trinity, and Justification, the Cause of God and Truth, and of several of his Commentaries on some of the books, both of the Old and of the New Testament, of all which more hereafter."

A couple of interesting things may be gleaned from the above quote regarding Gill. First, it is evident that the practice of having a mid week service was not being observed by the Baptist church that Gill pastored, New Park Street. This was a historic church that was later pastored by John Rippon and C. H. Spurgeon. By the time Spurgeon became pastor they had implemented a Thursday evening service (*The New Park Street Pulpit*, Volume 2, page 193, delivered on November 22, 1855). Second, Gill used the opportunity to engage in expository preaching and teaching as an outreach to those who were not members of New Park Street. Gill made the most of his time by not only preparing the manuscripts for

the lectures, but also seeing to it that they were put into print. It is one of the reasons why we have a wealth of material from the indefatigable pen of Brother Gill.

I believe that the meeting times of Baptist churches are to be determined by each independent, autonomous congregation. If a Baptist church determines to have one service on the Lord's Day it is their prerogative. I have only had the privilege of pastoring two churches. Thankfully, both churches had Sunday School, Sunday morning, Sunday night, and Wednesday night services. I have found that Wednesday night services help to recharge the spiritual batteries of God's children. We normally have a time of special prayer after singing and preaching. We usually have 3 men pray as they are called upon by the pastor. Sometimes we have opened up the prayer meeting to any saved man who feels led to pray.

TOM ROSS



Forum #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

suffering. We have been admitted to a life in the home and the love of God; they who abide there will learn thus to love."

We must all realize there is real suffering among our brethren and many difficulties that they have to endure every day. I will grant you, some may take advantage of us, but none the less we should have real concern for those who are suffering.

Here is a great quote on "empathy," "You can not understand someone until you have walked a mile in their shoes." If we have the love of Christ, then show it! God Bless!

ROGER REED

Matthew Stepp
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor
Big Creek
Baptist Church
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570



The writer of Hebrews (probably Silas) starts off this poignant verse with the word **"remember."** It is a request for the beloved reader to go back in their hearts and minds and to invoke a memory- a memory of a person that is suffering adversity and/or bondage for the cause of Christ. In other words, it is a prayer request! Selah! Think about it!

This prayer of remembrance that is requested is an exceptional request, though. It is an appeal for us to put ourselves in their place and pray as if we ourselves desired deliverance and salvation. 1) First of all, it is to be an intimate prayer. Not a "quickie." But to stop the world's hubbub all around us, and to intimately "remember" this beloved brother/sister in Christ and pray for Grace for their needs. 2) It is to be a fervent prayer, because we are now invested in this person's cause. Not a back-burner prayer anymore, is it? It is you-n-me. Passionately, we will spend time, blood, sweat and tears in the cause of our Beloved. 3) It is to be an active prayer, that moves us into groaning and puts us on our knees, as we dynamically participate emotionally with those in need. 4) It is to be a relevant prayer. One on one, our mind goes through the circumstances, as we have perhaps experienced such events ourselves before. But we need to know exactly what is going through their mind, and exactly what it is that they need, before relief and victory will come. 5) Entreat the Holy Spirit

with a personal prayer, that we might know how to pray for these precious folk. With groanings that cannot be uttered, let us appeal to God Almighty to supply the mercy and strength that is surely needed. 6) It should be a vicarious and sacrificial prayer in that our hearts truly desire that the trials and adversity might be lifted from them somehow and placed upon us. As God should supply the opportunity, we will not let them down, but will join with them in suffering for our precious Saviour and Redeemer. Selah! Think about it! Can we do that?

Certainly it will not be an easy task to **"remember"** them in this vigorous and empathic manner, but it would be hypocritical of us, as God's children, to do otherwise. The generations that have gone on before, I believe saw the power of God and received many more blessings and answered prayers than ours, because our forefathers and mothers witnessed and produced such mighty prayers.

The ending phrase of our text, I believe to be just as compelling, **"...as being yourselves also in the body."** As we unite it with the first word **"remember,"** it supports the thought of vicarious, relevant and passionate prayers, because of our "body" being sympathetically subjected to the same torture and temptations. But, I believe also that it goes further than a "physical body" in the context.

The body of Christ is being addressed and exhorted, as individual members of the same spiritual body, as fellow members of the Lord's New Testament churches. Jesus Christ being the Head of every church body, takes this bold step and claims to be the direct object of persecution by the vile Saul of Tarsus in Acts 9:1-5, **"And Saul, yet breathing**

♦ (Continued on page 16)

Forum #2

(Continued from page 15) ♦

out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord, went unto the high priest, And desired of him letters to Damascus to the synagogues, that if he found any of this way, whether they were men or women, he might bring them bound unto Jerusalem. And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest..." Although Saul had not physically assaulted the Christ, Jesus "remembers them that are in bonds, as bound with them; and suffers for their adversity, as being Himself also in the body of adversity..." We, as saints will never suffer, except that our Comforter will also suffer with and for us. Hallelujah!

"That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular" (I Cor. 12:25-27). If there is a "bound" member in our body, then none of us are free. If there is an "afflicted" member, then we are all afflicted. If one "mourn" or "sorrow," we all mourn and sorrow. As surely as the lungs are affected if the pancreas develops a cancer, so too is the body of Christ to be inseparably linked together, whether in joy or sorrow. Selah! Think about it!

Inevitably, the opposite premise is true also in this supernatural body. If we have leaven (I Cor. 5:1-13) or adultery (I Cor. 6:15-20) in our lives, it affects the remainder of the church. As our Bible teacher at Big Creek, Bro. Pete Chadwick is fond of saying, "We're all in the same boat, together!" What happens to one, not just affects all, but it literally is happening to us all, and that is how Hebrews instructs us to pray. Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



Raven and the Dove

(Continued from page 1) ♦

selah.

The raven never came back to the fold. The poetic verse says he flew **"to and fro, until the waters were dried up from off the earth."** Evidently, plenty of carcasses in the world were floating on the surface of this singular ocean, so this (now) meat-eater had plenty of sustenance, and even resting places, as he scrounged a living from death and destruction. That phrase **"to and fro"** was nagging at me, until I remembered the other dark bird of prey in Scripture. **"And the LORD said unto Satan, Whence comest thou? Then Satan answered the LORD, and said, From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it"** (Job 1:7). Peter also paints Satan as a carnivore that is scouring the Earth's surface for morsels of meat and fulfilling fleshly desires. **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour"** (I Peter 5:8). Quoth the Raven, "Nevermore?"

That is what the Bible is revealing to Noah (and us) about the nature of fleshly things. The

poet Edgar Allen Poe wrote thusly, "Ghastly grim and ancient Raven wandering from the Nightly shore- Tell me what thy lordly name is on the Night's Plutonian shore! Quoth the Raven 'Nevermore.'" Words mean things, and so do Biblical pictures. The raven has sin's curse upon it, and can no longer (nevermore) control his desires, motives and actions, but will continue to exist as a manifestation of his total depravity.

Birds of carrion are to be pitied, because their existence was thus altered by Adam's curse, but they are also to be feared, as that curse gathers strength and sway over this spiritually accursed Earth. The raven and Satan will co-jointly reign, until the curse is removed.

Satan has several epithets given him, to illustrate his nature, attributes and sphere of influence. The devil, the tempter, the adversary, the wicked one, but also less commonly used ones, like these two found in Paul's letter to the Ephesian Baptist church. **"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience"** (Eph. 2:2). He is the "prince of this world" that is intent on soaring **"to and fro"** over this earth, and like the raven, he is gobbling up the opportunities of lordship that death has provided him. **"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places"** (Eph. 6:12). "Kosmokrator" is the Greek word translated **"rulers"** in this passage. Another name of the tempter, the devil. It means "world-ruler" and

that is what the raven pictures in his eternal departure from the ark engineered for Noah and his family. Although it has just been cleansed by the great deluge, the world is STILL contaminated with spiritual depravity. Mere water cannot cleanse this earth, but she is reserved for an elemental, molecular, fiery cleansing yet to come. **"Whereby the world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished: But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men. ...But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up"** (II Peter 3:6-7, 10).

Then the curse will be purged and lifted! By the grace and power of the KING of Kings and Lord of Lords! **"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new"** (Rev. 21:4-5). Amen! Selah! Think about it!

There is a prophecy of the Millennial Reign in Isaiah 11:10,6-9, **"And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious. ...The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together; and a little child shall lead them. And the cow and the**

♦ (Continued on page 17)

Raven and the Dove

(Continued from page 16) ♦

bear shall feed; their young ones shall lie down together: and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. And the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put his hand on the cockatrice' den. They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the LORD, as the waters cover the sea. I thought it was pretty cool, that this was the analogy used by Isaiah to show that the knowledge of the Lord is going to fill the earth, "...as the waters cover the sea." Wow! That is what Noah, the dove and the raven saw out the window of their floating ark, eh? No one could deny the glory of God as they viewed the scene of justice, power and holiness, and an inward glance at the ark would round out the picture of grace, love and eternal hope and joy. Selah! Think about it!

So the raven is the "kosmokrator," or world-ruler in a picture, as Noah presciently and pictorially releases that Pandora's box of evil into the world. Not the black-feathered avian creature himself, but surely we know now what he represents is the desperate straits that the post-deluge world must not forget, else they end up with Noah's totally depraved generation where **"...GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually"** (Gen. 6:5).

If the only bird released out of Noah's ark had been the raven, then surely only destruction and condemnation could EVER have been foreseen. Kingdoms would have been built (like

Babel and Assyria) that would only have total depravity as their foundation, and only such carrion as the raven would rule, and inevitably, a cleansing world-wide judgment would await that such world, too. Edom (Idumea) was cursed to such a raven-inhabited end in Isaiah 34:9-13, **"And the streams thereof shall be turned into pitch, and the dust thereof into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever: from generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones**

of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be an habitation of dragons, and a court for owls."

But God had Noah release a dove, also, and then record the results in the eternal Word of God. **"Also he sent forth a dove from him, to see if the waters were abated from off the face of the ground; But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark. And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he**

sent forth the dove out of the ark; And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more" (Gen. 8:8-12).

Why, the dove? Unlike the raven, the dove was not transformed by the curse of Adam into a carrion bird. The dove eats live worms and insects, etc and remains a clean bird, suitable for holy sacrifices unto the Lord. **"And if he be not able to bring a lamb, then he shall bring for his trespass, which he hath committed, two turtledoves, or two young pigeons, unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering"** (Lev. 5:7). She is even pictured in each gospel at Jesus' baptism as a portent of the presence of the Holy Spirit. **"And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased"** (Luke 3:22).

The dove that Noah released, pictures a bird that unlike the raven, cannot subsist on the things of the flesh, and she returned to Noah and the ark that God had provided, trusting that God would STILL sustain her out of His great mercy and grace.

But to dig a little deeper into the story of this dove, we need to examine her three trips and the results recorded by God through Noah and his generation. "Three" is the number of full manifestation, typically through trials and tribulations. The three trips of the dove show the

♦ (Continued on page 18)



Raven and the Dove

(Continued from page 17) ♦

necessity of three visits to the earth by our Lord Jesus Christ, as well. The first trip results are seen in Genesis 8:9, **"But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark."** This parallels with our Saviour's first visit as well. **"And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head"** (Matt. 8:20). Neither the gentle dove, nor our gentle Saviour came to conquer this first trip, but to survey the damage of sin. Christ came, not to judge, but to become a sacrificial substitute for His elect in His first incarnation as Immanuel. He did not rescue them physically on the first trip, but showed the depth of this callous and inhabitable world for anything or any person of upright spirit and holiness. **"He came unto his own, and his own received him not"** (John 1:11). **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil"** (Matt. 5:17). Noah put forth his hand and pulled her back into the ark, and so our Father put forth His hand and brought His precious Son back home to His throne at the ascension of Christ.

The second expedition of the dove, is a picture of the Second Coming of our Lord. **"And he stayed yet other seven days; and again he sent forth the dove out of the ark; And the dove came in to him in the evening; and, lo, in her mouth was an olive leaf pluckt off: so Noah knew that the waters were abated from off**

the earth" (Gen 8:10-11). The seven days are representative of God's perfect appointed time. Christ will come whenever the Lord is finished with this current time of the Gentile church. **"Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away. 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. For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. 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. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch"** (Mark 13:31-37). **"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that 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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words"** (I Thess. 4:15-18).

The dove returned in the evening of the day, and so shall also come the Son of God, at the "evening" of our age. **"And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they**

looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, 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" (Acts 1:9-11). **"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"** (Rev. 14:14-16).

The Lord's second expedition to this earth is much different from the first and has physical results, that will be procured for His Father. The picture of the plucked olive leaf is what the dove brings home with her. So, too, shall Jesus Christ bring His plucked/raptured children home with Him. **"Mine eyes are ever toward the LORD; for he shall pluck my feet out of the net"** (Ps. 25:15). Life plucked from the death of the raven's world. So much so, that the olive leaf has become a universal picture of peace and reconciliation with God the Creator. Oh that salvation and deliverance might come! **"In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this**

corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (I Cor. 15:52-57).

The Nation of Israel (or God's chosen people) are pictured in Romans 11 as natural olive trees with branches that God has broken off for their disobedience and grafted in the branches of the Gentiles. The olive leaf is rescued as the Lord brings this remnant of the rapture into the ark, along with the dove's concluded second expedition, but the olive tree yet remains outside the ark, and yet another seven days must pass before the dove of Christ comes for them.

"And he stayed yet other seven days; and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more" (Gen. 8:12). What a glorious picture, this third and LAST venture of the dove from Heaven (the ark) into the now-cleansed world teeming with new life. At the end of the seven days, Noah sends the dove out and records that she does not come back. So Christ at the end of the Great Tribulation will come to permanently rule and reign over the deposed kosmokrator's kingdoms. King Jesus will make ONE everlasting kingdom and there will be no need to return to Heaven (the ark), because the Lord will bring Heaven to the earth with His continual presence and eternal dominion. **"And the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under**

♦ (Continued on page 19)

Raven and the Dove

(Continued from page 18) ♦

the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him" (Dan. 7:27). "And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God" (Rev. 19:15).

All along, men have supposed the raven to be mightier than the dove, but the amazing patience of the mighty dove is seen in waiting upon the Master's time and providence. The dove will DESTROY the raven's kingdoms and will rule with a rod of righteous iron, but only in the wisdom and purposes of the Father's decrees. **"For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind. But be ye glad and rejoice for ever in that which I create: for, behold, I create Jerusalem a rejoicing, and her people a joy.**

And I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in my people: and the voice of weeping shall be no more heard in her, nor the voice of crying" (Isa. 65:17-19). **"Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation"** (II Peter 3:13-15).

And that, ultimately, is the purposes of Noah's raven and his dove. To picture the fullness of God's long-suffering salvation. Never let His children lose hope. Yes, the raven is patrolling our carnal earth, but the dove is timing her expeditions with the precise timing of the Master of all. Christ came and fulfilled every prophecy concerning His first coming, and His next two comings will also be meticulously engineered and the deliverance of God's people will certainly be accomplished. Praise the Lord! Amen!



at his church, advocating for a historically Biblical view of marriage and sexuality. An investigation found no evidence Cochran ever discriminated against any member of the fire department on the basis of his religious beliefs. Despite that, in early 2015, the city fired Cochran. U.S. District Judge Leigh Martin May ruled in support of Atlanta's right to fire Cochran because the city can fire with or without cause, but she ruled that city government policies restricting employee speech did not pass constitutional muster. "The government can't force its employees to get its permission before engaging in free speech," Kevin Theriot, senior counsel for Alliance Defending Freedom and Cochran's attorney, said after the ruling. "In addition, as the court found, the city can't leave such decisions to the whims of government officials. This ruling benefits not only Chief Cochran, but also other employees who want to write books or speak about matters unrelated to work."

UN CENSURES U.S. OVER JERUSALEM EMBASSY MOVE
(WNS)--The UN General Assembly voted overwhelmingly Thursday to declare "null and void" the U.S. decision to move its embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv.

While Palestinians celebrated the 128-9 vote, they did not garner as much support for the international censure as they had hoped. Thirty-five countries abstained from the vote, and representatives from 21 countries left the chamber ahead of the tally. As debate on the measure began, U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley warned the Trump administration would not forget such a snub. "We will remember it when we are called upon once again to make the world's largest contribution to the United Nations," she said. "And we will remember when so many countries come calling

on us, as they so often do, to pay even more and to use our influence for their benefit." President Donald Trump announced earlier this month he would move the U.S. Embassy to Jerusalem, Israel's capital. Palestinian leaders also hope to declare part of Jerusalem their capital one day, prompting most countries to avoid putting embassies in the city. The UN vote is nonbinding and will not affect the Trump administration's plans, Haley said.

GOVERNMENT PROBE RENEWS CALLS TO DEFUND PLANNED PARENTHOOD

(WNS)--Pro-life advocates hope a new U.S. Department of Justice investigation into Planned Parenthood marks a turning point for the nation's largest abortion provider. On Dec. 7, the Justice Department requested unredacted documents from the Senate Judiciary Committee, indicating it has launched a formal investigation into Planned Parenthood. In 2016, both the Judiciary Committee and The House Select Investigative Panel on Infant Lives did their own investigations into the abortion industry and fetal procurement businesses. Both panels referred Planned Parenthood to the FBI at the end of 2016 for illegally profiting from fetal tissue sales. Now that the Justice Department agrees Planned Parenthood is worth investigating, pro-life groups want Congress to pull federal funding.

SUFFER NOT THE CHILDREN

(WNS)--Contrary to the narrative pushed by academia and the mainstream media, there is increasing evidence that same-sex parenting has negative effects on children. An article published in November by Catholic University of America sociology professor Paul Sullins found children with same-sex parents suffer emotional problems two to three

♦ (Continued on page 20)

THE

BIBLE AND THE NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

COURT RULES FOR FIRE CHIEF IN RELIGIOUS LIBERTY CASE

(WNS)--A U.S. District Court judge ruled on Dec. 20 that city of Atlanta rules used to fire former Fire Chief Kelvin Cochran were unconstitutional. The ruling said

policies restricting non-work speech allowed city officials to unconstitutionally discriminate against views with which they disagreed. Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed suspended Cochran without pay in 2014 because of an 162-page book Cochran wrote for men

Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 19) ♦

times as often as children raised by opposite-sex parents. Sullins' latest article joins other research, most notably published by himself and University of Texas professor Mark Regnerus, showing children raised by same-sex parents have increased risks of certain harms, including emotional problems, depression, and sexual abuse. Despite this, the American Psychological Association has dogmatically endorsed a "no difference" theory—namely, that there is no difference between children raised by same-sex parents and opposite-sex parents—since 2004.

BARBIE FOR GAY MARRIAGE

(WNS)--The recent push by toymaker Mattel for a more inclusive Barbie doll has gone beyond body types. In late November, the company revealed Barbie supports LGBT relationships. The post on the official BarbieStyle Instagram account shows Barbie with the fashion blogger Aimee Song-inspired doll, both wearing "Love Wins" shirts. The shirts are part of Song's fashion line for Gay Pride month, and proceeds benefit an LGBT advocacy organization. "Such an inspiring initiative," Barbie said in her post, "and fabulous few days I have spent with Aimee, she's a doll!" The internet is now alive with commentators guessing whether Barbie—a toy supposedly suitable for little girls ages 3 and older—is lesbian, bisexual, or just an LGBT advocate, and how her longtime boyfriend Ken feels about the development.

THE NOISE OF LIFE

(WNS)--Pastor Andrew March knows it is the content, not the volume, of his speech outside a Portland, Maine, Planned Parenthood facility that has him at odds with the state's noise ordinance. He is asking the

U.S. Supreme Court for relief from the law Planned Parenthood is using to silence his pro-life message. Christian legal defense organizations in December filed friend-of-the-court briefs supporting March's appeal to the high court. Planned Parenthood staffers did not complain Dec. 4, 2015, when climate change protesters paraded under the second-floor windows of their downtown Portland facility. But when March's solitary, unamplified pro-life message drifted into their windows from the sidewalk below, they called the police to enforce the noise ordinance.

CALIFORNIA AGAIN APPROVES ABORTION PILL REVERSAL CLASS

(WNS)--The California Board of Registered Nursing has given a green light—for the third time—to a class teaching nurses how to reverse drug-induced abortions. The board's decision, coming just months after it decided to cut the class, surprised leaders of Heartbeat International, the Ohio-based nonprofit organization that offers the continuing education credit. "We thought it would be more paperwork involved and more of a protracted process," Heartbeat spokesman Jay Hobbs told me. "In the end, really what we saw was them ... conceding

that this is a science-based approach to medicine, that there's just no good grounds to stop nurses from learning about that." After taking the first drug, more than 400 women have called the Abortion Pill Reversal hotline and successfully saved their babies' lives, according to Heartbeat.

INTERNATIONAL BRIEFS IRELAND WANTS TO SEND BACK SOROS' PRO-ABORTION MONEY

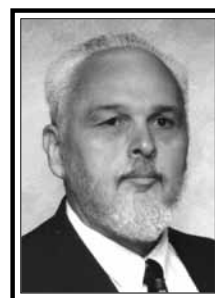
(WNS)--American billionaire George Soros' money has helped abortion advocacy groups in Ireland, but the nation's government has demanded the groups return his donations. The Irish Standards in Public Office Commission (SIPO) demanded that Amnesty International in Ireland return the Soros-funded Open Society Foundation's 137,000 euro (\$160,964) donation for its "My Body My Rights" campaign to repeal the country's abortion ban. Ireland's finance laws bar foreign donors from giving to groups that seek to sway elections or public policy. Amnesty International executive director Colm O'Gorman said the order is flawed and his organization "will consider every opportunity to challenge this decision."



The Scriptures or the Son

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

Speaking to the Jewish religious leaders who opposed Him, the Lord Jesus said: **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life"** (John 5:39-40). Herein is an amazing thing. Jesus is addressing the people



of His nation that were the most studious and the most knowledgeable in the Scriptures. And yet He tells them that they were wrong. They thought they had eternal life through their knowledge of God's Book. This book is the very book that foretold

of Him in many instances and ways. In spite of this, they missed Christ: they refused to come to Him. They had God's Book, but missed God's Son. They did not have eternal life: the very thing they thought they had. Saul of Tarsus learned that he was wrong about his religion on the road to Damascus. He, too, was of the sect of the Pharisees just as were these Jewish men whom the Lord Jesus rebuked. By the grace of God, Saul (later Paul) was enabled to receive and obey his rebuke. His contemporaries who plagued the Lord were not so enabled, at least for the most part. They had no love of the truth.

We have reason to believe that there are people in the same state today. What a terrible thing that is: to have a head filled with Bible facts and yet not know the One of whom the facts speak! The Pharisees knew the very Book that Jesus used in His preaching about Himself. The following two verses indicate how the Lord Jesus used the Old Testament Scriptures – the only Scriptures that existed when He was alive on the earth. **"And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself... And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me"** (Luke 24:27, 44). The Lord Jesus used the Book studied by the Pharisees. With it He demonstrated over and over again the things written about Him. Wonderful words this wonderful Word of God! And yet the Great Subject of this Book, the Lord Jesus Christ, was hidden to these

♦ (Continued on page 21)

The Scriptures or

(Continued from page 20) ♦

Jewish scholars! They had their theology all worked out. They were looking for their Messiah. But the true Messiah was not according to their expectations. He was not different from the One prophesied in the Old Testament. But He was exceedingly different from the ideas the Jewish scholars had of Him. He was different from their interpretation of the Scriptures that spoke of Him. And they loved their interpretation of God's Word. They loved their own doctrine. It was reasonable. They had it all worked out to the satisfaction of their own minds.

Just as the Jewish religious leaders of that day did not like the Lord Jesus Christ, so today there are people who do not like Him. Haters of God and His Christ are not limited to non-Christian religions. America's professing Christian churches are full of people who hate the doctrines taught by Christ. They hate the Christ who taught them. But they have their doctrine all worked out. They have their preachers who preach a loveable little Baby Jesus in a manger or a Christ who loves everybody and is trying to save everybody. That Christ is fine! The Christ who wants to give them all health and wealth – these preachers preach a likeable Christ. They and their tribes are bread-and-fish followers. But woe to the preacher who preaches the whole Bible – or even just the whole New Testament! Woe to the congregation that is loyal to the One revealed in the Bible! This Messiah is not the kind of King that people want. They delight to sing and shout and dance to their imaginary Jesus, but they will not bow the knee to the Christ of the Bible.

Most people who think themselves saved today do not like the Christ of the Bible. Again, we say that they are deluded as to who He is, and what He taught, and did. Oh, they know some things – the half-truths that tickle their flesh and give them a false comfort. They know them because these things are the “smooth things” they like to hear. They have fulfilled the prophecy of Paul in II Timothy 4:3-4. There he wrote: **“For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.”**

Let us look at one example of the hated words of the Lord Jesus. We refer to His use of parables. As an Arminian taught by Arminians, this preacher was inoculated with the usual stuff circulated about parables by people intoxicated by notions of their own free will and human ability. “A parable is an earthly story with a heavenly meaning” was one popular ditty of the day. It was taught that parables were used by the Lord to help people understand truth. As is often the case with Arminianism and other heresies, what they said was a half truth. The Lord Himself told His disciples why He spoke in parables. And God had His words recorded for us so that we can know the reason behind Christ's use of parables. Please read this text carefully: **“And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever**

hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them” (Matt. 13:10-15). If words have meaning, and they do, the inescapable conclusion to which we must come is that while parables teach truth to some people, they hide it from others. They hide it from others! Such an idea as that is not politically correct! But you cannot escape it: Jesus said that one reason He spoke in parables was to hide the truth from some people. The truth was to be hidden to those to whom **“it is not given”**. But this idea smacks of the doctrine of God's sovereign election of some to eternal life and His passing by of others. This will not do, they say: people are basically good and have a right to decide for themselves apart from any interference or influence from God upon their lives. Such a God as the One revealed in the Bible: the One who chooses His own friends and selects a bride for His Son is not to be tolerated. We will not have this man to rule over us! This thing the enemies of the truth often label as Calvinism is a much-hated and much-maligned doctrine. Calvin they can defeat,

but the doctrine of sovereign unconditional election of some to life is taught too often in the Bible to be ignored! But because of the Lord Jesus' teaching on election as well as other things, people do not like the Jesus Christ of the Bible! Such sentences as **“Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given”** which fell from the Savior's lips do not make Him friends among those to whom **“it is not given.”** And so we must ask the question: are there professing Christians “to whom it is not given”? Are there Baptists “to whom it is not given”? We fear that the answer is yes to both questions. There are people who know the contents of the Bible, but who do not know the Christ of the Bible. Some people may know the subjects of the sentences in the Bible, but do not know the Great Subject of the Bible.

You see, coming to Christ is a part of that great experience of grace given only to God's chosen ones. Most professing Christians know nothing about such an experience. They have joined a church. They have endured what passes for baptism. They have prayed the sinner's prayer – whatever that is. They have gone down to the front and signed a card. They vibrate to, and whistle, and applaud the latest “Christian music”. They are proud to be a part of “the flock on the block that rocks”. But they have not experienced the grace of God. The new birth is as much an experience as is the natural birth. One is being born of the flesh. The other is being **“born of the Spirit”** (John 3:6). And despite what the heretics say and think, the individual has no more control over the Spirit birth than he did

♦ (Continued on page 22)

The Scriptures or

(Continued from page 21) ♦

over his natural birth. You were a participant in your first birth, but you were not the cause of it. You did not go into labor: your mother did. In similar fashion the sinner is a participant in the Spirit birth, but he is not the cause of it. That is one of the lessons taught by the Bible metaphor of the new birth or Spirit birth.

The Bible says, **“...Knowledge puffeth up, but charity edifieth. And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know”** (I Cor. 8:1-2). Bare knowledge apart from the Spirit's work results in sinful pride and self-confidence. In the operation of the Holy Spirit, Bible knowledge results in humility and confidence in God alone. This, too, is a part of the experience of grace: God's grace. We need to understand and always remember that God's grace actually accomplishes the will of God in our lives. While there may be such a thing as common grace whereby men are influenced for good by the Bible and sound preaching, this is only temporary and limited. The Bible says, **“For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works”** (Titus 2:11-14). In this last passage God says that the grace of God does two things to some of all

kinds of people. First of all, it brings salvation. Did you get that? The grace of God actually brings salvation! Grace is not an offer to be scorned and trodden underfoot by wicked men. It comes with irresistible power: the power of God. It does not bring salvation half-way. It does not sometimes bring salvation. It does not try to bring salvation. Those to whom grace is given actually come to experience what grace brings. And that grace **“...was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began”** (II Tim. 1:9). (Oh no! There is that election thing again!) The second thing that grace does is this: it teaches us how to live. This is not an outward legalism based upon the constraints of the Mosaic law. That law is **“...from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage”** (Gal. 4:24). The way to live taught by grace is **“the law of Christ”** (Gal. 6:2). This is **“the love of God”** which has been **“shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us”** (Rom. 5:5). The life of a true child of God is not motivated by legalistic bondage, but rather by love both to God and men. To the same crowd who knew the Scriptures but who rejected the Christ of the Scriptures the Lord Jesus Christ said, **“But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you”** (John 5:42). They were like the people prophesied about in II Thessalonians 2:10. There the Bible speaks of **“...them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”** The child of God does not love truth because of something that is in him naturally. He does not love the truth because he is intellectually superior to

others. The love of the truth is a gift. It is bestowed. Receiving it is a part of all that goes into the experience of grace. Those who have not experienced God's grace may indeed love doctrine: their doctrine. They love that which suits their personality and ideas, but they do not love the truth. They will not follow it wherever it leads them. They can remain in churches that deny the truth, that revel in worldly entertainments and religious shindigs, that financially support “ministries” and seminaries and preachers that teach lies about God. The truth does not move them because **“they received not a love of the truth, that they might be saved.”**

Have you only a knowledge of the Scriptures, or do you know the Son – the Son of God? He is the one **“Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works”** (Titus 2:14). Knowing about someone is mere head-knowledge. Knowing someone is an experience. Have you had that experience of grace whereby you have come to be acquainted with the Son of God? If so, the Scriptures will mean everything to you. It is in **“the scripture of truth”** that the Son is revealed. It is by the experience of grace – the new birth of the Holy Spirit – that we are enabled to understand the things of the Spirit: God's Bible. It is at that new birth that the elect receive a love of the truth that they might be saved. Do not confuse a head-knowledge of truth with the experience of grace whereby a sinner comes to know the Son of God. Glorious things await those who know Christ!



END

The Short Pews



Brief
Articles
by Curtis
Pugh

“WHEN HIS CHOSEN ONES SHALL GATHER...”

Those familiar with the old song *When the Roll Is Called Up Yonder* will recognize the words of our title. They are part of the third line of the second verse: “When His Chosen Ones Shall Gather...” We wonder how many people really understand that the children of God, i.e. true Christians, i.e. those who have been born from above by the Spirit of God were first chosen for salvation by the Lord Himself.

Today we hear a lot about getting sinners to choose Christ. But the Bible talks about God having chosen lost sinners. The Bible is full of instances of God's choosing individuals. God chose Abraham and certain of his descendants to be His nation, Israel. Out of that chosen nation God chose the tribe of Levi to be His priests. Out of that same nation He chose the tribe of Judah to be the kings of Israel. In the New Testament He chose certain men to be His servants and messengers. For instance, God spoke to Ananias about Saul (later called Paul): **“But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel”** (Acts 9:15).

The Bible not only tells us that it is God who did the choosing, it tells us when He made His choices. **“According as he**

♦ (Continued on page 23)

The Short Pews

(Continued from page 22) ♦

hath 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" (Eph. 1:4-5). Three grand concepts are presented in those last two verses: (1) God's choice, or election, of certain individuals to salvation took place before the world was created, and (2) this election (choosing) is directly connected with the predestination of the same people and (3) this was all according to God's will – and not man's will or choosing – and certainly not man's per-determining anything. In II Thessalonians 2:13 we find this phrase, **"...God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation..."**

The Bible also tells us the kind of people God has chosen and effectively called to salvation. **"For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence"** (I Cor. 1:26-29). God did not look ahead and see any goodness or faith in those whom He chose. He chose foolish, weak, base, and despised people. These are the people whom God saves! Do you qualify?

THE CALL TO COME OUT

Humans dislike being different from their peers. Whatever group we identify with we tend to be in most every way like them. We want to be accepted by them. But God calls upon His people to come out. Second Corinthians 6:17-18 says: **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty."** The **"them"** are those who do not serve God.

This passage is clear: the relationship of God as a Father to His "sons and daughters" - His receiving of them - hinges upon their coming out. Notice that in the Bible God either receives individuals or He does not. Today people emphasize trying to get spiritually dead sinners to "receive Christ" as if they have the ability to do so. Those who received (welcomed) Christ when He was here on earth did so because something had previously happened to them. John 1:12-13 explains it: **"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."** If men and women were made willing and able to receive (welcome) Christ by the new birth when He was present bodily upon the earth, how much more now that a relationship with Him is a purely spiritual matter? Clearly the new birth is not brought about by anything the creature does. His will is not the cause. It is God who wills to birth sinners into His family.

Paul wrote to a congregation

these words: **"Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure"** (Phil. 2:12-13). Some folk latch onto the first part of this passage and do not realize that the only way a person's inner spiritual experience bears outward fruit is because the Holy Spirit is working within the child of God causing him to **"will and to do"** what God tells us to do.

And we are told to **"come out from among them, and be ye separate."** We are not even to **"touch"** the unclean thing: that which is sinful in God's eyes. After all, God is, **"...of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity..."** (Hab. 1:13). How can we then think that God will have anything to do with those who do not **"come out,"** but continue to walk in harmony with the world? Jesus said: **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me"** (John 10:27). Are you following the Good Shepherd?

WORKS MONGERS VERSUS GRACE MONGERS

Today's Americans do not use the word "monger" much. A person who deals in a specific commodity is a monger. Among religious people there are both works mongers and grace mongers: those who deal in the idea that good works are necessary to obtain the new birth, and those who maintain that the new birth is all of grace.

Every person claiming to be a Christian says that they believe in grace. However the parting

♦ (Continued on page 24)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

12-1-2017 to 12-31-2017

Beginning Balance \$2,240.97

RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX 100.00
Benny Huerta, Youngstown, AZ 44.00
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 300.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL 60.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX 50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV 200.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 300.00
Bruce Allen, Fairmount, GA 25.00
Carol Willet, Edgewater, FL 50.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 25.00
Emmanuel B. C., Oldtown, KY 100.00
Faith B. C., Lynn, AR 12.50
Gail Knowles, Scarborough, ME 20.00
Grace B. C., Rural Hall, NC 50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL 50.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
The Lord's Church, Goose Creek, SC 50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY 35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH 100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN 50.00
Parkway Landmark B. C., Springfield, OR 100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL 100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR 50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS 25.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA 25.00
Subscriptions 30.56
Anonymous 1,210.00
Dividing checks 300.00
Sub Total \$3,562.06
TOTAL \$5,803.03

EXPENDITURES:

Printing 490.00
Postage 523.14
Wages 2,300.00
FICA 175.96
Dividing checks 300.00
Bank Charge 13.00
Total Expenditures \$3,802.10
ENDING BALANCE \$2,000.93



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

12-1-2017 to 12-31-2017

Beginning Balance \$1,912.98

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY 200.00
Calvary I. B. C., Sumas, WA 100.00
..... 525.00
TOTAL 2,437.98

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time 843.98
Program production 195.00
Bank charge 10.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES 1,048.98
..... 1,389.00
Interest +.01
ENDING BALANCE \$1,389.01

ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Grace Bible Baptist Church of Denham Springs is in search of a pastor.

For a statement of faith you can visit the church website at <http://GraceBibleBaptist.webhop.org> or <http://gracebbc.dyndns.org:81/>.

You may contact any of the following for more information: Keith Laurence (225) 664-3557, Lucien LeSage (225) 803-9710, Charlie Andrews (225) 200-1171, or Joey Newell (225) 772-9158.

The Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Marion, IL is seeking a pastor. Please contact Gary Ratley at (618) 841-0228 for more information.

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.

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

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

The Faith Missionary Baptist Church of Cobbitty, South Wales, Australia is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact David Jackson at 4 Station Street, Thirlmere, NSW 2572, Australia or Email: shellie45@bigpond.com.au.

The Short Pews

(Continued from page 23) ♦

of the ways comes when some say that the sinner must do something in order to obtain grace. Many say that grace - and with it the new birth - comes by baptism. Others say the new birth comes because a person prays or opens his heart's door or makes a decision for Christ, etc. In other words, God gives the new birth (eternal life) because of works on the part of the spiritually dead sinner. They claim that a spiritually dead sinner can do something physical and bring about spiritual life.

Jesus said, **"That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit"** (John 3:6). All that the flesh (natural man) can produce is something natural, but the Spirit produces spiritual life when He moves into the sinner. Proof: **"But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his"** (Rom. 8:9).

Then there are those who "deal" in pure grace. They say, **"...the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord"** (Rom. 6:3). They often quote, **"For by grace are ye**

saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast" (Eph. 2:8-9). And often resort to Romans 4:4-5 which says: **"Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."** Think of that! Righteousness by God's gift of faith alone!

Then there are those who think they can mix works and faith and thus qualify for the new birth. But Paul knocked that idea in the head when he wrote: **"Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace"** (Rom. 11:5-6). In other words, election and subsequent spiritual life is either by works or by grace. The two are opposites and cannot be mixed: like oil and water! When Newton wrote "'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved" he testified to the fact that all of salvation - beginning with the new birth - all is by grace! Are you a works monger or a grace monger?



Quotes from Brother Ritechus N. Dignation
by Joseph Harris

OFFENDED FOLKS

I'm fired up. I just heard about a school over across the pond in England that's got a real problem. Seems they are skittish about some children's nursery rhymes. They are all in a stew over Baa Baa Black Sheep. Apparently, it's racist. Now when nursery rhymes that have been around for years and years start offendin', then it's time to call the cuckoo truck. With tongue in cheek, just consider the following.

I'm more concerned about some real offenses that are actually in these rhymes. Baa Baa Black Sheep also asks if you have any wool, and the answer is "yes sir, yes sir, three bags full." Now how do you suppose that wool got in those bags? It was trimmed off the sheep, which means they got a haircut, which means bald headed people can now be offended. And I'm one of 'em. That makes me mad as hornets.

And how about Jack Sprat who could eat no fat? That's okay, but his wife could eat no lean, which means all she eats is fat. It's not hard to figure out she must be big as a house. As my old friend Cowlick used to say, "That's a lotta lard." I take exception to that, and I'm hurt, since I'm a bit on the lardy side.

I just think it's high time we sharpened our sensitivity and started teachin' our kids a little more respect and chunk those hurtful rhymes. Don't you?

ARTICLE INDEX

A Remedy for Wandering Thoughts by Richard Steele	p. 7
The Bible and the Newspaper	p. 19
Forum	pp. 12-13
The Golden Age by Arthur W. Pink & Luther C. Peak	p. 1
Little Hills	p. 5
Quotes from Brother R. N. D. by Joseph Harris	p. 24
The Raven and the Dove by Matthew Stepp	p. 1
The Scriptures or the Son by Curtis Pugh	p. 20
The Short Pews	p. 22
Why A Crown of Thorns? by Lucien J. LeSage Jr.	p. 1