

The Berea Baptist Banner

"And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." Matt. 21:22

Patriotism & Citizenship

Eld. Chuck West

Citizenship: Our citizenship is in heaven

Philippians 3:17, 20, "Brethren, be followers together of me, and mark them which walk so as ye have us for an ensample. For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ:" Let us bear our text in mind as we first discuss citizenship, as we do not believe it is possible to be "Patriots" if we have not yet learned to be

good and responsible citizens. So, let's begin with "responsible" citizenship: What does that mean and how do we attain to it?

Since the beginning of time, men have been able to see that, **"The heavens declare the glory of God"**. That which is noted in Psalms 19 should be obvious to the eyes of all on the earth, so that even the natural man has a pattern of order to model things after in the world. But God did not leave man to his own devices, rather

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The Call of God

By Wm. Doyal Thomas
(1932 - 2018)

"No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45).

These verses of Scripture declare plainly that they who are drawn by the Father will be raised



up at the last day. Being raised up to the glories of resurrection is the work of God, and is the culmination of His work toward His chosen people.

It is the "conforming them to the image of His Son" that is here in view, and is the predestinated end that God has decreed for His

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The Way of Salvation

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:21).

"Blessed be the LORD, who hath not given us as a prey to their teeth. Our soul is escaped as a bird out of the snare of the fowls: the snare is broken, and we are escaped. Our help is in the name of the LORD, who made heaven and earth" (Psa. 124:6-8).

"Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the LORD revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground:



he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows,

and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not. Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for

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The Judgments of God

By E. G. Cook
(1898 - 1986)

The seventieth, or last week of Daniel's prophecy is to be filled so full of judgments upon this earth that some Bible scholars call it "The Dispensation of Judgment." The title seems to fit perfectly in spite of the fact that modernists and liberals of our day have concocted them a god who is all love and mercy. Certainly the true God is love, and He is also merciful. If He were not a God of love and mercy it would be too bad for this poor sinful writer---and for the ones who may read this as well. But He is also a just God (Rom. 3:26), and justice demands judgment.

In discussing II Thessalonians 1:7- 10, C. H. Dodd,



the great champion of modernists and liberals, on page 79 of his book, *The Apostolic Preaching*, says "There is nothing distinctively

Christian either in its contents or in general tone."

That just shows how far these atheistic religionists will go to build up their god of love and mercy. But that will in no wise prevent the last seven years of Bible prophecy from being taken up with great and terrible judgments.

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

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Berea Baptist Banner
PO Box 39
Mantachie, Mississippi
38855

(662) 282 - 7794

www.bereabaptistchurch.org

request@bereabaptistchurch.org
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Patriotism...

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He has given us oral and written instructions on how to form and order a civil society that will best serve our interests. Therefore, the ultimate model of government and citizenship is found in the Scriptures. But how do we balance government and Scripture?

Mark 12:14, 15, 17, "And when they were come, they say unto him, Master, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou regardest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God in truth: Is it lawful to give tribute to Caesar, or not? Shall we give, or shall we not give? ... And Jesus answering said unto them, Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's."

Tertullian said, "'Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's;' that is, give to Caesar his image stamped upon his coin, and give to God his own image stamped upon you; so that while you render to Caesar the coin which is his due, you may render your own self to God."

It is the duty of every good citizen to adhere to the law and traditions of an equitable government, so long as that adherence does not interfere or directly contradict our primary duty of giving to God, the things that are His. **Romans 12:1**, says **"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."**

When our American forefathers and founders felt that the tyranny of King George III threatened and directly contended

with their spiritual duties, it left them in a precarious position. Those who truly felt the Divine call to Christ, were not satisfied to be oppressed with ungodly rule, but submitted themselves to God in prayer, study and worship, where they found courage and were convicted with the truth of His Scriptures. They found the courage that sadly many Christians lack today: the courage to present their "bodies a living sacrifice".

For centuries prior to American colonization the court systems of many governments had been used primarily as a political enforcement tool; a means by which to rid the nations rulers of their political opponents. Christians were often a target for such corrupt court proceedings, and not just in Rome but throughout Europe. Many of the European nations were homes to state-run churches, and in time Christians grew tired of this corruption and many of them left for America.

Remembering the tyranny of the court systems and state-run churches they had fled, these new, American Christians purposely moved to set up a more equitable judicial system. The biggest thing they did in opposition to most of the court systems they fled, was to secure justice for all those accused by setting up a trial by jury system.

Those original American jurors played a much more prominent role in court proceedings than modern jurors. One of the scriptures they looked to in establishing that original system was **I Corinthians 6:2**, **"Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters?"** Since the original Americans considered this Scripture to be literally true,

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they set up a system whereby the juror was literally a “citizen-judge”. In other words, the original American jurors examined the facts of a case and then judged the law at the center of the case.

In 1895, the SCOTUS sadly ruled that juries would no longer consider the law in any case but only the “facts”. So American courts became courts of law, not courts of justice: Why? Because the American citizen-judge no longer had a voice against a tyrannical law. He or she could only render a decision as to whether an individual had violated a law, not whether the law itself was just or unjust. Consequently, the new federal court of appeals system has taken control of America’s “laws”, once again, often pitting the Christian against the state and tyrannical anti-Christian “laws”.

Consider the case of Daniel. There was a conspiracy to create a law that the conspirators knew Daniel would violate because Daniel did not cease to render his body “a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God”. The conspirators abused their power, excluding the “first president”, Daniel, when preparing the document, then they lied to king Darius in order to obtain his signature, which made it “law”. Now, if Daniel’s case had been presented to a pre-1895 American jury, he would have been immediately exonerated because the “law” was not only tyrannical but was designed to “entrap” a specific type of individual: the devout worshipper of the True and Living God, Jehovah! Sadly, a modern-day jury would be directed by the judge to “convict”, because the “facts” say Daniel violated the unjust “law”.

Are we good Christian, American citizens today? Can we be without a measure of political activism in a nation that has so obviously wandered off the strait and narrow path of God? Can we honestly say we are good stewards, working diligently to maintain the blessings of an America founded by God and His servants if we are not actively working in the natural political realm as well as the spiritual?

When is the last time you wrote your state and national representatives? Do you vote? Do you vote in every election, even the local ones, on local matters? **Galatians 6:2-9, “Bear ye one another’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ. For if a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself. But let every man prove his own work.... Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. ... let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”**

Brethren, we are called to be spiritual beings. But let us remember that we received that call in this natural physical world. We have a calling to care for the things of nature with a spiritual heart. James 1:17 says, **“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”** What a good gift it is to be born in “the land of the free and the home of the brave”.

What a good thing it is to have “liberty”! To retain that liberty has cost the lives of many Americans. Perfect liberty is in, and through Jesus Christ, and that cost our Savior His Life. Is it not right and just to honor The Blood of The Giver and the blood of those whose

bravery have retained the gift? Will we not do all in our power to preserve the Gift of freedom and liberty for our children and their children?

Patriotism

In my study of original American history, (and I say “original” here because the liberals of the last 75 years have done much to rewrite history), I have concluded that among the original colonists and founders of this country were a great many Christians. Much of our original history is still preserved in the Library of Congress but I have to feel that even that, is threatened today. That feeling, to me is all the more reason for us who consider ourselves Patriots, to lift up our voices against all manner of tyranny and oppression. That shouldn’t be too hard to do: it’s all around us!

Voting and writing and expressing ourselves in other ways as patriots are indeed valuable, but sometimes greater measures may be called for. As mentioned earlier, freedom and liberty is obtained and kept with blood. There is value in the study and understanding of American history, but there is far greater value in the study and understanding of God’s Word. While it’s true that anyone can pick up a Bible and read it, only those who are given Holy Spirit discernment can truly and fully appreciate it, understand it, and unlock many of its Divine Truth’s.

Therefore, the greatest patriots are most likely to be convicted, committed Christians or those raised in a family environment where Judeo-Christian precepts and commands were revered and followed. Please, don’t misunderstand me when I say that: I value every life that is sacrificed for the “good gift” of this nation. My observation is simply this: Those who are most in

tune with the underlying founding documents of this nation and the declarations of so many of this nation’s founders and framers, and who have a spiritual nature with which to fully appreciate the nourishment and direction found in God’s Word, are far more likely to live a continually committed life to preserving the integrity of those documents and declarations as filtered through and distilled from the Scriptures.

Let me go one step farther and say this: If a patriot desires the blessing of God that they be a “good patriot”, he or she, must be Christian. For in Christ alone can the patriot find blessing and acceptance in the eyes of God, **“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”** (Acts 4:12) Now, when the Christian condition is combined with **Psalms 33:12, “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD”**, then the patriots and the citizens of that nation can take comfort in the blessings and promises of God.

The founding of America has increasingly come under attack in recent years as illegitimate, non-Christian and with an assertion that the founders and framers were not really Christians at all. Well, just who were some of those people who were willing to risk everything in order to establish a nation that would provide freedom and liberty for generations to come; Let’s take a brief look at some of them:

Charles Carroll, signed the Declaration of Independence and was one of the Framers of the Bill of Rights, said the following, “Without morals a republic cannot subsist any length of time; they therefore who are decrying the Christian religion ... are undermining the

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solid foundation of morals, the best security for the duration of free governments."

American Statesman and U. S. Secretary of State under Presidents William Henry Harrison, John Tyler and Millard Fillmore, Daniel Webster, said the following in a speech to the SCOTUS on February 10, 1844: "The Christian religion – its general principles – must ever be regarded among us as the foundation of civil society.

Joseph Story, U. S. Supreme Court Justice appointed by President James Madison, said the following, "One of the beautiful boasts of our municipal jurisprudence is that Christianity is a part of the Common Law. ... There has never been a period in which the Common Law did not recognize Christianity as lying at its foundations."

George Washington believed that anyone, even "mere politicians" as he called them, who worked to undermine religion and morality, what Washington considered to be the two indispensable pillars of government and civil society, could not be considered to be a "patriot". Washington said, "In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness. ... The mere politician equally with the pious man ought to respect and to cherish them."

John Quincy Adams performed diplomatic missions to five nations. He served as a state senator, U. S. senator, Secretary of State and 6th U. S. President. On his retirement from the presidency neighbors appealed to him for help. Relenting, he was elected to the U. S. House of Representatives, and

served nine terms, dying in office: although he declared, "I had not the slightest desire to be elected to Congress." Adams believed it was his Christian duty to serve when called upon rather than to retire to an unencumbered life.

When he was seventy-four years old in 1841, he wrote the following: "I deem it the duty of every Christian man, when he betakes himself to his nightly pillow, in self-examination to say, 'What good have I done this day? Ay! And what evil have I done that may be repaired or repented of?' Nor should he rise from that pillow the next morning till after the inquiry, 'What good can I do, and to whom this day?' I have made this my rule for many years, with superadded prayer to the Lord of all – the Giver of every good gift for light (James 1:17) – for discernment, for guidance, for self-control, for a grateful heart to feel and acknowledge all His blessings, for humble resignation to His will, and submission to His chastisements ... Jesus Christ went about doing good (Acts 10:38); I would do the same."

Now friends I ask you, do the statements of these men taken from verifiable historical documents, cause them to sound like non-believing men of no certain conviction, who would be happy to be the founders and framers of a corrupt and unjust nation? Or do they have the ring of true believers? Why then have we in America suffered so of late: Suffered with abomination after abomination with corruption in every branch of government and at every level from local to national?

While I do not have all the answers, but I do know a large portion of the answer, and it involves the youth of America. Listen to what Benjamin Rush, signer of the Declaration of Independence,

physician, politician, educator and former Treasurer of the United States Mint had to say about the education of America's youth.

In his work of 1791 entitled, "A defense of the Use of the Bible as a School Book", he wrote the following: "I promised to give you my reasons for preferring the Bible as a school book to all other compositions....I shall assume the five following propositions:

1. That Christianity is the only true and perfect religion; and that in proportion as mankind adopt its principles and obey its precepts, they will be wise and happy.
2. That a better knowledge of this religion is to be acquired by reading the Bible than in any other way.
3. That the Bible contains more knowledge necessary to man in his present state than any other book in the world.
4. That knowledge is most durable and religious instruction most useful when imparted in early life.
5. That the Bible when not read in schools is seldom read in any subsequent period of life.

My arguments in favor of the use of the Bible as a school book are founded in the constitution of the human mind. The memory is the first faculty which opens in the minds of children."

One of my earliest memories is that of my grandmother singing old Baptist hymns. **Proverbs 22:6** says, "**Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.**" I sure am glad for the folks who "trained me up": But what kind of training up are young folks getting today in our public schools?

That might be one of the good things to come out of the governments coronavirus lockdowns: no ungodly, government sponsored public education.

The responsible Christian-American who desires to be a good patriot must do their duty in "training up" our young people but must also lead by example and be good, actively involved citizens, themselves. That means appreciating God's good gift of America enough to be courageous in protecting the freedoms and liberties He has blessed us with in this land. We have perfect liberty in Christ, but we've been given the gift of liberty in this country and the freedom to publicly and boldly declare His Gospel and we need to cherish that and work to keep it!

You may say, "That's all well and good but is patriotism and political activism Biblical?"

What about Moses, who by faith and trust in God, reluctantly but boldly, withstood the tyranny of Pharaoh for the sake of his people. What of the shepherd boy David who asked, "**Is there not a cause?**" (I Samuel 17:29) Well, is there not a cause to personally be involved in the defense of our people, our nation, or our God?

What about Joshua and Caleb, or Judah and Simeon; Deborah and Barak; Gideon; Jephthah; Samson and on and on, even after Israel would turn away from God and do "**evil in the sight of The Lord**"? Were not all those Biblical hero's raised up by God as patriotic defenders of the people?

Consider Esther: she like Daniel was caught up in the politics of high palace intrigue; she could have elected to be an uninvolved and apathetic bystander, but thank God she found the courage to become

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directly involved in the political moment. Let's pay particular attention to some of the details of her case that are directly applicable to those of us in America today.

First of all, notice that in order to get involved, she did so at the risk of her own life: **Esther 4:11**, "... **whosoever, whether man or woman, shall come unto the king into the inner court, who is not called, there is one law of his to put him to death...**" Most of us today would not be directly risking death by publicly exposing an unjust and tyrannical law, although we might be imprisoned and die there.

Next, we notice in v13 that her silence would not shield her from the tyrannical law that would eventually destroy her and her people: **"Then Mordecai commanded to answer Esther, Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews."** She might have delayed her own death for a little while but that is all. Our continued silence, or merely complaining among ourselves about the erosion of God's Laws and the subsequent loss of freedoms and liberties, only serves to prolong our suffering and ensure the suffering of our children.

Then notice something interesting that each one of us should always be aware of; never shy away from, and openly ask of ourselves and each other in v14: **"...who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?"** Do not expect that God requires anything short of our very lives in defending that which is His; that He has given us: **"For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to**

whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more." (Luke 12:48)

Finally, notice perhaps the most significant part of this historical account in chapter 8:17, **"...And many of the people of the land became Jews..."**. Do you see the significance here and how that pertains to us today? If we found the courage to have the faith of these Biblical patriots and act accordingly, how do we know that God would not work a great awakening of the Spirit across this land and return her to her former glory in Jesus Christ!?

We do not all worship the same God! True Christian American patriots and citizens looking to heaven for our home, worship The True and Living God of Israel: God The Father; God The Son; God, The Holy Spirit! If we as God fearing Americans really want to make America great again, then we must publicly declare our love and our faith in Jesus Christ and actively defend the original laws of this nation as founded under Him. I believe that is "our reasonable service."

America has fallen into a time where truth is in short supply. To openly speak the truth is one of the greatest gifts we can give one another. But it takes a certain individual ability to perceive "truth". This perception is given with The Holy Spirit and each one of God's elect are imbued with the power of that gift. We need a "great awakening" that many more across this land be able to separate the truth from the many lies being told for truth today. **"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour..."** (Ephesians 4:25)

Jesus says to all believers, **"If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; And**

ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:31-32) **"Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free..."**, (Galatians 5:1), not turning aside to sin but manifesting in our lives that our citizenship is in heaven, speaking truth to one another and rebuking those who lie as good citizens of this God-given nation and defending her truths as God-fearing patriots: **"Is there not a cause"**.

Freedom, Truth, Liberty; all these things were given by God to this country called, **America!** Are these things not worth cherishing and are they not worth protecting and defending? If we as Christians are not interested enough or brave enough to get personally involved in shaping and protecting the God-inspired laws of the land, as were our forebears – then we have no right to complain about the current erosion of them; or that the people of America are doing "evil in the sight of the Lord".

We have seen Biblically, that God used the brave and the devoutly convicted to return the people of Israel to Himself: will He not do the same for His people in this country; the land He used His servants to establish?

Friends, I do not know how you feel about this subject, but as for me – I can only echo that which was declared in a church some years ago in Richmond, Virginia on March 23, 1775: **"Give me liberty, or give me death!"**



The Call of God

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people. This predestinated end is the result of God's election, calling, and justification as is specified in Romans 8:29, 30. It is the end that

God has ordained, or appointed. By the means that He has decreed, "He works His work, His strange work, and performs His act, His strange act" (Isa. 28:21).

The Scriptures therefore confirm the doctrines of grace, and leave religious man without grounds or basis for any self-righteous boasting. And all boasting that man does religiously is nothing but self-righteous boasting.

That man is totally depraved, there can be no doubt. This dreadful condition of men in their native state is the awful result of sin. When Adam rebelled against the Thrice Holy God, and sinned in the garden of Eden, he plunged himself and his offspring into utter and complete ruin. This act resulted in the loss of all desire and ability to serve God, and placed man in a helpless and undone position. From this position, man deserves only the wrath of a Sovereign and holy God.

The unconditional election, or choosing by God of some men out of this mass of filthy and depraved humanity to obtain salvation through the benefits, or merits of the shed blood of God's own dear Son follows. Except God intervene in the behalf of fallen man, it is clear that none could, or would be saved.

But God does save some. This fact alone verifies that God did intervene and rescue some from among the fallen race. The fact that some are saved from the wrath to come proves that God provided the way out of this dreadful condition. All men are not saved, to be sure, as is shown in Luke 16:23. Here it is stated that the rich man in Hell lifted **"...up his eyes, being in torments..."**. Beloved, there are inhabitants of Hell at this very time and moment. All men are not saved.

In choosing some to obtain salvation, God passed by others and left them to their just punishment. And He did no injustice to those He passed by. None can charge God in this matter, for, **"...it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that**

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The Call of God

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runneth, but of God that showeth mercy" (Rom. 9:16).

The doctrine of limited atonement, or particular redemption is a scriptural truth that cannot be denied. This doctrine is clearly set forth in the Scriptures that teach redemption. Christ died for some, and He knew who they were. Every one of them He knew. **"I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep"** (John 10:11). **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand"** (John 10:27-29).

This message now centers upon the biblical doctrine of God's calling. This calling is the work of God, the Holy Spirit, and to imagine that He fails is to imagine that God is lacking in power, or ability. Such an imagination is absurd, and brings great and awful dishonor to God.

We ask you now to open your Bibles to the 6th chapter of the Gospel according to John, and to read with us our text Scriptures again. These two verses, 44 and 45 will serve as our beginning point as we seek to search out "thus saith God" in the matter of those chosen and redeemed as being also the called.

"No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me" (John 6:44-45).

It is immediately apparent that Jesus speaks of the natural inability of depraved man to come to Him. In verse 44, He speaks as

plainly as language can speak of this lack of ability. He said, **"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."**

In the face of this clear declaration by Jesus Christ Himself, depraved, religious man has the audacity to lift up his voice and say, "but any man can come to Jesus anytime he chooses to do so."

What a religious sham this is. What an ugly and ungodly shame this is. Just think. Puny, created worms of the dust even dare to say that Jesus lied. And that is just what men do. They say that Jesus lied about this matter, and insist upon it by repeating again and again that man can come to Jesus to receive the benefits of atonement anytime their depraved will desires to do so.

Just reform your habits, they say. Just clean up your conduct, they say. Just turn over a new leaf, they say. Just cry and be very sorry when you get caught in your sins, they say. But what "did" Jesus say? He said, **"No man can come."** Now, who is the liar in the matter?

It is clear then that the ability to come does not rest in the sinful creature at all. Do not take issue with me now about this. It is God's Word that has said so. It is not my word. It is God's Word. God said, **"No man can come."**

Jesus did not leave the matter after affirming that man has no ability to come to Him. He immediately dealt with the matter by also saying, **"...except the Father which hath sent me draw him."** This "except" clearly teaches that the Father will intercede and will indeed draw him.

Please notice also in the last phrase of verse 44 that Jesus makes a promise to **"...raise him up at the last day."** Does our Lord make idle promises that He has no intention of keeping? Does He speak such words of assurance if He has no ability to carry them out?

Give very careful and serious consideration to what I am about to say now on this point. It is very, very important, and I urge you to hear

me plainly, and make no mistake in understanding.

First of all, please understand that Jesus "did" make a plain and clearly stated promise to raise up at the last day "someone." Who is that "someone" who is to be raised up at the last day? Listen carefully. The "someone" is the same as the one drawn by the Father; the same one who **"come to me"** in the first phrase of verse 44.

The promise of resurrection is based upon coming to Jesus in this life. And coming to Jesus is based upon the drawing power of God, the Holy Spirit. Our dear Lord has never made a promise to raise up all men in the last day, in the sense of their being raised up to be conformed to the image of His Son, and to be eternally in His presence. He has promised that His people will be raised up in this realm, and that none of them shall ever perish, nor shall any man pluck them out of His hand. Oh, Security! Oh the joy of knowing that His people are to be forever safe and secure in His keeping.

To declare that a single one of those chosen by the Father and given to the Son in the eternal covenant of redemption shall one day fall, or fail to come when called is to accuse God. Hear this clearly. It is to accuse God.

For a single one of God's elect to be lost, then there must be some failure on God's part. If God promised to raise up every one He draws, as He certainly did in verse 44, and then fail to do so, it would prove Him either to be lacking in desire to do so, or, to be lacking in ability to do so.

If you say, "God decided not to raise up one," it accuses Him of changing His mind. It declares Him to be mutable as is man. The Scriptures plainly teach however, that "God changes not" (Mal. 3:6) **"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning"** (Jam. 1:17).

If you say, "God could not raise up one," then you accuse God of being limited in power, or ability to do so. This is an open attack upon His omnipotence. He is all powerful, and the only saviour (Isa. 43:11).

I repeat. If God does not raise up every one of His own, it is either because He would not, or, He could not. God forbid that man make such an awful charge against the Almighty God of the universe.

Have you ever questioned God on this matter? Have you ever imagined that God is trying His best to save some dead, alienated sinner; and the miserable sinner just will not let God save him?

Beloved friend, my God is not trying to do anything! He does as He will. He has always done as He will. He will forever do as He will. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

"The king's heart is in the hand of the LORD, as the rivers of water: he turneth it whithersoever he will" (Prov. 21:1).

"And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou" (Dan. 4:35).

"But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth" (Job 23:13).

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:9-10).

Verse 45 of the text also presents some precious truths on this subject. It is declared here, **"Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."** The last phrase, "cometh unto me," is a continued promise that some will come to Jesus. Who

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The Call of God

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is this someone? Is it every man of Adam's race? Then who is it?

First, it cannot be every man of Adam's race. How do I know that to be so? Because if every man of Adam's race comes to Jesus, then they all, without exception, will be raised up at the last day, as verse 44 has just said.

Is this the case? Certainly not. If it were the case, then Luke 16:23 would not be true. Remember the rich man in Hell? Is he to be raised up at the last day? What an absurdity this would be.

Then those who come to Jesus must be someone in particular. Who are they? Speculation upon their identity is not necessary, for God knows them, and has already identified them in verse 45. Here He said they are they **"that hath HEARD, and hath LEARNED of the Father."** (emph. DT) These are the ones that will come, and none besides them will ever come, because all that come are all that are drawn by the Father.

Have not all men heard, and learned of the Father? Paul answered this question in Romans 10:18, when he declared, **"...Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."**

To hear the sounds of the gospel, or to hear with the natural ear does not mean that one has heard. Likewise, to have a head or intellectual knowledge of the things of God does not mean that one has learned of the Father. The natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, so declares I Corinthians 2:14. Only one who has been made a spiritual being can perceive the things of God.

How is it that two may sit side by side and hear the preached gospel, and one of them hear the good news, and the other hear only the uncertain sound of human words? How is it? Have you ever considered

the matter? You may say, "one of them wanted to hear, and the other one did not." That sounds good, does it not?" That sounds as if a man who is dead in trespasses and in sins can hear if he wants to. But is he not as dead as the other? Are there degrees of dead? Dead? Deader? Dearest? Both were dead. But one heard. Why? How?

Consider this. When Jesus was crucified on Golgotha's barren hillside, there were two malefactors crucified along side Him. One on either side, that the Scripture might be fulfilled that had said, "I was numbered with the transgressors." These two were guilty of murder and sedition. Truly they fully deserved the punishment they were receiving. One of them admitted that they were getting their just dues.

Now, as two were facing certain death, does it make any sense that only one of them wanted to hear, or to live? What was said that one heard, the other heard also. What was seen by one was also seen by the other. But only one of them said, **"...Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom"** (Luke 23:42). Why not both of them? Why either of them?

One of the guilty malefactors was effectually worked upon in regeneration by the Holy Spirit. The irresistible grace of Almighty God was effectively and efficiently brought to bear. He was awakened, made alive, given ears to hear and eyes to see. He was enabled to see Jesus, Who He was. He acknowledged Him as Lord. In repentance and faith (which are the fruits of the Spirit) he turned to Jesus and said, **"...Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom"** (Luke 23:42).

Listen now to the gracious Lord as He answers this guilty but repentant sinner whom He had just saved. **"...Verily I say unto thee, to day shalt thou be with me in paradise"** (Luke 23:43). Today! Today in paradise with the Lord! Praise God! To be in paradise with Him!

This one heard, and learned

of the Father, as the Holy Spirit worked efficiently. The result is, he came to Jesus. In repentance and faith which were given to him, he came to Jesus. Why? Because it was given unto him to believe (Phil. 1:29). But why not the other? Because unto him it was not given. But why? **"Even so, Father, for lo it seemeth good in thy sight."**

There were no works done that day, nor was there any act of baptism of water, as some men affirm there must be. They can never deal with this repentant thief, can they? This man was saved by the man, Jesus Christ, as are all who are, or shall be saved.

Why do two sit side by side and hear the message of grace preached, and one believe, and the other believe not? For the same reason as applied to these two thieves. To one it is given. To the other it is not given. Oh, the majesty of elective, distinguishing, discriminating grace! What maketh thee to differ?

Grace first contrived the way

To save rebellious man:

And all the steps that grace display
Which drew the wonderous plan.

Grace led my roving feet

To tread the heavenly road;

And new supplies each hour I meet
While pressing on to God.

Grace all the works shall crown,

through everlasting days;

It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.

In conclusion, God's call is a direct call, as shown by Acts 16:14. It is a particular call, as shown by Romans 8:30. And it is a effective call, as shown by II Samuel 9:5.

It is my prayer that you have received such a call. May God be pleased to use these words to get glory to Himself, and to edify and strengthen His dear saints. May God bless you all.



The Way of Salva...

(Continued from page 1) ♦

our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors" (Isa. 53:1-12).

"Jehovah is Salvation" is what the Hebrew name 'Jehoshua' (or
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The Way of Salva...

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Joshua) means. It is the foundation of our faith; that we have indeed been delivered by the blood of the Lamb of God. **"Behold, God is my salvation; I will trust, and not be afraid: for the LORD JEHOVAH is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation"** (Isa. 12:2).

Let us first consider why a "Way" was/is necessary? The simple answer is because of the forsaken stewardship in the Garden of Eden, all have fallen with our forefather, the first Adam, and thus in order for us to be restored a way must be provided. The way back in is literally blocked: **"And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And Adam called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them. And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life"** (Gen. 3:17-24).

Our natural inheritance, as a result of Adam's fall, from birth is sorrow and death, and we can

simply look through history to see this truth. All have died, and all have experienced loss. For us to have been born in this depraved state, we require a path of righteousness: a way of salvation. Not a way to work for salvation, as salvation itself is the deliverance or redemption from our inherited state. If our inherited state is fallen, it cannot simply be turned useful or "unfallen" once again in and of itself.

What we are delivered from is the penalty of sin, eternal death and destruction...dying continually for all time. What we are delivered to is eternal bliss in the presence of God the Father and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We required a "Way" of salvation for without it we are forever lost. In a longer study of the Old Testament we would find men straying from God further and further. Desiring the creature comforts we have made for ourselves because we are unable to believe (faith) that there could truly be a more permanent comfort. Praise God there is an eternal comfort for the believer!

Let us consider now the fact that we could be saved by no other way; it had to be by Jesus' own blood and righteousness because He was appointed before His birth. He was appointed to be the "Way" of salvation by the Father, and He willingly took upon Himself our nature to be handled once and for all. He was **"in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin"** (Heb 4:15). **"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 behoved 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 succour them that are tempted" (Heb. 2:14-18). **"Now I say, That the heir, as long as he is a child, differeth nothing from a servant, though he be lord of all; But is under tutors and governors until the time appointed of the father. Even so we, when we were children, were in bondage under the elements of the world: But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons"** (Gal. 4:1-5).

He was the only acceptable "Way" of salvation because He was born outside of the curse of the first Adam. Born without our depravity as He came from Mary but not a human father (**"made in image of Adam"** Gen. 5:1-32). He was begotten of the Holy Spirit and did not come into this life with an insurmountable need for He was **".. holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens"** (Heb. 7:26). The Messiah, our second Adam, rather than needing to offer up sacrifices for His own sins, of which He had none, He offered up Himself "once" for the sins of His people. A perfect Sacrifice from a perfect High Priest!

He was also perfect as He led a perfect life and served as our only example of true righteousness. **"Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found**

in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls" (1 Pet. 2:18-25). Do we struggle as servants to be subject? Perhaps our banner should be **"By Whose stripes ye were healed"** as a reminder that we are His, bought and paid for!

In His death He fulfilled His mission completely. **"Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil"** (Matt. 5:17). Beloved, hear the words of Christ from the cross....**"It is finished"**. What was completed was all of the law, and all of the prophecies of this book were fulfilled therein. The way of salvation was paved in Christ...and made open and available through the preaching of His Word by the sacrifice upon the cross!

The sacrifice of animals was symbolically pointing to this one and perfect sacrifice. The effectiveness of that spilt blood was temporary in its effect. It was a display of faithfulness to God, but it could do no more than roll the sins forward. **"Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God"** (Heb. 9:12-14)?

The Sacrifice of Jesus was efficient and eternal, praise God! **"But now the righteousness of**

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Heavenly Hymns

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

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BRING THEM IN

1. Hark! 'tis the Shep-herd's voice I hear, Out in the des-ert dark and drear,
2. Who'll go and help this Shep-herd kind, Help Him the wand-ering ones to find?
3. Out in the des-ert hear their cry, Out on the moun-tains wild and high;

Call - ing the sheep who've gone a-stray Far from the Shep-herd's fold a - way.
Who'll bring the lost ones to the fold, Where they'll be shel-tered from the cold?
Hark! 'tis the Mas-ter speaks to thee, "Go find my sheep wher-e'er they be."

REFRAIN

Bring them in, bring them in, Bring them in from the fields of sin;

Bring them in, bring them in, Bring the wand-ering ones to Je - sus.

The Way of Salva...

(Continued from page 9) ♦

and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. -- The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep" (John 10:11-15).

Lastly, Jesus was made the "Way" of our salvation because, being raised again, He now resides at the right hand of God. **"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom"** (Heb. 1:8). Our eternal inheritance (everlasting life or the **"sure mercies of David"** as referenced in Isaiah 55:3 and Acts 13:34) are forever secure because they are **"hid with Christ in God"** (Col 3:3). Where would be more secure than at the right hand of God? **"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword"** (Rom. 8:34-35). **"Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them"** (Heb. 7:25). **"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine"** (John 17:9). What a thing to recognize that our very "Way" of salvation is also our continual advocate at the right hand of the throne! Our salvation can therefore be as secure as His sacrifice (which **"is finished"** and as secure as His position, (which has been before the foundation of the world and will continue to be for He is the Alpha and the Omega)!

This: our "Way of Salvation"

is eternal. He has the final word on the straight and narrow way. No worldly nor church authority will overrule Him; no heavenly power can supplant Him. He cannot be undone by tradition, plagiarism, or misinterpretation. He is forever Holy, Holy, Holy! Amen!



The Judgments...

(Continued from page 1) ♦

which we wish to discuss is that of the saints. It is terrible in the sense that many of us will be sorely surprised when we learn that many of our great and wonderful works (in our eyes) will not stand the test of that great day.

In II Corinthians 5:10 we read, **"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."**

There are those who use this Scripture to support their false belief in a general judgment, but Paul is talking to the same group of people in the first verse of this chapter. So if there are lost people included among the **"we"** in verse 10, there are also lost people who have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. That is absurd, is it not?

In II Corinthians 3:11-15 we read that if our (the believers) works stand the test, we shall receive a reward; but if our works are burned up we shall suffer loss, but we ourselves shall be saved so as by, or through, fire. The reward here in the Scripture is not salvation. We must have salvation in order to be eligible to be at this judgment. This judgment of the saints takes place after we have been caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air (I Thess. 4:16-17).

II

The next judgment we shall consider is that of the Jews. In Jeremiah 30:4-7 we read, **"And these are the words that the LORD spake**

concerning Israel and concerning Judah. For thus saith the LORD; We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Ask ye now, and see whether a man doth travail with child? wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness? Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble."

Then in Daniel 12:1, **"And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: (the Jews) and there shall be a time of trouble such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time..."**

And in Matthew 24:15-21 we find this to be the "great tribulation." This judgment upon the Jews who have turned away from our Lord in unbelief will take place during the seven years of the last week of Daniel's prophecy, and especially during the last half of this time.

III

Next, let us think for a moment about the judgment of the Gentiles' world powers. This may be called the smiting of the toes of Nebuchadnezzar's image in Daniel 2. In this judgment our Lord is bringing to an end the times of the Gentiles (see Luke 21:34). In order to do this our Lord brings all these great Gentile armies together in one place. In Revelation 9:16 we see there are to be two hundred million men brought together, and in Ezekiel 39:4 we learn they are to fall upon the mountains of Israel, that is, upon the hills of Megiddo. The battle of Armageddon could not be fought any where else in the world. The battle of Atlanta had to be fought in and around Atlanta. Had it been fought in Memphis, it would not have been the battle of Atlanta.

It is indeed interesting to note how a 200,000,000 men army is brought into the mountains of Israel. In Ezekiel 38:10 we read, **"... It shall also come to pass, that at**

the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought." If we read the following verses we will see that their evil thought is to go to the land of Israel and take spoil! If we turn to Revelation 16:13-14 we will see the three frog-like spirits which come from the mouths of the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet. These spirits go forth unto the kings (or rulers) of the earth to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. We read in I Kings 22:20-22 how these spirits do their work. When these armies are come together against the land of Israel, we hear God saying in Ezekiel 38:18-19 **"...my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken..."** This is not the god of the modernists and liberals, but it is the God of the Bible.

In Revelation 14:20 see the blood of the great host of men running down the plain of Esdraelon up to the horse's bridle for the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs (about 176 miles). In Ezekiel 38:22 God says He will rain upon them great hailstones, fire, and brimstones. And Revelation 16:21 we see these great hailstones which weigh about a talent each. A talent, as used here, is about one hundred pounds. Just think of one hundred pound blocks of ice falling out of the heavens upon these men! No wonder their blood runs to the horse's bridle for 176 miles! God's fury has come up in His face, and He is pouring out His wrath upon His enemies.

In Revelation 19:17 John says, **"And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God."** This should read "the great supper of God." And truly it is a great supper.

In Ezekiel 39:19 God tells the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field to eat fat until they are full, and drink blood till they are drunken, of His sacrifice which He

♦ (Continued on page 11)

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).



I Am the Lord...I Will Not Give My Glory to Another!
Eld. Randy Johnson
"I am the LORD: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images" (Isa. 42:8).

He is Yahweh, the Self-Existent or Eternal; Jehovah, He is Lord to His people, but one day over every human being who has ever lived. God said in Romans 14:11: **"For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God."** This will occur during the final judgment of humanity, at the Great White Throne. Every soul that died lost, that refused to truly recognize Him as Lord, and as Saviour, will bow and recognize Him as just that. What makes us know when Saul of Tarsus was truly saved? When he recognized Jesus as Lord and His supremacy over him: **"And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do..."** (Acts 9:6). Paul, as we know him, recognized Jesus as "supreme in authority". Every saved soul recognizes Jesus as Lord, as Saviour, and everything we need is in Jesus. God said, **"Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free: but Christ is all, and in all"** (Col. 3:11). The greatest thing about salvation is that it is the same for everyone no matter who you are, where you were born, nor what color you are. Jesus is Lord and He saves every lost sinner that comes to Him for salvation. Because He is Lord, He is Saviour, you absolutely need nothing but Jesus to save your soul. This is what makes Jesus God, He is the same self-

existent God that created everything and is Lord over everything. Jesus is the "Christ that is all things and in all things." In salvation you need nothing but Jesus Christ.

"...my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images;" the glory, honor, or praise that is due to Me. Because of His Supremacy over all things, nothing shapes Him, nothing turns Him, nothing challenges Him, and nothing helps Him. God has an ordained will, He has predestinated, He has all power, and all glory is due Him and He will share it with none else. **"Tell ye, and bring them near; yea, let them take counsel together: who hath declared this from ancient time? who hath told it from that time? have not I the LORD? and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else"** (Isa. 45:21-22). This is why God refuses to share glory with another, everything is His. **"I, even I, am the LORD; and beside me there is no saviour"** (Isa. 43:11). God shares no glory because He is everything, and nothing is anything without Him, nothing exists without Him, there is no salvation for people without Him. He shares no glory for His work. Salvation is God's work, from start to finish. He is our God and Saviour and there is none else! God said about Jesus, **"For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord"** (Luke 2:11).

The word "Saviour" means - a deliverer - Salvation is the glory of Jesus Christ and not man, He does not share it. However, for

thousands of years man has rejected God, they have rejected God's glory due Him in the Old Testament days by the worship of false gods. They rejected His glory due Him in freeing them from captivity and Pharaoh. People reject Him today and will worship anything but the True God. The question must be asked, is Jesus Saviour of mankind or not? If yes, then we must believe with all our hearts that He is and reject everything else, even ourselves. People have been trying to save themselves unsuccessfully since time began. Satan tries to steal God's glory and lost people try to steal God's glory. People cannot accept Jesus as Saviour or as our True Deliverer since He was born. He was crucified because He proclaimed His true identity as the Messiah, and the True Saviour. If God saves sinners, if Jesus is the True Deliverer, then do they need our assistance? If they did then would they not need to share their glory with us, making us equal partners in salvation? Would that not make God a liar when He said, **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest**

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The Judgments...

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has sacrificed for them. On Calvary's cross our Lord sacrificed His own blood for us, but here we see Him sacrificing the blood of His enemies for the fowls of the air and beasts of the field. In Ezekiel 39:12 we find that it takes the children of Israel seven months to bury what is left of this great supper in order that they may cleanse the land.

In Ezekiel 38:14 God says, **"...In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it?"** In other words He is saying do you not know when to let My people alone? And in Ezekiel 39:8 we hear Him as He says, **"Behold, it is come, and it is done, saith the Lord GOD; this is the day whereof I have spoken."**

In other words, He is saying I have been telling you this was coming, but you would not believe it. He told the people before the flood, through His preacher Noah, that the flood was coming, but they only laughed at him. This writer once thought of the battle of Armageddon as being fought by two, not the case. God is here delivering His people from their enemies just as He delivered them from Pharaoh in the long ago, that is, by His mighty arm.

IV

The next judgment in line seems to be that of the beast and the false prophet. In Revelation 19:20 we find that they are taken and cast into hell alive. In the Old Testament we learn that two men, Enoch and Elijah, were taken up into heaven alive. Here we see two men cast into hell alive.

V

Then, finally, we come to the judgment of old Satan himself. In Revelation 20:1-3 we see him as he is chained and cast into the bottomless pit for one thousand years. Bible-doubting modernists like Edward A. McDowell tell us that this means Satan's power will be limited for an indeterminate period of time, but the Bible says he will not be able to deceive the nations any more for a thousand years, and I believe it.

VI

This brings us to the time when our Lord takes His place on the throne of His father David, so one more judgment now comes into view. This is the judgment of the nations found in Matthew 25:31-46. Here we find that the nations of the earth that have been good to our Lord's brethren (the Jews) will enjoy the thousand year reign of our Lord here on earth, but those nations that have persecuted His brethren will be destroyed.

Dear reader, what will your status be when the One Who is the ancient of days shall sit upon His throne that is like the fiery flame, and His wheels as burning fire?



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1) What is the best godly advice that you offer to couples considering Marriage?

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Pastor
West Jefferson
Missionary Baptist
Church
47 S. Heath Lane,
West Jefferson, Ohio
43162



Below is what I have compiled from other pastors that I have had the pleasure of knowing as my policies for marriage.

The best answer I can give couples considering marriage is this. Let me ask this question to the man first, does the woman you intend on marrying Love You? Now to the woman, does the man you intend on marrying love you?

If either of you hesitated, or answer I do not know, or you are not sure, then you are not ready for marriage. My best advice!

PASTOR'S MARRIAGE POLICY

Now let me state my position on Marriage: I will officiate marriage for a man and woman who have neither of them ever professed saving faith in Christ. I will officiate at the wedding of West Jefferson Baptist Church; however, I will not perform the marriage at the West Jefferson Baptist Church to a Christian of a different persuasion. I will officiate at the wedding of two professing Christians who have no affiliation with Sovereign Grace Baptists. I will perform the marriage ceremony for divorced people, providing they have a scriptural divorce.

I also believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be pursued outside of a marriage between a man and a woman. I believe

that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bi-sexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, and pornography is a sinful perversion of God's gift of sex. (Gen. 2:24; 19:5, 13; 28:8, 9; Lev. 18:1, 30; Rom. 1:26-29; I Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thes. 4:1 8; Heb. 13:4) I believe God disapproves of and forbids any attempt to alter one's gender by surgery or appearance. I believe that the only legitimate marriage is the joining of one man and one woman (Gen. 2:24; Rom. 7:2; I Cor. 7:2; Eph. 5:22-23).

I further believe that human life begins at conception and the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of human life. Abortion is murder! We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects, gender selection, birth, or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. To be clear, none of those are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14 16; Isaiah 44:24; 49:1, 5; Jeremiah 1:5; 20:15 18; Luke 1:44).

According to my convictions there are three Scriptural reasons for divorce: First, death of either of the spouses is an automatic termination of the marriage. Secondly, adultery is a scriptural basis for divorce. And thirdly, malicious desertion by one spouse or the other is grounds for divorce. However, be it understood, because a spouse has scriptural grounds for divorce, a divorce does not have to be sued for. If reconciliation can be realized, and the marriage salvaged thereby, this is the far better choice and all attempts must be made to honor your marriage vows.

Instances of malicious desertion would be where one spouse forsook the other who was critically

ill, or for a spouse to leave the other destitute of the means of livelihood of course. Adultery is a horrible violation of the marriage vows, and is agreed by all to be scriptural grounds for divorce. In any of the two cases stated in this paragraph, the innocent party is free to sue out a divorce, and has the right to remarry "only in the Lord" (only another Christian) (I Cor. 7:15, 39).

I know you and your betrothed will be honest, and let me know if you, according to my stated convictions herein, are qualified for marriage. If your answer is in the affirmative, let me know, and I will be more than glad to perform the marriage for you here in Ohio. At present, I am not licensed to perform a marriage in the State of Ohio.

PASTOR'S MARRIAGE POLICY (Continued)

1. Pastor must be notified three (3) months in advance of wedding date.

Bride and groom must agree to attend preaching service regularly either morning or evening service (preferably both) during that three-month period. If they are already members, this should already be their habit.

2. Bride and groom must be willing to participate in six (6) counseling sessions during that three-month period.

3. Receptions must be held in a place the pastor is in agreement and in a place where no alcoholic beverages are served. I will not perform a ceremony for a couple who is going to begin their married life with the serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

4. In cases of second marriages, where either or both of the parties have been divorced, the divorced person(s) must have been divorced according to the biblical standard as set forth in (Matt. 3:32; 19:3-9).

5. If the bride is already pregnant, or if her personal life has not been guarded to identify with

the precious (symbol of white), which symbolizes virginity, then white will not be worn by the bride, and the wedding will be "low key," i.e., immediate family and friends.

6. I cannot perform the ceremony for any couple where one is saved and the other unsaved, as this violates God's clear command in (2 Corinthians 6:14-18).

7. If at any point in time after notifying the pastor of the desired wedding date, the bride or groom, or both, break this agreement this pastor will reserve the right to be relieved of the responsibility of performing the ceremony, and the couple will have to seek another to perform it.

8. The pastor will be willing to perform the ceremony anywhere that is not dishonoring to God or to the institution of marriage. He reserves the right to refuse to perform it in any place which would be thus dishonoring.

9. The pastor will be in charge of preparing the ceremony to ensure that proper vows are made in harmony with the Word of God.

"The sacredness of marriage is being taken far too lightly in the day in which we live."

"God's will is to be considered and honored in all that His people do, and especially so in the matter of marriage, both by those entering into it and by the minister performing the ceremony!!"

Matthew Stepp
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570

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



Marriage is an Institution of God - Outside of an intimate knowledge of Jesus Christ as your Saviour, this is the most consequential relationship of your life! Do not take it for granted, and if this is the "Only One" for you, please

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2) Is a pastor obligated to travel to Bible Conferences?

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

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



During my 41 years of ministry I have had the joyful privilege of going to many Bible Conferences where my soul has been nourished and encouraged by the preaching, fellowship, singing, and eating. It is a special time of blessing that is set apart for God's people to get together for spiritual edification. I would recommend that pastors attend as many Bible Conferences as they are able.

With that said, I do not believe pastors are obligated to travel to Bible Conferences. Through the years I have observed a preference that developed into a habit, and finally into a conviction that many preachers may find peculiar. I do not like being away from the church I pastor on the Lord's Day. I make exceptions a couple of times a year if I am asked to preach in a Revival Meeting requiring me to be away on a Sunday. Mount Pleasant has never limited me from going, but I limit myself to twice a year as a general rule. However, I have never felt comfortable being away from my church for a Bible Conference that would require me being gone on a Sunday. Through the years I have turned down lots of invitations to Bible Conferences that go through Sunday. It is not because I dislike the pastor or the church, it is just that I want to be in my own church on the Lord's Day. Please understand that I have no problem with preachers that do go to Conferences on Sundays, or the churches that host them. It

is just my personal preference and conviction.

Another thing that comes into play when deciding to travel to a Bible Conference is time and distance. In a normal week I preach and teach a minimum of four times (Adult SS; Sunday morning and night, Wednesday night). During the school year we help with the grandkids. During the Spring, Summer, and Fall I work in the garden and do a lot of canning come harvest time. We do door to door visitation when the weather permits. If a conference is six hours away, I have to have a travel day to get there and one to come back home, with the Bible Conference sandwiched in between. That is four to five days away from home so I am limited to the number of Bible Conferences I can go to that are far away. I wish I could attend more Bible Conferences, but the responsibilities of my family and church come first.

I am glad that there are so many Bible Conferences that preachers can attend. It is a blessing to be with other preacher brethren and visit sister churches. I try to go to as many as I am able and would encourage other preachers to do the same.

Matthew Stepp
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570

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



"That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ. ...If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the

truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:3, 6-7).

Yes! A pastor is "obligated," whenever it is possible, and as he is able, to fellowship with other pastors and godly churches. "If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness (alone)" in this world, we are lying, both to Him and to ourselves. There is no single pastor, nor single church that can make it through this world, without the fellowship of Christ! The "best" form of fellowship with Christ, is with His body, the Lord's New Testament Baptist churches...! Selah! Think about it!

I am not advocating that your pastor needs to become a social butterfly and attend every conference available, and get to the point of neglecting his own family and church, which things are his primary responsibilities in this world. But a preacher cannot survive on his own sermons! Books are a great way to fellowship with learned and zealous saints from days gone by, but there is also a necessity for current and physical fellowship and spiritual banqueting within the Lord's churches in these difficult days.

No single church has the promise of eternal perpetuity. Nor does any single church have the promise of being the complete and perfect "Pillar and Ground of the Truth." As we examine the seven churches of Asia that the Lord exhorted, commended and reprimanded, we see varying problems and both doctrinal and practical issues with five of the seven Baptist churches addressed. Each church and pastor needs to constantly be on the guard from Satan's attacks. **"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend"** (Prov. 27:17). This "iron-sharpening" can happen within the congregational fellowship of teaching, preaching and intimate times of Bible study, but

honestly, "the gene pool" is too small within the individual churches. It takes Bible conferences and multiple church area fellowships to cause pastors more often to say, "I never thought about that!" or "that is an awesome aspect!" Not always is this "eye-opening" experience edifying, as Satan's entrance into the garden of Eden was an heresy-introducing scenario! That will have to be picked up on, and denounced as quickly as possible, but as the Apostle Paul says, sometimes we do not realize "why" we believe something, until we see the alternative heresy manifest. I Cor. 11:18-19 **"For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you."** Selah! Now we Know!

It is very easy for a particular church that becomes isolated from other sound churches to start to think that their long-term traditions are the only way the scripture can be interpreted or applied. It is by the fellowship with Baptist churches that do things a "little different" that tolerance is built up against legalism and Pharisaicisms. Certainly, the doctrines of the Bible are unchanging and inviolable, but how often we have the Lord's supper, or whether we use a baptistery or a lake, are not defined, nor restricted by scripture. The Baptist bedrock is scripture, not opinion, and this needs to be reaffirmed by the very diversity of the saints and the churches. Surely a Dutch church is not going to do everything like a Nigerian church will do! Neither will a 1250AD Anabaptist Church conform exactly to the dress codes of a 2023 Baptist Church. Having dear friends on both sides of controversies will cause even the hardest-headed pastor to (re)consider, "What would Jesus do?"

Whether it is Barnabas reconciling the church at Jerusalem with Saul of Tarsus, Peter reconciling the Judean churches with the new

Forum Question #1

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do not undervalue your blessing from God! **"...Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"** (Matt. 19:4-6). 1+1=1 is the miracle of marriage! Christ clearly states here that divorce is "not" a Christian's option. 'Til death do us part is for real! Awesome!

The world's enmity against marriage "requires" the power of Jesus Christ! **"Two are better than one; ...For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken"** (Eccl. 4:9-12). The three-fold cord is man-woman-God. You will have many enemies in your relationship, including covetous "friends" or acquaintances, or even family members that have to take second place to your new relationship. Do not forget that Satan hates good marriages, too. Be on your spiritual guard for temptations and trials... prayer, both alone "and together" will be your best weapon! Spend quality time making your marriage a strong three-fold cord with Jesus.

God's Order in Wedding Vows - **"But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God. ...as the woman is of the man, even so is the man also by the woman; but all things of God"** (I Cor. 11:3-12). The man is to be the Scriptural head of the family. No 50/50 relationships allowed here! Make marriage 100%/100%. You

"both" must give your "all," for the marriage to be successful. This does not mean that the man makes all the decisions on his own. Ignoring a wife's prudent advice will destroy a marriage as quick as anything. But a man that is strong enough to take responsibilities for the actions of the family is imperative! A woman that is secure enough in love to support her husband/head is needed, too.

One flesh will grow into one spirit, if watered with love! Marvelously and wonderfully, you will find yourselves finishing each other's sentences, etc. **"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church... Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; ...This is a great mystery... Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband"** (Eph. 5:22-33). Love (also known as cherish, devotion and adoration) is the glue that perfectly binds us together. We must continually show our love and live according to the golden rule of marriage. "Do unto your loved one as you would have them do unto you..."

Potential Abuses Physical/Mental/Emotional/Spiritual - "Never" use your positions as lovers and soulmates to denigrate or abuse your Spouse. (I Pet. 3:1-7) You will know more about your loved one than anyone else, other than God. Cherish the intimacy and use your knowledge "only" to build up and edify the marriage. Do not intentionally wound and damage your spouse by using your intimate knowledge about their weaknesses in your inevitable arguments. "Fight fair" and they will "Fight fair," too. What is past is past- forgive the past! The key word in your marriage must be "henceforth"! Commitment is

irreversible grace!

Finances are going to be a Potential Sore Spot - **"But godliness with contentment is great gain. ...And having food and raiment let us be therewith content. ...For the love of money is the root of all evil..."** (I Tim. 6:6-11). Prudent budgeting with provisional perks for each member (man, woman and children) of the family figured in at regular intervals. God will certainly bless such affection and wisdom! You will always have a "potato in the pot" and "joy around the dinner table," by His marvelous grace and provision (Prov. 19:13-15/6:6-8). Six days shalt thou labor in the world (See the Ten Commandments!). The normal Christian life in the USA is 5 days working for security, 1 day working for family and 1 day resting for the Lord. That equals 7 days of working for the marriage and God...!

Lastly, and "most" importantly of "all" the finance law is tithing to God and His church! God's blessings and dividends are worth more than millions of dollars! Benefits will be poured out in love, health, obedient children, joy and peace...! Well worth the investment (Mal. 3:10)!

Faithful to God - Make God and His church the most important part of your life and live in fear of His righteous judgments. Encourage each other in the Lord and pass on invaluable knowledge of God to your family (Heb. 10:23-31).

Faithful to Each Other - **"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency"** (I

Cor. 7:2-5). Make sure that intimate time is made for each other. Do not just tell her you love her, show her! show him! This goes both ways, and frustration caused by a trivial "headache," "meetings," etc, cause more harm than can be imagined! Share yourselves, your bodies, your time, and your interests with each other frequently and joyfully (Prov. 5:18-20). Selfishness has no place in a marriage of love. Seek forgiveness often. Show much mercy. Exercise humility and tenderheartedness. Laugh frequently! The better the marriage, the better your quality of life will be! May God bless the both of you!

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

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



Entire books have been written on this all-important crucial subject. I will make my comments brief and to the point.

1. Seek God's approval over everything else. You may think she or he is the right one for you based on your feelings or emotions. However, the real deciding factor in choosing a life long mate is clear. Does God approve of the person I am considering a life-long union with? Is my decision concerning a mate submissive to God's will, directives, commands, and instructions as revealed in the Word of God? Will what I am about to do glorify and honor the Lord? God's will is more important than your will and desire. I Corinthians 10:31 states: **"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."** Failure to select the right spouse can lead to a life of misery, disappointment, and bitterness.

2. Biblical marriage is between one biological man and one biological

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Forum Question #1

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woman. Jesus made this crystal clear as Matthew 19:4-6 declares: **"And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female, And said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder."** Biblically, there is no warrant whatsoever for homosexual or transgender "marriage." Both are considered abominations in the sight of a Holy God. Society has drifted so far from the biblical mandate for marriage that this simple truth must be clearly stated.

3. Marry only in the Lord. Saved people ought to marry other saved people. Do not be unequally yoked to an unbeliever (II Cor. 6:14-18). I Corinthians 7:30 states: **"The wife is bound by the law as long as her husband liveth; but if her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will; ONLY IN THE LORD"** (emphasis mine, TWR). Many will say, I know so and so who has a wonderful marriage to an unbeliever. Do not base your decision to marry on the exception to the rule. Obey God's Word and marry only in the Lord. I would go a step further. If you are a sound Baptist, determine only to marry someone within the Baptist faith. Better to have this matter settled before entering into a life long covenant with someone who does not even believe what you believe. It will cause disharmony and division within your home.

4. Do not base your decision on the mere physical attraction to the outward appearance of a prospective spouse. Outward physical beauty may cover up inward rottenness of the soul. Plus outward beauty fades over time. The man you think is such a "hunk" in all probability may turn into somewhat of a "chunk"

over time. I understand there must be a measure of attraction to one another, but it should not be the deciding factor. Devotion to God, a sincere desire to serve God and put Him first, along with a testimony of obedience to God's commands are far more important than outward appearance. I Samuel 16:7 declares: **"But the LORD said unto Samuel, Look not on his countenance, or on the height of his stature; because I have refused him; for the LORD seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the LORD looketh on the heart."**

5. Observe your prospective spouse around his/her parents and children. Does your prospective wife have a rebellious spirit toward her dad? Does she berate him and disobey him? Is she disrespectful towards him? If so, in all probability she will not submit to your headship in the marriage covenant. If she respects her mom and dad, obeys them, and seeks to please them you have found a virtuous woman. Is the man you want to marry disrespectful toward his mother and other women? He will probably be disrespectful toward you. Does your prospective mate love children and treat them with kindness? Could you see them as a dad or mom helping to raise your children in the fear and admonition of the Lord? These are simple ways to evaluate a prospective spouse. **"Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee"** (Ex. 20:12).

6. A healthy courtship should develop virtue, trust, friendship, and love between the prospective couple. Each partner must be fully committed to one another. This is why I do not believe in "serial dating." It promotes a transient, fleeting, emotional roller coaster attitude that often leads to feelings of jealousy and resentment. If you are serious about getting married, seek the Lord and set your sights and desires on the one person you want to spend the rest of your days with. Refrain from physical

intimacy, saving yourself for the joy of intimacy within the bonds of holy matrimony where God sanctions it. Hebrews 13:4 declares: **"Marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled: but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge."** You will save yourself from feelings of guilt, regret, and resentment if you will follow this simple guideline.

7. Before entering into the marriage covenant I believe it is important that you view marriage as a life long commitment of holy matrimony. Carefully review the marriage vows and determine whether or not you can commit to them without reservation. Make sure your prospective spouse feels the same way you do about marriage as a life long bond of love, trust, and commitment. Determine to love them unto the end like the Lord loves His people (John 13:1). I say this because the specter of divorce has done so much damage to families, children, churches, and society as a whole. I am praying that God will raise up a new generation of young people who are committed to the bonds of holy matrimony for better or worse, in sickness and in health, until death do us part.

On July 21st, 1984 my wife Tammy and I solemnly and joyfully said our marriage vows before God, the preacher, and a church house full of people. We meant what we said, and by the grace of God we have been committed to one another through thick and thin, good times and bad, victories and disappointments, joys and heartaches. I am so thankful for a faithful, virtuous, caring, loving wife who has done me much good. We have raised a family together. We have served the Lord in His church together. We have built a happy life filled with love and grace, cheerfully submitting to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ. We have had our share of difficulties and afflictions like all married couples do, but God has been our stay and guide.



Forum Question #2

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mission work at Cornelius' house, or for the churches in WV to be praying for the attacks on the Landmark churches of California, the necessity for fellowship is clear. Our great commission does not allow us to stay in our own holes, nor limit ourselves to our own membership's abilities. Pastors have an obligation to be acquainted with like-minded churches, mission works and pastors, and the "best" way to do that is to go to Bible conferences and receive refreshings, updates and blessings from the fellowship of the saints of God! The Bible exhorts a holy kiss and love for fellowship among the churches of Christ! **"Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house. And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea"** (Col. 4:15-16). Let the truth edify "all" the churches! Selah! Think about it!

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Pastor
West Jefferson
Missionary Baptist
Church
47 S. Heath Lane,
West Jefferson, Ohio
43162



No, I do not believe a pastor is obligated to travel to Bible Conferences! The Lord has put me in charge of one of His true New Testament Baptist Churches as an under shepherd. My only obligation is to that church **"Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you"** (Heb. 13:17).

So, I must give an account of the souls God has entrusted to me. God Bless!

GLEANINGS



Judge Yourself By Eld. Dan Stepp

I look around today and see many Baptist brethren preaching and teaching the wonderful truths concerning the church, the sovereignty of God, and the doctrines of grace. I rejoice in these great truths of The Word of God, and I believe they are essential to make good Baptists. Brethren, I believe that too many of the Baptist messages today are being made of none effect because of the lack of a godly life and testimony on the part of the preachers and the brethren in our Baptist churches.

In Matthew 7:20 Christ said that by their fruits you can know and recognize the false prophets. I believe that He intended that the saints should be recognized by their fruits. We find that our Saviour Himself expected to be recognized by His fruits. When John sent from prison to inquire as to the identity of Jesus, He replied: **"...Go and shew John again things which ye do hear and see: The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them"** (Matt. 11:4-5).

Brethren, it is time that Baptists awake to the fact that we are ambassadors for Christ (II Cor. 5:20). I Peter 2:9 tells us we are to be a peculiar people, and that we should show forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

I realize that there are too many preachers today that either by their teaching, or lack of teaching, indicate that it does not matter how short the women wear their dresses, how long the men wear their hair, how much time the family sits in front of the TV set, how little time is spent in Bible study and prayer. But I would like to point out to you that we are exhorted to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. We are going to be judged for the manner in which we have fulfilled our responsibilities as Christ's ambassadors. I Corinthians 11:31 tells us **"For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged."**

I would like to propose three questions by which we, as Baptists, can judge all that we do and say: First, does it glorify God? If it does not, repent! Second, does it exalt Christ? If it does not, stop doing it! Third, is it to the edification of yourself and others? If it is not, then it is not worth your while.

Beloved Baptist friends, we are living in the latter times that Paul speaks of, and we can daily see the world waxing worse and worse. I believe it is past time that we, as Baptists, awake out of sleep and work while it is day. I believe it is time that we examine and judge ourselves as to whether we are living the holy faith as it was once delivered to the saints.



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Points to Ponder

Points to Ponder: Light Years – A Measure of Distance Not Time

Elder Perry Ames

"And God said, Let there be light: and there was light" (Gen. 1:3).

Biblical chronology tells us the age of the earth is only six to ten thousand years old. However, you and/or your friends may have been led to believe that scientists have proven the earth is much older than that. As one of the proofs they often use to supposedly confirm that the universe, and therefore the earth's age, is millions, billions, or even trillions of years is the fact that there are galaxies millions of light years away.

First off, we must realize that millions of light years is a measure of distance and an indication of how great God is, not a measure of time. In the beginning, God said, **"Let there be light"** (Gen. 1:3). That command placed light throughout the universe as if God had already made the stars, etc..., which He made on the 4th day: **"And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years: And let them be for lights in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth: and it was so. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, And to rule over the day and over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good. And the evening and the morning were the fourth day"** (Gen. 1:14-19).

One fact astronomers use to determine the distance of galaxies from the earth and to prove that the universe is expanding is light spectra's loss of frequency. Loss of light spectra frequency simply means the light wave is longer because it has been stretched out. The stretched-out or lengthened wave means that less wave forms will pass a given point in a specified period of time. It does not mean that light is traveling slower it just means that the waves are longer. Astronomers call this loss of frequency "redshift."

This redshift agrees with Isaiah 44:24 where it is recorded that, **"the Lord...stretcheth forth the heavens..."** God is not only expanding the universe as God said He would but even the light waves are being stretched to fit an expanding universe.

The scope of this writing does not allow us to enter into all assumptions (a two-dollar word that means, "I believe this is true, but I have no facts or proof"; the offices of evolutionary scientists are full of two-dollar bills) that scientists use to determine the age of the earth or the universe. However, you need to be aware that scientists are biased. For their supposed evolution to take place requires millions of years, so they "assume" that the light has been traveling for millions of years rather than being put in place by God at creation.

Points to Ponder: God caused it to be written more than 3,000 years ago that the universe, i.e., the heavens would continue to enlarge. Fallible man finally discovers that the universe is expanding, but rather than give God the glory, they invent the "Big Bang" theory.



Brief Truths

(Continued from page 11) ♦

any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them" (Eph. 2:8-10) or when He said, **"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified"** (Rom. 8:29-30). How could God say this if He shares His work of salvation with us? How could God promise predestination, calling, justifying

♦ (Continued on page 17)

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).



Selah! Think about it!
by Eld. T. Matthew Stepp

"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. Then shall two be in the field; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left. Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come" (Matt. 24:38-42).

It is really a pretty simple picture that is painted by Scripture. But, I have run into a couple of post-trib guys that have tried to tell me that the two classes of folks in the above verses are backward in my

theology. They use the verb "took" in "And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away", and confuse it with the ones later on being "taken" (or "tooken"!) and those being left behind. Then they use this to try to convince me that the coming of the Lord will not be a pre-tribulational rapture of the saints being snatched away before the Great Tribulation, but more in line with the second advent at the end of the Great Tribulation when the Lord has promised to burn the tares and judge the wicked, leaving the tribulation saints in possession of the field of the battle at Armageddon and marching into the Millennial Reign when Jesus Christ sits on the Throne of David for a literal thousand years. Selah! Marvel upon it!

Now, beloved reader, we have to make a stand here. Because if we give them this (inaccurate)

inch, they will take a (heretical) mile! If we allow them to turn the words around and the wicked are taken at the mill or in the field and the righteous are left behind before long, "you" will be tempted to think; maybe it "is" speaking about a post-tribulational coming of the Lord. Bluntly, Beloved- it is not! Of this I am sure. Again, while it might be possible for them to dupe the simple in the English language (but not the mature English Christians!), it is impossible to dupe anyone in the Greek original.

Matthew 24:38-39 **"For as in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, And knew not until the flood came, and took them all away; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be."** The word "took" is the Greek word "airo" which is translated elsewhere in Scripture as "remove" (Matt. 21:21), "put away" (Eph. 4:31) or "take away" (Matt. 22:13). This last usage is by far the most common and is interesting in the context of the Scripture quoted: Matthew 22:13 **"Then said the king to the servants, Bind him hand and foot, and take [airo] him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth."** So, in the Greek, these two passages harmonize completely in that God will "airo" the wicked and unbelieving.

But the rest of our text mentions one being "taken" and one being "left". In a nominal reading, one might assume the same reckoning, but it would be incorrect, because the Greek word for "taken" here is "not" "airo"! It is "paralambano", which is a stronger version of "lambano", which means "receive" or "accept" throughout the New Testament. Basically it means to receive one's own! How beautiful is that! Jesus Christ is coming to "take" us Home! **"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not**

so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3). (Yep! "Receive" in this precious passage is also "paralambano"!)

The Bible is consistent if we compare Scripture with Scripture. Sometimes it might take a little digging to find out what a certain passage is talking about, but hey, we are admonished to be diligent in studying! The Bible is PreTrib from Genesis to Revelation! Picture after picture and Scripture after Scripture will fall in line as we heed the Holy Spirit in Selah! Think about it!



Brief Truths

(Continued from page 16) ♦

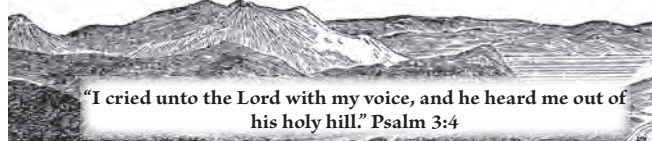
and glorifying, if any of salvation is a work on our part? Are people that call themselves Christians, churches, and believers, lying to themselves and calling God a liar, and stealing God's due glory for salvation?

"...not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." What exactly is a "graven image"? It is defined as "an idol; carved or graven image." It is an image of something you have no proof that it is a genuine image, or anything worshiped. Images of Jesus Christ are all fake, crosses are false idols, or anything outside of the worship of the True God fits in this thought. All praise is due God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, no glory belongs to anything else, if anything besides Them are worshipped it is false worship, even your works for salvation. **"Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen"** (Rom. 1:25). Do not be a false worshipper of God.



Selahs

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



The Ebenezer
Elder Julius Salacup
"And the children of Israel said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the LORD our God for us, that he will save us out of the hand of the Philistines" (I Sam. 7:8).

The Israelites were scared of the Philistines. They knew they were unarmed and unmatched with them. They besought Samuel to "... **Cease not to cry unto the LORD...**" for their deliverance from the enemy. At the end of the day, they defeated the Philistines when God discomfited them with thunders that slew them. In a grateful way to God, Samuel built the most famous stone memorial called "Ebenezer," the Lord has helped hitherto.

Truly God helps those who call upon Him. It is certainly one of the things that God does to

those who beg and ask it from Him, especially His children. He can not turn His back on them, and is always ready for them.

In light of our study, it was Samuel. He was asked to not cease to pray for the Israelites, and so they got their victory, for it was God Who fought for them. We, new covenant believers, have a better Intercessor, Jesus Christ Himself. O what a comfort it is to all believers that our great Intercessor above never ceases, is never silent, for He always appears in the presence of God for us! He is our EBENEZER!

Oh sinner, does He pray for you? Is He your Ebenezer? Selah!

"My help cometh from the LORD, which made heaven and earth" (Psa. 121:2).



Small Drops

"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).



The Grievous Famine
Elder Joseph M. Sidders

"And there was a famine in the land: and Abram went down into Egypt to sojourn there; for the famine was grievous in the land. And it came to pass, when he was come near to enter into Egypt, that he said unto Sarai his wife, Behold now, I know that thou art a fair woman to look upon: Therefore it shall come to pass, when the Egyptians shall see thee, that they shall say, This is his wife: and they will kill me, but they will save thee alive. Say, I pray thee, thou art my

sister: that it may be well with me for thy sake; and my soul shall live because of thee. And it came to pass, that, when Abram was come into Egypt, the Egyptians beheld the woman that she was very fair. The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh: and the woman was taken into Pharaoh's house. And he entreated [made happy] Abram well for her sake: and he had sheep, and oxen, and he asses, and menservants, and maidservants, and she asses, and camels. And the LORD plagued Pharaoh and his

house with great plagues because of Sarai Abram's wife. And Pharaoh called Abram, and said, What is this that thou hast done unto me? why didst thou not tell me that she was thy wife? Why saidst thou, She is my sister? so I might have taken her to me to wife: now therefore behold thy wife, take her, and go thy way. And Pharaoh commanded his men concerning him: and they sent him away, and his wife, and all that he had" (Gen. 12:10-20).

The very sad thing about famines is that they are not simply over when food is once again made available. Much like analyzing the rings of a tree trunk, or following the ripples in a pond from when a stone had been thrown into it, this grievous famine was a starting point for some events that would be long lasting. For example, Hagar, who will later be revealed as Sarai's handmaid was likely given here in verse 16. **"Now Sarai Abram's wife bare him no children: and she had an handmaid, an Egyptian, whose name was Hagar" (Gen. 16:1).** "Had there never been a famine..." we might find ourselves saying but God is permitted to do as He sees fit, and as He refines the faith of Abram with His famine many things are accomplished, the half of which perhaps we have yet to even discover.

The first thing we see in our text is a type of disappointment. A famine in the place of God's leading! What a great disappointment this must have been to the pilgrims. We must recognize that God was testing their faith, to see if they were trusting the land or the Lord. Instead of remaining in Canaan and trusting God, they went down to Egypt.

Now when we use the phrase "God was testing...to see" we must realize that He already knows. His tests are for us. His grievous famines and tempestuous storms are for us. Chrisitan Bovee once wrote that "Affliction, like the iron-smith, shapes as it smites." We are being shaped beloved born-again friends, and we should praise God for it!

We should note that Egypt

symbolizes the world, the life of self-confidence, and Canaan illustrates the life of faith and victory. **"And Lot lifted up his eyes, and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered every where, before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the LORD, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar" (Gen. 13:10).** Oh, what eyes of flesh that we would compare the "land of Egypt" to the great garden of the Lord! We do it quite often, though, do we not? Egypt was watered by the muddy Nile River; Canaan received the fresh rains from God: **"For the land, whither thou goest in to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs: But the land, whither ye go to possess it, is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven: A land which the LORD thy God careth for: the eyes of the LORD thy God are always upon it, from the beginning of the year even unto the end of the year" (Deut. 11:10-12).**

What so-called treasure have you put in place of God? Is He not greater, beloved? Let us be clear; health, wealth and/or prosperity is not a sure sign that you are living within the will of God, nor is it a sign that you are His. Your drawing nigh to Him and learning to wait and call upon Him. Your being soothed at the sound of His name as a result of such a great trust in Him...that is the true reward of following by faith. Those Israelites who wandered the wilderness were not gold mining 49ers beloved! Those who "truly" followed the Messiah during His earthly ministry were not doing so for physical comforts, Spiritual ones...and the same is true today. Those who follow for any other reason will eventually turn back!

Abraham abandoned his tent and altar and trusted in the world. **"Woe to them that go down to Egypt for help; and stay on horses, and trust**

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Small Drops

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in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong; but they look not unto the Holy One of Israel, neither seek the LORD! (Isa. 31:1). I want to be careful to note here that just because we are not equal to the tests on our faith does not mean that we are not the Elect children of God. None of us are “out-of-the-box,” “ready-to-go” Christians. There is no such thing! What happened here in Genesis 12 needed to happen, and was providentially permitted to happen by God!

Second we find the deception in our text. Notice here this man, who was so cautious in turning to the Lord in the first half of this chapter. See how he did no such thing when it came to making the decision to go to Egypt. Or in search of protection from those who might want to kill him for his wife. One sin will always leads to another, beloved!

First, Abram trusted Egypt rather than God. The Egyptians, like the Canaanites, were descendants of Ham though these were through Mizraim rather than Canaan. They were known for being polytheistic, cruel, and immoral. Polygamy and sexual promiscuity were very common. We see a concept displayed here by Abram’s reaction which is the perception of beauty equating to power. What eye-appeal truly equates to is a fleshly desire and a willingness on our part to give up certain things to have our way with it. Abram’s wife, Sarai was fair to look upon, and Abram sees her as something to be desired; sadly, as his wife she should have been considered something to be cherished as well!

Second, Abram trusted his wife’s lie to protect him. The “lie” was what many today might call a “half-truth,” for she was his half-sister. How would God look at something that was “only” half true? Is a half sin not still a sin against God? It seems that Abraham was more concerned for his own safety than the safety of his

wife--or the safety of the promised seed which would be coming from her.

Without his tent and established altar practice of looking to, and giving thanks unto, God, Abraham was acting like the people of the world: **“Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper”** (Psa. 1:1-3).

Lastly, we find the discipline. What a shame that believing Abraham should be rebuked by an

unbelieving king. Our lessons as His adopted children can come from literally anywhere! Let us be ever-mindful of His watchful care for us and let us be quick to discern with His Word what intentions He might have for us! Until he knew the truth about Sarah, Pharaoh “bestowed favors” (“**entreated**”) upon Abraham, but once God stepped in and exposed the lie, Pharaoh asked them to leave. What a poor testimony the Christian is when he or she mingles with the world and compromises on the truths and principles of God.

An interesting thing to observe here is that God brought the “**great plagues**” upon Pharaoh, yet we do not see that Abram nor Sarai had prayed for this intervention. The same is true of us today. If we have compromised with the world to achieve great gain, often we are so

fat on the flesh that the last thing we might beseech the Lord for is His bringing such things to an end. God not only loves us enough to care for us when we want it, but to care for us when we seemingly do “not” want it. Let us be ever-careful to pray that He lines up our desires with His! “Faith is living without scheming” someone once said; that is to say, without the necessity for “half-truths.” In John 8:32 Jesus proclaims that “**... the truth shall make you free**” and He was speaking of the continued progression of His saints (here in particular was to the believing Jews) as they strove to practice and understand God’s Word and will for them. Is it our desire when utilizing “half-truths” to proclaim the partial liberty that we have found in God’s grace? Are we indeed set free (for all eternity) from our sin-debt, or merely furloughed for a season?

Reader, some will say, “Is not all well that ends well” in this case? Abram and his family had survived the famine and even come back with increased goods, but was it worth what they had lost? We started this lesson pointing out that Egypt is typically a picture of the world in the Bible and it is to Abram’s shame that they did not leave it better than they found it, for they had lost their testimony as God’s chosen ones while dwelling there. I dare not hypothesize away the providence of God but how different would things have been had Abram gone in declaring the promises of God? Or better still, had he stayed where he was sent standing on the promises of God in the promised land for which he was sent?

As a result of such leanings, Hagar was not in Abram’s band later to be used as another “shortcut” around walking in faith and young Lot has now been given a “well-watered” comparison for which he would later choose the plain of Jordan. Lord help us to learn from these great historic details!

THE PRECIOUS BLOOD

The blood, the blood, the precious blood
That takes man’s sin away,
It ne’er shall lose its mighty power
To rescue and to save.

The blood, the blood, Christ’s precious blood
That flowed through sinless veins,
He freely poured out while on that cross
For saints to shout always.

The blood, the blood, His eternal blood
That yonder abides in Heaven
For saints redeemed to intercede
And for them bless forever.

This blood, my friend, do not despise
Its baseness you perceive,
Will one day be the final word
And leave you no reprieve.

Repent dear soul and believe on Him
And have your sins forgiven,
Rest with Him and all blood kin
In God’s eternal Heaven.





“HE’S NO DEID”

By G. F. Pentecost

I was conducting an evangelistic meeting in Aberdeen some years ago in the great music hall in that granite city. Finding it necessary to make some alterations, I had asked the committee to remain after the meetings were over one night. The gas was turned out, except upon and just over the platform. I was consulting with the committee in respect to some alterations I wished made for the better accommodation of the choir.

In explaining these matters, I had occasion to walk back and forth in front of the platform, which extended all the way across the hall.

Presently I noticed that I was being followed back and forth by a little girl, who kept at my heels like a little dog. Finally, I turned to her and asked, a little sharply:

“Lassie, what do you want? Why are you not away home with the rest of the folk?”

Then, for the first time, I scanned her a little more carefully. On her face, none the cleanest, there were evidences that great tears had been plowing furrows through the dirt on her cheeks. Her eyes were large and hungry looking and still suffused with tears. She was barefooted, and barelegged half way to the knees. Her clothes were of the poorest, “all tattered and torn,” her hair hanging in unkept strings over her neck and partly over her face. An old, tattered shawl was thrown over her head and shoulders, and altogether she was

a forelorn looking little creature. I should say about twelve years old---a child of the poor.

“Lassie, what do you want?” I repeated.

Then the little lassie reached up on her tiptoes and whispered into my ear as I bent to catch her words:

“I want to get saved.”

Surprised and startled at the intensity of her whispered words, I drew back and looked her eagerly in the face, and repeated her own words for answer:

“You want to get saved?”

“Ay, sir, I do,” oh, so pathetically, and still in a whisper.

“And why do you want to get saved?”

Again on her tiptoes she reached up and whispered in my ear: “Because I am a sinner.”

This was so satisfactory a reason, and by this time the child had so interested me, that I drew her to one side, away from the gentlemen who were standing by, that I might talk with her unreservedly.

“How do you know you are a sinner? Who told you so?”

“Because God says so in the Book; and I feel it right here,” laying her little dirty hand on her breast as the publican did.

“Well,” I said “Do you think I can save you?”

Hitherto she had spoken in whispers, but now, drawing away from me, her eyes taking fire, and her whole tone assuming that of a polemic, her words rang out short and clear:

“Na, na, man; you canna save me. No man can save a sinner.”

And she looked at me as if much offended at the bare suggestion.

By this time my interest still deepened. I drew her down beside me on one of the benches, and taking her little hands in mine, and speaking as kindly as I knew how, I said to her:

“You are quite right; no man can save you, much less I. Tell me why, then, did you come to me? I cannot save you. Who, then, can save?”

Again she dropped into a

whisper, and almost touched my ear with her lips. There was infinite pathos in her voice as she said:

“Jesus can save me.”

“Yes my dear, you are quite right. Jesus can save you. But tell me how can He save you? what has He done to save you?”

Again the lips to my ear, and again the eager whisper---if possible more pathetic and tender:

“Oh, sir, He died for me.”

I do not know why I made answer as I did. Perhaps it was curiosity to know how the little waif, who had so hotly repudiated the idea of man’s ability to save, would answer.

“Then He is dead, is He? How can He save you if He is dead?”

The little thing sprang up from her seat, and those eyes, just a moment ago suffused with tears, flashed upon me. No whisper now, no timid putting of lips to my ear, but her voice ringing out as once before:

“He is no deid! He is no deid!”

“But you just now said that He died for you. If He died for you, He must be dead. And how can a dead man save you, however good and loving He may have been?”

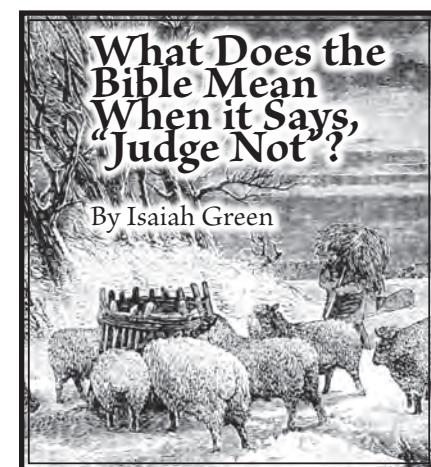
She looked at me as in amazement, and, lifting her little bare and lean arm in striking gesture, she declared again:

“Man, Jesus is no deid. He died for me, but He is no a deid man. He is God’s Son. Man, did you no tell us this vera nicht that God raised Him from the deid? He was deid, but He is no deid noo. Oh, man, I want to get saved!” And her voice dropped into the old pathetic tones; “Do not fash me, but tell me a’boot it, and how can I get saved?”

I had preached that night from text, “**Who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification**” (Rom, 4:25). Here was a little theologian who had grasped the whole blessed gospel with a clearness which I have only seen among Scotch children, all of whom, however poor, have been taught the Scriptures from their youth. Now,

she knew she was a sinner---she knew that only Jesus could save her. He had died, but God had raised Him from the dead, and now He was able to save all who came unto God by Him.

I need not say that the little one went away glad and rejoicing. And I went away glad and happy. “He is no deid.” “He died for me; but He is no deid.” How often these words have come back to me! “Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou has ordained strength.” (*News and Truths*, July 17, 1918).



What Does the Bible Mean When it Says, “Judge Not?”

By Isaiah Green

One of the most quoted pieces of Scripture is Jesus’ words when He said, “**Judge not, that ye be not judged**” (Matt. 7:1). It has become common for people to silence their critics when they say that Jesus has made it clear that it is a sin to judge others.

“If you are a Christian, you can not judge me!” stated an atheist debater in an attempt to silence his Christian critic. Sound familiar? You do not have to debate people long to find someone like this. I encountered this when I was debating someone over the topic of abortion. Sadly, even Christians have come into this biblical and logical fallacy. This is an example of poor context and not enough reading. Allow me to list five reasons this reasoning is false:

1. Just a few verses down, Jesus states, “**Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye**

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Judge Not

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your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you" (Matt. 7:6). He commands us to watch out for the **"...false prophets..."** (Matt. 7:15-16). Without judging, how can we discern the pigs, dogs, and false prophets?

2. Jesus has commanded us to judge: **"Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment"** (John 7:24). Here we have an example of the incorrect way to judge others.

Now the question arises: Is Matthew 7:1 an example of a contradiction in the Bible? The answer is a resounding, "No." Take a look at point three:

3. In the same sentence Jesus states, **"...that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?"** (vs. 1b-3). This passage is not telling us not to judge. Rather, how to judge. Readers, recall that the English versions of the Bible were made by gathering several scrolls and writings that were not written in a verse-by-verse program. Stuart Weber gives an excellent conclusion of what this passage really means:

"Do not judge others until you are prepared to be judged by the same standard. And then, when you exercise judgment toward others, do it with humility" (*Holman New Testament Commentary*, Volume I, page 96).

4. Mark 6:18-19 gives us an example of John the Baptist judging Herodias when he pointed out her adultery with Herod.

5. There is literally a book in the Holy Bible titled, "Judges." In Judges 2:18 we are told the judges were raised by God.

Now, allow me to give you five types

of wrongful judgment:

1. False judgment: not only is it a sin to bear false witness in the Ten Commandments (Ex.20:16), we are told in multiple places it is a sin, like in Proverbs 19:5 or Titus 3:2. So, we can then gather it is wrong to judge others on a false account.

2. Unforgiving judgment: in Colossians 3:13 and multiple other passages we are told to forgive others. In Titus 3:2 we are told to be gentle towards everyone. And even in Matthew 7:2, we are warned that the same way we judge others, we will be judged that way, too. We cannot judge others and then never forgive them for that judgment.

3. Hypocritical judgment: when Jesus gave us His rule about judging, His main point warned against hypocrisy (Matt. 7:3-5). Who are you to judge others about sin while you yourself are committing the same sin? In Romans 2:1-3, the Apostle Paul warns against hypocritical judgment. When one is hypocritical he or she judges others for sin while they are sinning themselves. It is very easy to call out others, but have you examined yourself?

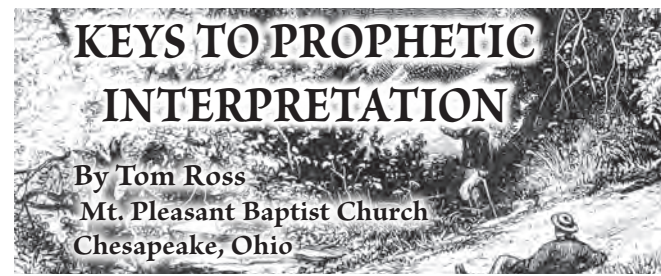
4. Self-righteous judgment: in Luke 18:9-14, we are given the famous, "Parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector." The Pharisee in this account is confident that he is right in his ways. However, Jesus tells him he is wrong because of his ways. Jesus opposed the proud judgmental Pharisee because he was proud. Remember, God opposes the proud (Jam. 4:6).

5. Superficial judgment: that may be a large word, however, superficial judgment is passing judgments based solely on appearances and reputations. As I have already shown, in John 7:24 we are told that judging on appearances is a sin. In Luke 7:36-50, Simon got in trouble for judging a woman based on appearance and reputation.



KEYS TO PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION

By Tom Ross
Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church
Chesapeake, Ohio



"We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation" (II Pet. 1:19-20).

In order to interpret prophetic Scripture aright the Word of God must be consulted and believed as the authoritative and infallible Word of the living God. We must learn to take heed to what God's Word plainly says if we are to understand the truths of prophetic Scripture. The interpretation of prophecy is not up to the private whims of the individual. Rather, we must bow to the clear and literal teachings of the Holy Book.

The study of prophetic Scripture is no easy task. It requires diligent labor, prayer, and the empowerment of the Holy Spirit in order to come to Scriptural conclusions. There are certain keys or laws that must be used if the treasures of prophetic study are to be opened to the Bible student. I offer the following suggestions to be used as keys to the interpretation of prophecy.

1. In order to interpret prophetic Scriptures, or any Scriptures for that matter, the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit is necessary. We must pray for the Holy Spirit, who is the Divine Teacher, to open our eyes and hearts so that we may receive the truths of God's Word. When we study prophetic Scripture we should pray as the Psalmist did in Psalm 119:18 which states: **"Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law."** When we come to the Word of God

we ought to come as eager students wishing to be taught by the blessed Holy Spirit. We should come with a deep sense of humility, recognizing our need of instruction, along with a holy reverence for the Word of God. Since the subject matter is Divinely inspired we need the direction of the One who inspired it if we are to "rightly divide the word of truth" (II Tim. 2:15). I Corinthians 2:10-11 declares: **"But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God."**

I am convinced that if we earnestly and fervently pray for the leadership and illumination of the Holy Spirit He will guide us into all truth and show us the truth about things to come. John 16:13 states: **"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come."** I believe that if an individual comes to the Scriptures with an unprejudiced mind and an open heart he will at once identify with the truths of premillennialism. I have long been of the opinion that one of the reasons why so many men defect to the theories of amillennialism is because they have spent more time poring over the writings of fallible men than they have the writers of sacred Scripture.

2. Prophetic Scripture should be interpreted literally unless otherwise indicated by the context. As a general rule, we are to

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BEREA BAPTIST BANNER	
Financial Report	
5-1-2023 to 5-31-2023	
Beginning Balance.....	\$11,310.65
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	750.00
The Willetts, Cottonwood Shores, TX	125.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Germanton, NC	25.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC	100.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
S. G. B. C., Wellington, KS	200.00
Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV	50.00
Indore B.C., Indore, WV	300.00
Berea B.C., Stonington, IL	60.00
Big Creek B.C., Wayne, WV	200.00
Victory B. C., Courtland VA	25.00
Grace B. C., Corbin KY	100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen IN	100.00
Faith B. C., Lynn AR	12.50
Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX	50.00
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield OR	100.00
West Jefferson B. C., West Jefferson OH... ..	100.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	45.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS	25.00
John Martin, Winston Salem, NC	2.00
Briar Creek, Williamsburg, KY	300.00
Subscriptions	54.00
Anonymous	325.00
Div. Cks.	300.00
Sub Total	\$3,673.50
TOTAL	\$14,984.15

EXPENDITURES:	
Postage:	859.14
Printing	459.10
Wages	2,000.00
FICA	153.00
Total Expenditures	\$3,771.24

ENDING BALANCE..... \$11,212.91



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST	
Financial Report	
5-1-2023 to 5-31-2023	
Beginning Balance.....	\$5,545.65
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	150.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg	200.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
Calvary I. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
.....	550.00
TOTAL	6,095.65
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio time	403.98
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	403.98
Interest	+0.33
ENDING BALANCE	\$5,692.00

Keys to Prophetic...

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interpret the words of Scripture as meaning exactly what they say. By a literal explanation, we mean that the words of prophetic Scripture should be explained in a simple, natural, unrestrained manner; and that we must not depart from the literal meaning except when forced to. A word is a vehicle of a thought, so the meaning of any passage must be determined by arriving at a correct grammatical understanding of the words in the text. We have no right to give the words of Scripture another meaning other than the common and literal one unless the Scriptures themselves plainly tell us to do so. For example, when Revelation twenty employs the phrase “thousand years” six times we are to understand that the writer is referring to a literal thousand year period of time since there is no indication from the context that it should be interpreted otherwise.

I like what George N. Peters, the writer of the massive three volume study entitled *The Theocratic Kingdom*, wrote concerning the literal interpretation of prophecy.

“In confirmation of such a course, it may be said: if God has really intended to make known His will to man, it follows that to secure knowledge on our part, He must convey His truth to us in accordance with the well-known rules of language. He must adapt Himself to our mode of communicating thoughts and ideas. If His words were given to be understood, it follows that He must have employed language to convey the sense intended, agreeably to the laws grammatically expressed, controlling all language; and that, instead of seeking a sense which the words in themselves do not contain, we are primarily to obtain the sense that the words obviously embrace, making due allowance for the existence of figures of speech when indicated by the context, scope, or construction of

the passage.”

The reason why a non-literal interpretation is resorted to by many is because the literal meaning does not fit in with their preconceived opinions and theological training. Those who abandon the law of literal interpretation do so because they want to avoid the obvious meaning the words of the text are trying to convey. For example, those who deny a future for the nation of Israel say that the terms of the Abrahamic Covenant were conditional and temporary. Yet God said unconditionally to Abraham and his seed: “**And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their generations for an EVERLASTING COVENANT, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an EVERLASTING POSSESSION; and I will be their God**” (Gen. 17:7-8) (emph. TR). An amillennialist who refuses to believe that the land of Canaan was intended by God to be the everlasting possession of His chosen nation must give the word “**everlasting**” a new and foreign meaning. This is dangerous indeed. What would prevent the same interpreter of Scripture from giving the word “**everlasting**” in John 3:16 a new and foreign meaning? Unless otherwise indicated by the context all Scripture should be interpreted in a literal fashion, otherwise the individual could make the Bible say anything they want it to.

3. When interpreting prophecy the student must understand the literal method of interpretation is sustained by the literal fulfillment of certain prophecies. Consider all of the unlikely prophecies concerning the first coming of Jesus Christ. His birth, His ministry, His unparalleled sufferings, His death and resurrection were all prophesied in the Old Testament Scriptures. All of the prophecies relating to His first coming were literally fulfilled, so we

may safely conclude that all of the prophecies relating to His Second Advent will likewise be literally fulfilled. The only way to know how God will fulfill prophecy in the future is to see exactly how He has fulfilled it in the past.

A prime example of the literal method of interpretation being justified by literal fulfillment of prophecy is found in Hosea 3:4-5 which states: “**For the children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the LORD their God, and David their king; and shall fear the LORD and his goodness in the latter days.**” The things mentioned in verse four have already been fulfilled. During the present age, the times of the Gentiles, Israel has been without a king. The things mentioned in verse four are literally true concerning the nation of Israel. Any amillennialist will agree with that. Why then do they change their method of interpretation when they come to verse five? Why not read it and believe it in the same way you read verse four? The literal fulfillment of the prophecy of verse four sustains and justifies the literal interpretation of verse five.

4. When interpreting prophetic Scripture the student must understand the principle of partial or double fulfillment. Often times prophetic Scripture has fulfillment in the immediate circumstances as well as in the distant future. The angel’s announcement in Luke 1:31-33 is a prime example of this, it states: “**And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.**” The things mentioned in

Keys to Prophetic...

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this text were literally true at the birth of Jesus Christ, but will not be universally true until the Second Advent when He comes to reign upon the throne of David. The fact that Christ was literally conceived in the virgin womb of a literal woman named Mary, that He was literally named Jesus, and that He was literally the Son of the Highest points us to the conclusion that He will literally reign upon the throne of David some time in the future because He did not do so at His first coming. Thus, the law of double or partial fulfillment must be recognized in some portions of Scripture where there is a partial fulfillment of a prophecy first, followed by a complete fulfillment later.

5. Another key to interpreting prophetic Scripture correctly is to understand that many of the prophecies by the Old Testament prophets are mingled together in one verse. A majority of prophetic utterances by the Old Testament prophets contain no reference to the time period between the first and second advent of Jesus Christ. Their vision of the future was like viewing two mountain peaks, yet not viewing the valley in between the two mountains. The first advent of Christ was the first mountain peak, and the second advent of Christ. The valley in between the two peaks, which they did not see, is what many call the church age. The fact that two events are prophesied side by side, in the same context, is no proof that the fulfillment will take place at the same time, or in immediate succession. This is particularly true in the prophecies concerning Christ, where events of the first and second advents are spoken of together in the same context as though taking place at the same time.

A good example of this law operating is seen in Micah 5:2-3 which states: **"But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little**

among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel: whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. Therefore will he give them up, until the time that she which travaileth hath brought forth: then the remnant of his brethren shall return unto the children of Israel." In this passage of Scripture the exact place of Christ's birth is foretold which relates to His first advent. Jesus was definitely not a ruler in Israel in His first advent. Rather, He was despised and rejected by men, and finally crucified like a

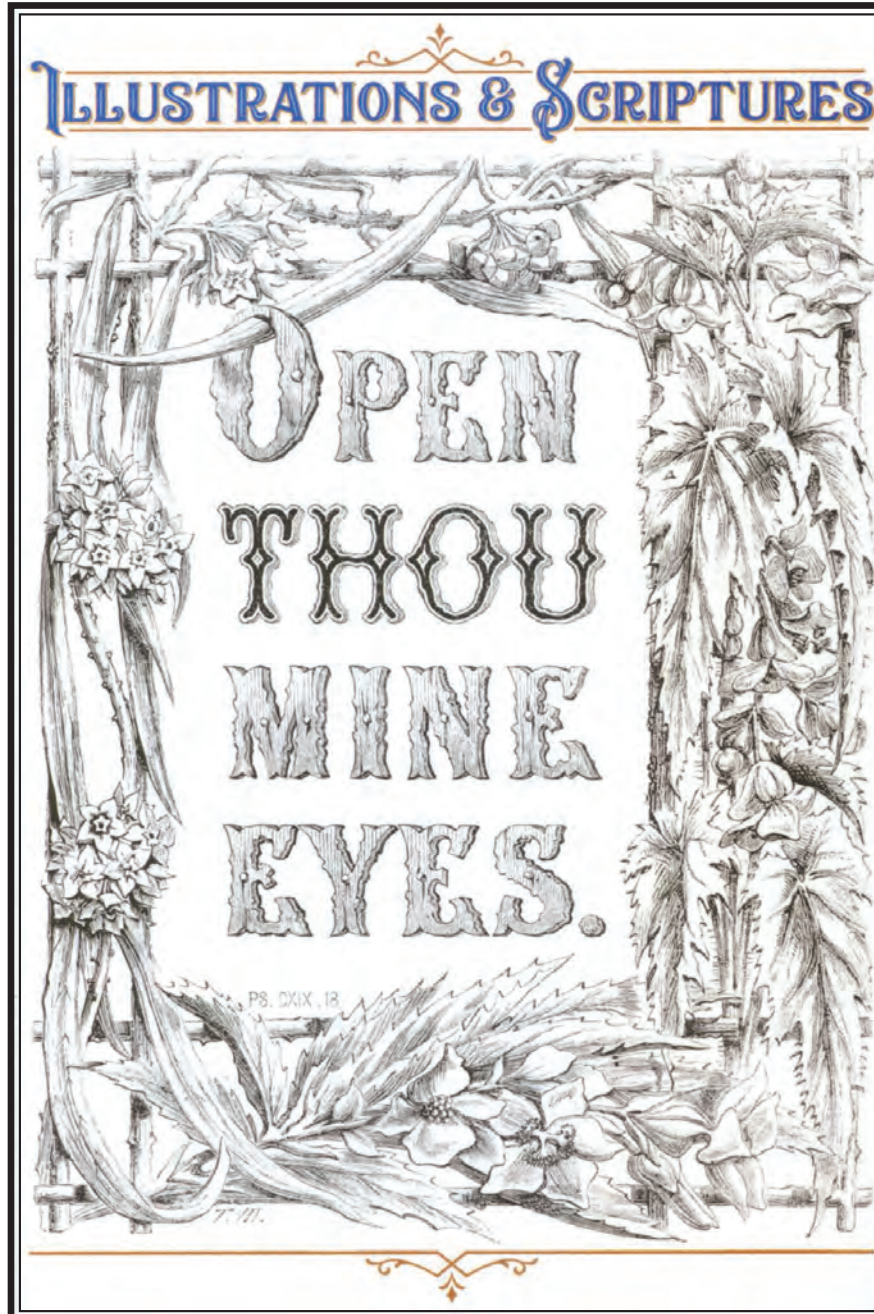
common thief on a tree of cursing. So the reference to His rule in Israel must relate to the second advent. In the very same context we have an allusion to Christ's birth as well as His reign and rule in Jerusalem on the throne of David. The restoration of Israel is alluded to as well. Thus, the prophet foretold of the first and second advents of Christ without seeing the period in between. Much of amillennial error could easily be avoided if this law of interpretation were applied in such passages.

6. Another key to interpreting prophecy is to

understand that the church and the age in which it was to operate was an unseen mystery to the Old Testament prophets. The focal point of most of their prophecies relate to the apostasy, restoration, and latter day glory of Israel. The establishment of the church by Christ during His earthly ministry, its development and growth as an institution, as well as its commission were largely unknown to the Old Testament prophets. God used the apostle Paul to unveil the mysteries of the New Testament church which had been hid up until that time. Ephesians 3:9-11 declares: **"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church in manifold wisdom of God, According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord."**

When the principle is understood the amillennial attempt to make Old Testament Israel the New Testament church becomes utter foolishness. They are two distinct and separate entities. The New Testament church did not take the place of Israel. The fact that many of the Old Testament promises to Israel may be *applied* to believers in the New Testament in no way nullifies their literal fulfillment to Israel. There is no warrant from Scripture to either cancel or transfer the promised blessings made to Israel in the Old Testament. Romans 11:1-2 and 29 makes this very clear: **"I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew...For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."** The reason why so many amillennialists are so far off base in their interpretation of Old Testament prophecies concerning

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Israel is because they fail or refuse to see that the New Testament church was an unseen mystery to the Old Testament prophets.

7. Finally, prophetic Scripture should be interpreted in light of the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ: **“..worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy”** (Rev. 19:10). All of the prophecies in the Word of God whether fulfilled or unfulfilled, relate in some way to the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is the center and focal point of all of God’s revelation to man. He forms the central theme of all of prophecy. Thus, all of the lines of prophetic Scripture converge upon some aspect of the glorious Second Person of the Sacred Trinity, the Holy Son of God. I Peter 1:10-11 declares: **“Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: Searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glory that should follow.”**

Any system of prophetic interpretation that takes away from the glory and sovereignty of the Lord

Jesus Christ should be immediately shunned. Postmillennialism would have you believe that there will be a kingdom of peace and righteousness without King Jesus. This certainly robs Christ of His kingly glory. On the other hand, amillennial eschatology limits the reign of Jesus Christ to that of a spiritual nature rather than a literal reality. Both systems fail to believe all that the law and prophets spoke concerning Jesus Christ. Luke 24:25 declares: **“..O fools, and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.”**

May God grant us grace and wisdom to see the wonderful truths in prophetic Scripture. May the keys listed above enable and help us to unlock the vast treasures of the prophetic Word.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

This ministry currently has a

blog written by Bro. Coffee that can be read online at <https://thefaithfulofgod.com/blog/>

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

The 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.

Bethel Baptist Church, which is located at 2603 Penfield, Pasadena, TX 77506, is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elders should call Brother Risinger at 832-564-6350 which is

his cell phone or you can call him at home at 281-476-5099.

Grace Missionary Baptist Church in Tulsa, Oklahoma is in need of a pastor. This calling has a parsonage located right next to the church building. Interested persons are to contact Brothers Charlie Hodges at 918-633-2713 or David Thorne at 918-373-6057.

Bethel Baptist Church of Lawton, OK is looking for a pastor. They have been an independent, sovereign grace Baptist Church since the late 1950’s and they are seeking to call a man of God to guide, lead, teach, and rebuild their modest congregation. If you are interested please contact Bennie Burnsed at 580-695-4473.

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

Elder Joseph Sidders has resigned as pastor of Berea Baptist Church and as Editor of the Berea Baptist Banner. We pray our Lord’s blessings on him as he seeks to follow God’s leading.

Bro. Clark Manning has been selected as our new Editor. Please pray for him as he goes through the learning process, and for us as we seek a new pastor.

The Berea Baptist Church of Mantachie, MS is in search of a Pastor. Any interested Elder, of like faith and order, my contact us at 662-282-7794, or office@bereabaptistchurch.org for a pastoral questionnaire.

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