Christ, The Captain of Our Salvation

By Christmas Evans

(1776 - 1838)

"And being made perfect, he became the Author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey him" (Heb. 5:9).

"I shall offer a few remarks on Christ, as the Captain or Prince of Salvation.

I. The perfection of this Prince as the Author of salvation; and

II. The characters interested in this..."

I. I shall offer a few remarks on Christ, as the Captain or Prince of Salvation.

II. The perfection of this Prince as the Author of salvation; and

III. The characters interested in this...

Continued on page 45

Gnats and Camels

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

"Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel" (Matt. 23:24).

Some would render the text to "strain out a gnat" rather than to "strain at a gnat." The Greek means to strain out by a cloth or sieve. Jewish law prohibited the eating of flying things (Lev. 11:22-23). Hence the Jews had a custom of filtering wine before it was drunk. The wine gnat was the smallest insect known to the Hebrews, while the camel was the largest and forbidden as food (Lev. 11:4).

In my text Christ used this contrast to illustrate the inconsistency of the Pharisees in taking great pain to avoid small sins while making no effort to avoid greater sins. These religious fanatics were very scrupulous about the minutest matters of the ceremonial observances, and then they neglected law.

Continued on page 43

Spiritual Vegetation

By Milburn Cockrell

(1941 - 2002)

"And he said, So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground; And should sleep, and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how. For the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the sickle, because the harvest is come" (Mark 4:26-29).

Mark only reports this parable. It is not the same as the Parable of the Sower (Mark 4:1-20). In some ways the two parables resemble each other, but in other details they are very different.

Though the parable I am about to comment upon is brief, it is filled with precious gems...

Continued on page 45

The Yoke for Young Men

By Jeff Short

(1776 - 1838)

"It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth." (Lam. 3:27)

In this chapter Jeremiah is relating his own experience in afflictions. He is commending his experience as an example to the nation of Israel to be followed in their own afflictions. If they will follow this godly counsel and quit themselves like men, he believes that God will redeem them from captivity and restore them.

He declares, "It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth."

The immediate reference is to bearing the yoke of afflictions or trials, realizing that "For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;" (II Cor. 4:17). The verse states that it is good for a man to bear this yoke in his youth. The word yoke is here translated 'man.' It means a man as opposed to a woman or the male gender. The word also implies...
**Gnats and Camels**

*Continued from page 41*

The highest ethical duties enjoined by the law is it so often the case that he who is troubled with little things pays no attention to great things. This trait of character, so vivdly displayed in the Pharisees of old, is still most conspicuous in the lives of no small number of professing Christians today.

**TITERS AND TURNABOUTS**

In the time of Christ the Pharisees took great pain to avoid offense in the smallest matter, like people straining out a wine gnat, but made no effort to avoid greater sin—hypocrisy, deceit, oppression and lusts—like a man who withholds a loving gift. This was certainly true in their tithing.

The law required the Jew to give a tenth for the support of the Levites and the service of the sanctuary (Num. 18:20-24; Deut. 14:22-24). They were obligated to pay tithes of the "fruit of the earth." (Deut. 26:22).

Hower, the law said nothing about herbs or camels. The Paulines maintained such herbs should be tithed.

Jesus condemned them for being so precise in matters not expressly commanded, while omitting the greater things which the law enjoined: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cumin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone. Matthew 23:23.

They tithed the herbs of their garden, while neglecting judgment, mercy, and faith. Hence they were guilty of straining out a gnat and swallowing a camel!

**MONEY AND MADNESS**

Another instance of the inconsistency of the Pharisees can be seen in their proceedings with Judas. The ruling men of the Sanhedrin agreed to pay Judas thirty pieces of silver to betray Jesus Christ. This was the price of a slave (Ex. 21:32). It is not unlikely this sum was fixed by the council to show how little they valued the Savior's tribunary seemed not at all scrupulous in the least about judgment, although the act was forbidden in their Old Testament (Deut. 16:19; Ps. 26:10; Prov. 17:23).

Later when Judas returned their blood-money, they scriped to return the money into the treasury; "And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for us to receive money and to set a price on a man's life. Hence they were guilty of the Pharisees still live. They now have different names but their characteristics are the same. Their successors are those in our churches who profess to know God but in works deny Him (Tit. 1:16), those who have a name to live when they are dead (Rev. 3:1).

**A CHRISTIAN BURIAL AND A CHRISTLESS LIFE**

Some church members are greatly concerned with their "Christian burial." They want a certain text read at their funeral about H. eaven. They want some scholarly preacher to give a eulogy about their "good" deeds. They want to be buried facing the east, in a fine coffin. They want to be interred on their tomb: "Asleep in Jesus." But after being so particular about these details, they live for the Devil during their life on earth. They serve the god of this world and foolishly hope to live with God in this next world. These gnat-strainers, destined to miss H eaven, as far as H eaven is concerned, are asleep in Jesus.

In John 18:28 we behold again their hypocrisy. The Pharisees refused to wash the feet of Jesus, "ye are not fit for my table." Let me illustrate. One day a man comes to buy a person's house. The sale is completed, but the man refuses to pay. The seller writes to the buyer, "Fifteen dollars is worth $50,000 or more. The next day the tax assessor comes around, and the owner estimates it is worth no more than $25,000. Here is a camel-swaller with his gnat strainer in his hand.

**CRITICS WHO NEED CRITICIZING**

In some churches you can find a person who points out every wrong chord the pianist makes and every sour note the music director sounds. They notice every inaccuracy of speech the pastor makes in his sermon. They notice who sleeps during the sermon and who looks out the window. And amidst all of this they never hear the message from God. By constantly criticizing those who try to serve the Lord, they miss the main reason for a religious service—to hear the message, which comes forth from God. Such a person is a gnat strainer of the worst kind!

Some preachers are quick to point out the faults and follies of other people. The errors of others alarm them greatly, yet they have no alarm about their great transgressions. They use a microscope on others and a telescope turned backward on themselves! Jesus said of such persons: "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye" (Mat. 7:3-5).

The unregenerate can find so much wrong with the church. They will say, "We don't like the preacher who preaches." Or they may say, "No one spoke to us when we went to church last Sunday." Or maybe they will say, "The church asks for money." These things would not be a problem at the club or in the business world. You have never heard someone say, "No one spoke to us at the club." Or do they say, "We will never go to the department store again because they ask for money." These people gag at a gnat and swallow down a whole camel!

**PREACHER'S PARADOXES**

Some preachers preach much about things people ought not to do and little if ever about what they should do. They tell sinners they are lost, but never hear the message from God. They tell people what they ought not to do. They tell their congregation about things people ought not to do. They tell their congregation about things people ought not to do. They tell their congregation about things people ought not to do. They tell their congregation about things people ought not to do. They tell their congregation about things people ought not to do.
Gnats and Camels

Continued from page 42

talk much about the independence of the church, then political to get another pastor run off from his church. Some speak of each church being sovereign in its own sphere, then turn around and dictate how another church should conduct their Bible conference. Still others speak of the democratic rule in the church, but then assume the office of the chief dictator in the church. A few say it is a terrible thing to eat in the church building, while affirming it is a fine thing for a minister to have as many wives as he pleases so long as he takes only one at a time! Such people have strained out a gnat and swallowed a camel hump and all!

TWO WRONGS DON’T MAKE A RIGHT

Some professed Christians condemn a man for drinking alcohol. The Bible also condemns the drunkard. But some of the same people who denounce the drunk smoke and defile their body. Both drinking and smoking harm the body. Both are sins against God. Then some condemn people who smoke, but they eat too much. Gluttony is equally as much a sin as smoking. Still others complain about folks going to the picture show, while they watch TV at home. A few are quick to condemn gambling, but they enter every mail-order contest, which comes along. “Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whomsoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest doest thou the same things” (Rom. 2:1).

So many religious people today are consistently inconsistent. Their thinking is so very lopsided. They remind me of the Pharisees who permitted circumcision on the Sabbath and denounced Christ for healing on the Sabbath (John 7:22-23). Certainly if a work of necessity could be done on the Sabbath it was in order to completely restore a man to health. It would be well if men would not condemn others in things that they allow. Men often accuse others of doing things that they themselves do in other ways. People who live in a glass house should seldom throw a stone.

Some religious leaders criticize churches that have an executive mission board separate and apart from the churches. But some of these same people have a missionary committee which acts as an executive between sessions of their association. Still others in the ranks of Baptists denounce all mission boards and their financial reports, while defending a secret board, which gives no reports. Some criticize the missionary work of all; yet do no missionary work—the worst thing of all! These are content to be omissionary and brag about being a “sound Baptist, when in reality they are sound asleep. Those who refuse to become a missionary force are destined to become a mission field!

CONCLUSION

This message has not been intended to justify any known sin, which the Bible condemns. Rather, it was intended to show how inconsistent we sometimes are in our religious practices. Little sins are not to be tolerated. They must be strained out. We are to avoid lesser sins, but we are responsible not to commit greater sins. Let us get rid of both motes and beams. But let us always remember it is better to swallow a thousand gnats than one camel!

Spiritual Vegetation

Continued from page 41.

of truth. The Parable of the Sower describes the quality of the soil in the field, but this one the vitality of the seed in the soil. It sets before us the work of grace in the individual soul. SOME BRIEF DEFINITIONS

I want to comment upon a few terms which are less prominent in this parable. By “kingdom of God” (v. 26) I understand the God in the hearts of H is people and churches. In this parable we see the slow and secret growth of the kingdom. Jesus Christ said: “The kingdom of God cometh not with observation” (Luke 17:20). The final stage of the growth of the kingdom is the thousand-year reign of Christ and H is saints. There is special stress on the relation of gospel preaching to slow growth of the kingdom of God. By “the ground” (v.26) I understand the hearts of men and woman who hear the gospel. More will be said about some of this later.

The big question in this parable is the identity of the sower or the farmer. In the Parable of the Sower it is “the Son of man” (M att. 13:37) or Christ. But in the parable before us the sower is the human instrument that declares the gospel of Christ. The sower in our parable cannot be Christ, for Christ does not sleep and rise. Of the sower it is said that “he knoweth not” (v. 27). This cannot be said of Christ (John 21:17; Heb. 4:13). It would be blasphemy to apply such things to the omniscient and omnipotent Redeemer. Hence it best in this case to think of the person who declares the gospel. Gospel preachers are the Lord’s seed men.

THERE MUST BE A FARMER

“...so is a man should cast seed into the ground” (v. 26). The earth does not bring forth of itself. It is the mother of weeds and grass, not corn. Casting the seed into the ground is the first step toward a harvest. “They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him!” (Ps. 126:5-6). As the song writer so well expressed it in our beloved hymn:

Sowing in the sunshine, sowing in the shadows,
Fearing neither clouds nor winter’s chilling breeze;
By and by the harvest and the labor ended,
We shall come rejoicing, bringing in the sheaves.

While God can work without means in some cases, H e generally works through means as seen in this parable. God uses ministers, missionaries, parents, teachers, friends and relatives to sow gospel seed. “Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man? I have planted, Apollos watered: but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase. Now he that planteth and he that watereth are one: and every man shall receive his own reward according to his own labor” (I Cor. 3:8-10). To despise human instrumentality is to expect corn when no seed has been sown. I believe we are responsible to sow gospel seeds among the unconverted. On this point I differ with some who are of the contrary mind.

All we can do is sow the seed. It is not within our power to make the seed germinate and grow. We do not make the seed or the soil, but all Christians are the field of God’s grace. Nothing will hinder us in this important work: “He that observeth the wind shall not sow; and he that regardeth the clouds shall not reap. . . . In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether thou shalt plow after or whether they both shall be alike good” (Eccl. 11:4-6).

Isaiah 32:20 says: “Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters.” Of the Jerusalem church it is written: “Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word” (Acts 8:4).

But we must never put the gospel preacher on a pedestal and attribute the results to God. M an may sow and water, but God only can give germination and growth. All is vain unless God intervenes by H is power to produce life and action. M an left to himself will never repent and believe the gospel. It is the work of the Holy Spirit to break up the ground of the human heart and make the seed spring into life.

THE SEED IS THE WORD OF GOD

In Luke 8:11 Jesus said: “The seed is the word of God” (Luke 8:11; cf. Mark 4:34). The kingdom of God grows by the sowing of the seed of the written Word of God. Religious training and social improvement are useful, but they do not extend the kingdom of God. The Lord of the harvest did not promise to bless church ball games and midnight hay rides in the growth of His kingdom. Speculations, political speeches, human traditions, and doctrines of demons are no good. Neither is human philosophy and vain deceit. These things are like mixing grass seed with corn seed, or darnel with wheat. To add something to the Word of God is the handle “the word of God deceitfully” (I Cor. 4:2).

The kingdom of God grows only as the Word of God is preached in its purity and power without any mixtures. Paul said: “For we are not as many, which corrupt the word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God in the sight of God speak we of Christ” (I Cor. 2:37). The whole counsel of God must be
him a son by the bondwoman, some
ministers attempt things beyond their
power. By super salesmanship
evangelism and hour-long invitations
they seek to make the seeds of the
gospel germinate. This is very
foolish, for we cannot make seeds to
grow otherwise than God appoints.
Like Abraham, the results of their
trying to help God out results in
unfruitful labors for those who are
troublesome to the house of God.

THE MYSTERY OF LIFE

“For the earth bringeth forth
fruit of herself. . .” (Mk 4:28).
Even with all of our modern-day
knowledge we still know little about
how corn grows. We observe the
stages of its growth, and we watch its
changes. We realize the necessity of
rain, good soil, and proper sunshine,
but beyond this we cannot go.
Even so, we do not know how the unseen
God imparts spiritual life and growth.
How the Word operates on the
sinner’s heart, and how it becomes
the engraven Word we know but little.
The gospel farmer will tell you that
life and growth are hard to explain in
nature. We have mostly observation
of what it does. The farmer does not
know the minute life begins nor the
time it may show itself in a small
sprout. In truth we cannot define life,
whether natural or spiritual. Our
Lord Himself said that the beginning
of spiritual life is a great mystery:
“The wind bloweth where it
listeth, and thou hearest the
sound thereof, but canst not tell
whence it cometh, and whiter it
goeth: so is every one that is born
whence it cometh, and whiter it
goeth” (II Cor. 5:16). The
origin of the wind, and its
changes. We realize the necessity of
having spiritual life. The full corn
is gradual and from God. In Christian
experience many things are a city set on a hill.
Mark 4:28)

THE GROWTH OF THE SEED

In the plant world there is the law
of continuity: “. . .first the blade,
then the ear, after that the full
corn in the ear” (Mk 4:28). The
process is the same in nature or
grace. It cannot be reversed.
Everything must have a beginning.
The mightiest oak was once an acorn,
and the strongest man was once a
babe. The tall corn stalk, which waves
in the wind and bright sunlight, was
once only a small sprout. The
conversion of the sinner is the
beginning of a day of small things.
Faith at first is small and weak. It has
only a glimmering view of Christ.
It is scarcely more than a mere venture,
hoping that there may be salvation for
such a poor lost sinner. When it is first
imparted by the Spirit through the
Word it has only a glimmering view
of Christ. But as time passes it will
leam more and more on Christ. Then
the converted man will soon live by faith
and walk by faith. The young
convert has but a limited knowledge
of Christ. But as time passes it will
leam more and more on Christ.
The full corn in the ear is the spiritual father able to
teach others the deep things of God.
There is a time lapse between
seedtime and harvest time. Growth
is gradual and from God. In Christian
experience there is no such thing as a
speedy sanctification. We all know
that some plans grow faster than
others, and some grow larger than
others. This is true of God’s children
as well. Neither natural growth nor
spiritual growth can be kept secret from
others. The holy evidence of
being alive in Jesus Christ must
appear.

While God may bless corn with
good growth, there are many external
things which may hinder its growth
and production. There can be
devouring worms, picking birds, high
winds, and bad weather. Believers
experience many such things in
the spiritual realm. They must endure
an alluring world, craving flesh, and a
mean Devil. Before corn can be
harvested there can be cold nights and
dry days. Even so, in our spiritual
development we may experience
many such external situations. Often
tings do not complete stop growth,
but they greatly hinder it.

NO HARVEST TILL THE
CORN IS RIPE

“But when the fruit is brought
forth, immediately he puttheth in the
sickle, because the harvest is
come” (Mk 4:29). The harvest is
not the end of the world in this parable
as it was in the Parable of the Sower.
The harvest time in this parable may
be understood in two different ways.
First, it may have an application to
those who reap and enjoy a harvest
of souls from their labors while they
live on earth. The same one who sows
the gospel seed man reaps a harvest.

Continued from page 43

Over anxious preachers have
sometimes done more harm than

THE BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Page 44

March 5, 2003

Continued on page 45
**Spiritual Vegetation**

Continued from page 44

character is fully developed. He will remain in this low land of sin and sorrow to be useful to Christ and to answer the designs of his heavenly Father.

There is no chance, no accident, and no mistake about the death of God’s children. All wise God knows when we are ready to be harvested. The Divine sickle only separates us from the field (this evil world). The farmer’s hand grasps the ear of corn only when it is ripe and ready. At death the Divine Reaper gives us the fatal stroke, and then He takes us to the shelter of the big Barn in the sky. Oh, to be gathered into the garner of glory (Matt. 13:30!)

**CONCLUSION**

1. This parable should make us examine our Christian experience. Have I experienced regeneration and conversion? Has my Christian experience been characterized by spiritual growth? Am I progressing toward the goal of spiritual perfection? Am I striving for the perfection of the Spirit? Am I spiritual minded? Am I useful to God in the church where I am a member? How far have I advanced in holiness? Am I going on to perfection? Am I striving for the mastery? Am I pressing toward the mark of the high calling? Am I ripe and ready for the Divine sickle?

2. Here is seen the importance of preaching the gospel. There can be no harvest of souls without sowing gospel seeds. All who do not believe the gospel shall be damned to Hell (Mark 16:15-16). Those to whom the gospel remains hid are lost (II Cor. 10:13-17).

3. The word of God shall be with us (II Cor. 3:4). All who do not obey the gospel shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power” (I Thes. 1:8-9). Sinners cannot hear the gospel unless some person preaches to them (Rom. 10:13-17).

4. What kind of ground are you? If your calling and election are sure, cry to God to make your heart tender and fit to receive the seed of the Word. Oh, that God would create a thirst in you for His Word. The psalmist said: “I opened my mouth, and pant: for I longed for thy commandments” (Ps. 119:131). A gain he said: “I rejoice at thy word, as one that findeth great spoil” (Ps. 119:162).

5. When the Word is rooted and springs up in the heart, the soul cries out under the load of sin: “Wretched man that I am!” (Rom. 7:24). The good soil hearer is not only grieved over the plague of his deceitful heart, but he also cries out for Christ: “Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat!” (Job 23:3).

6. Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee” (Ps. 73:25). He says to himself, “What is my life if I have not Christ? I must have Christ as my Savior, or I shall die in my sins and go to hell.” He delights in the commandments of Jesus Christ and follows Him whithersoever He goes. This is the evidence of good seed which has taken root in a heart prepared by the Holy Spirit.

7. Natural death is harvest time for every soul. When the great Farmer reap His field He gathers ripe souls into the heavenly Garner. After this He will cut down the weedy and burn the fire (Mark 13:40,43). Some will only be ready to be burned. “Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he shall burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire” (Mark 3:12).

(Editors note: This is one of four sermons on the parables that my father was writing before his death. Each will be published in future issues of the Banner. In all, he has written approximately eighteen sermons on the parables of Christ. We hope in the future to publish these in a book.)

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**Christ, The Captain**

Continued from page 41

salvation: “all them that obey him.”

shall offer a few remarks on Christ as the Prince, Leader or Captain, as the great antitype of Moses, Joshua, Samson and David. The heroic deeds they wrought, and the glory they achieved during their lives were, but a faint resemblance of the glorious actions of Christ, the Captain of our salvation.

We would notice in the first place, that Christ is a Prince in our nature. The Lord from Heaven is the Second Adam. The human and the divine natures are united in Him. The Word that was in the beginning was made flesh, and dwelt among us; or, tabernacled among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. According to the proclamation in Genesis, the Messiah was to be the seed of the woman. He is of the seed of David according to the flesh. In that sense God is nearer to Him than ever He was before. The Lamb of God, whose blood cleanseth all sin, and in whom the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same.

The Word being united to the nature of man, has restored the human nature to life: and having cast out the prince of this world, He demolished his empire, destroying his works, and evidently proved that the devil had not the least claim to the title of god and prince of this world, in short that he is a notorious liar, a great deceiver, and a vile impostor. On the cross the Captain of our salvation triumphed over the powers and principalities of darkness, and made a shew of them openly, so that the world might know what they are. When Jesus proclaimed aloud on Calvary, “It is finished,” the kingdom of darkness was shaken and the drooping spirits of the church of God were revived. The obedience of Christ to the death of the cross, is the title of H. He is brethren to kings and priests unto God.

Three offices meet in the Captain of our salvation. He wears three crowns, of silver, gold and precious jewels on His head. The Branch, at the Root of the stem of Jesse, shall bear all the glory and He shall sit as a priest upon His throne. The altar was consecrated; the house was purified, on the third day when He arose from the grave. By His blood He has secured liberty to captives and the people of the land are worshipping at the porch of the gate, which He opened by His blood. Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with H is own blood, suffered without the gate.

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**Funnybone**

"... A time to laugh..." (Eccl. 3:4).

While at the grocery store, several ministers of the Possum Trot community were discussing the problem of squirrels nesting in their church buildings. One minister complained that they were disrupting services and keeping the congregation amused instead of listening to the sermon. Another said they had tried to collect them and move them to the deep woods only to have them return by the next service.

One of the ministers turned and asked pastor Brown, “Still having problems with squirrels at the Baptist Church?”

Pastor Brown quickly replied, “Not since we made them members. Now they hardly ever show up.”

Little Jimmy Johnson was fidgeting in Sunday school when the teacher asked him a question. “Jimmy how far is it from Dan to Beersheba?”

Little Jimmy jumped up saying, “I thought they were husband and wife like Sodom and Gomorrah!”

The local Campbellite preacher was talking to Deacon Jones and asked him, “Are you one of those narrow minded that believes that only Baptists are going to heaven?”

Deacon Jones made a light hearted reply, “I’m more narrow than that. I believe only half of them are going.”

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Page 45
This perfection implies, in the first place, the incarnation of Christ. The priest must have something to offer as a sacrifice for sin. A body hast thou prepared for me, said He. This is that clean thing that is born of an unclean. Moses saw an emblem of this mystery in the bush that was burning and yet not consumed. Our God is a consuming fire, dwelling in a tabernacle of clay; the human nature, though not incorruptible; but it is not wholly consumed. On the third day the bush might be seen growing as usual, full of blossoms and most delicious fruits. The Son of God took hold on this body that was prepared for Him, as H is own property, therefore it is said that He offered His own body and soul, that He shed His own blood, and that He had power to lay down His life, and power to take it up again.

Such a body the Son of God assumed as became H im, in which He answered the demands of the two stones, or tables of the law, on behalf of H is people. The image of God, and all the fruits of righteousness, were found in His human nature. Righteous and hated iniquity. Here the great commandment in the law namely, perfect love to God, appeared as flaming fire through the whole course of His life. The second commandment was also completely fulfilled in His human nature. In the form of a servant He became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. In this nature He paid all the demands of the law; a debt which He never contracted Himself; and fulfilled all righteousness. Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law, to do them, is the law nature H e ve.

Behold the human nature united to the person of Emmanuel, hung on the accursed tree, and drinking the full cup of the wrath of God! In H ell every one drinks his own cup, and can never drink it up. On Calvary there was but one drinking the cups of countless millions, and He said, “It is finished!”, not a grain of the bitter ingredients was left behind for H is people to taste. God is just in the justification of the ungodly, because sin was condemned and punished in the human nature of Christ. Christ was a prophet among His brethren, and taught them the wisdom of God, which was an attribute essential to Him as the God-man. He is an High Priest of the kindred of his brethren, their kinsman, and a partaker of their natures, and yet without sin. Here is a great mystery, the ascending of David, sitting on the throne of the kingdom of Heaven. The human nature, united to the Divine nature of Christ, is the head of the church. The church is represented as having four faces: the face of a man, of an ox, of a lion, and of an eagle, and the likeness of a man’s hand is under the wings of the four living things.

The wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption of men, are in the Son of Man. From His fullness they receive every necessary grace. The fullness of God is in Christ, and He has the hand of a man to bestow blessings on us through the fullness of Christ. Christ is the head, and the two natures, in the person of Christ, the human nature received from the divine nature sufficient strength for that work which was far beyond the power of the human nature alone to perform. The glory of Deity often shone forth with splendour through His humanity; and when the divine nature in the person of Christ would manifest itself like flaming fire, the winds and the waves must submit, the dead must hear His voice, and the buyers and sellers, and even the devils must obey. Behold, the men with torches, swords and spears, falling before Him is the flower of the grass; and the boasted strength and courage of corrupted flesh vanishing away before the God of all flesh.

Christ suffered more of the wrath and displeasure of God, from the sixth to the ninth hour, while on the cross, than all the vessels of wrath can ever suffer. Had it not been for the union of the two natures subsisting in His person, He could not have endured the heavy load. It was the human nature that suffered tortures of body and agony of soul, while the divine nature supported it under those sufferings. It was the human nature that died, and the divine nature gave such infinite virtue and efficacy to the sacrifice, that it was of sweet smelling savour to God. His sweat and tears, his blood and death, are of infinite value.

Here God manifests the greatest mercy to poor sinners, the greatest hatred to sin, and the greatest equity to the divine law. The human nature received not from the divine nature unspeakable honour and dignity, notwithstanding that Emmanuel died on the ignominious cross, yet the human nature died in union with the divine nature. I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, that was dead and am alive, says the adorable Saviour. The cross of Christ is the subject matter of the adoration and praise of men and angels. “Worthy is the Lamb,” is the chorus in Heaven above, and on the earth below, and the voice of all the sheep that are given to the Lamb. Christ the true God answered by fire, and manifested Himself the God of love. The human nature of Christ is the sacrifice that He offered for us, His divine nature is the altar upon which it was offered, which sanctified the gift, and by which offering the justice of God was satisfied and His law honoured and magnified.

And being made perfect. Aaron, in his consecration, was a type of Christ. In the 29th chapter of Exodus, we read of the ram of consecration. The ram of perfection in the original, or full ram, as the word full signified complete, mature, full. In this chapter, the ram signifies the name of Emmanuel in that chapter, denoted the atonement and the intercession of Christ. Aaron was not to appear before the Lord on behalf of his people, empty handed. Christ, the High Priest of our profession, when He laid down His life for us on Calvary, was bathed in His own blood, and sweet and tears; and by virtue of the same blood and sufferings He entered, with H is hands full, into the heavenly sanctuary, to sprinkle the blood on the golden altar of His intercession; and obtained an eternal salvation for all that obey Him.

We would notice the characters interested in this salvation, —“all that obey him.” As we promised, we shall offer a few remarks on the nature of this salvation.

It is a deliverance, not from the hands of Pharaoh through the Red Sea,—but from the guilt, the power, and pollution of sin. It is spiritual in its nature, wise in its contrivance, beneficent and lasting in its effects: in a word, it is a salvation worthy the name of Christ, and He has the hand of a man under the wings of the four living things.

Hear, O sinners! Hear the merciful declarations and gracious invitations of Heaven! Look unto me, all ye ends of the earth, and be saved; for I am God and there is none else; a God ready to pardon. There is forgiveness with H im that may be feared. Call upon me in the day of trial, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me, is the tender and affectionate language of the Captain of your salvation. Send your petitions for pardon on the wings of faith to Heaven, that the sentence of condemnation may be removed; and when you receive the answer, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved. There is, therefore, no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus. Thankfully receive the report, and cordially obey the command.

Fly to the city of refuge, under the Divine testimony, on Mount Tabor,
This is the true sake of the satisfaction He received. The satisfaction is to reconcile the minds, and hush to silence the raging of sin in the hearts of the sons of men. 

Sin is a second nature to man, which has vitiated his taste, else he could not relish such a deadly poison; but self-righteousness is natural to man; it was implanted in his constitution in Eden. It was interwoven in his nature, and twisted round about him, like bark to a tree. Therefore to submit to the righteousness of Christ alone must be a matter of difficulty. The faith that depends on the righteousness and atonement of Christ is supernatural. The work of the Holy Spirit in the sinner's heart is a supernatural operation. The light that shines into these dark hearts of ours, is a supernatural light. That is the reason, that any of us have been enabled to pray, that we may be found in Him; clothed in His immaculate righteousness, and washed in His precious blood. This is the greatest honor that ever was conferred on the law; the greatest glory that God ever received from man, and the greatest blessing and favor that man ever received from God. 

This obedience proceeds from the principle of life. And you hath He quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners; but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. There is a living principle implanted in your hearts. It is not a dead, but a living active principle, working the works of God, and rendering obedience to all His commands. 

Again, we may observe that this obedience proceeds from the love of God by the love of God. Love is the first moving cause of the machinery of human redemption; and love is the mainspring of all our obedience to the commands of God. We love Him because He first loved us. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but because He first loved us, and sent His Son to be a propitiation for our sins. The love of God being shed abroad in our hearts, constrains us to love God and keep His commandments, and to be obedient unto Him in all things. 

Your obedience should be genuine, not hypocritical: it is the end or design that crowns every action. In all your religious duties, the glory of God, the advancement of His cause and interest in the world, and fellowship and communion with Him, should be your chief aim. Many sons were brought to glory, before the Captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings. They were saved through faith in that Saviour which was to come. Christ undertook the cause, became the Surety, and fully completed the glorious work of the redemption of all who obeyed under the law: and all that obey under the Gospel. Sinners of all descriptions, nations, and languages are saved by Him. 

O Captain of Salvation! Make Thy power and mercy known; Till clouds of willing converts come, And worship at thy throne.
THE GOVERNOR OF THIS AGE
II Cor. 4:1-6

Satan is not the god of the universe, but he is the god of this present evil age. Jesus Christ called Satan “the prince of this world” (John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11); Paul called him “the prince of the power of the air” (Eph. 2:2), and our Lord also called him “the prince of the devils” (Mark 3:22). I John 5:19 tells us the whole world lieth in the evil one.

Satan is such only in this present age, for in the age to come he will be bound (Rev. 20:1-2). This position is usurped, temporary, and in no sense absolute. In the strict sense, God is “the King of the ages” (I Tim. 1:17).

I. HIS PERSONALITY.
1. This god is no mere phantom, but a great and mighty person. (Eph. 2:2), and our Lord also called him “the prince of this world.”
2. Even Michael the archangel did not dare to use abusive terms when contending with him (Jude 9).
3. It was no ordinary wicked spirit that tempted Jesus Christ with all the kingdoms of the world (Matt. 4:8-9).
4. Christ considered the devil a real person, not some unseen evil influence (Luke 4:8).

II. HIS POSITION.
1. Satan is the god of this age. With the exception of God’s elect, he has deceived the whole world (Rev. 12:9).
2. He is not worshipped and obeyed as an ugly, mean-faced devil, but as an angel of light (I Cor. 11:14).
3. If Jehovah is not your God, Satan is. The men of the world pay him homage as their god (Deut. 32:19; I Cor. 10:20).
4. Satan originally wanted to be like God (Isa. 14:12-17). The unsaved world has made him their god.

III. HIS PURPOSE.
1. Satan’s purpose is to blind the minds of men to the gospel. He hates the preaching of the gospel (I Cor. 1:18).
2. The gospel is the good news about Jesus Christ. (1) It is the good news about how God saves sinners by the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ (I Cor. 15:1-4).
3. If Jehovah is not your God, Satan is. The men of the world pay him homage as their god (Deut. 32:19; I Cor. 10:20).
4. Satan originally wanted to be like God (Isa. 14:12-17). The unsaved world has made him their god.

II. HIS PRACTICE.
1. He blinds men to the fact that Jesus Christ is the image of God. The cults all deny the deity of Christ.
2. Satan causes men to see the honors and pleasures of earth to blind them to the gospel (I John 2:15-16).
3. By putting special luster on material things the great deceiver blinds men to eternal things.
4. He does not want men to see the glory of the gospel. He makes them see no beauty in Christ that they should desire Him.
5. Satan’s dominion is secured by keeping men in a world of darkness.
6. He directly affects the mind of man to delude and destroy.
7. He holds his black hand before their eyes so they may fall into Hell.

V. HIS PEOPLE.
1. Satan’s subjects are those who do not believe the gospel.
2. At present, Satan rules over the greater part of this world. He reigns in the hearts of men in fashion, in philosophy, in nations (Eph. 6:12), in commerce, and in every enterprise that rejects the gospel.

100 World-Known
Continued from page 47

Continued from page 47

Influenced by the thought of the Lord’s return.

Professor A. Rendle Short, M.D., B.S., B.S.C., F.R.C.S., Bristol; Author of “The Bible and Modern Research,” etc.

“It appears to me that one must accept one of two alternatives: Either the prophecies of Holy Scripture with reference to the Second Coming and earthly reign of our Lord Jesus Christ are to be taken at their face value as definite predictions of events that must surely come to pass, or they are mere pious hopes and nebulous promises of what appears to be one thing, but as a matter of fact is another. The facts of fulfilled prophecy in the past put the second theory out of court. That being settled, it further seems clear, if we put all the relevant passages together, that our Lord will come to find the world in confusion and rebellion against God, and that earthly reign will follow, not precede, His Advent.”

Dr. Alex, Smellie, Minister of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Carluke; Author of Devotional books.

“The Lord Himself shall descend:” It is personal Coming for which I wait. It is an actual revelation of my very Redeemer and King. He is near. He abides in me, and I abide in Him. But the more outward appearing is required to complete His victory and my beatitude: and the saints who have most of the inner Presence are precisely those who most long for the personal Return.

This is my blessed hope—Without a screen, at one burst be seen, the Presence wherein I have ever been.

The hope is certain. It may be realized tomorrow. It may be fulfilled with the next breath I draw. So many and so different are the days of my earthly life, and on any one of them my Lord may come. It is a thought to hallow them all.”

J. Denham Smith, well-known Bible Teacher, of Dublin and London, Author of many hymns and books.

“When He has taken away His Church, that being completed, He will then take possession of the earth, and Israel will be saved with all nations of the earth, and the Millennium will come as times of refreshing, not from the Gospel, as some suppose, but from His Presence (Acts 3:19). To one who has been living in the prospect of this hope, as in my case, for nearly half-a-century, it seems as if the Bible is full of the subject from beginning to end.”

George Soltau, well known Christian Worker and Author.

“The fourth watch, or morning watch, has been entered, and slowly it creeps along. He came not in the first, second, or third. He must come in the fourth watch! The Church is ‘tolling in rowing,’ only able now to hold her own against the strong head winds of infidelity, Higher Criticism, worldliness, and the waves of antagonism to the Will of God. But in the fourth watch will come Jesus, walking over the sea of trouble and discord, and immediately we shall be at the land whither we go—‘In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye’—so stick to the oars—Watch and pray till He come.”

Dr. Robert E. Speer, an earnest Christian Worker and Writer of Books.

“The Hope of Christ’s Second Coming is an integral part of our Christian faith. It is also a necessary
100 World-Known

Continued from page 48

part of our Christian faith. It is necessary from the point of view of our Christian faith itself. Christ must come again in order to complete and fulfill His first Coming. Christianity is an incomplete and imperfect and unfulfilled thing unless the goal of it is the Return of Jesus to complete that which he began. The return of Christ is essential to Christianity from the point of view of the inner needs of Christianity for its own completeness.”

James Sprunt, for long known as a Pastor and able Bible Teacher in the South of England.

“The Hope of God’s Word, the Hope of God’s people, the Hope of the Church, is the coming again of our Lord Jesus. ‘I will come again.’ Surrounded as we are by wide-spread unbelief, indifference, formalism, wickedness, disastrous times, departure from the faith, evil men waxing worse and worse, we should tell out the glad tidings concerning the speedy return of our Lord. Let us proclaim everywhere, and to every one, that the Lord Jesus is Coming—the resurrection is Coming—the judgment is Coming—the One Who will raise the sleeping saints is Coming—the One Who will transform and translate the Church is Coming. Amen! Come, Lord, Come!”

C. H. Spurgeon, The prince of Preachers, too well known to need description.

There is a high excitement in which the Christian ought to be waiting for the consolation of Israel. I am very pleased to see that the doctrine of the Second Advent is gaining ground everywhere. I find that the most spiritual men in every place are ‘looking for’ as well as ‘hastening to’ the Coming of our Lord and Saviour. I marvel that this belief is not universal, for it is so perfectly Scriptural.

Dr. J. W. Thirle, Editor of The Christian; Author of several books.

“While some points of doctrine are inferential and relative, others are categorical and essential to a clear statement of revealed Truth. Among these latter I place the Blessed Hope, or the Return. When Christ came in the old time, it was in order that, among other things, He might declare a purpose to come again. He was manifested in lowliness, and went to the Cross; in due time He will return in glory and wear the victor’s crown. Before leaving His disciples, He said, ‘I will come again;’ and this word was received with joy and has since been cherished by a waiting Church. From early days, however, there have been unbelievers, who have asked, ‘Where is the promise of His Coming?’ For such inquirers the hope of the Return has been a matter of indifference. Nevertheless, all the time men of faith have waited in expectation, and have prayed (and still pray) in fervent desire, ‘Come, Lord Jesus.’

In acts of worship we call to mind the sacrificial death, by means of an ordinance which points forward to the glorious advent—‘until He come.’ Thus the life of devotion becomes one of work and witness in regard to past and future—the first Advent and the second: with words of faith and heart-strings of love, we watch and wait, even with upward look, in hopeful confidence that ‘This same Jesus which was taken up into Heaven shall so come in like manner’—in other words, shall return. There is Divine grace in the assurance, ‘I will not leave you orphans, I will come unto you.’ Thus it becomes certain that the redemptive purpose of God waits for the manifestation of Christ in glory, in performance of the categorical promise made by the Lord Himself to “come again.” After the Cross, the Crown: ‘He must reign till He hath put all enemies under His feet.’

Dr. W. H. Griffith Thomas, Principal of Wycliffe College, Toronto, formerly Principal of Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, writes in “Principles of Theology.”

“The Coming is the climax and culmination of His work of redemption, when the Body of Christ, the Church, will be completed, and the Lord will usher in that Kingdom which will eventually result in God being ‘all in all’ (Eph. 1:22; Rom. 8:19-23; 1 Cor. 15:23-28). In the familiar words, ‘Lo, He comes, with clouds descending,’ we have what may be called the second part of His Coming, the Coming to judgment. But before that the N. T. seems to teach a Coming for His people, and a taking of them away before He returns to the earth for judgment. Of all the Scriptures which treat of this first part of the Coming there is none more explicit than 1 Thess. 4:13-18.

The Coming is to be the: (1) Taking to Himself of His redeemed. (2) Taking of reward of His servants. (3) Ushering in of peace and rule to this world now in rebellion. (4) Re-gathering of Israel. (5) Execution of judgment on His foes. (6) Swallowing up of death in victory. (7) Binding of Satan and ushering in of eternity. It is therefore usual to distinguish between Christ Coming for His people and with His people.”

Dr. R. A. Torrey, whose Missions along with Chas. A. Alexander were worldwide; Author of many books.

“When I got hold of the truth and the truth held of me of a personal, visible, glorious imminent return of our Lord Jesus Christ, it lifted me above the world and its ambitions. The Lord Jesus is coming back again! I had been very ambitious, but when that truth got hold of me I had but one ambition, and that was to please my Lord, who might come at any moment.”

Commr. Booth Tucker, one of the leaders in the Salvation Army.

“This event—the Return of the Lord Jesus—spoken of in the New Testament, I believe is very near at hand. It is the Coming of Christ, in all, for the raising of those who ‘are asleep in Jesus’ and the gathering together with them of the living saints to meet the Lord in the air: not a general resurrection, but a resurrection of the ready ones. Probably very soon after this the Coming of Christ when He feet shall stand on the mount of O’lives, and He shall come to reign gloriously for a thousand years upon the earth.”

Queen Victoria, Empress of India, and Britain’s most famous Queen.

“I am looking for the Coming of our Lord, and I do not think it improbably that I may not have to surrender my life before my Lord comes.”

John Wesley, founder of the Methodists, a worker worthy of more credit than ever he has received.

Dr. West, a loyal Methodist, proves by elaborate citation, from Wesley’s hymns and writings that he taught specifically: (1) The spread of the Gospel as a testimony to all nations; (2) An apostasy yet more to be developed, and already at work in Christendom; (3) The literal conversion and restoration of Israel to their own land; (4) That the full revelation of the Antichrist precedes the Advent; (5) That it is the duty of the Church to observe the signs of the times; (6) The literal, visible, personal, and glorious Second Coming of our Lord; (7) That the seventh beatitude, “the meek shall inherit the earth,” refers to the Millennial age; (8) That the curse shall be removed from the earth; (9) That there shall be a transfiguration of the planet into a new man, with new climates. (10) That the duty of the Church is always to pray and look for the Coming of the Lord.

Continued on page 52
Is the devil a real threat and danger to believers (1 Peter 5:8)?

--- Mississippi

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“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (I John 4:4).

The devil can possess a lost person and use him at his will (II Tim. 2:26). He is said to be “...the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience” (Eph. 2:2), but he cannot possess a child of God. God’s children are said to be sealed and given the earnest of the Spirit in their hearts (II Cor. 12:7). The spirit of darkness and the Spirit of light cannot dwell in the same person.

There are several ways that the devil is a threat to the believer.

First, he is said to be our adversary. In I Peter 5:8, Peter is speaking to the elect of God. He instructs them to be sober and vigilant because they have an adversary which is the devil. An adversary is one who is seeking to swallow up or destroy (Strong). The devil reveals this as the tempter (Matt. 4:3). Peter exhorts believers to be mindful and prepare themselves of the dangers of Satan (I Pet. 1:13; 4:7).

Satan here is referred to as our adversary. He is the saints avowed adversary. He is the saints avowed and implacable enemy. He accuses God to man and man to God. The word adversary here is a forensic term and signifies a court-adversary, one that opposes another in an action before God as law-breakers and should be punished according to the law. He acts as a prosecutor to bring about a sentence to hurt or punish for sins already atoned for (Rev. 12:10). “And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night” (Job 1:7).

Satan is described as a roaring lion denoting that he pursues with great violence and diligence to provoke believers to do evil, to discourage, to cause to doubt God, and destroy even the testimony of the Christian. Satan’s primary purpose is to destroy, as far as God will permit, God’s people (Job 2:1-6; Eph. 6:10-18).

Satan is real today and we would that all do well to look and be mindful and prepared for his devices (I Cor. 2:11).

GARNER SMITH

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Should the words of I Peter 5:8 pose no real threat or danger to believers; one might wonder why they were written. The great majority of Baptists, past and present, have understood this text as a warning of the Devil’s onslaught against believers.

It is a fact that true Baptists believe Satan does not have the power to pluck a believer from God’s hand, however, this conviction has not deterred them from warning of the influence of the Devil and the danger it presents.

Perhaps those who hold the Preterist view of the Second Coming of Christ, and the binding of the Devil, could have some difficulty in applying this text to present day believers. If I understand their teaching Christ supposedly returned the second time in 70 A.D. The binding of Satan, we are told, has already taken place, and it is not the Devil who harms us, only our fleshly nature. If Satan has no power to walk about, seeking whom he may devour, this would mean that this text is no longer useful. If the Devil is now bound to the extent that he cannot harm believers, would you like to have been present when he was loose?

Christ bruised Satan’s head at Calvary, and Satan has no power to keep the elect from salvation and eternal life, but be forewarned that you will have problems with the Devil until our redemption is fully manifest at the coming of Christ for His own.

The Book of Revelation has an abundance of teaching on the Second Coming of Christ. Early church writers and most modern scholars date the writing of the book during the reign of Domitian between 81-96 c.e. Wide support is given for the date of 95 c.e. If Christ returned the second time in 70 A.D. would John ask Him to come quickly some 25 years later?

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

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I believe the context of Romans 8:14-23 shows that the final proof or manifestation of the sons of God will be when Jesus comes and we receive our glorified bodies fashioned like unto His glorified body (Rom. 8:18-29; Phil. 3:21; I John 3:1-2).

GARNER SMITH

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THE BEREABAPTIST BANNER

Page 51

March 5, 2003

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

P O Box 39

The Berea Baptist Banner

What is “the manifestation of the sons of God” in Romans 8:19?—Mississippi

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GARNER SMITH

I believe “the manifestation of the sons of God” in Romans 8:19 speaks of the full revelation of God’s sons. It is true that we have manifestations of our sonship now, but not in the sense that we shall have when we receive the redemption of our bodies from the grave. All of God’s creation is waiting for our final redemption—the redemption of our bodies.

In the Sonship of Believers we note several things in Romans 8. We see God’s foreknowledge of His people. We see Him predestining them to be conformed to the image of His Son. We see their calling and justification, along with future glorification. We also read of their adoption, and of their being led by the Spirit of God. We have before us a record all the way from eternity past until our days on earth are over, and we arrive with the full manifestation of our sonship—glorified bodies raised in the image of the One we were chosen in—Christ (Eph. 1:4; I Cor. 15:49; Phil. 3:20-21; I John 3:2).

JIMMIE B. DAVIS

According to Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, manifestation in Romans 8:19 is the Greek word apokalupsis which signifies an uncovering, laying bare, revealing, revelation. The context of Romans 8:19 clearly reveals that the manifestation of the sons of God is an event associated with their glorification. Romans 8:18 declares: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” This points us to a day in the future when the sons of God shall be revealed in their glorified bodies conformed to the lovely image of Jesus Christ. This is the hope of the saints of God. Titus 2:13 exhorts: “Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” I John 3:2-3 reveals: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” There is coming a grand and glorious day when the sons of God shall literally have Christ revealed in them, a process in which we will be conformed to His image. This blessed event is commonly referred to as the Rapture. It will signal an end to the saint’s struggle with indwelling sin and mark the beginning of our glorified existence where iniquity will have no place.

How we ought to long for this blessed manifestation of the sons of God! Let us be found faithfully watching, earnestly praying, and patiently waiting for the coming of our glorious Lord!

TOM ROSS

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JIMMIE B. DAVIS

According to Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words, manifestation in Romans 8:19 is the Greek word apokalupsis which signifies an uncovering, laying bare, revealing, revelation. The context of Romans 8:19 clearly reveals that the manifestation of the sons of God is an event associated with their glorification. Romans 8:18 declares: “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” This points us to a day in the future when the sons of God shall be revealed in their glorified bodies conformed to the lovely image of Jesus Christ. This is the hope of the saints of God. Titus 2:13 exhorts: “Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ.” I John 3:2-3 reveals: “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.” There is coming a grand and glorious day when the sons of God shall literally have Christ revealed in them, a process in which we will be conformed to His image. This blessed event is commonly referred to as the Rapture. It will signal an end to the saint’s struggle with indwelling sin and mark the beginning of our glorified existence where iniquity will have no place. How we ought to long for this blessed manifestation of the sons of God! Let us be found faithfully watching, earnestly praying, and patiently waiting for the coming of our glorious Lord!

TOM ROSS

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit questions on any Bible topic

P O Box 39

The Berea Baptist Banner

What is “the manifestation of the sons of God” in Romans 8:19?—Mississippi

David O’Neal

2750 South 53rd West Ave

Tulsa, OK 74107

Pastor

Grace Missionary Baptist Church

2750 South 53rd West Ave

Tulsa, OK 74107

“I believe “the manifestation of the sons of God” in Romans 8:19 speaks of the full revelation of God’s sons. It is true that we have manifestations of our sonship now, but not in the sense that we shall have when we receive the redemption of our bodies from the grave. All of God’s creation is waiting for our final redemption—the redemption of our bodies.”

GARNER SMITH

I believe “the manifestation of the sons of God” in Romans 8:19 speaks of the full revelation of God’s sons. It is true that we have manifestations of our sonship now, but not in the sense that we shall have when we receive the redemption of our bodies from the grave. All of God’s creation is waiting for our final redemption—the redemption of our bodies.

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TOM ROSS
**100 World-Known**

*Continued from page 49*

John Wesley complimented Thomas Hartley on his book on the Millennium and Christ's personal reign on the earth. Wesley stated that this was also his belief.

William Nass says: "I have studied William Penn and the Quakers with great diligence and my prayer has been that the clergy and laity of the church might be reminded that John Wesley was a firm believer in the personal and Pre-Millennial Coming of the Lord Jesus."

Charles Wesley, brother of John Wesley, wrote numerous hymns. CHAS. WESLEY'S heart's desire was that Jesus might come and catch him up to be with the Lord. In one of his hymns he says: "Happy with those that first arise, might I not obtain." Plenty of his hymns show us his thoughts re Christ's Second Coming.

"Whatever ills the world befalls, A sign of Jesus near. Whatever ills the world befalls, A sign of Jesus near.

"The doctrine of the Lord's Coming is brought out in a remarkable way in the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. These Christians were those who 'waited for the Son from heaven.' Nothing ought to be before the soul but meeting with the Son of Man in the glory of kings and Lord of lords—He brings with Him all His heavenly saints."

Dr. Dinsdale T. Young, of Westminster Central hall, the most popular Methodist Minister in Britain. The Second Advent of our Lord and Saviour has been a dear and delightful doctrine to me through the greater part of my ministry. I regard it as the very soul of New Testament teaching, and of the Old Testament, too. I also regard it as an essential part of the Christian Gospel. I hold strongly that our Lord's return is to be personal, physical, visible. If I am charged with a 'spectacular' idea of His Coming, I shall not shrink from the charge.

"That His Coming will be Pre-Millennial, I heartily believe, and that it will be preceded by the 'rapture' of Christian believers, I also heartily believe. My hope of the world's salvation lies not in any gradual evangelization of the world, but in the personal return of our Lord and Saviour. I believe this age is waning fast, and that at any moment He may appear. This makes me an optimist. This thrills me with hope. This makes my ministry vivid, and intense, and glad."

The Second Coming of the Lord—100 World-Known Witnesses to this Great Event, pp. 748.

**Yoke for Young**

**Continued from page 41**

Strength as it is rendered 'mighty men' of the New Testament. The word rendered 'yoke' means childhood or the early part of life. Our text teaches that men are made strong men by bearing the yoke in their youth. This truth is consistent even with nature and certainly with becoming mighty in the Lord, as H. S. says, "I love them that be young and early shall find me." (Pro. 8:17)

I shall now endeavor to expand upon our text and speak to young men, hoping to press upon you and urge you to take the Lord's yoke and bear the burden and heat of the day while in your youth. Now, while I have much to say in this message to young men, I do not wish to exclude anyone. Some may be thinking, "I am not a young man so what has this sermon to do with me?" And some may be thinking, "Well, I am a young man," and you are not. But in response to the question, I suggest a wise saying that I have heard attributed to various sources. "When is the best time to plant an oak tree? Twenty years ago. When is the next best time to plant an oak tree? Twenty years after that."

The doctrine of the Lord's Coming is brought out in a remarkable way in the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. These Christians were those who 'waited for the Son from heaven.' Nothing ought to be before the soul but meeting with Him. I am called to be one who is looking out for Him, reminding myself continually that He is coming, that my soul may be constantly kept in a waiting position, moment by moment, crying, 'Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.' (Rev. 22:20.)

Dr. W. T. F. Wooster, Edinburgh. Well-known Preacher and Teacher; Editor of Gospel Messenger; Author of "Behold the Bridegroom," and several other books.

"There are two stages: His Coming as the Bridegroom into the air, and our rising to meet Him; then the Coming of the King, in the Day of His glory, when He returns to deal with the earth. We rise at the call of the Bridegroom, and meet the One we love in the air. A little while afterwards, when He appears on earth as Son of Man in the glory of kings and Lord of lords—He brings with Him all His heavenly saints."

"He looked for no Millennium but the Second Coming of Christ. Standing in a waiting position, moment by moment, looking out for Him, reminding anyone who might be listening, that difficulties will come. You will fall. You will fail. You will be tempted to cry out as thou wilt."

"The doctrine of the Lord's Coming is brought out in a remarkable way in the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. These Christians were those who 'waited for the Son from heaven.' Nothing ought to be before the soul but meeting with Him. I am called to be one who is looking out for Him, reminding myself continually that He is coming, that my soul may be constantly kept in a waiting position, moment by moment, crying, 'Amen. Even so, Come, Lord Jesus.' (Rev. 22:20.)"

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Trials help us in these things, so let us consider some of the trials in this yoke.

A) There is here a yoke of chastening or correction. "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Romans 8:29. The Psalmist says, "For I know the thoughts that I think," says God, "even the thoughts of the heart of men. " "I will not reject thee." Jeremiah 1:5. David says, "I have besought thee, O Lord; in thee do I trust." Psalms 31:16. So there is a yoke of chastening on all men, whether they desire it or not. God's service is not as a servant of men but as a servant of Christ, which is more excellent. "I press toward the mark," says the Apostle. "I along with all the saints, strive to be found in Him without spot or wrinkle." Philippians 3:14. We are instructed to "submit ourselves to every ordinance of man, for the Lord's sake." 1 Corinthians 9:22. So we have a yoke of chastening.

B) But in patience you will conclude as I have said, "Try me, and see." Job 17:9. It is better to try the patience of a man who is immature, young, than it is to try the patience of a seasoned, mature man. "Young men are peculiarly susceptible to temptation. They are gullible, easily swayed, fickle, and changeable. At this stage, they are not very practical and have not yet learned much of life's hard lessons. The yoke of temptation is a yoke of patience. It is good to bear the yoke of patience early and have it on you when you need it most."

C) "The yoke of temptation is a yoke of patience. It is good to bear the yoke of patience early and have it on you when you need it most."

Continued on page 54
Yoke for Young

Continued from page 53

piece of bread: and the adulteress will hunt for the precious life. Can a man take fire in his bosom, and his clothes not be burned?” (Pro. 6:25-27). You must be aware of the flattery and deception. Paul has this to say in an important verse: “Flee also youthful lusts. You cannot stay and fight. You must flee like righteous Joseph. Aiso, Paul says, “But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof.” (Rom. 13:14). You must flee if you encounter this temptation and even better, you must avoid any opportunity for the temptation.

“Remove thy way far from her, and come not nigh the door of her house:” (Pro. 5:8). It is good to bear this yoke early and not be the “young man void of understanding” that was “Passing through the streets in the fool’s corner... So she caught him.” Physical uncleanness and sexual immorality will cut off your usefulness and destroy your fitness for the Lord’s work. Escape this snare early.

I conclude with Jeremiah, “It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.” Do you realize that God has gifted you uniquely? The Bible says, “The glory of young men is their strength.” Young men have so many wonderful qualities such as, health, energy, strength, and passion. You also have many wonderful opportunities for service. These gifts are fleeting. If you live long upon the earth they will quickly leave you and fly to another. It is so important to “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth, while the evil days come not, nor the years draw nigh, when thou shalt say, I have no pleasure in them;” (Ecc. 12:1). “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). Listen to the grandparents when they have the young children with them. You will hear them say, “I wish I had their energy.” To have a young mind and a young body is a great blessing from the Lord. “Commit thy way unto the Lord. Do not get distracted with trinkets and entertainments and thereby waste your substance with riotous living. “I have written unto you, fathers, because ye have known him that is from the beginning. I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever.” (I John 2:14-17). Seek earnestly the Lord’s will for your life. Begin preparing for His service, and start doing now what your hands find to do for the glory of Christ. You can do nothing greater with your life than live it for the sole purpose of exalting Christ. Find your purpose in God’s will and give yourself wholly to it. “Let no man despise thee youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” (I Tim. 4:12).

At the young man’s age, I remember wishing I had now a brief appendix for the purpose of giving some very practical suggestions for beginning to bear the yoke. First and foremost, every young Christian man should own a good cross-reference King James Version study Bible. Make a habit of reading your Bible, studying your Bible, and meditating upon what you read and study. Do this every day. The guidance of the Holy Spirit is indispensable to understanding God’s word. Seek the help of the Spirit with your studying. Persistence and persistent prayer will aid your studying. Persistence and persistent prayer will aid your studying. Seek the help of the Spirit with your studying. Persistence and persistent prayer will aid your studying. Seek the help of the Spirit with your studying. Persistence and persistent prayer will aid your studying. Seek the help of the Spirit with your studying. Persistence and persistent prayer will aid your studying.

One of the practical suggestions for beginning to bear the yoke early and not be the “young man void of understanding” is to have a “Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance Of The Bible With Hebrew And Greek Dictionaries.” Here is a concordance of all the words in the Bible with a reference to the original language and corresponding definitions. Thirdly, the young Christian man should have a “Vine’s Expository Dictionary Of Old And New Testament Words.” This book gives definitions and meanings in differing contexts. Fourthly, the young Christian man should own a good sound book on Bible doctrine.

“A Systematic Study Of Bible Doctrine” by T. P. Simmons is the best in many respects. Bro. Simmons’ book is readable, understandable, and brief considering its vast scope. This book will prove a valuable tool to study. Fifthly, every young Christian man should have a copy, and maybe two, of Arthur Pink’s “The Sovereignty Of God.” But beware of the skeleton edition published by The Banner Of Truth Trust. They have revised Pink’s work by leaving out chapters that they disliked. Bro. Milburn Cockrell once told me, “They [The Banner Of Truth] are hardly qualified to edit A. W. Pink.” With him I heartily agree. Secure a copy published by Baker Books or one you find that is completely unabridged.

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any form you may feel we should read. Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

CHRISTIAN ACTIVIST WITHDRAWS FROM PRESIDENTIAL AIDS ADVISORY PANEL

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP)—A Christian activist chosen by the Bush administration for an AIDS advisory panel withdrew his name after he was harshly criticized by a Bush aide for characterizing the disease as a “gay plague.” Jerry Thacker, who had been selected to serve on the Presidential Advisory Commission on HIV and AIDS, withdrew after White House Press Secretary Ari Fleischer condemned Thacker’s views. “The views that he holds are far, far removed from what the president believes,” Fleischer said. “The president has a total opposite view.”

The president’s view is that people with AIDS need to be treated with care, compassion.

In a letter to Health and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson, Thacker, a Pennsylvania businessman, said his statements had been misconstrued and that he was no longer willing to serve on the board. “I feel I must withdraw my name from consideration to serve at this time due to my and my family’s personal concern about my ability to be effective with the council given the current controversy,” Thacker wrote.

Thacker himself has AIDS, having contracted it in 1986 after his wife was infected during a blood transfusion she received during childbirth. When their daughter was born, she also tested HIV-positive.
archaeology and could fortify Israel's claim to a sacred site in Jerusalem.

The tablet is described as being approximately 12 to 15 inches in length and approximately 4 inches wide, and is covered with two rows of characters written in an ancient language. The characters are not yet fully deciphered, but it is believed that they are inscribed in ancient Phoenician script that closely resemble passages in the Bible.

W. Lane, a biblical scholar, has suggested that the tablet could substantiate, suggests that Jews did occupy the location before Muslims.

EVIDENCE POINTS TO MORE

Witnesses allege that the Vietnamese government has resorted to using chemical gas to break up religious services. The Voice of the Martyrs (VOM) reports that two underground church services were raided in late December 2002 by Vietnamese police who sprayed worshippers with gas. Victims of the attacks reported that those sprayed started seizing and shaking uncontrollably.

A new wrinkle in Vietnam's attack on Hmong Christians, said VOM spokesman Todd Nettleton, "We have long received reports of arrests, beatings, and even Christians having boiling water poured down their throats, but these chemical attacks show that the Vietnamese authorities have sunk to a new low."

The first chemical attack took place during a Hmong worship service in Kheekher village, close to Mong Lai in Lai Chau province the morning of Dec. 28. Over 20 people in the service were immediately affected. However, when they tried to reach a hospital for medical attention, police sent them back to their village without allowing them to see doctors. A number of worshippers suffered symptoms after police had left the service.

The second attack happened the following day at a Hmong worship service in the Dien Bien Dong district, in northern Vietnam.

In a related story, the Central Committee of Vietnam's Communist Party released in the middle of January a new resolution on religion. According to Compass Direct, the Central Committee resolution calls for the establishment of cells within approved religious organizations staffed by communist party members. Vietnamese Christians fear that communist infiltration of their organizations will only restrict their religious freedom further.

Meanwhile in China, a top-secret document recently obtained by VOM allegedly proves that the Chinese government has an ongoing, systematic campaign to expose and destroy registered Protestant churches in Hebei Province.

The directive, the first one of its kind ever seen by the public, is a work plan from the Public Security Bureau (PSB) of Baoding to sub-bureaus in all cities, counties, and districts of Hebei Province. It instructs the bureaus to terminate "illegal Protestant activities."

The document describes the work plan as an effort to "embrace and create a sound and secure social environment in a concerted citywide action of the Communist Party Committee and the government in advance of the Communist Party's 16th National Party Congress," which was held in November 2002. The plan was to crack down against illegal Protestant activities from August through October 2002.

The directive, dated Aug. 20, 2002, details the establishment of a government task force created to send supervisors to Public Security Bureaus in all counties, cities and districts to assure the implementation of compulsory measures against the activities. The bureau was directed to "set up full files; recognize influential people and illegal meeting places." They received further instructions to clearly identify legal and illegal church activities in order to take action against those "which are organized by freelance missionaries, which are overseas infiltration; and prepare to terminate them."

One section of the work plan details the establishment of a government task force created to send supervisors to Public Security Bureaus in all counties, cities and districts to assure the implementation of compulsory measures against the activities. The bureau was directed to "set up full files; recognize influential people and illegal meeting places." They received further instructions to clearly identify legal and illegal church activities in order to take action against those "which are organized by freelance missionaries, which are overseas infiltration; and prepare to terminate them."

The top-secret document also directs all grassroots police stations to strengthen their daily management of Christian affairs to assure targeted unregistered churches would be prevented from spreading and stopping a comeback. It also informs the bureaus that awards would be granted to them "on the basis of performance and achievement."

"We urge Christians everywhere to pray for our persecuted brothers and sisters in China who are suffering extreme measures against them by their government," said Lane. "We also ask Americans to contact their representatives in Congress and the Chinese government to lodge formal complaints against this systematic targeting of believers."

SUPREME COURT JUSTICE OFFERS VIGOROUS

DEFENSE OF FREEDOM OF RELIGIOUS

EXPRESSION

FREDERICKSBURG, Va. (EP) — Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia is speaking out on church-state issues. Scalia, one of the most conservative of the nine chief federal justices, told a small gathering in Fredericksburg, Va. that the First Amendment — which among other things guarantees freedom of religion — was not intended to "exclude God from the public forums and from political life."

Scalia was speaking to about 150 people gathered to commemorate a Virginia law that helped to usher in the First Amendment. In 1777, founding fathers Thomas Jefferson and George Mason gathered with other colonialists in a Fredericksburg public house to draft what was to be known as the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom. The law became the blueprint for the constitutional guarantee of the right to religious freedom that anchors the Constitution's Bill of Rights.

At the ceremony, Scalia criticized court decisions in recent years that have made it illegal to display expressions of religious faith in many public venues. He noted last summer's California federal court decision that the phrase "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance was a violation of the separation of church and state.

During his ten-minute speech, Scalia defended traditional public religious expressions like the phrase "In God We Trust" that appears on U.S. currency, as well as prayers at high school sporting events and graduation ceremonies. He also defended the 200-plus year tradition of chaplains in the military and Congress, actions which "reflect the true tradition of religious freedom in America — a tradition of neutrality among religious faiths."

Noted Scalia, "Government will not favor Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Jews. But the tradition was never that the government had to be neutral between religiousness and non-religiousness."

Courts often interpret the Constitution in a manner Scalia termed "elastic," resulting in such decisions as those forbidding appeals to God in public venues. Said Scalia, "It is part of the Constitution known as the 'living Constitution.' It is a Constitution that morphs... We however think it ought to mean it means, and that new meaning will be imposed on our citizens coast to coast."

PAMPHLET URGES PAKISTANI MUSLIMS TO KILL WESTERNERS AND CATHOLICS

LAHORE, Pakistan (EP) — An inflammatory pamphlet being distributed

Continued on page 56
such threats. The rights group also encouraged Christians, as well as foreign citizens in associated with the West because of their Afghanistan. Pakistani clerics have also the fundamentalist Taliban regime in U.S.-led forces attacked and brought down rise in Islamic militancy in Pakistan since 2001. Thalib also instructed not to work with Christians in the city, air, or desert. "Westerners, whether they are army men or not, and kill them, whether they are in the city, air, sea, or desert. "M Muslims are also instructed not to work with Christians or make a contract with them because they are the enemies of Islam.

The majority of the inflammatory pamphlets were distributed in the two provinces controlled by the M MMA, an Islamic party that supports the imposition of sharia law and has been known to shelter Talib and Al-Qaeda members. The M MMA also blamed the deaths of three Christian young women on the Christian community after an attack on a Christian young women on the Christian community. The ICC reports there has been a significant rise in Islamic militancy in Pakistan by Islamic fundamentalists.

The ICC called for the release of an Islamic cleric who was arrested for inciting the attack near Daska in Punjab Province. ICC reports there has been a significant rise in Islamic militancy in Pakistan since U.S.-led forces attacked and brought down the fundamentalist Talib regime in Afghanistan. Pakistani clerics have also increasingly called for revenge against the West. Pakistani Christians have felt the brunt of much of this anger, as they are associated with the West because of their religious affiliation.

International Christian Concern called upon the Pakistani and U.S. governments to do all that they can to protect Pakistani Christians, as well as foreign citizens in Pakistan. The rights group also encouraged Christians to contact the Pakistani embassy in the U.S. to voice their opposition to such threats.

Continued from page 55

March 5, 2003

THE BEREAN BAPTIST BANNER

THE BIBLE & NEWSPAPER

in Pakistan by Islamic fundamentalists calls on Muslims to kill Westerners and Christians wherever they may be found. The pamphlet, which is printed in Urdu and Aрабic, was distributed on Jan. 9 in Bulochistan and the north West Frontier Province, as well as in some other major Pakistani cities. Pictured on the pamphlet is a monogram of M ecca surrounded by swords. Government authorities have reportedly collected a number of the pamphlets and have started an investigation.

According to International Christian Concern (ICC), a Washington, D.C.-based Christian rights group, the main purpose of the pamphlets is to encourage armed jihad among Pakistani Muslims. The pamphlet states that "non-believers have made the lives of Muslims miserable, leaving them with no option except jihad." The piece also expresses extreme anti-Western sentiment, saying, "It is the supreme duty of the Muslims to trace out Westerners, whether they are army men or not, and kill them, whether they are in the city, air, sea, or desert." Muslims are also instructed not to work with Christians or make a contract with them because they are the enemies of Islam.

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Continued on page 57
Weekly Devotionals

By Jeff Short

(In transition)

Genesis 13:12

Aram dwelled in the land of Canaan, and Lot dwelled in the cities of the plain, and pitched his tent toward Sodom (Gen. 13:12).

Lot is a peculiar figure in scripture. The Bible is full of godly men with wonderful testimonies of faith. These men are not perfect, but they attained to a high degree of grace and holiness. We think of men like Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Samuel, Daniel, The Baptist, and Paul, to name only a few. Lot does not seem to fit in very well with these names. If it were not for God’s testimony that Lot was “just” and “righteous,” we could hardly believe he was even saved.

However, Lot fits in very well with the many of Christians today. Lot’s was not a victorious life. He did not die a triumphant death. I do not believe he had the rich abundant entrance into Heaven that Peter wrote about, “Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall: For so an entrance shall be ministered unto you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” (II Peter 1:10-11).

What happened to Lot? Our text marks an epoch in the life of Lot. From this point there is nothing good reported about Lot, except that he was scarcely saved. In the time of our text, Lot made a choice. This choice set the tone for the rest of his and his family’s life. This choice contributed to such a lowly state of grace that God’s Word tells us that when God was about to destroy the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, “he lingered” (Gen. 19:16). Let us think upon the life and choice of Lot. Let us treat this account as a solemn warning and trustworthy guide for us to avoid this danger.

Lot made a choice about where he and his family were going to live. We all have to make this decision and sometimes we will have to choose our place of residence several different times. Lot had been with his righteous uncle prior to this, but both of them had accumulated a great estate so that it was not possible for them to abide together. Araham gave Lot the first choice as he wanted to live and told him that he would go the other way. Lot must make a decision that will have long-term implications on his life and the life of his family.

We cannot be certain about how much that Lot considered the spiritual implications, but we see from the account that he certainly considered the physical and temporal implications. “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. Then Lot chose all the plain of Jordan; and Lot journeyed east: and they separated themselves the one from the other.” (Gen. 13:10-11).

Lot recognized that the plain of Jordan was a place where he could thrive. His flocks and herds would flourish in such a fertile environment and, after all, this was his livelihood, this was how he provided for his family, so it was very important that he choose a profitable environment for his business. Moreover, Lot “pitched his tent toward Sodom” despite the fact that “the men of Sodom were wicked and sinners before the LORD exceedingly.” (Gen. 13:13).

I am amazed that many Christians follow Lot’s course repeatedly today. People choose where they are going to live based on the economy of the place, laws that they like or dislike, taxes, the government school systems in the area, business associations, sports programs for the youth, property values, land, and other such factors. They give little or no consideration about whether there is a sound church in the location. They are more concerned about the raise or promotion that they will receive. They give little consideration to the wickedness of the place. They will expose themselves, and their families to all manner of ungodliness, rub elbows with the wicked and separate themselves from righteous company, all in order to earn more money.

I am even more amazed at the rationalizations and justifications made. People say, “We don’t approve of the wickedness in our area. In fact, we are a witness and a testimony in this place. We have family devotions, we pray, and we listen to preaching tapes. We are just as good as anybody else.” This is true, but do not be deceived. Lot did not approve of the wickedness of Sodom. He “vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds!” (I Peter 2:8). The unholy city had more effect on Lot than he ever had on them. Our text tells us that he “pitched his tent toward Sodom” and the next time we find him, in the nineteenth chapter, he is dwelling in a house in the city. He was such a good witness and testimony that there was not found even one righteous person outside of his house. He had lost all good influence over his family and he was so weak spiritually that “he lingered” in the city, not able to go, and had to be carried out by the angels.

Do not trade your birthright for a mess of worldly pottage. Do not let the physical things dictate the spiritual. Do not think that you can make a constant association with the wicked not be affected by them. Do not throw your wife and children into the company of the wicked. God says, “Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,” (II Cor. 6:17). Move to a place where there is a sound and godly church, even if you have to suffer and sacrifice. Be like Moses, “Choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompense of the reward.” (Heb. 11:25-26).

J. C. Ryle called Lot a beacon for Christians of all ages. Let us heed the lesson in Lot’s life. May we sacrifice the physical in order to serve God and avoid the danger of the attraction of the world.

The Bible & Newspaper

Continued from page 56

News Service (CNS), “I want there to be something in place so if somebody is brave and has strong leadership skills… and knows that if they don’t report there is going to be a predator loose in their church, they have something to protect them legally.” But conservative religious and policy groups see the measure in a different light. CNS quoted Louis Giovino, communications director for the Catholic League, as calling the bill “an obvious incursion into separation of church and state.”

DENVER (EP)—Crusading recently in Denver for President Bush’s plan to federally fund faith-based social services concerns, Attorney General Robert Ashcroft “may have sounded more like a preacher than a politician” reported the Associated Press. Ashcroft, who is the son and grandson of Assemblies of God ministers, told a conference of religious groups that over the last several decades “the government has discriminated against people of faith who are striving to do good for others. Out of fear, ignorance, and occasional bigotry, faith-based groups have been prohibited from competing for federal funding on a level playing field with secular groups.” According to the Denver Post, Ashcroft’s comments were met with shouts of “right-ons” and “amens.” A federal judge dismissed a lawsuit against a Kentucky county that posted the Ten Commandments in its courthouse. U. S. District Judge Karl Forester dismissed the suit, brought by the American Civil Liberties Union, against officials of Mercer County. Foster ruled that the display had a legitimate secular purpose of educating those who see it about the influence of historical documents on American law. The display entitled “Foundations of American Law and Government,” also includes the Declaration of Independence, the Bill of Rights, and other significant historical documents. ACLU officials vowed to appeal the ruling, and discrepancies among federal court rulings on similar cases may lead to the U.S. Supreme Court’s eventual involvement in the issue.

MINNEAPOLIS (EP)—A survey that tests views on religion has found that the public’s perception of organized religion is at an all-time low. The most recent reading of the Gallup Index of Leading Religious Indicators is the most negative since the index began in 1940. To compile the index, researchers survey American adults throughout the year. Last year only 52 percent of Americans gavem clergy either very high or high marks on their ethical standards, compared to 64 percent the previous year. Researcher said that low reading is due in part to the Catholic Church’s ongoing sex scandal. The index also showed a sharp decline in the confidence Americans have in organized religion. While in 2001 60 percent of Americans said they had a “great deal” or “quite a lot” of confidence in organized religion, in 2002, that number had declined to only 45 percent.

KANSAS CITY (EP)—A Pentecostal pastor and his wife were charged with murder in the Dec. 29 death of their adoptive son, nine-year-old Brian Edgar. Neil Edgar, 47, is pastor of God’s Creation Outreach Ministry, a store-front church in Kansas City affiliated with the Church of God in Christ (COGIC). He was charged in the murder, along with his wife, Christy Edgar, 46. The boy died of asphyxiation after he was bound and gagged, and his mouth taped shut. According to District Attorney Nick Tomasic, Brian and his siblings were frequent victims of abuse, which included binding and gagging. Tomasic charged that strict physical discipline is “a teaching of the church.” But Clifford Jackson, a...
said the League. “This was a very successful anniversary of the passing of the Abortion free abortions on the 30th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, known among pro-life activists for its widespread offence and being unduly distorting to recipients,” but the pro-life group said abortion’s gruesome nature was “likely to cause serious or emotional harm.”

The proposed version of the bill contains language that would remove longstanding prohibitions against taxpayer-funded abortions. The bill would also allocate money to the United Nations Population Fund, a group that supports coerced abortion in China and Palestine.

Michael Schwartz, vice president of government relations with Concerned Women for America, explained why the president is in this position. The U.S. Senate is now under Republican control but still has a pro-abortion majority.

Schwartz also placed the blame for the pro-abortion elements of the bill on Sen. Ted Stevens, R-Alaska, the chairman of the Senate Appropriations Committee. "He thinks he can get away with things under President Bush that he didn’t get away with under President Clinton," he said. Douglas Johnson of the National Right to Life Committee said this is a significant stand by Bush since the same bill funds nearly every government agency.

"That’s extremely significant, because sometimes there would be a tendency to split the difference or to compromise in conference committee; and then we would actually lose ground on some of these important pro-life policies," said Johnson. He expects the offensive language to be removed before the bill hits Bush’s desk.

Schwartz added that he finds it positive that Bush thinks life issues are worthy of a veto threat. It shows the president is committed to the pro-life community.

ATTACKED EVANGELIST JOSEPH COOPER DEPORTED FROM INDIA, TENSIONS MOUNT

KERA LA, India (EP)—Following an attack on American missionary Joseph Cooper and his subsequent deportation, Christian leaders fear more deportations will follow.

Cooper sustained major injuries when a gang belonging to a militant Hindu group attacked him and seven other Christians with knives, sticks, swords and crowbars on Jan. 13. The Christians were part of a group visiting the region.

India’s Foreigners Act of 1956 forbids tourists from speaking at religious meetings, and Cooper was in the country on a tourist visa to share his testimony.

As many as 50 missionaries could be deported in the near future due to increased attention towards India’s visa regulations.

The World Hindu Council has compiled a list of names of missionaries they want the Indian government to remove from the country.

Several associations in India have released statements asking evangelists to exercise sensitivity and caution when dealing with local religious sentiments. Cooper’s attack has also created challenges for missionaries in other parts of India.

Two Kerala pastors were attacked in 1999 by Hindu activists, and violence against Christians in India has been growing ever since. “This attack proves that the Christian church has enemies growing in tribe. I’m sure the church will outlive all these threats,” said Cooper.

NATIONAL NEWS SHORTS

WICHITA, Kan. (EP)—A Wichita church in the nation’s largest African-American denomination has ordained four women, the first time in the denomination’s history. Beatrice Cunningham, 75, is one of four women ordained in recent months by Wichita’s Tabernacle Baptist Church, a part of the 120-year-old National Baptist USA denomination.

It’s not the first time in the denomination’s history that women have been ordained for general ministry, though it is believed to be the first time that women were ordained specifically to take senior pastor roles. Several National Baptist USA churches have ordained women for non-pastoral ministry. The convention has no policy about it and doesn’t keep track of how many female ministers it has. It does have a national women’s component, which guides some female pastors in charge of churches. Their numbers, however, are generally thought to be small and their involvement in convention business on state and national levels limited.

RALEIGH, N.C. (EP)—In a move that is being watched by home schooling leaders nationally, the state of North Carolina will more closely monitor home schools for abuse and neglect. New procedures were adopted Jan. 27 as part of the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force’s 2003 agenda. The Task Force will send a letter to the Department of Social Services (DSS) in North Carolina’s 100 counties to request that DSS record the type of school attended by a child who is being investigated for abuse or neglect. The primary intent of tracking this information is to determine “if home schooled children are more or less likely to be investigated than the general school population.” The Task Force will also request that when conducting an investigation of a home in which children are being home schooled, that DSS ensures that state home school requirement
certificates are obtained and report any non-compliance to the Division of Non-Public Education.

It is important to note that this case does not involve a life-and-death instance.
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**Mother Churches and Daughter Churches**

**By Henry A. Grissamer**

**Crucifixion Day**

**By A. W. Pink**

**Churches of God**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS**

* The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Northport, Ala. will be having special services May 16th thru 18th. Service times are Friday night at 7:00 p.m., Saturday at 10:00 a.m. (with lunch following) and at 6:00 p.m., Sunday at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Speakers are Bro. Roy Mitchell and Bro. Raymond Spann. All are invited to attend. For more information contact Bro. Todd Bryant at 205-333-8449 or email toddbryant@juno.com.

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Militant Islam is Still Enemy No. One

Previous columns of mine have been sounding the alarm about the ongoing threats of militant Islam against America—with documentation, including the M uslim holy book, the Koran. But, not all these columns saw the light of day.

Some editors, I suspect, just don’t like titles like “Sweet Talk about ‘Good Muslims’ is Bad” or “Watch out for Muslims,” why don’t I just repair to spending hours in the library and then, absolutely. I’m often reminded that the Christian Crusades were just as bad or worse, and besides, he said he had many other groups to defend against.

Undaunted, but still the “busybody,” I approached the editor of the Alumni Bulletin, thinking this background would be helpful. She seemed appalled at my presumption, saying, in effect, “Lots of Coast Guard people are Muslims, you know.”

All true! All True! But really! What does the Crusades’ bloodletting of a thousand years ago have to do with defending our country from murderous terrorists today? And, what does defending against “other groups” have to do with protecting our ports from militant Muslims today? And truly, the fact that some Coast Guard, Navy and Army people are Muslims is beside the point, absolutely.

REPAIR TO ROCKING CHAIR?

So, instead of busying myself with the Islam faith of the Muslims, spending hours in the library and then, writing bad things about “good Muslims,” why don’t I just repair to my rocking chair and let the world go by—at this late date in my career?

After all, silence could generate more friends, lower blood pressure and certainly produce fewer critics—except that one truism is so haunting: “Silence is the temptation of the informed man who finds himself in the minority.”

Our country and our people are far too precious to be silent about—in war or peace. Moreover, our security and our conscience are bound up with the rest of the world today and every citizen of every country is either with us or against us in fighting the War on Terror.

President Bush continues to emphasize that point. When his diplomacy is rejected by our “allies,” he moves ahead in the best interests of America, just as he does in military operations against terrorists.

DANIEL PIPES SAYS

Veteran Middle East expert Daniel Pipes, now professor at the U.S. Naval War College, warned about the militant Muslims long before Sept. 11 and warns that the threat continues: “If we don’t make security our priority, I predict more hits by militant Islam on a much larger scale than 9/11. I wish we would get serious without the spur of more catastrophes.”

Understanding the Islam faith and its goals is essential for defense against its boast to “conquer America.” Mr. Pipes says, “Militant Islam is a rabid utopian ideology along the lines of fascism and Marxism—seeking—totalitarian means to overthrow governments and to dominate the world, much like fascism and communism.”

For example, Yale University Muslims chaplain Zaid Shaker boldly calls the American system “against the orders of Allah.” This is a political threat, not taken seriously by our government.

AYATOLLAH KHOMEINI AGAIN

Pipes reminds us that Iran’s Ayatollah Khomeini was calling for “Death to America” in 1979—and since then, some 600 Americans have been murdered by militant M uslims.

And still, the U.S. government fails to “proclaim militant Islam our strategic enemy,” but goes along with blandishments about “good M uslims” and “true Islam” being a religion of peace. We should look at the record.

In the Koran, Allah tells Mohammad, “Fight those who do not believe in Allah...those who do not accept the religion of Islam” (Surah 9:29).

Prof. Pipes makes the point that “profiling” should be a priority for airline security—focusing on names, behavior and passenger appearances, instead of the current practice of random searches that often insult 80-year old grandparents. Quizzed screeners should be hired; their judgments about suspicious characters accepted and a little personal inconvenience cheerfully endured for security’s sake.

CRUSADES NOT FORGOTTEN

The holy war between Christianity and Islam, the Crusades, has not been forgotten by the fundamental M uslims of the M iddle East. In many respects, militant Muslims are still fighting that war, while Westerners only faintly remember it.

The “moderate Muslims,” living in the West, according to reports, want a “moderate Islam” without the violence and bloodshed that still seems like a “pay-back” for the humiliation of the Crusades.

The fundamental Islamic faith under the Koran, however, includes violence and bloodshed. Moreover, the prophet Mohammad was more successful in Medina with violence than he was in Mecca with peace and persuasion in winning converts to Islam. Even today, in countries with a M uslim majority, the government persecutes Christians—often with the blessings of the Islamic clergy. These are facts.

Let us also note that our “allies” in the War on Terror, including Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Egypt and Pakistan, routinely persecute Christians on nothing more than their profession of faith. This state-sanctioned inhumanity is legal under the constitutions and laws of these Muslim nations. These also are facts and our media haven’t told us much about that, as they go after more sensational stories and second-guessing the President.

Meanwhile, militant Muslims continue to be a deadly threat to America’s security and sovereignty. Our Commander-in-Chief is dedicated and deserves loyal backing from all sides, including “allies,” media and, as always, the troops. He proclaimed Iraq, Iran and Syria as the “axis of evil.” He should proclaim militant Muslims as America’s strategic enemy number one in order to clarify, simplify and emphasize. (Captain Evans’s columns are distributed by the Americanism Educational League of Buena Park, California.)