

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 Battle of Armageddon

T. P. Simmons
(1898 - 1969)

Most people have a mistaken notion, if they have any notion at all, about the Battle of Armageddon. Some thought the late World War was the Battle of Armageddon. Others have advanced the idea that it will be a war between Catholics and non-Catholics. Still others teach that it is to be a mere spiritual conflict between good and evil without any literal reality. Yet



others confuse it with the battle that is alluded to in Revelation 20:8, which is to be after the Millennium. All of these ideas are unscriptural and unworthy of serious consideration. Let us study this battle by noting the following:

Why this battle is so named. The battle is named from the place in which it is to be fought. **"And I saw three unclean spirits"**
♦ (Continued on page 5)

Can This Text Speak?

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

"Son of man, can these bones live?" (Ezek. 37:3).

I love this Ezekiel 37. I had a picture of Gustave Dore's painting, *Vision of the Valley of Dry Bones*, as the screensaver on my phone for a while (it sparked my boys' imagination when they were little. It is kind of creepy in the way young people like spooky stories). This story has a happy ending. God called the prophet to go to a



valley, and he saw an awful sight-- a valley full of dead men's bones. They lay on the ground, parched bones dry as dirt, bodies without the dignity of burial. They just lay as they were killed and rotted away.

God asked Ezekiel if the bones could live again, and he said, **"thou knowest."** Maybe Ezekiel wanted to say no, but God asked

♦ (Continued on page 2)

But Rather Giving Thanks

By Timothy J. Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Please consider Ephesians 4; 5:1-20 before reading.

"Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph. 5:4, 20). Paul, speaking as "the prisoner of the Lord," using his actual condition as a prisoner in a prison because of preaching the gospel of the grace of God as an illustration of belonging entirely to the Lord and being bound to



the Lord to do the Lord's will, much as he was bound with a chain at all times pending his trial before Caesar, appeals to the Ephesians that

they would live in a manner that is worthy of the calling of God of which they were recipients and partakers. They ought not live any longer like the world, or behave themselves as they had done before God called them out of the darkness, error, and folly of sin to walk in newness of life and the paths of righteousness for His name's sake. They have been
♦ (Continued on page 4)

The Red Heifer Ordinance Part 2

By Nathaniel Hille
of Plant City, Florida

"And the LORD spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, This is the ordinance of the law which the LORD hath commanded, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer without spot, wherein is no blemish, and upon which never came yoke: And ye shall give her unto Eleazar the priest, that he may bring her forth without the camp, and one shall slay her before his face: And Eleazar the priest shall take of her blood with his finger,



and sprinkle of her blood directly before the tabernacle of the congregation seven times: And one shall burn the heifer in his

sight; her skin, and her flesh, and her blood, with her dung, shall he burn: And the priest shall take cedar wood, and hyssop, and scarlet, and cast it into the midst of the burning of the heifer. Then the priest shall wash his clothes, and he shall bathe his flesh in water, and afterward he shall come into the camp, and the priest shall

♦ (Continued on page 6)



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The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

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

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KARI, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550	5, 0 0 0	A M

Can This Text Speak?

(Continued from page 1) ♦

the question, and all things are possible with God. It was a safe answer to say, "you know, Lord." Obviously, bones can not live, but God can do whatever He pleases. The Lord told Ezekiel to prophesy to the bones and say, "**O ye dry bones, hear the word of the LORD;**" because the Lord would give these bones life again. God will provide them with breath, flesh, and life once more. So, Ezekiel preached. He might have felt silly preaching to inanimate objects (every pastor who has preached right after a big meal at a fellowship meeting knows the feeling). Suddenly, there was a noise in the valley. The bones began to move on their own. The skeletons began to reassemble before his very eyes. Imagine seeing the dead man's skull rolling over on its own, connecting to the vertebrae. Think about seeing that cold, black eye socket, the bare and exposed teeth, moving on its own. Arms were joining together, hands reforming. Then, muscle and flesh formed over the bones, and there was a valley of corpses. On the bright side, at least they were not just bones. The Lord said, "**Prophecy unto the wind, prophesy, son of man, and say to the wind, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live,**" and Ezekiel preached, and the men began to breathe and move about. They stood up, and there in the valley were dead men, regenerated—a great army of born-again soldiers.

That would have been something else, for sure. Why did God put Ezekiel through this exercise? What was the point of this passage? Was there only one

point? Sometimes, in a preacher's zeal to be faithful to the text, we impose rules that God does not impose like a text can only mean one thing. That is not how language works. A text cannot mean two contradictory things, but it can have more than one meaning, especially in a prophecy. A man could say, "Honey, have you seen my coat?" When the wife says, "I picked it up out of the middle of the floor where you left it and hung it up in the closet, where it belongs," she probably has more than one meaning behind the words. "Yes, I know where your coat is because I found it where it should not have been and placed it where it belongs, like you should have done, and then you would not ask me where your jacket is." Many husbands have the wrong hermeneutic and only hear the one point to their wife's words, "Jacket is in the closet."

God, Himself tells us there are a few different points to the same passage. One end of the message is to have faith in God. In verse six, God told Ezekiel to do this so that he would "**...know that I am the LORD.**" This entire exercise was, in part, to strengthen the faith of Ezekiel and all the people who would read this hereafter. It strengthens our faith to know the answer to the question is, "Yes, they can live Lord, if you will them to live." Ezekiel learned to trust God, that nothing is impossible with the Lord, and we should not doubt God's words and His work but trust and obey Him by faith.

Another point of the passage was giving God's people hope in Ezekiel's day in exile. God is faithful to His promises. The text provides God's people assurance that God has not forsaken them during their darkest trial. When the exiles heard this, it was

♦ (Continued on page 3)

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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas

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



How Important is the Local New Testament Church?

"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matt. 16:18).

I wanted to use Matthew 16:18 as my starting point, but not to debate the local church verses the mythical universal church. My thought here is the importance of the local church, because so many today do not reverence the church. The word reverence here means "by analogy to be in awe of" the church as though she is metaphorically the body of Christ and one day will be the bride of Christ. Therefore, the church must be respected for the glorious and holy institution that she is, not as simply a place of pleasure.

The church is important to the Christian because she is the pillar and ground of truth. **"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. 3:15).** If a church is not the pillar and ground of truth then it is not a church. **"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of**

his place, except thou repent" (Rev. 2:4-5).

The church is where you not only find truth, it is where you find Christian love. This love is of Jesus Christ and He instituted the church in the world to have love, share love, and a place to praise and love God. The church is the most holy place on earth, not Israel, not the Holy Lands, not any symbolic thing or place on earth, just the local New Testament Church.

The church must be the immovable pillar where the absolute truth is taught, where the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit is taught and respected as the absolute Sovereign Beings that they are. The church is about one focus, worshipping the Triune God in spirit and truth. The local church is the seminary of truth and only truth should be taught there. This is the reason the church, when assembled, is Holy ground.

Every member of a local church is a part of the body, and every member is very important to the local body. **"For the body is not one member, but many. ...For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked. ...And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues" (I Cor. 12:14, 24, 28).**

Therefore, you as a member were set in the local church to serve God, Jesus Christ, as it pleases Them. **"But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him" (I Cor. 12:18).** What a true blessing, God saves by His grace, then God sets us in the church as He chooses, to serve the purpose He chooses.

God chooses the building and body parts and calls them the body of Christ which gives us all a more special membership. Being a child of God is so special and being a member of the Lord's church is also very special, however both can be abused. God's grace can be abused by Christians sinning at will, by others not seeing your light shine.

The blessing of being a church member can be abused by not attending church, this is an awful disobedience to God. There are very few true reasons for a Church member not to be in church. God said, **"Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching"** (Heb. 10:25). Another failure by many members is tithes and offerings to the Lord's house. It is a fact that the Lord's churches suffer in many ways, but the two most common ways are attendance and money.

It is a real blessing to see God's children following the scripture and walking in His Word, but a sad thing when we see those not following the Scriptures. If you are saved and you are not a church member you truly need to join and be a part of God's church. Second, if you are a church member that does not do as God commanded it is time to straighten that out. Every Christian is saved because God saved them for a reason, and

that reason is not to disobey the Word of God.

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



Can This Text Speak?

(Continued from page 2) ♦

suitable and appropriate to say, "take heart, God has not forgotten us. God is for His people."

But there is another meaning. In verses 11-14, we learn the bones represent the whole house of Israel, Judah, and the Northern Kingdom. They were dry and without hope. Dead and divided, just like the bones. To a dispersed and exiled people, the Lord declared that He would again bring the nation to life. God will do the seemingly impossible thing, to bring the country back, bring the two kingdoms back in existence, and put them back in the land He promised Abraham and David.

"...Then shall ye know that I the LORD have spoken it, and performed it, saith the LORD," gives us yet another meaning here. God keeps His promises. Here is the main reason why I am a premillennialist. I believe God keeps His word. The covenants to Abraham and David about a particular land with a specific border, a particular kingdom, and a throne in an Earthly city have not been fulfilled. I do not believe God promised it, then tells us in the New Covenant, the specific promises were an allegory and that all the prophets and Old Testament saints had it entirely wrong for thousands of years.

I do not believe that is all this passage teaches. Indeed, I think it is valid to see God's life-giving, wonderworking power in salvation from this passage. Notice in verse 14, **"And shall put**

♦ (Continued on page 8)

Give Thanks

(Continued from page 1) ♦

called to put off the old man with his deeds, the former manner of life, and put on the new Christ-like man who is made anew in the likeness of Christ. This is evidenced in **"...all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace"** (Eph. 4:2-3). Christ was meek and lowly, longsuffering, and forbearing; and so are we to be. He did not seek His own pleasure or profit, but the profit of those He came to save. He did not seek to do His own will, but the will of the Father who had sent Him. He considered those brethren whom the Father gave to Him in the covenant of redemption, and for whom He laid down His own life, and who were likewise, because of the grace and working of God in their hearts, interested in and concerned with doing the will of His Father in heaven.

There is a great unity, or oneness, in the work of God. And therefore there ought to be a great unity, or oneness, among the people of God, particularly in any particular church of the living God. This unity, or oneness, is produced by, is a work of, the Spirit of God. We have all the same Holy Spirit, if we have been born of God. We were all called in and to the one and the same hope. We have the one and the same Lord, the one and same faith, and the one and same kind of baptism for the one and the same reason. We have the one and the same God and Father, who is over all, and who works all things for His one and the same purpose, and who is in us by the Spirit and works in us according to His will and pleasure. To every one of us He has given some different

measure of grace according to the will and pleasure of our one and the same Lord Jesus Christ, but it all comes from the same source. He is the Giver, we are all the receivers of His gift of grace and truth. And the purpose of these varying gifts is so that we might be built up as a body of Christ, His kind of church, and come to the unity and oneness of the faith, knowing Him and His will, and be a growing, prosperous, healthy, strong, well-nourished, intelligent, capable, dependable, and faithful church, for the honor and glory of God through Jesus Christ. We ought to have the same love one for another, and so every part of the body able to nourish every other part, strengthen every other part, and so the whole be something that no one part by itself could be, but together they be a God-honoring, Christ-loving-and-following body, united in inseparable unity in walking and pleasing God.

Having this oneness in Christ, they are now distinct and separate from the world, and taking an altogether different course or direction, and traveling in an entirely different manner, with an altogether different sort of conduct. This is not merely a following of some new set of rules and regulations, or a mere religious performance or show, but is the product of a transformed mind, that thinks in an entirely new way, and is of an altogether different spirit than that which operates in the minds of those who know not God and whose behavior is the product of the vanity of their minds and the lusts of their spiritually dead fleshly nature and sin-darkened hearts.

We are given a catalog of the things that are no longer appropriate for those who have

been called with the heavenly calling. Lying is no longer appropriate. Being angry and allowing anger to be the cause of sin is no longer appropriate, and is shown to actually be the means by which the devil gets his way in our lives. Stealing is no longer appropriate. Corrupt communication and God-dishonoring speech and talk is no longer appropriate. What should come out of our mouths should be that which conveys and serves the grace and truth of God to those who hear our words and the tone of our words. There is quite a list of things that are to be completely and totally abandoned. **"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice"** (Eph. 4:31). There is a list of what ought to now be our mode of behavior instead. **"And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you"** (Eph. 4:32).

The pattern for our life is now that which has been set by our heavenly Father, who has loved us as dear children, made us His children, gave His only begotten Son to save us that we could and would be His children; and in imitation of His great love, we are to love one another, and have the love of God in us be the rule of our lives, our conduct, our speech, and our behavior one toward another. Christ's love was a self-denying, self-sacrificing love; and we are to have the same love as Him.

Now we must not forget or minimize the great truth that He died on account of our sins. We are called with an holy calling. And so, we cannot allow the false doctrine of love to enter in and become a counterfeit substitute for the love of God. God's love

does not embrace sin. God's love does not excuse sin. God's love does not merely say sin is not so bad. God still hates with the most holy and complete hatred the sin that we committed and that was the reason Christ went to Calvary as the sacrifice for our sins. He hated it then, and He hates it now. And we ought to have nothing to do with sin. Those who continue in sinful living will still not have any part in the everlasting kingdom of God, no matter what vain and deceitful words come out of the mouths of any so-called preacher, or any person, no matter how much you think of them and like to have to do with them in the flesh, or no matter how impressed you are with them and their so-called ministry.

This brings us to the main focus of our lesson this evening, giving of thanks. This is part of the new way of living for those who have been called of God. This is a daily part of the vocation wherewith you have been called. We read here, in Ephesians 5:4, that **"Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting..."** are any longer to be a part of the speech patterns of a child of God. "Filthiness" means bad language, obscenity, and dishonorable talk. Some people like to tell dirty jokes. Some people like to talk about indecent things. Some people like to use foul language. The world thinks it is clever, funny, strong, smart, or necessary to prove a point or get a point across. God says it does not belong in His children's mouths. Jesus never found it necessary, and neither should we. "Foolish talking" refers to silly or useless talking (the word actually means "stupid," implying moral worthlessness). It has no value, is without spiritual benefit or purpose, and is therefore

♦ (Continued on page 10)



Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

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

Christless Christianity

I saw a video of an alleged pastor preaching a sermon on the resurrection of Christ. Well, sort of. He did not preach, but he wrote a play. And it was not really about Jesus and His death and resurrection. It was about The Avengers, the Marvel comic book characters, and the superheroes portrayed the people from the gospel accounts. It was a retelling of the gospel as if it happened in comic books. I will not give any more detail about the blasphemy but take my word for it. It was worse.

A few days later, I listened to a religiously conservative pastor preach a sermon, and the message had just as much Christ in the message as the comic book play. Seriously. He preached from the Bible and had many Scriptures, but the sermon had no Jesus. There was law from beginning to end but no grace. Do this and do not do that, but no Jesus. With no Jesus, there is no hope, just condemnation.

Paul preached against sin and preached commands. There are many commands in Paul's epistles for Christians, but not without Christ. Paul names Christ, Jesus, or Lord over fifty times in the book of Philippians alone, one of the favorite books for assurances robbers (Phil 2:12). In the first chapter (Phil. 1:12-21), Paul thought about his situation. He was not thrown in jail for preaching politics but for preaching Christ. And he was ok with that. Not that he wanted

to be imprisoned, but that his suffering furthered the gospel. While Paul was in bonds, other people stepped up and preached Christ. Some preachers hated Paul and preached Jesus to spite Paul. Some faithful brethren preached Jesus out of good will, and Paul's bonds encouraged them to press on. Despite their motives, Paul rejoiced because Christ was preached. Not a retelling of Christ, but the true Christ in a true gospel. Paul knew Christ was with him.

Paul said, "...that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death. For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:20-21). Paul was not ashamed of being locked in the hoosegow because he preached Christ. He was not ashamed of being attacked for his message because He preached Christ. The pastor who preached Ironman should be ashamed. He should go be an insurance salesman rather than a preacher if that is what he is going to preach. But is it any better to preach in the traditional style without Jesus Christ? Other than stomping on people's toes with behavior modification, what is the point? The law must be preached, but it must be preached lawfully.

The two men and their churches could not be more different. Their sermons, in some ways, are almost opposites. But strangely, they were similar in that there was hardly any

Christ in either. There are topics the Bible addresses that we need to address. Let us make sure we address them as Christians. Jesus said the Old Testament testified of Him, so let us make sure as Christians we do not leave Jesus out of the Bible when we preach.

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

Armageddon

(Continued from page 1) ♦

like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue **Armageddon**" (Rev. 16:13-16). The Revised Version renders the name Har-Magedon. Har-Magedon is defined as meaning the "mountain of Megiddo," which was located in the southwestern edge of Galilee. By this means it meant, perhaps, not merely the mountain itself, but the mountain and the surrounding section. This section is described as "a high tableland surrounded by hills" (Carpenter). It formed a pass to the North, and so was famous as a battlefield. This vicinity was the scene of two notable victories and three notable deaths. The victories were that of Barak over the Canaanites and that of Gideon over the Midianites. The deaths were that of Saul, that of Ahaziah (slain by

Jehu), and that of Josiah. lint the most famous event of all is yet to occur there.

Who the combatants are to be. The combatants are to be the kings of the earth and their armies under the leadership of the Beast and false prophet on one side, and King of Kings and Lord of Lords and His People—the Jews and the glorified saints—on the other. **"And the LORD shall utter his voice before his army: for his camp is very great: for he is strong that executeth his word: for the day of the LORD is great and very terrible; and who can abide it?"** (Joel 2:11). See also Zech. 12:2, 3, 8, 9; 14:3; Rev. 19:11-21.

The details of the battle. Near the close of the great tribulation period the Beast and the false prophet (the second beast—Rev. 13:11) will send out their emissaries to stir up the nations of the earth to gather against Jerusalem (Rev. 16:13-16; 19:19). In this they will be but fulfilling the purpose of God, for it is his design to gather all nations together for the purpose of pouring out upon them His indignation and fierce anger, **"Therefore wait ye upon me, saith the LORD, until the day that I rise up to the prey: for my determination is to gather the nations, that I may assemble the kingdoms, to pour upon them mine indignation, even all my fierce anger: for all the earth shall be devoured with the fire of my jealousy"** (Zeph. 3:8). The armies of the nations will be allowed to capture Jerusalem and work great destruction therein (Zech. 14:2). In the approach of the armies and the capture of the city two-thirds of the Jews then in Palestine will be killed (Zech. 13:8, 9). All the Jews in Jerusalem that are not killed will be either

♦ (Continued on page 6)

Armageddon

(Continued from page 5) ♦

captured or driven out of the city (Zech. 14:2). Then the Lord will appear to deliver His people (Zech 14:4). Then, judging from the fact that Rev. 16:16 says that the nations are to be gathered in a place called Armageddon, we take it that the armies of the nations, alarmed by the events that will presage the coming of the Lord, will desert Jerusalem and retreat northward. At Armageddon the Lord will overtake them and visit His vengeance upon them as described in Isa. 66:15, 16; Zech. 14:12, 13; Rev. 16:17-21; 19:20, 21.

The relation of this battle to the judgment of the nations. We believe that the judgment of the nations as depicted in Matt. 25:31-46 will take place in connection with the Battle of Armageddon. We believe that Matt. 25:31-46 is a figurative description of God's dealings with the nations in the Battle of Armageddon and the destruction that shall attend it. It is in this that all the tares are to be gathered out of his kingdom and burned (Matt. 13:40-43). None will survive this ordeal except the righteous. For the relation between this battle and the judgment of the nations, see Joel 3:2, 12-13. Also note Joel 2:10, 31; 3:15-16; Isa. 13:10-11 in connection with Matt. 24:29. The following Scriptures will show that the vengeance of the Lord in connection with the Battle of Armageddon will be world-wide: Jer. 25:15-33; Isa. 24:17-21; 26:20, 21; 34:1, 2.

This period of world-wide destruction will be "the day of the Lord." See Isa. 2:12; 13:9; 34:8; Jer. 46:10; Ezek. 30:3; Joel 1:15; 2:11; Amos 5:18-20; Oba. 15; Zeph. 1:15, 18; and Zech 14:1. "The day of the Lord" is to be a day of extended

length (Zechariah 14:6-7 **"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark: But it shall be one day which shall be known to the LORD, not day, nor night"**).

A new heaven and a new earth are to emerge from "the day of the Lord." See Isa. 34:4; 65:17-25; II Pet. 3:10-13. The Lord willing, our next article will be on "The Regathering and Conversion of the Jews."

(This article was taken from *The Baptist Examiner* Vol. 1, pgs. 8 & 9 from August 1, 1931)



The Red Heifer

(Continued from page 1) ♦

be unclean until the even. And he that burneth her shall wash his clothes in water, and bathe his flesh in water, and shall be unclean until the even. And a man that is clean shall gather up the ashes of the heifer, and lay them up without the camp in a clean place, and it shall be kept for the congregation of the children of Israel for a water of separation: it is a purification for sin. And he that gathereth the ashes of the heifer shall wash his clothes, and be unclean until the even: and it shall be unto the children of Israel, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among them, for a statute for ever" (Num. 19:1-10).

We continue with our study of the ordinance of the Red Heifer. Here we want to note the typology. That Jesus Christ is portrayed by the Red Heifer. **"For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me"** (John 5:46). Now, remember that we said that we are perfect, perfectly cleansed in the sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Our

standing is perfect. God sees no imperfection in those who have been born again. But, alas, as I remind us, we do not feel perfect, do we? Oh, how riddled with sin we are. And I think that we can agree with those words of the apostle Paul, **"For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but he evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man; But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin"** (Rom. 7:15-25). You see, we all have need of this purging of sins. Paul had need of it; Simon Peter had need of it; you and I have need of it. The Holy Spirit spake of it in the book of Hebrews, **"For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more**

shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?" (Heb. 9:13,14).

The Children of Israel

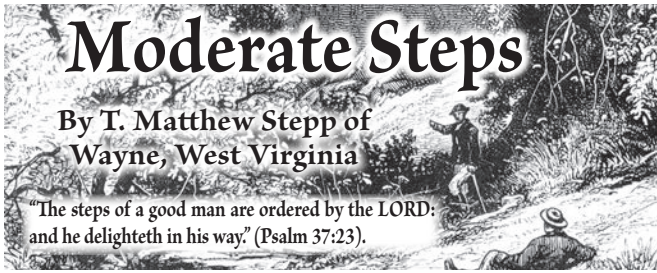
"...Speak unto the children of Israel, that they bring thee a red heifer..." (Num. 19:2). All the children of Israel were to bring this. It was to admit that all of them were in need of their consciences being purged from dead works. Without question, you and I who have been born again know exactly what is being spoken of here...that we are saved by the grace of God, and complete in Him, but we need our consciences to be purged from those dead works. We exclaim as Paul did, **"O wretched man that I am!..."** (Rom. 7:24). We want to be delivered from this body of death, from these dead works. The works of that old sinful nature. This is what was being portrayed when the children of Israel would bring forth a red heifer. Israel is a type of the people of God. They are not a type of the church. They are a type of those who have been delivered by God from the bondage of sin in Christ Jesus. They had to be purged, cleansed. So do we. Remember how Jesus, after the supper was ended, girded Himself and He washed the disciples feet in church capacity (John 13:1-10)? You and I also today need to be cleansed from our dead works. You know it. You know the pressure you are under everyday, the inadequacies that you have every single day. We know it. We feel it. God's people all know it. No one was exempt from bringing the red heifer. Now, they did not bring multiple

♦ (Continued on page 7)

Moderate Steps

By T. Matthew Stepp of
Wayne, West Virginia

"The steps of a good man are ordered by the LORD;
and he delighteth in his way." (Psalm 37:23).



Jeremiah 3:8,13-14 **"And I saw, when for all the causes whereby backsliding Israel committed adultery I had put her away, and given her a bill of divorce... Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the LORD thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the LORD. Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion."**

A thorough study of the bill of divorcements in the Bible will lead to the conclusion that the "bills" are always for the guilty and unclean party. The innocent ones are never served the "bill." This is the case in the primary text on the subject in Deuteronomy 24:1-3 **"When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement, and give it in her hand, and send her out of his house. And when she is departed out of his house, she may go and be another man's wife. And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out..."**

Note that there are no references to her then turning around and giving him a bill of divorce, is there? He is Innocent! In our text verses in Jeremiah

3, God uses a spiritual analogy of His unfaithful wife that had defiled herself in idolatry and spiritual fornication. In verse 8, He states that He had **"put her away"** and given her the bill of divorce. Certainly, He had found uncleanness in Israel and the bill of divorce was to mark her thusly, just as in Deuteronomy 24. So many folks today seem to think that a bill of divorce is just about as good as a "Get out of Jail free" card that they can play to get back into the marriage game. Beloved reader, that is "not" what the Bible is teaching here, or anywhere in Scripture! Selah! Think about it!

Please note in both the Deuteronomy passage and in Jeremiah, that reconciliation is possible after the bill of divorce has been issued to the guilty party. If she comes back before she marries that second husband in Deuteronomy 24, then all will be well. Tear up the "bill" and be reconciled in peace. The marriage is still intact! Would they have to get married again after the divorce (should we Biblically say separation?)? No new marriage ceremony according to our text in Jeremiah 3:14! **"Turn, O backsliding children, saith the LORD; for I am (still) married unto you..."**

In the fourth and final usage of the Hebrew word "keriythuwth" or "divorcement", the pattern holds true of the guilty party being "branded" with this Bill of Divorcement. **"Thus saith the LORD, Where is the bill of your**

mother's divorcement, whom I have put away? or which of my creditors is it to whom I have sold you? Behold, for your iniquities have ye sold yourselves, and for your transgressions is your mother put away" (Isa. 50:1). Beloved Reader, do not you give God a bill of divorcement! God is "true" to His vows and is faithful in every aspect of our relationship!

In fact, God, as the God of all grace, will go beyond all measure of human forgiveness to the realm of miraculous and divine forgiveness! If we start in the third verse of Deuteronomy 24, we find that **"And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorcement, and giveth it in her hand, and sendeth her out of his house; or if the latter husband die, which took her to be his wife; Her former husband, which sent her away, may not take her again to be his wife, after that she is defiled; for that is abomination before the LORD..."** Succinctly, if the unclean party remarries, then she can "never" be reconciled with the first husband! Selah! Think about that in relationship with our departure and rebellion against God!

But God's mercy is boundless and great in power! **"They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the LORD"** (Jer. 3:1). Miraculous forgiveness! That is what I have written in the margin of my Bible! Grace is unmerited favor! Selah! Think about it!

(Matt Stepp is pastor of the Big Creek Baptist Church of Wayne, West Virginia.)



The Red Heifer

(Continued from page 6) ♦

red heifers at a time. It is not like you brought one, and this one brought one, and I brought one. It was not like the other offerings when you sinned, or trespassed. This was an ordinance that when it was needed they would take a red heifer and perform the ordinance according to the Scriptures (Num. 19:17).

Red Heifer

"...that they bring thee a red heifer..." (Num. 19:2). I want us to see the significance of this animal in this ordinance being a **"red"** heifer. The word **"red"** in the Hebrew is what the name **"Adam"** means. Red is the natural color of earth. I thought about that. When we lived in Kansas we were two miles from the Oklahoma border. You would cross over the state line and that was some of the reddest dirt I have ever seen. When some of the farmers would come into town you could tell where they were farming that day. You remember how that God said, **"And the LORD God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul"** (Gen. 2:7). From where did Adam come? From the red dirt. That is why he is called Adam. Adam means **"red or ruddy."** Now note that red means ruddy. Ruddy means **"of a red color, of lively flesh color, or the color of human skin in high health"**. Now in this, we see the Lord Jesus Christ. The Lord requires a **"red heifer"**. That connects us with Adam. What is the Lord Jesus referred to in Scriptures? **"...the last Adam"** (I Cor. 15:22;45). Furthermore, in type we find that the Bride in Song of Solomon ♦ (Continued on page 8)

The Red Heifer

(Continued from page 7) ♦

speaks of the Bridegroom (her husband) in a very specific way. This Song of Solomon is a picture of the church, the Bride of Jesus Christ and the Lord Jesus. Note in Song of Solomon 5:10 that bride calls the Lord Jesus, saying, **“My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand.”** You see, Jesus is set forth as the last Adam who honored the Lord. Who obeyed the Word of God in every jot and every tittle. The first Adam broke the law, broke God’s word; but Jesus Christ would fulfill it and cleanse us from every sin. **“Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted”** (Heb. 2:14-18). The red heifer pictures that it would be a man, one who was like unto us, who would come and cleanse us from our sins. **“What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? For thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowed him with glory and**

honor” (Psa. 8:4-5). **“For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the LORD of hosts will perform this”** (Isa. 9:6-7). **“Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel”** (Isa. 7:14). Matthew 1:21-23.

Beloved, see how this heifer was red in order to portray the work of our Lord Jesus Christ in cleansing us from our sinful walk? Now I am told that this heifer was closely scrutinized. That if it had but one, some say two or three non red hairs on it, then it was rejected. One writer I read after said that in all the Old Testament there have only been 6 that were used for the ordinance of the red heifer. About twenty years ago, there was a red heifer that was born in Israel, and everybody thought Jesus was coming again. All the “end timers” ran-a-muck saying, “the Lord is coming again”. But beloved, this ordinance has no bearing on end-time theology. This ordinance is a picture of what Christ Jesus is doing, presently doing to you and to me who have been born again in cleansing us from our sinful walk, our sinful thoughts, our ways. Yes, I am perfect in Christ Jesus. My standing is without fault. But my walk, that is another story. Thus

the need of Jesus Christ to be our Red Heifer.



Can This Text Speak?

(Continued from page 3) ♦

my spirit in you, and ye shall live...” The Lord God is going to put “His” spirit in “His” people. This speaks of something more than the reinstitution of a nation but the salvation of a people. It speaks of the new birth and the New Covenant. Did Ezekiel consider the work of regeneration when he saw the bones come to life? I do not know what all that Ezekiel knew, but I should expect to know more than him since the mysteries have been revealed in Christ (Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:26-27, 2:2,4:3). In salvation, God the Holy Spirit quickens dead sinners to life (Eph. 2:1, 5; Col. 2:13) and uses the means of the Word of God in the regeneration of dead sinners to life (I Pet. 1:23-25). As Ezekiel preached God’s Word, God gave the increase and brought the dead to life, giving them life to hear and respond to Ezekiel’s message. Jesus said we should know about the necessity of the new birth from the Old Testament (John 3:10). Ezekiel himself knew about the Spirit’s work in God’s promise in the New Covenant (Ezek. 11:19-20; Ezek. 36:26-27). Tying this together is not imposing my thoughts on the text but interpreting the Scriptures in light of the whole revelation. The Old Testament prophecies are tricky because they point to a mystery not yet revealed. But imagine a Christian pastor refusing to take the key that unlocks the door because a Jewish man in Babylonian exile did not also have the key?

The text gives us yet another point, understanding regarding the future of Israel that though

they are a broken and dead nation, God will restore them yet again. The country will become one, and they will be a holy nation yet again. However, the point of the Bible is not Israel. If we, as premillennialists, point people to Israel more than Christ, we have failed. And by that, I do not mean tacking on the gospel at the end of the message that has been 44 minutes of Jewish history. Israel is not the center of the Bible, but Christ is the center of the Bible. And so this passage must be interpreted in light of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Twice in this chapter, the Lord references the everlasting, eternal covenant and references the Davidic covenant, and the New Covenant when promising to give the spirit to His people. Ezekiel points us to salvation in Jesus Christ. It is not allegory to see the text and preach how God saves dead sinners. It’s dealing with the text with Christ as the point of the passage because Christ is the point of the Bible. If you only deal with the grammatical, historical meaning and how Ezekiel would have understood what God was telling him, you are living in the old covenant. I am not an old Covenant man, nor an old Covenant preacher. I am a New Covenant preacher, so I interpret the part in light of the whole. I have a commentary at home that a famous preacher denied the Eternal Sonship of Christ. He later retracted that view but said he was just interpreting the Scripture as it was written. True enough, but he interpreted only the part while ignoring the whole.

The same people who may object to seeing Christ and salvation in this text (and many other Old Testament texts) would also read it and moralize it.

♦ (Continued on page 9)

Can This Text Speak?

(Continued from page 8) ♦

So they would talk about Ezekiel preaching God's Word, and the preacher needs to preach the truth. But that is not what Ezekiel said, and he was not thinking about the church. People think it is ok to moralize the Scripture to preach the law to Christians, but it is wrong to see Christ in the text and preach Christ to Christians. I do not think every rock in the Old Testament has some symbolic significance, but if you preach a sermon in the Old Testament and do not preach Christ at all, then what is the difference between your sermon and a Jewish discourse?

Starting in the 15th verse, the Lord used another illustration. He told Ezekiel to get a stick and write, **"For Judah, and for the children of Israel his companions."** Then, get another stick, and write, **"For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions."** Once he did that, he would take the two sticks, bring them together, and meld them into one. Now, when someone saw Ezekiel and asked him what the deal was with the stick, he would preach to them. It is a symbol. The separate sticks represent the divided kingdoms. When they are joined together, the whole represents God's grace in bringing the children of Israel from out among the Gentile nations and gathering them back into their land. One day, they would be united again, no longer worshipping idols. No longer learning and living in the way of the heathen, but living under the one King of Kings. "... **but I will save them out of all their dwellingplaces, wherein they have sinned, and will cleanse them: so shall they be**

♦ (Continued on page 10)

Heavenly Hymns

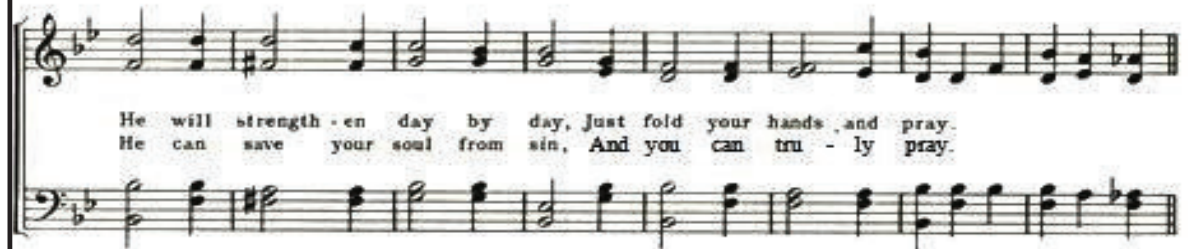
"...Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 5:18-20). [This hymn was printed with Eld Ronnie Wolfe's permission.]

Fold Your Hands And Pray

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Words and Music by
RONNIE WOLFE



CHORUS



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Can This Text Speak?

(Continued from page 9) ♦

my people, and I will be their God.” When will this be? Who is this king?

Ezekiel 37:24 reads, **“And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd: they shall also walk in my judgments, and observe my statutes, and do them.”** David has been dead for about 500 years, so how is David going to be king? Considering the promise given to David in II Samuel 7:14-16, we understand it is not David himself but the Son of David, the Lord Jesus. David knew he was dying in II Samuel 23:5, and his hope was in that coming Son. David’s hope was not that he would sit on the throne again, but his Lord (Acts 2:34). Just as in the covenant, it is not Solomon that the Lord talked about when He said, “David’s son,” but Jesus. This promise is fulfilled in Christ, in the future kingdom. The Son of David (Jer. 23:5; Matt. 1:1; Luke 1:32; Hos. 3:5) will rule from the throne of David in Jerusalem (David’s throne is not in Heaven), and God’s elect will dwell in the land God promised them. The focus is not on Israel but on God being faithful to His promises, saving His people, and glorifying Himself through showing mercy to undeserving sinners. During this millennial kingdom (Revelation 20), God will bless this nation, multiply them, and fulfill His promises in the Abrahamic and Davidic covenants. Jesus did what Adam could not do. He will do what David could not do. He is the King of Kings. The point is Christ, not Israel. When people saw the stick, they were to be reminded of God’s covenant faithfulness. **“And the heathen shall know that I the LORD do sanctify**

Israel, when my sanctuary shall be in the midst of them for evermore.” Yet, another purpose. God is glorified, and Christ is lifted up among all the people of the earth. Not just Israel but all God’s elect will praise Him for His faithfulness and grace.

So, child of God, does this text speak? Yes, indeed it speaks. It speaks loudly and speaks of God’s grace to us in Christ. If there is no Jesus in this valley, we all remain dry bones. If there is no Jesus in your sermon, your sermon will be just as dry and lifeless.



Give Thanks

(Continued from page 4) ♦

sinful. Do not talk just so you can hear the sound of your own voice. Do not talk about silly or useless questions or subjects that do not serve to honor and glorify God and point men to the Savior. **“Jesting”** refers to both witty humor and being able to always respond with your mouth with wit, as well as to vulgar and dirty humor. Again, the world finds this clever. God does not. Did Jesus ever use such?

With these things absent from our mouths, something else is to take their place. **“...but rather giving of thanks.”** “All kinds of evil, frivolous, fruitless talk should be condemned by the Christian. He should feel that he lives at a nobler rate, he lives for a purpose; he lives to bear fruit; and what has no fruit about it, and out of which no good can come, is not for him. ‘But rather giving of thanks.’ Oh, for more of this giving of thanks! It should perfume the labours of the day, it should sweeten the rest of the night, this giving of thanks. We are always receiving blessings; let us never cease to give God thanks for them. If we never stop thanking until we are beyond the

need of blessing, we shall go on praising the Lord as long as we live here, and continue to do so throughout eternity.” (Spurgeon, C.H.) “Giving of thanks’ gives that real cheerfulness of spirit to believers which the worldly try to get from ‘jesting.’ (Jamieson, Fausset, Brown.) We may offend both man and God with our foolish talking and foolish joking and sarcastic wittiness; but we will never do any man harm or fail to please God when from a grateful heart and a thoughtful mind we give forth the sacrifice of praise from our lips in giving thanks to God for His manifold blessings!

This is to be the use of our lips from now on, **“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”** Just as the hands that formerly stole are to steal no more, but are to work at honest labor and provide for things that are good and honest, not only for one’s self, but for those who stand in need; and just as the heart and mind that used to meditate on hateful, vengeful, selfish, and covetous thoughts is to now instead be busy and occupied with looking out for the needs of others, ready to serve at any opportunity, eager to overlook and pass by the faults and errors of others and to forgive the offenses of others; so now the mouth that was once employed with idle talking, foolish and spiritually unprofitable questions and arguments, and sarcastic joking and even vulgarity and profanity, is now to be taken up with the expressing of thanksgiving and praise to God through Jesus Christ. And that does not mean only for a few minutes on Sunday in church service, but all the time. Would it be acceptable to God to steal as long as you were not stealing on Sunday during

the church service? Neither is it acceptable to God for your mouth to be used for those things when it is His plainly revealed and expressed will that your mouth should now be an instrument of thanksgiving to His name, at all times, under all circumstances.

Some parts of the world pretend to give thanks once a year. The partakers of God’s heavenly calling ought to be continually giving thanks, every day, their Spirit-taught-and-led-and-filled hearts being mindful of all the blessings and benefits of God, and all the precious promises of God, and all the wonderful works of God, that are worthy of the offering up of thanksgiving and praise. If you are not accustomed to giving thanks to God always, then you are to become accustomed to it. I know some people who seem to be proud of the fact that they have bad manners, and they feel that being accustomed to having bad manners is an excuse for continuing to practice them. They are wrong in their thinking and in their behavior, and they ought to become unaccustomed to their bad manners and become accustomed to courtesy and politeness and kindness. Even so, the child of God ought to become unaccustomed to the fleshly and false and filthy ways of the old nature, and, being renewed in the spirit of their mind, become accustomed to a new way of daily thinking, living, speaking, scheduling, planning, and wanting. And part of this new way of daily thinking, living, speaking, scheduling, planning, and wanting is **“Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ”** (Eph. 5:20).



Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Guntown, Mississippi

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



God's Gifts

"And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him" (Gen. 17:19).

During this past thanksgiving I had a very different perspective on God's gifts than what I have been accustomed to. He pours into our lives a great deal more than we likely realize, and sadly much more than we often ever show gratitude for. They are not always gifts for our pleasure, but there is always a purpose behind them.

First, we should note that God's gifts are not always some thing or experience that we knew we wanted. "And the LORD appeared unto him in the plains of Mamre: and he sat in the tent door in the heat of the day; And he lift up his eyes and looked, and, lo, three men stood by him: and when he saw them, he ran to meet them from the tent door, and bowed himself toward the ground, And said, My Lord, if now I have found favour in thy sight, pass not away, I pray thee, from thy servant: Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree: And I will fetch a morsel of bread, and comfort ye your hearts; after that ye shall pass on: for therefore are ye come to your servant. And they said, So do, as thou hast said. And Abraham hastened into the tent unto

Sarah, and said, Make ready quickly three measures of fine meal, knead it, and make cakes upon the hearth. And Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it. And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat. And they said unto him, Where is Sarah thy wife? And he said, Behold, in the tent. And he said, I will certainly return unto thee according to the time of life; and, lo, Sarah thy wife shall have a son. And Sarah heard it in the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old and well stricken in age; and it ceased to be with Sarah after the manner of women. Therefore Sarah laughed within herself, saying, After I am waxed old shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also? And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? Is any thing too hard for the LORD? At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh" (Gen. 18:1-15).

So many of His gifts are not ones we might have ever even prayed for. How often do we receive God's gifts with phrases

like: "That is too much work," "That will be great for someone else," or even as Sarah here who says "I am too old." The gifts of God, much like salvation itself, has "nothing" to do with our ability. We can see proof of that in the text above as even though Sarah proved herself to be a tale-bearer in the end, it would not remove the coming gift... "Sarah thy wife shall have a son."

Secondly, God's gifts are not always as easy as "He gives and

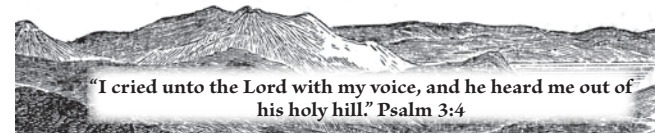
we take." "And the LORD visited Sarah as he had said, and the LORD did unto Sarah as he had spoken. For Sarah conceived, and bare Abraham a son in his old age, at the set time of which God had spoken to him. And Abraham called the name of his son that was born unto him, whom Sarah bare to him, Isaac. And Abraham circumcised his son Isaac being eight days old, as God had commanded him. And

◇ (Continued on page 16)



Selahs

By Tomas Julius G. Salacup
Christological Baptist Mission
Vallejo, CA



"I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill." Psalm 3:4



The Heavenly Bodies' Dependence

"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years" (Gen. 1:14). "And the evening and the morning were the fourth day" (Gen. 1:19).

In Genesis, days and evenings existed already without the sun and moon. As in our verse of the Scriptures, they were only created on "the fourth day!" There is so much we can observe in these verses.

First, it is God who measures the evening and the morning. In our times, we cannot do it without the sun and moon. We are measuring our days and years based on their movements. Thus, it is very clear that God is not dependent on the movement of the stars to measure the days and years, because "He is time"

Secondly, it is not the sun that gives light but God because He is light. In Genesis 1:3, He said, "Let there be light, and there was light." If the lights were created on the fourth day, how come there was light in day 1? Obviously, because He is the light and not the "sun." He controls and uses His light as He would want it. When He created the earth, His light was absent from it, until He declared it in verse 3, by which only then His radiance would give light to the earth and it was so. Soon the sun and moon will cease to exist, because He is the only light that we need (Rev. 21:23).

Thirdly, the sun, moon, and stars were created to sustain only the earth's needs (days and seasons, etc.) and cannot function independent of God, if God stops them from giving their lights. Their lights are not theirs but God's. (Genesis 1:16-19). Selah!



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

Luke 17:11-19 speaks of ten lepers and only one returning to give thanks. Based on verse 19, were the other nine healed but not saved?

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I have preached many funerals in my time as pastor, and I have followed the advice of my dear friend Bro. Jerry Webb, and I have never tried to preach any of those questionable ones into Heaven, and neither have I tried to preach them into Hell. Salvation is by Sovereign Grace alone, so we cannot judge anyone's salvation based upon works! Works never saved anyone. So, whether just one of those lepers were saved; whether three, five or all ten were saved, is known only to them and their Lord and Judge! Selah! Think about it!

But on the other hand, true salvation will indeed produce spiritual fruits that have never been present before in our flesh. **"A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. ... Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them"** (Matt. 7:18, 20). So, I have no problem seeing a difference made in the Samaritan leper that **"...when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan"** (Luke 17:15-16). The actions of this leper showed a wondrous desire to love and worship and give glory to God! Wow! If these are

the leading characteristics of his life from now on, then I would preach his funeral with great joy, knowing a brother in Christ had been reunited with his Lord and Saviour! Hallelujah!

"And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger" (Luke 17:17-18). Many a sermon has been preached on, "But where are the nine?" Were they healed, but not saved, as evidently the thankful one had been born again? Well, the argument is made that the Lord told them to **"...Go shew yourselves unto the priests."** And the Scripture says that obedience is "better" than sacrifice! **"And Samuel said, Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams"** (I Sam. 15:22). Could the obedience of these "now-healed" lepers, as they continued to follow the letter of the law be just as good a reason to validate their salvation, as the "disobedient" Samaritan leper that made a detour to make sure that his "loud voice" resonated with praise unto the Master? Selah! Think about it!

Nope. No... I used to think that Martha got the short end of the stick, because Mary sat at the feet of Jesus and left her with the (wonderful, but arduous) task of preparing food for the Lord. But we need to listen to the Lord's words and judgments! **"But**

Martha was cumbered about much serving, and came to him, and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? bid her therefore that she help me. And Jesus answered and said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her" (Luke 10:40-42).

He does not say that Mary made a "better" choice! Only one thing was needful! And Martha in her "obedient servant" serving was "neglecting the Lord! I have often reflected if "no one" had been in the kitchen, then eventually when everyone got hungry, probably the whole party would have gone into the kitchen, with Jesus continuing to teach as He sat on a bar stool at the kitchen counter, with "all" blessing and rejoicing!

So, as we come back to our story, let us pay attention again to the words of the Master! **"And Jesus answering said, Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole"** (Luke 17:17-19). Conclusion: Only "one" of the lepers had acted correctly and received His blessing! He was expecting the other nine to obey the first and greatest commandment! To love the Lord with all of their hearts, souls, minds and strength! To worship and give glory to God! A child of God should be in the state of mind that they cannot help themselves from "loving on" their Saviour!

The actions of the "nine" do not "un-save" them, as salvation is "still" by grace, not works; but our service is going to be judged

by the Master, also! What did we "do" with our salvation, will be asked at the Bema Seat. 1) Did we glorify God with our actions? Or: 2) Did we just check off our list of requirements? 3) Only justified ourselves in the eyes of self and men, rather than our God? May God grant us opportunities to turn **"...back, and with a loud voice glorified (glorify) God..."** Selah! Think about it!

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This account is one of the most remarkable displays of the sovereign power of Christ to heal physically and spiritually in the New Testament. It appears that the ten lepers knew something of the healing power of Christ. Perhaps the word had spread of His great grace and power. As these men, who were defiled by perhaps the most loathsome disease of their day, saw Jesus, they began shouting for Him to show mercy to them. They were ceremonially unclean and forbidden to come into close contact with others. I find it interesting that they called Jesus by name and also called Him Master as they cried out for mercy and healing. They recognized Jesus as no ordinary man, but one with extraordinary power.

When Jesus saw them, He had compassion on them. He willed them to be physically healed of the disease of leprosy without any physical contact. As far as I can tell Jesus did not even say, "Be healed or be clean." Rather, he told them to go to the priests as the Old Testament ceremonial law

◊ (Continued on page 14)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

Will the judgment of the nations (Matt. 25:31-46) be on an individual or national basis? Will any unsaved be permitted to enter the Millennial kingdom?"

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There is a judgment of the nations in Matthew 25:32-35, 41: **"And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: ...Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:"** Selah! Think about it!

Question: Will this be on an individual or national basis? Answer: Yes! Both! The judgment of the Gentile nations is actually more familiarly referred to as the Battle of Armageddon or the seventh vial of Revelation. It is where 100% of the remaining mortals in the world's nations (all goats and sheep) are judged at the end of the Great Tribulation. Over half the world's (4 of the 8 Billion, if the Rapture happened today!) population has been destroyed by the seal and trumpet judgments, and perhaps as many as one billion of the diaspora

of Israel has been saved out of every Gentile nation during the ministry of the two witnesses (Daniel and John), as well as the 144,000 Israeli Gospel preachers called in this time of desperate perils. As the vial judgments progress through the last 42 months for the last three billion residents of this current and shuddering world, God makes preparation for the Armageddon, judgment of the nations. **"And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs...the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. ... And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon"** (Rev. 16:12-16).

This is the moment of Truth! Are you, individually an Egyptian sheep or a Filipino Ggat? Will you have the mark of the beast, or will you have resisted by the power of the blood of the Lamb? All will be brought before the throne and purview of the Almighty **"in that day"** and **"it is done"**. **"And I will send a fire on Magog, and among them that dwell carelessly in the isles: and they shall know that I am the LORD. So will I make my holy name known in the midst of my people Israel; and I will not let them pollute my holy**

name any more: and the heathen shall know that I am the LORD, the Holy One in Israel. Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken" (Ezek. 39:6-8). **"And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done"** (Rev. 16:17).

Nations will typically mean Gentiles, and at this conclusion of Daniel's Seventieth Week, the Apostle Paul says that as the **"fulness of the Gentiles"** (Nations) has come in, so too, shall the salvation of Israel be sure! All Israel shall be saved sovereignly on this day of sheep and goats. **"For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved..."** (Rom. 11:25-26). (Zech.12)

The complete picture of the Judgment of the Nations is that no lost person will enter the Millennial Kingdom! Right hand only, enter...! **"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world..."** (Matt. 25:34). **"And it shall come to pass, that every one that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall even go up from year to year to worship the King, the LORD of hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles"** (Zech.14:16). Only saved folks are left after Armageddon/Hamongog...! If the Rapture were to happen today, any person left behind could only hope to live a maximum of seven

years, outside of the saving Gospel of Christ. All lost people will die during those terrible seven years! Only Jesus' saints will enter His Millennial Kingdom! **"For yet a little while, and the wicked shall not be: yea, thou shalt diligently consider his place, and it shall not be. But the meek shall inherit the earth..."** (Ps. 37:10-11). Selah! Think about it!

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The answer to the first question is that all nations are made up of individuals. There has never been and never will be an entirely righteous/sheep nation due to human depravity and sin. Therefore, I believe this judgment will concern individuals who make up nations. The Judgment of the Nations will occur immediately after the Tribulation Period (cf. Matt. 24:29-30) and will take place on the earth, the natural habitat of people that make up nations. There is no way that the Judgment of the Nations should be confused with the Great White Throne Judgment that will occur after the Millennium and somewhere other than earth (Rev. 20:7-15).

The Judgment of the Nations will be held to determine who enters into the Millennial kingdom with Christ as evidenced by what He says to the elect/righteous sheep who have been separated and are on His right hand: **"Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation**

◊ (Continued on page 15)

Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

commanded, to confirm that they had been healed of the disease. One minute they were covered with leprous sores oozing with pus and blood, the next moment, after Christ had exercised His sovereign power they were completely healed and fit to go to the priests to show what had been done. What an astounding miracle! The transformation of healing and cleansing had occurred while they were on their way to show the priests.

One leper out of the ten turned back after the cleansing had taken place. His heart and mind were filled with gratitude for the grace and power of the Living Christ. He lifted up his voice in praise and worship for the Lord's Christ. He then fell at the feet of Christ in a display of reverence and adoration and began to thank the Lord. Interestingly enough, he was a Samaritan, considered to be a Gentile dog among the Jews. Jesus, as God manifest in the flesh and the express image of His person, received the worship of the newly converted Samaritan. Jesus emphatically declared that the faith of the Samaritan had made him whole. I take it to mean both physically and spiritually.

Jesus questioned where the other nine who had been healed were. Should they not have had same response as this Samaritan? Should they not have returned with thankful hearts full of worship and adoration for the Saviour? Jesus rebuked the nine for their ingratitude. They should have been shouting the praises of Jesus, but instead they wanted only to be declared ceremonially clean by the priests so they could return to a normal life in society. It appears they had been

physically cleansed and healed of leprosy, but were still consumed with the spiritual disease of sin and depravity. Perhaps the corrupt priests, after seeing the miraculous cleansing, warned them not to give any credit to the Lord Jesus for His healing power. Whatever the case, they did not return in thanksgiving to the Lord Jesus like the Samaritan did. They were physically healed but lost in their sins. They had enough religion to go to the priests to be declared ceremonially clean, but not enough to return to Christ to give Him the worship and praise He was worthy of. It is the way with most religious people who are not truly saved I am afraid. They are willing to submit to some outward, ceremonial shows of religion, but they have never truly been inwardly changed by the power of Christ. They have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof (II Timothy 3:5). Paul would later also warn Titus of such false religious professors: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:16).

As I was studying this passage I came across an interesting quote by John Gill, the Baptist expositor and theologian. Gill's Exposition of the New Testament was published in 1809. What I find fascinating in his quote is that he recognizes only those churches as valid and scriptural that were keeping the ordinances as they were delivered and makes the remark that the true church was indeed a little flock. At the time of the writing, Baptists alone were baptizing believers and observing the Lord's Supper as purely symbolic. So in effect, Gill did not recognize Catholic or Protestants as true churches.

Gill's observation on Luke 17:17 states in part:

"...and yet there are but few that glorify Him, by keeping close to the rule of His word, by giving up themselves to the churches of Christ, and by walking with them in the ordinances of the Gospel: Christ's flock, which is separated from the world and walks in Gospel order, within the enclosures of it, is but a little flock; they are but a few names in Sardis, who have not defiled themselves, with corruptions in doctrine and discipline; and these few are often such, who have been the worst of men, the vilest of sinners, from whom it has been least expected, they should glorify Christ; publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of heaven, the Gospel church-state, embrace its doctrines, and submit to its ordinances, when the Scribes and Pharisees, self righteous persons, do not..." (Vol. 7, p. 669).



"Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened" (Rom. 1:21).

"This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall 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: from such turn away" (II Tim. 3:1-5).

Even though I cannot be dogmatic, I have always believed that any and all that were healed by the Great Physician were also saved by our Great Saviour.

If you read carefully the above scriptures and remember back before we were saved, we were one of these at one time **"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"** (Rom. 7:24); **"Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked"** (Rev. 3:17). "Amazing grace! How sweet the sound That saved a wretch like me."

There are many indications in the Gospels that healing did not automatically mean salvation right away. We do not know at what point Nicodemus was saved after he heard he **"...must be born again"** (John 3:7). **"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God"** (John 3:3). But we know at some point he was saved **"And there came also Nicodemus, which at the first came to Jesus by night, and brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about an hundred pound weight"** (John 19:39). Someone may say but Nicodemus was not sick...Oh he was not? He may not have been physically sick, but he sure was sick spiritually!

When the blind man whose eyes were opened had been cast out of the temple he was asked if he believed on the Son of God. His

♦ (Continued on page 15)

Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 14) ♦

answer was, **“Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?”** (John 9:36). Only then did the Lord graciously reveal Himself to him, **“And he worshipped him”**.

We do not know about the state of the souls of the nine, but we need not assume they were just healed without receiving salvation. Every saved sinner has a thankful heart, even though we lament that we often suffer from slowness of heart **“Then he said unto them, O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken”** (Luke 24:25). In His omniscience the Lord knew that the ten were cleansed without being with them when it happened, but He also knew their hearts, and even though they were not thankful at that time does not mean we just discard them as not being saved at all.

The Samaritan was the one exception. It is one of the most solemn indictments against men that **“...when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened”** (Rom. 1:21). Before I was saved, I believed there was a God, and that Jesus Christ was His Son, but that was just a head knowledge. But it was when as Paul puts it, **“But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb, and called me by his grace, To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood”** (Gal. 1:15-16). Then I know longer had a head knowledge, but a heart knowledge as well. I knew then that Jesus was the Saviour of my soul.

We need to be very careful that we do not set ourselves up as the judges of mankind, that is not our responsibility, we do not know their hearts, but God does. We are to present the gospel to this lost world (Matt. 28:18-20), the rest is up to God.

If we read further in Romans 1:28-32, we see that God left these lost sinners **“over to a reprobate mind”**, but you and I do not know who they are so, we present the gospel to everyone, and some will never be saved, **“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God”** (John 3:18).

I can tell you when we will know if the nine were saved. **“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad”** (II Cor. 5:10). So, we will know at the judgment seat of Christ (Bema Seat of Christ), where all Christians will stand before Christ, at that place we will know whether or not the nine were ever saved! God Bless!



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 13) ♦

of the world” (Matt. 25:34). These are saved survivors of the Tribulation Period consisting largely, though not entirely, of the elect in Israel who have been regenerated and redeemed as they looked upon the One Whom they had pierced (Zech. 12:9-10).

The other individuals among the nations are on the left hand of Christ and are called goats. They are the lost, unsaved, reprobate survivors of the Tribulation period who will not enter into the

Millennial kingdom, but rather will be purged from the earth and judged by Christ: **“Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels”** (Matt. 25:41).

From the context of Matthew 25 saved and lost individuals are contrasted throughout. The five wise virgins (saved) who are ready for the marriage feast are contrasted with the five foolish virgins (lost) who are not ready and thus hear Christ say to them **“I know you not”** (Matt. 25:12, contrast with John 10:27-29). The faithful servant (saved) who used his talents is contrasted with the evil servant (lost) who hid his talent and was cast into outer darkness (25:30). Likewise, the sheep (saved) are contrasted with the goats (lost) at the Judgment of the Nations (25:31-46).

From the context of Matthew 25:31-46 it does appear that the lost, the goats, the reprobate who survive the Tribulation Period will be effectively purged from the earth and cast into the fires of Hell. So, I believe that at the beginning of the Millennial Kingdom Christ will purge the earth of all who are lost.

I wrote a book in 1996 entitled Elementary Eschatology: A Study of Premillennial Prophecy. Here is an excerpt where I offer proof for my answer:

“The purpose of the Judgment of the Nations will be to rid the earth of all the unsaved. No one will enter into the Millennial Kingdom who has not been saved by the sovereign grace of God. This judgment will be one of purification as well as separation. The Lord’s sheep will enter into Millennial glory where they will live and reign with Christ for one thousand years. The reprobate

goats on the other hand, will be consigned to Hell where they will await their final sentencing in the resurrection of the unjust dead. After the Millennium they will be raised to stand before Christ at the Great White Throne Judgment to determine their degree of punishment in the Lake of Fire. Thus, because of the purifying Judgment of the Nations, the earth will be without an unregenerate person for a time. Psalms 37:9 declares: “For evildoers shall be cut off: but those that wait upon the LORD, they shall inherit the earth.” Psalms 101:6-8 states: “Mine eyes shall be upon the faithful of the land, that they may dwell with me: he that walketh in a perfect way, he shall serve me. He that worketh deceit shall not dwell within my house: he that telleth lies shall not tarry in my sight. I will early destroy all the wicked of the land; that I may cut off all the wicked doers from the city of the LORD.” Proverbs. 2:21-22 declares: “For the upright shall dwell in the land, and the perfect shall remain in it. But the wicked shall be cut off from the earth, and the transgressors shall be rooted out of it.” These verses will have a literal fulfillment as a result of the Judgment of the Nations. This judgment will mark the beginning of a new age of righteousness, peace, spirituality, and harmony upon the earth. The glory of King Jesus will fill the land as the waters that cover the sea.” (pages 212-213)

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♦ (Continued on page 16)

Small Drops

(Continued from page 11) ◇

Abraham was an hundred years old, when his son Isaac was born unto him. And Sarah said, God hath made me to laugh, so that all that hear will laugh with me" (Gen. 21:1-6).

The purpose behind God's gifts for His elect are typically for our growth and bringing an increase to our faith. **"And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of. And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I, my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. And they**

came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And the angel of the LORD called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: for now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the LORD it shall be seen" (Gen. 22:1-14).

Let us take notice that a gift given was required to be provided as a burnt offering before the Lord. It was His to offer; it was also His to require! From where did this lamb come from after all? Was it not God Himself, alone on the mountain with Abraham and Isaac that day? Was it not God who also visited with him in the plains of Mamre? Was not God with Abraham and Isaac for all times? We see from these portions of God's Word that He saw Abraham's household before Isaac's birth, after Isaac's birth, and his future lineage for all time.

The altar that was built here he named Jehovah-jireh which means "Jehovah sees" or "Jehovah will provide." We see here this personal altar that Abraham built for remembrance of Jehovah's seeing him. Should we not also

establish our own banners and memorials of the times in which God have provided (as a gift) for us?

Thirdly, God's gifts are not to our glory, but His. **"And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him"** (Gen. 18:17-19). Seeing His elect for all time, God knew what was needed and knew what would be provided. Remember, Abraham named the altar we mentioned above, not God. That is why it was named in a future tense that speaks for all time. If God had named it, perhaps it would have been "I AM" for He sees past/present/future.

It was not for a work that Abraham would do, but for God's own name sake that He provided the gifts we read about in Scripture. Beloved reader, you are not likely to do a great and mighty thing in the eyes of God. Perhaps you will impress a few men, but what is that? "However", what if God were to use you in a mighty way to share the Gospel to this lost and dying world? What greater gift is there aside from His grace?



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 15) ◇

I presented the above Scripture to a man once, because he said that God loved everyone, and

he said that Jacob and Esau were nations not individuals...are you kidding me? I came back with, "what is a nation?" So, what is a nation? That has to be answered before we continue!

"A nation is a community of people formed on the basis of a combination of shared features such as language, history, ethnicity, culture and/or territory. A nation is thus the collective identity of a group of people understood as defined by those features. A nation is generally more overtly political than an ethnic group; it has been described as "a fully mobilized or institutionalized ethnic group". Some nations are equated with ethnic groups (see ethnic nationalism and nation state) and some are equated with an affiliation with a social and political constitution (see civic nationalism and multiculturalism). A nation has also been defined as a cultural-political community that has become conscious of its autonomy, unity and particular interests" (From Wikipedia).

A simpler definition is: a large body of people united by common descent, history, culture, or language, inhabiting a particular country or territory: "the world's leading industrialized nations" (Oxford Dictionary) Merriam-Webster's dictionary defines a nation as: "a politically organized nationality... a community of people composed of one or more nations possessing a more or less defined territory and government."

People make up the nations is what I have always believed! Matthew 25:31 says, He will sit on the throne of His glory. I believe this speaks of the earthly reign of Christ described in Revelation 20:4-6. The judgment described

◇ (Continued on page 17)

Baptist History



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

A PATIENT SOWING AND ENDURING BRINGETH FORTH FRUIT

“Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your riches are corrupted, and your garments are motheaten. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the rust of them shall be a witness against you, and shall eat your flesh as it were fire. Ye have heaped treasure together for the last days. Behold, the hire of the labourers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth: and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth, and been wanton; ye have nourished your hearts, as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just; and he doth not resist you. Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain” (Jam. 5:1-7).

Seeds must be sown and a patient waiting and laboring for maturing must occur before the harvest can be realized. So it was with the planting of the Baptist churches in the Massachusetts Bay Colony. The seeds of biblical truth and religious liberty were

sown in the heat of religious persecution. It takes hearty plants to endure the rigors of burning sun and violent storms.

It was upon the persecution of Obadiah Holmes and others who had taken a strong stand for believers' baptism that Henry Dunster, President of Cambridge College (now Harvard), was so stirred in his mind that he turned his attention to the subject of infant baptism and soon rejected it altogether. The faithfulness of Holmes, the publicity his enemies gave to his convictions, his willingness to suffer for convictions, and the beastliness of a church-state that denied its citizens religious freedom all magnified the truth he propagated.

Dunster's success in promoting Harvard by furthering its interests collecting large sums of money in its behalf, and even giving one hundred acres to it, was marvelous and testified to his commitment to the institution. But he had a higher commitment to the truth of God and began to preach against infant baptism in the church at Cambridge in 1653, to the great alarm of the entire community. Armitage quotes Prince in pronouncing Dunster “one of the greatest masters of the Oriental languages that hath been known in these ends of the earth; but he laid aside all his honors and positions in obedience to his

convictions.”¹

Dunster was forced to resign his presidency of Harvard College, April 7, 1657, after which he was arraigned before the Middlesex court for refusing to have his child baptized. The court records indicate that Dunster had been forbidden to speak but stated Dunster's position as follows: “The subjects of baptism were visible penitent believers and they only.” Also, after protesting the christening of a child in the congregation, Dunster said, “There is an action now to be done which is not according to the institution of Christ. That the exposition as it had been set forth was not the mind of Christ. That the covenant of Abraham is not a ground of baptism, no not after the institution thereof. That there were such corruptions stealing into the Church which every faithful Christian ought to bear witness against.”²

Now the influential Dunster had planted in the heart of the Puritan Commonwealth seed which was indestructible. Cambridge and the adjoining town of Charlestown had been filled with these principles, and out of the center of that influence came the First Baptist Church of Massachusetts Bay proper.

God grant to us in this day of compromise and “instant everything” (including a pseudo-success complex) a willingness to endure the affliction that comes with planting the seed and the patience to wait upon its germination and fruit-bearing.

1 Thomas Armitage, *The History of the Baptists* (1890; reprint ed., Watertown, Wis: Maranatha Baptist Press, 1976), 2:498-99.

2 Ibid., p. 498.



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 16) ♦

here in vv. 32-46 is different from the Great White Throne judgment of Revelation 20:11-15. This judgment precedes Christ's millennial reign, and the subjects seem to be only those who are alive at His coming. This is sometimes referred to as the judgment of the nations, but His verdicts address individuals in the nations, not the nations as a-whole (cf. v. 46). So, I have to believe the judgment of the nations is on an individual basis to answer the first part of this question.

To answer the second part of the question, I never knew whether or not any unsaved will be permitted to enter the Millennial Kingdom until I read Elder Tom Ross's book “Elementary Eschatology,” and others on the same subject. I came to believe as they did that there will be no unsaved people walking into the Millennial Kingdom. This is a quote from Brother Ross, “The fourth group among the righteous who will reign with Christ during the Millennium will be the converted survivors of the Tribulation Period who will enter into the Millennium, in their natural bodies. They are identified by Christ as the sheep who enter the Kingdom at the Judgment of the Nations. Because this group of kingdom dwellers shall enter into the Millennium with their natural bodies they will have the ability to continue to procreate children who will be born with depraved natures. Though no unsaved people enter into the kingdom at the beginning, over a period of time there will be lost people populating the earth during the Millennium. Thus, the fourth class of among the righteous who will inhabit the

♦ (Continued on page 24)

The Kentucky Baptist and the Burning Coals of Truth



C. D. Cole
(1885 - 1968)

Eternal Punishment



Part I - Introduction

We have chosen to speak and write upon a very solemn theme. The flesh will not be entertained, but the spirit may be profited. Much grace is needed if we are to hear profitably---grace for both saint and sinner. The flesh, which profiteth nothing, will hinder both classes. The saint still has a fleshly nature, and the sinner has nothing but a fleshly nature.

Just as no criminal would enjoy a lecture on the time, place, and nature of the punishment to be meted out to him by the law he has violated, so no lost man will enjoy a sermon on the punishment he will receive for his violation of the law of God. If my preaching on this subject should meet with universal approval, I would be suspicious as to my position on it. It would be good evidence of my being in error.

When Pastor Russell was speaking to a large crowd, in denial of the truth on this theme, a thoroughly worldly man promised him a liberal donation because, as he said, it makes a man comfortable to feel that there is no hell. And when Robert Ingersoll was once inveighing against the doctrine of eternal punishment, a drunkard arose and said, "Make it mighty strong, Bob, for a lot of us fellows are depending on you." And there are people before me today, and some will doubtless

read this message who would be glad to know that there is no eternal punishment for the lost. Any teaching on the subject that has the approval of the ungodly might well be regarded with suspicion.

There is widespread denial of the truth about eternal punishment. I expect there is more literature being circulated today against this truth than against any other truth of the Bible. You can hardly name a modern sect that does not either deny or eviscerate this doctrine. Besides such groups as Christian Science, Russellism, Seventh Day Adventism, and Christadelphians, there are many individuals in the evangelical denominations who boldly flout their declared faith in this doctrine. We allow that no truth should be rejected merely because heretics may hold it, but when such an imposing array of errorists is on one side of a question, there is certainly a need for serious reflection, and a challenge to **"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."**

We preach upon this subject, first of all, because it is a part of the once delivered faith. Whatever God has revealed is to be our study and proclamation. then, a discussion of this truth will increase the gratitude of the saints for their glorious salvation. They will see that they have been saved "from" something as well

as to something. Moreover, a sermon on this solemn subject may, under God, put fear into the hearts of sinners and cause them to flee the wrath to come. **"Because there is wrath, beware lest he take thee away with his stroke: then a great ransom cannot deliver thee"** (Job 36:18). **"It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"** (Heb. 9:27). **"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"** (Luke 13:3).

THE NATURE OF MAN

Man is a compound being of three elements: body, soul, and spirit (I Thess. 5:23). We can also think of man as a dual being when we wish to differentiate between that which is material and that which is immaterial. Our Lord divided man into two parts when He admonished us not to fear him that can only kill the body, but to fear Him that is able to cast both soul and body into gehenna.

The soul, being the principle part of man, is often employed for the man himself. In Genesis 2:7, we read that God breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life (Hebrew-lives) and he became a living soul, that is, a living person, or a living man. In Exodus 1:5, we read that seventy souls came out of the loins of Jacob---meaning seventy persons. In I Peter 3:20, we are told that eight souls, that is, eight persons were saved by water. The word soul is even applied to a dead body. Numbers 6:6 says: **". . . he shall come at no dead body."** The word here for "body" in the Hebrew is "nephesh" or "soul"; and the clause, if literally translated, will be "And he shall not approach a dead soul," that is, a dead person. The word "nephesh" (soul) is translated dead "body" eight times in our English Bible.

Man also has a spirit as a separate and distinct entity. We

will argue this point later, as we only wish to affirm here and now that man has a spirit by virtue of his creation. Man lost no part of his being in the fall, but all the parts became depraved.

In the New Testament, the immaterial part of man is spoken of as the real person in distinction from the body as the house in which he lives. II Corinthians 5:1-2 says, **"...we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, ...for in this we groan."** The pronoun "we" so often occurring in the passage stands for the immaterial and invisible part of man that dwells for a while in the mortal body and then moves out to go to be with Christ. This certainly teaches conscious existence with the Lord after death.

That the soul or immaterial part of man continues in conscious existence suffering after the death of the body, and Lazarus was in conscious comfort. The rich man's body was buried and the soul of Lazarus was taken into Abraham's bosom by angels. Their experience after death could not have been bodily experiences, therefore, they were possessed of another element that had conscious existence after death.

I do not call this a parable. Our Lord did not say, **"Hear another parable,"** neither does the Holy Spirit say that He was speaking in parables. The following extract from a well-known writer is worthy of consideration:

"The rich man and Lazarus I am not free to regard as a parable, while having no controversy with those who so regard it. Not only is it not called a parable, but names are introduced, a thing without precedent in our Lord's parables. I prefer to look at the rich man and Lazarus as actual characters,

◊ (Continued on page 19)

Burning Coals

(Continued from page 18) ♦

whose history in this world and beyond is solemnly traced by the Lord for the moral profit of men everywhere."

What is said of the two men in this life is quite in keeping with actual occurrence, therefore, what is said of them in death and afterwards must also be true to facts. We grant that the physical torment is symbolical, but it is a symbolism of spiritual torment. Is the symbolism terrible? Then the truth intended to be taught is also terrible.

When Stephen was martyred, his body fell in death under a hail of stones, but he said to Christ, "**Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.**"

Paul had some wonderful experiences on account of which he was given a thorn in the flesh to keep him humble. Once he was caught up to the third heaven, and it would seem that on another occasion into paradise, where he heard "**unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter**" (II Cor. 12:4). He says that he did not know whether he was in the body or out of the body; only God knew. This certainly teaches that a disembodied spirit can consciously exist and be intelligently active. Paul did not think a "disembodied spirit is a self-contradiction."

VARIOUS SENSES OF THE WORD "DEATH"

Life and death are antonyms, and it is axiomatic that a man cannot be both dead and alive in the same sense at the same time. But one may be alive in one sense and dead in a different sense at the same time. This is obvious from the saying of Jesus, "**Let the dead bury their dead.**" He meant for the spiritual dead to bury the physical dead. A man may be alive

physically and dead spiritually at the same time, as is true of all the unregenerate living. We believe there are four distinct senses in which the word death is used in the Bible.

1. *Physical death.* This is caused by the departure of the spirit from the body. James 2:26 says: "**For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.**" See also Acts 7:59.

2. *Spiritual death.* This is the condition of human nature as the result of the fall of man. It is a death to holiness, the depravity of nature. There is a human spirit in every man by which he understands the things of man (I Cor. 2:11) but the born again man has the Holy Spirit by which he understands the things of God (I Cor. 2:12). The human spirit is essential to life in the physical realm; the Holy Spirit is essential to life in the spiritual realm. The human spirit enables a man to be active in human affairs; the Holy Spirit enables a man to see and enter the kingdom of God.

3. *Judicial death.* This is God's sentence of death upon all men. It is the death of condemnation as opposed to justification of life (Rom. 5:18). It is death in the sense of guilt. This is the death of Romans 5:12, John 5:24, Romans 6:23, and other passages. The antithesis of judicial death is justification of life. Romans 5:18 says, "**Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.**" Life and death in the judicial sense are generally overlooked by commentators. The believer is to reckon himself dead to sin and alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord (Rom. 6:11). The believer is dead to the guilt of sin

and alive or justified before God. The unbeliever is dead in sin, that is, condemned before God. We have this aspect of life and death in I John 5:12: "**He that hath the son hath life; and he that hath not the son of God hath not life.**" The present life in Christ is life in the sense of justification---freedom from the penalty of sin---deliverance from the wrath to come, and since this is unalterable, it is called everlasting life.

4. *The second death.* This is the execution of the judicial sentence against sin. It is described as being cast into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:14-15). This is the gehenna into which our Lord said both soul and body of the wicked would be cast. This is the final state of

the lost. This is hell proper and follows the judgment of the great white throne. This is the place of unquenchable fire.

The Greek word "hades" should never be translated hell as the place of final punishment. Hades is the intermediate state and is to be emptied into the lake of fire (Rev. 20:13-14). Hades is the place of punishment between death and the judgment, after which both soul and body will enter the lake of fire. "**...the Lord knows how to rescue godly men from temptation, and... how to keep the unrighteous under punishment for the day of judgment.**" (II Pet. 2:9, Weymouth)



THE TRUTH PERCEIVED	THE GOSPEL BELIEVED	THE SOUL RELIEVED
<p>"God be merciful to me a sinner."</p>		<p>"I will sing of my Redeemer"</p>
<p>COMPASSED ABOUT WITH SORROWS</p> <p>"The sorrows of hell compassed me about"</p> <p>Psaln 18:5</p>	<p>COMPASSED ABOUT WITH MERCY</p> <p>"He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about."</p> <p>Psaln 32:10.</p>	<p>COMPASSED ABOUT WITH SONGS</p> <p>"Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance."</p> <p>Psaln 32:7.</p>



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



Preventive Providence

"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain" (Ps. 76:10).

There are three very important truths set forth in Holy Scripture. First, the doctrine that God created all things. We call this creation. Second, the teaching that God maintains in existence all the things which He created. We call this preservation. Third, the fact that God controls all things that He made. We call this providence.

Most Christians will gladly concede the first two of these things, but many Arminians and some who wave the sovereign grace flag seek to modify the doctrine of providence. They say that God controls all good things. He is master of the weather and wind, the sun and the stars, the prayer and praise of His people. But they are quick to deny that His government extends to the free actions of men in most cases. It seems that they believe that God made more creatures than He can care for and to extend His government to all events would over tax His infinite mind and tire His omnipotent power. But the Scripture teaches that God "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. 1:11). Romans 11:36 says: "For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Some believe in a general

providence, but they are unable to see a particular providence. In truth there can be no such thing as particular providence without God's government of all things (Rom. 8:28). If any good or bad happens to a man without God's order and appointment, then the God of the Bible is not a God of providence. If good or evil may befall us without His particular order and appointment, then there is no reason to trust in a God who does not always care for us. Then we have no cause to praise God for His blessings, seeing we know not whether they came from God or not. Then there is no need to pray to God for particular blessings, seeing He does not concern Himself in particular events.

Those who take the Bible seriously believe that God has supreme disposal of all events and takes particular care of us. No good or evil can happen to us but what He has appointed for us. Job 23:13-14 tells us: "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him." This being truth, all acts of religious worship of the God of providence are reasonable, necessary, and just.

A LOOK AT THE TEXT

All Christians will gladly affirm that man's obedience, love, and piety bring praise to God.

But Psalm 76:10 declares that man's rebellion, disobedience, and violent resistance will end in bringing praise to God. It is plain from this text that the whole of the wrath of man is under the control of God. This is a great mystery. In a way unknown to us pride, enmity, ambition, and revenge will be rendered subservient to God's glory and man's good.

There is another truth presented in my text. Note the words: ". . . but the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." Man's wrath cannot break its bounds. While God defeats the wrath of wicked men and makes it serve His glory, He restrains the rest. God suffers wicked men to vent their wrath as far as it shall contribute to His glory, but the rest is restrained. The most rampant evil is under the control of God. Surely this proves that the God of the Bible controls all events, even the actions of men on earth.

There is seen in the words, "the remainder of wrath thou shalt restrain," the doctrine of God's preventive providence. The word "restrain" means "the binding of wrath on every side so that it can by no means break out." Man's wrath is like a dog on a chain or a lion in his cage. God has it in His power to prevent wrath in a man. The sovereign Lord of all can withhold man from sin, if He pleases to do so.

ABIMELECH

"And Abraham journeyed from thence toward the south country, and dwelled between Kadesh and Shur, and sojourned in Gerar. And Abraham said of Sarah his wife, She is my sister: and Abimelech king of Gerar sent, and took Sarah. But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast

taken; for she is a man's wife. But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation? Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this. And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her" (Gen. 20:1-6).

Please note the words in verse 6 where God said to Abimelech: "For I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her." The king of Gerar was prevented by God from committing adultery with Sarah and sinning against God. Before Abimelech could touch Sarah God struck him with some kind of lethal infirmity (vv. 6, 17-18).

Preventive providence kept back this man from doing wrong. Here are seen some general facts about preventive providence. First, there is a great deal of sin devised and designed that never comes to pass. As bad as things are in this wicked world, they are not as bad as Satan and impenitent sinners would have them to be. What a Hell on earth would there be, but for God's various restraints in conscience, in the Bible, in the church, in civil government, and other things. How thankful we ought to be for these restraints!

Second, it is the mercy of God that withholds a man from sinning against Him. Sin does not originate with God, but it is God Who keeps a lid on sin. He influences the minds of sinners, or checks their inclinations to sin, or by providence takes away the

◊ (Continued on page 21)

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 20) ♦

opportunity to sin.

Third, it is a great blessing to be hindered by God from committing sin. Divine intervention prevented the death of Abimelech and preserved Sarah so she could fulfill the purpose of God concerning the seed.

LABAN

We all remember the story about Jacob and Laban. Jacob feared that Laban would not let him leave with his flocks and family (Gen. 31:42). So he decided to leave unannounced. Upon learning that Jacob had departed from him, Laban and his men pursued them, intending to take Jacob's flocks by whatever force that was necessary and to slay Jacob. They overtook Jacob in the mountains of Gilead. Knowing that Jacob could not escape, Laban and his men made camp in order to rest and prepare for combat the next day. But God spoke to Laban that night in a dream and said: "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad" (Gen. 31:24).

Here is another example of God withholding a man from sinning. He made it plain to Laban that Jacob was under His protection and was following His directions. The safety of godly men is very much owing to the control that God has over the consciences of bad men.

DAVID

On one occasion David was kept by preventive providence from a fearful act of vengeance. He and his men were fleeing from King Saul. They befriended Nabel the Carmelite by protecting his servants and property (I Sam. 25:1-9). In return, being in need of food, they requested ample provision from this man of great

wealth. To this request, Nabel gave an offensive answer (I Sam. 25:10-11). David and his men, prompted by this insult, rashly determined to slay this man who denied their request (I Sam. 25:13).

When they neared Nabel's house his wife, Abigail, acted in great wisdom. She kindly greeted them and made a liberal present to them. This subdued the angry warriors and stilled their swords. Consider David's words of thanksgiving: "And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand. For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hasted and come to meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall" (I Sam. 25:32-34).

It was at God's instigation that Abigail was led to pursue the conciliatory course which prevented David and his men from slaying the whole family. To God was due the glory of keeping back David and his men from a bloody deed which would have brought upon them a fearful amount of guilt. Here again the providence of God prevented sin.

DAVID IN THE PSALM

In Psalm 19:13 there is found this prayer of David: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins; let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." Presumptuous sins are wilful, intentional, deliberate sins. Here they are personified as tyrants

who strive to bring the servant of God into unbecoming subjection to them. No atonement was provided under the Jewish law for presumptuous sins (Num. 15:27-31). The psalmist knew that a true believer could fall into the worst of sins apart from a preventive providence. Unless restrained by grace, presumptuous sins would have dominion over us.

Were it not for God's intervention, the best of Christians would go from presumptuous sins on to the great transgression. "The great transgression" is when a saint sins unto physical death (Heb. 10:26-31; I John 5:16). This is why we ought to pray to be kept from presumptuous sins. God's providence can prevent the temptation, or He can give us grace to win the victory over sin. Saints cannot keep themselves; only God can keep them from presumptuous sins.

GOMER

The Prophet Hosea had an unfaithful wife named Gomer. She went on a wild career of adultery with lovers other than her husband. But a preventive providence checked her evil course so that she was driven back to her true husband (Hosea 1-2).

Pay attention to Hosea 2:6-7 where God says of Gomer: "Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths. And she shall follow after her lovers, but she shall not overtake them; and she shall seek them, but shall not find them: then shall she say, I will go and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me than now." God hindered her course of sin and shame. He hedged in and made a wall about the adulteress. This restrained her mad career of iniquity and folly. To change the figure, it is as though God

addressed the raging sea: "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed" (Job 38:11).

THE EXAMPLE PRAYER

Look at a portion of the words in the prayer which Christ taught His disciples: "And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil" (Matt. 6:13). According to this prayer, after we ask for the forgiveness of our sins (Matt. 6:12), we must pray for preservation from future sins. We are to ask God not to bring us into trying circumstances which would put our character to the test. At any time we may fall into sin. Hence we must confess our weakness and beseech God to prevent us from falling into sin.

The words, "but deliver us from evil," are also a prayer for preventive grace. We need to be delivered from the evil in our own hearts, from the evil in the world, from the evil one, and from every kind of evil. Only preventive providence can preserve us from the evil which surrounds us on every hand.

THE HOLY SPIRIT A RESTRAINER

Satan would have long ago consummated his evil program for the world unless he was restrained by God. The Holy Spirit in the New Testament church is at present a means of restraining evil: "And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity doeth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way" (II Thess. 2:6-7). When the Holy Spirit and the church are taken out at the Rapture the world will plunge into the seven-year-tribulation period under the reign of the final Antichrist.

At the present time the

♦ (Continued on page 23)

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER
Financial Report
5-1-2022 to 5-31-2022

Beginning Balance.....	\$6,837.21
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	500.00
S.G. B. C. Silsbee TX	30.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	100.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Germanton, NC	50.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	40.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Cheapeake, OH	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS	100.00
Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV	50.00
N. T. B. C. Goshen, IN	100.00
Indore BC, Indore, WV	300.00
West Jefferson BC, West Jefferson, OH.....	75.00
Berea BC, Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Big Creek BC, Wayne, WV	200.00
Eld Donald Parker, Millport, AL.....	100.00
Faith BC, Lynn, AR.....	12.50
Victory B. C., Courtland VA	25.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg KY	300.00
Grace B. C., Corbin KY	100.00
Kay Spencer.....	100.00
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield OR.....	200.00
Bethel B. C., Pasadena TX.....	100.00
Southside B. C., Fulton MS.....	50.00
Subscriptions.....	12.00
Divided Checks.....	300.00
Anonymous	250.00
Sub Total	\$3529.50
TOTAL.....	\$10,366.71

EXPENDITURES:

Postage	684.75
Printing.....	459.10
Wages	1750.00
FICA	133.88
Div Cks	300.00
Total Expenditures	\$3327.73

ENDING BALANCE \$7,038.98



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST
Financial Report
5-1-2022 to 5-31-2022

Beginning Balance.....	\$4,252.52
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg KY	200.00
Calvary I. B. C., Sumas WA	200.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	725.00
TOTAL.....	4977.52
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio time	363.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	363.98
.....
Interest	+0.03
ENDING BALANCE	\$4,613.57

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.

Disney Will “Lose on This Wokeness Gamble” If Parents Stop Their Patronage
By Annalisa Pesek
(Printed in the May 16, 2022 issue of The New American)

After nearly a century, the “happiest place on earth” is becoming the wickedest. Disneyland, now a “woke” world after all, is soon to be a broke world if enough parents rise up and boycott all things Disney, as they all should.

The company’s latest controversy involves its vigorous opposition to Florida’s new Parental Rights in Education bill, dubbed by its critics as the “Don’t Say Gay” bill, though the word “gay” never appears anywhere in the legislation. Now Disney is facing significant backlash from parents fed up with the “nonsense.”

Disney, no stranger to scandal, was at the center of an explosive investigation by CNN in 2014 that found 35 Disney employees were arrested for sex crimes against children. Today, the company condemns a law designed to protect kids from classroom instruction on sexual orientation and gender identity.

As Florida Governor Ron DeSantis made clear the day he signed House Bill 1557 into law, “Parents have every right to be informed about services offered to their child at school, and should be protected from schools using classroom instruction to sexualize their kids as young as 5 years old.”

Disney had little to say on the issue until a minority group of LGBTQ+ employees demanded a response, causing Disney CEO Bob Chapek not only to apologize to the “woke” mob for not being a “stronger ally,” but also vow to work to ensure the Florida state legislature repeals the law. Chapek further threatened to stop all political donations until this goal is achieved.

Yet DeSantis once again fought back, reminding Disney that Florida “is governed by the interests of the people of the state of Florida — it is not based on the demands of California corporate executives.”

No More Nonsense

Many parents from across Florida and beyond stand with DeSantis and have begun protesting by boycotting Disney products. News outlet Breitbart confirmed that “a flood of families are canceling Disney memberships” to its theme parks and Disney+ online streaming services.

On April 6, Christian singer Sean Feucht, founder of the Let Us Worship movement, called on believers and parents to “take a stand for the innocence of our children,” organizing a march outside the Disneyland headquarters in Burbank, California.

“Our kids are OUR kids,” wrote Feucht in an op-ed for Turning Point USA. “They aren’t the property of the woke expert class

who believe they know better how to raise our kids.”

Feucht promised Disney will be hearing from parents, declaring, “We as parents have not yet begun to fight. Disney will feel it in their earnings reports, teachers will feel it in the classrooms, and anyone who dismisses the concerns of parents and sexualizes children will feel it at the ballot box.”

Leading the Charge

Feucht gathered around 150 protesters to rally against Disney’s “woke” agenda on April 6. One attendee, Steve West of Moorpark, California, told *The Epoch Times* that he came to the rally because he wanted to be a part of the change. “It’s not enough to say you know something’s wrong and things aren’t how they should be,” said West. “You’ve got to put some skin in the game if you want to make a change. This is amazing.”

One wonders if these rallies happened every weekend whether Disney would begin to feel the pressure.

Meanwhile, “#BoycottDisney” has trended on social media, and Moms for Liberty, one of the nation’s largest mothers’ rights advocacy groups, has warned Disney of further backlash if it doesn’t stop interfering with Florida’s laws. The group’s co-founder, Tiffany Justice, told Fox News, “It seems like Disney is OK with sexualizing our children.”

While Justice’s group has called for boycotts of Disney products and its streaming service Disney+, Moms for Liberty is primarily working to get parents involved in their children’s education through local politics, such as running for the school board and voting down ballot.

Feeling the impact of community pushback, Disney

◊ (Continued on page 23)

Bible & the Newspaper

(Continued from page 22) ♦

would need to change its policies or risk losing fans and young children who idolize their beloved characters. Perhaps losing those people who pay the wages of Disney elites by spending their vacation dollars at theme parks and on other products would change the company's way of thinking.

Go Woke, Go Broke

One Tennessee father believes it will have an impact. He recently told Fox News Digital, "as a new father, I have decided not to expose my baby to any of Disney's products — anything they stream, or their theme parks. Disney doesn't seem to understand that parents have so many options now. Ultimately, I think they're going to lose on this wokeness gamble."

Even many of Disney's employees disagree with the company's promotion of sexual politics and race-based initiatives. Brave workers are speaking out against the company's challenge of a law that shields young children from material that teaches about sexual orientation and gender identity.

One Disney cast member, speaking at the rally in Burbank, admitted that "it's gotten very hard for [employees] with conservative values ... but it is okay to stand up for righteousness.... It's okay to stand up; you're not alone."

Another Disney employee, Jose Castillo, told One America News that the "silent majority" of Disney workers in Florida support Governor DeSantis' bill. "A lot of us are parents and we want to protect our children.... The bill doesn't say 'gay' anywhere. It says don't talk to our kids about sex, and that's what we care about.

We want to protect our children," he said. If Castillo and other now-silent employees loudly and proudly voice their opinions, Disney may change direction.

"Goodwill Always Triumphs Over Evil"

Ohio-based parent and grandparent Patti Garibay is also reconsidering her ties to Disney. She described in an e-mail to Fox News Digital that "Walt Disney most often cited his most important lesson as that of 'goodwill always triumphs over evil.' Today's Disney promotes a full spectrum of lifestyles that rarely align with the biblical values of good and evil, which God calls us to."

Walt Disney famously said, "the most important thing is family," and undoubtedly he would turn in his grave knowing his company now produces content that robs young children of their innocence.

Florida's "Freedom" Governor Is Not Finished

The parental-rights bill was just the first step by Governor DeSantis in ridding the state of Florida of atrocities committed by radically left-leaning companies such as Disney. He has refused to back away from the largest "single-site" employer in his state, and lawmakers have taken action against Disney and voted to repeal the 1967 Reedy Creek Improvement Act, which gave the company authority to self-govern across two counties in Florida.

Clearly, DeSantis plans to continue the fight against the progressive Left to save the state, and especially the children. Even as Disney attempts to supplant the will of bipartisan voters, of whom an overwhelming majority supports the new measure, DeSantis is hitting back.

"To inject a lot of these topics into programming for very

young children," he said at a press conference, "I can tell you as a parent of young kids that is not what I want to see them talking about, pushing an agenda, an ideological agenda." Certainly, DeSantis is not finished improving the free state of Florida. He is fighting the Left with the law, and hitting them where it hurts. By staying true to his word, he is winning.

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 21) ♦

Holy Spirit in true churches is restraining evil forces in the world. Any time now He may go out with the church. The result will be a time of unparalleled sufferings for planet earth.

HOW DOES GOD DO THIS?

The means that God uses to prevent sin as I have demonstrated in this lesson are many. Sometimes He spoke through a dream. At other times He provided a way of escape. At still other times He made it impossible for the person to commit the sin. But, all things considered, He in the main acted upon their minds in some form and fashion. Providence does extend to the free actions of men by preventing them from sinning. God does this by the government of their minds, their wills, their passions, and their counsels. These things are the spring of actions, and they are not ungovernable.

Proverbs 21:1 says: "The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will." If the king's heart is in the hand of the Lord, we can be sure God has all other hands and hearts, and He can turn or change them as He pleases. Proverbs 16:9 declares: "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the LORD directeth his steps." Men consult and advise what to do, but God steers and directs them as He pleases. "There are

many devices in a man's heart; nevertheless the counsel of the LORD, that shall stand" (Prov. 19:21; cf. 16:1; Jer. 10:23).

The government of God does extend to the free actions of men in the sense that He prevents them from breaking His law when He is pleased to do so. How easily He can alter their counsels and disappoint the evil they intended to do: "For they intended evil against thee: they imagined a mischievous device, which they are not able to perform" (Ps. 21:11). "Then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instructions, That he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man" (Job 33:16-17). God can cause men to do what they never intended to do: "The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands" (Ps. 9:15-16).

CONCLUSION

1. A sovereign God can restrain the wrath of man and prevent that wrath from leading on to sin. It is pure mercy on God's part to do this. God governs the world with a perfect providence. Men's lives are weaving the web God intends, working out the pattern of His eternal purpose. Our song in eternity will be: "He hath done all things well" (Mark 7:37).

2. Any person who disputes or denies that God's providence extends to the free acts of men cannot believe in preventive providence, for preventive providence is particular providence.

3. What a Hell this earth would be if God did not withhold men from their mad career of sin and shame! Thank God that men are restrained in their wrath and

♦ (Continued on page 24)

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 23) ♦

wickedness. If the Holy Spirit did not withhold the spread of wickedness through the church, how long would the church survive on earth? The flames of martyrdom would soon blaze to high Heaven and consume the house of God to ashes. Praise the Lord for preventive providence which makes certain that the gates of Hell shall not prevail against His church!

4. The world is not run by fate or chance. These things are impersonal and void of life and intelligence. We have a personal God on the throne of the universe, infinite in wisdom, goodness, and power. So great is His power that He can restrain the wrath of man and withhold a man from a sinful act, if He is pleased to do so in His mercy.

5. Let us daily cry to God for deliverance from presumptuous sins. If God leaves us to ourselves we shall surely fall into sin and ruin our testimony. Only a preventive providence can keep us from sinning against our God and hold us in the path of righteousness. Our God is able to keep us from falling and to present us faultless

before His presence (Jude 24).

6. Martin Luther said: “O unhappy men, when God leaves them to themselves and does not resist them in their lusts! You bless yourselves many times that in the way of sin you find no difficulty. Bless thyself! Thou hast caused to howl and wring thy hands; thou hast the curse of God on thee. A dreadful curse to make pleasant the way of sin!” Oh, my friend, there is but one Savior from sin, and that is Jesus Christ Who died to save sinners. Do you know Him?



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 17) ♦

Millennium will be the saved who enter the kingdom in their natural bodies.” (pgs. 172-173).

So, I hope this answers the question to the asker’s satisfaction. There are exciting times coming for the believer in Jesus Christ. If you do not know Jesus as your Saviour, then horrible times are awaiting you. **“For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”** (Rom. 10:13). God Bless!



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

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

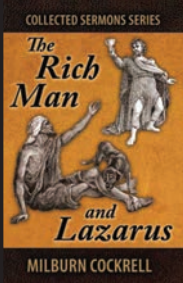
The Grace Landmark Baptist Church of Buckhannon, WV, is seeking a pastor. The church is Sovereign Grace and Landmark in doctrine and practice. Any interested called pastor of like faith may contact Brother Brad Butcher at (304) 669-4738 or (304) 745-6226.

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

The Victory Baptist Church of Chehalis, Washington is in

need of a pastor. Any interested brother may call Gerry Greisen at (360) 985-7975, or Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

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



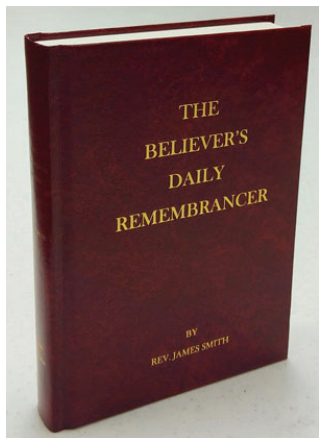
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ARTICLE INDEX

The Battle of Armageddon by T. P. Simmons	p. 1
Can This Text Speak? by Doug Newell IV	p. 1
But Rather Giving Thanks by Timothy J. Hille	p. 1
The Ordinance of the Red Heifer Pt 2 by Nathaniel Hille	p. 1
Brief Truths by Randy Johnson	p. 3
Narrow Paths by Doug Newell IV	p. 5
Moderate Steps by T. Matthew Stepp	p. 7
Heavenly Hymns	p. 9
Small Drops by Joseph M. Sidders	p. 11
Selahs by Tomas Julius G. Salacup	p. 11
Forum	pp. 12-13
Baptist History	p. 17
Burning Coals of Truth by C. D. Cole	p. 18
Country Preacher by Milburn Cockrell	p. 20
The Bible and the Newspaper	p. 22