

The Berea Baptist Banner

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

Did Jesus Go To Hell?

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

The teaching that Jesus suffered in Hell is not in Scripture. This viewpoint assumes much where the Bible is silent and eventually leads to disastrous consequences if you carry it out to its natural conclusions. There are three reasons why Jesus did not suffer in Hell. The first, which is the most easily refuted, is that the Bible tells us where Jesus was during the crucifixion and after His death. The second reason why



Jesus did not go to Hell is what the Scriptures reveal to us about the nature of Christ. Either Hell will need to be redefined from an actual place to a state of mind or being, or the nature of Christ must be redefined, or we must say that Christ left the cross during his bodily crucifixion. Lastly, the Scriptures tell us where the work of redemption took

◊ (Continued on page 5)

For Whom the Bell Tolls

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

"No man is an island, entire of itself..." These are the words Ernest Hemmingway made famous in his novel *"For Whom the Bell Tolls"* and this line was actually a quote from John Donne's [pronounced 'done'], an English poet and later cleric in the Church of England, from his meditations on health, pain and sickness.

The tolling bell is a reference to the old funeral tolls. It was a



solemn ringing of one singular bell with significant rests between strikes. It was the "tolling" (from the English) or "telling" of death

that accompanied the funeral march.

Hemmingway's book is about a soldier who realizes the common journey (through life

◊ (Continued on page 2)

The Blessed and the Bless'ed

By Glenn Gilbreath
of Decatur, Alabama

Editor's Acknowledgment: The following article is not doctrinal but rather the thoughts and meditations of the writer. We are presenting this article as we feel it is something worthy of your consideration.

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath



blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: According as he hath chosen us in him before the

foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved" (Eph. 1:1-6).

◊ (Continued on page 16)

What is Our Message?

By Timothy J. Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

"And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his



name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great

◊ (Continued on page 8)



May 5, 2022 Volume XXXXII, Number 6

Whole Number 503

Editor: Eld. Joseph Sidders

Staff: Sheron Cockrell and Marsha Kiser

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

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

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

CHURCH PHONE: 1-662-282-7794.

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

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

COPYING PRIVILEGES: Unless otherwise stated any article published in this paper may be copied by other publications, provided they give proper credit line stating that such was copied from this publication, and the date of publication; provided that such materials are not published for profit. If we are not on an exchange list with the publication

copying, it is requested that a copy of the issue containing the article be sent to our address. All copyrighted materials may not be copied without written consent.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - U.S.

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

SUBSCRIPTION RATES - FOREIGN One Year \$45

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

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

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

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

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

The purpose of the Berea Baptist Banner is as follows:

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

Tune in to the Berea Baptist Broadcast

STATION	TIME	DIAL	WATTS	
WCNA, Myrtle, MS.....	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	95.9	3,000	FM
WCTT, Corbin, KY	Sunday 9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	680	5,000	AM
WFTA, Tupelo, MS.....	Sunday 9:30 - 10:00 a.m.	101.9	3,000	FM
KARL, Blaine, WA	Saturday 10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	550	5,000	AM

Berea Baptist Banner
PO Box 39
Mantachie, Mississippi
38855

(662) 282 - 7794

www.bereabaptistchurch.org

request@bereabaptistchurch.org
bbchurch@nexband.com

Planning a move?

Please let us know your new address. The post office charges us \$.61 for each returned wrong address.

CAN'T REMEMBER?



Can't remember if you renewed? Look at your mailing label on the front page of this month's paper. If you see above your name "Expires 5/2022" then this will be your last issue. So renew now, otherwise you will not be reading the next issue of the *Banner*.

For Whom the Bell

(Continued from page 1) ♦

and toward death) of humankind as he wrestles with duty and love. In the end, suffering mortal wounds, he chooses life for his love and sacrifices himself defending it. Makes for a pretty great picture of our Savior does it not? **"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement"** (Rom. 5:6-11).

Let us first consider those for whom the bell tolls with fear and trembling. There will be a tolling bell for each of us. For some, this sober sound will bring about a shrill shiver of terror.

It is finished. There will be no more time for thrilling the flesh, for being lost, this soul will only know torment for all eternity. It is for that flesh thrilling that you now must pay. **"..Bind him hand and foot, and take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth"** (Matt. 22:13).

There is no hope. "No, no... please give me more time!" they shall plead but the wounds are unto death, there is no returning now. **"And in hell he lift up his**

eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence" (Luke 16:23-26). **"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity"** (Matt. 7:22-23).

Now let us consider those for whom the bell tolls with rejoicing and relief.

"It is finished." **"After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar: and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost"** (John 19:28-30). **"..God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it"** said Daniel unto King Belshazzar (Dan. 5:26).

For the workers of iniquity, the tolling bell sounds that "it is finished," this life in which they

♦ (Continued on page 4)

Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas

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



You Are Inexcusable

"Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things" (Rom. 2:1).

One day, every single person will stand before Jesus Christ, the righteous Judge. It does not matter who you are in this earthly life, lost, saved, a murderer, Christian, or even a Minister or a Pastor, our judgment is an absolute, no one will escape judgment. People, Christians, churches, and Pastors ignore this thought but be assured your day of judgment is coming. **"And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment"** (Heb. 9:27). It is because of man's sins that we will all die because God promised it to mankind in the fall. Adam's sin caused us to be born sinners and it caused death, both spiritual and physical. God Himself not only determined our days on this earth, **"Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass"** (Job 14:5). God will also determine our judgment. This is a fact, we will all die, and we will all stand before the Great Righteous Judge, Jesus Christ. While it is true our judgments will be at different times and for different things, judgment will be His to do. **"And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify**

that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead" (Acts 10:42). We are all responsible to Him in this life, the lost for their sins and the saved for their biblical faithfulness. The saved will have their works as a believer judged, and the lost will be condemned for their sin starting with Adam. Lost people cannot live a good enough life to redeem themselves, because sin has eternally condemned them. People try to figure out how to redeem themselves by their works but find out at the Great White throne they have failed. **"Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works"** (Matt. 7:22)? And in the very next scripture Jesus answers them for their failure. **"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."** Jesus will condemn them to eternal Hell, not because their works were bad, but **"...I never knew you..."**. Let us look at the actual judgment, **"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every**

man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire" (Rev. 20:12-15). We saw in Matthew what is said in judgment of the lost, Jesus tells them He never knew them, here in Revelation we see why, He never knew them because their names are not in the book of life. These people are without excuses, their condemnation is real, they are all going to Hell's eternal flames, why? **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God"** (John 3:18). Not because he did not have enough good works, but because he believed not the testimony of God and called God a liar. **"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son. And this is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life"** (I John 5:10-12). If you have not believed on Jesus Christ as your Saviour, you are "already condemned"! When Jesus opens the single book, that was their condemned judgment, they were not in the book that was written before the foundation of the world. This book has the names of every soul that was given to Jesus before the foundation of the world was spoken into existence. **"Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me:**

for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world" (John 17:24), and **"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"** (Eph. 1:4). **"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you, Who by him do believe in God, that raised him up from the dead, and gave him glory; that your faith and hope might be in God"** (I Pet. 1:18-21). It is absolutely true, just as the atheist is without excuse because creation proves God's existence, God's Word proves His salvation in Jesus Christ. Therefore, if you stand at the Great White Throne for judgment, do not forget, "you are inexcusable"!

The saved are also going to be judged, by the same Judge, our Saviour Jesus Christ, but for our biblical works in life, for the fruits we all produced. As Christians, our sins have been paid for through the blood of Jesus Christ. **"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven"** (Col. 1:19-20). However, this is not an excuse to sin, because Jesus did not die for your sins to allow you the freedom to sin more. As a Christian, we are to serve the Lord

For Whom the Bell

(Continued from page 2) ♦

manufactured hope by their own arms is now finished, they are left with their true strength in salvation which is empty and vain and quickly quenched by hellfire. For the redeemed Saints of God, the tolling bell jubilantly sounds "It is finished" for it brings to mind that precious cross where our Lord and Savior went with our sin debt, taking it do the tomb and leaving it there. We are now justified before the King!

What great hope! This tolling bell sounds relief from the flesh, an eternal rest with your Savior awaits! It is as the tolling dinner bell from my youth, "time to go home dear child!" When I was young we lived in a small neighborhood in the country and my grandparents also lived in that neighborhood. They had the biggest yards for us to play in so we would be gone all day over the summer playing soccer and riding our bikes. When it was time to go home mom and dad would ring this old cast iron bell and it seemed that no matter where we were, we could hear it. With that bell, if we were delighting in fun and games, we might choose to ignore its call but there was no questioning that it was ringing for me! No one else would respond to our mother's bell but her own children...for those in which it rings!

With the tolling bell that awaits we shall be found watching! **"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you**

by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words. But of the times and the seasons, brethren, ye have no need that I write unto you. For yourselves know perfectly that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night" (I Thess. 4:13; 5:2).

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God [Tis why we must be born again of the Spirit (John 3)]; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality [If the corruptible remain corruptible it is unwelcome in the presence of absolute holiness, God the Father]. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death

is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (I Cor. 15:50-58).

Is there yet hope for the lost? II Peter 3:9-18 **"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up. Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat? Nevertheless we, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless. And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they**

do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen" (II Pet. 3:9-18).

Understand, beloved friends, that the Lord is indeed long-suffering but the wrath of God will not be stayed for all eternity! There is yet hope, now today, and we have our proof in reading how Peter speaks of Paul in the above text. One day on Damascus road made Saul a beloved brother rather than a dreaded enemy... God is good! With this present span of hope, you must repent, dear reader. **"...Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand..."** were the words of John the Baptist in Matthew 3:1-2 and of Jesus upon the Baptist's imprisonment in Matthew 4:16-17.

Death is not a journey we should want to go alone. For the lost, they will squirm and tremble as they feel the bells presence. As John Donne finished the earlier quote, "therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls; it tolls for thee."

For the beloved Saints of God, they sit quietly listening and longing for its ringing. His last precious words to them being **"... Surely I come quickly. Amen". Even so, come, Lord Jesus"** (Rev. 22:20).

"When I've Traveled My Last Mile" (He'll Hold My Hand) by Henry J. Donohue as sung by Rhonda Vincent:

"Some day when I've traveled my last mile here The call will be coming for me;

♦ (Continued on page 10)



Narrow Paths

By Doug Newell IV of
Clendenin, West Virginia

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

Make It Plain

All things in Scripture are not equally plain. Some passages are difficult to understand. To paraphrase the confessions, doctrines necessary to know and believe for salvation are so clearly seen and taught that both learned and unlearned people can see and understand them in some place or another in the Bible. If one passage is unclear, there may be 100 more that will shed light on the tricky passage. But, some texts are difficult to interpret. Or as Alistair Begg said pithily, "The main things are the plain things, and the plain things are the main things." In II Peter 3:15-18, Peter does not say to leave those difficult texts alone, but instead, you need to learn Biblical truth in all the Bible, the right way, to keep on guard against evil people who want to deceive you.

Hard verses are the favorite playthings of those who know the least while also being the foundation for the most unstable ones. Common sense would tell you that if you do not know very much about a subject, the best place to start would be the easy parts. I did not teach my kids how to read from Van Tillian presuppositional apologetics books. They learned from Dr. Suess, not Dr. Owen. You teach beginners 2+2, not polynomials, rational exponents, and radicals. The unlearned and unstable like to go to the difficult passages because there is a place where a person can seem wise. So why do unlearned and unstable

people gravitate toward difficult passages? In challenging texts, you will find differences of opinions, debate, and argument, always asking questions, but never having any answers. It is the place where there is room for fanciful interpretation. False teachers like to take unfamiliar texts and twist them until they can convince people of their false teaching. Faithful pastors take unfamiliar texts and explain them. Good preachers try their best to make the Bible plain.

Twisting Scripture or not knowing the Scripture is the highway to destruction. It is dangerous to be ignorant of the Bible. The Lord has given His people the means to learn about Him, learn about the Bible, and learn about Christian living. He established His church on the Earth, then equipped her with pastors and teachers to equip the children of God to grow in him. Churches with pastors who do not know very much about the Bible are in for a world of hurt. Christians who do not go to church and do not sit under doctrinal preaching are in a world of danger. **"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and**

some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:8-16). Be aware of how false teachers operate, lest you be led away with their error and fall from our steadfastness. Peter does not put a nice spin on false teachers but calls it the "error of the wicked."

Peter urges you to grow in grace and knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. That means you need to learn more about Jesus. If you are a young Christian, learn more about Jesus. Study the Gospel and redemption. If you are a seasoned Christian, and add to that knowledge of the Lord Jesus and His work, His person, His promises, and His future program. You already know the Gospel, but I can promise you that you do not know all there is to know about the Gospel, redemption, how it was accomplished, why it was accomplished, and applied. And never stop. Always look and learn of Jesus.



Did Jesus Go to Hell?

(Continued from page 1) ♦
place, and that was on the cross.

First off, in this article, when referring to Hell, I am speaking of the place of judgment, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth, where the worm dies not; not the place of the dead or the grave as is sometimes translated in Scripture. I believe in a literal Hell, a real place where the souls of men who die without Christ go and suffer for their sins. The focus of this article is whether Jesus was sent to the fires and torments of Hell to pay for sins. It is clear from the text that Jesus was nailed to the cross (Matthew 27:29-35) and remained there (Mark 15:30) until He gave up the ghost (Luke 23:46) and at that point, He went to paradise (Luke 23:43). While on the cross, Jesus said, **"...It is finished"** (John 19:30), speaking of the work of redemption, which eliminates the possibility that Acts 2:27 refers to the fires of Hell, but to the place of the dead, or the grave, or that I Peter 3:19 refers to a suffering Jesus preaching in Hell fire. A cursory reading of the gospel accounts is enough to show that Jesus could not have suffered in Hell because He was on the cross when He suffered, then went to paradise. It would be a strange paradise indeed, if it was a place of suffering.

From the very beginning, people have been wrong about Jesus. In Matthew 16:13, Jesus asked His disciples, **"...Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?"** The answer to that question is of eternal importance. There is no wiggle room here. There

♦ (Continued on page 6)

Did Jesus Go To Hell?

(Continued from page 5) ♦

is no “difference of opinions” in response to that question. Jesus is **“...the Christ, the Son of the Living God”** (Matt. 16:16). Upon this Person and this truth, the church was built. Jesus said this was not earthly wisdom but truth given by the Father.

But notice, from the start, men were confused about Jesus. They did not know who He was. They had opinions and thoughts but did not know who Christ was. And deceivers have attacked the Lord’s people on this point from the very beginning. One of the earliest heresies centered on the nature of Christ, deceiving by coming up with the wrong answer to the question, **“whom say ye that I am?”** Even while the Apostle John was still alive, a form of proto-Gnosticism began attacking the vital truth of the person and nature of Jesus Christ.

The Apostle John said, I John 4:2-3 **“Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God: And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.”** People look at the news, see the conflict with Russia and Ukraine, and try to discern the times and seasons. They see the rumblings of Antichrist everywhere, and they are looking for it in globalism and mandates and lockdowns. But sadly, Christians miss the very place that John warns us the spirit of antichrist resides, in heresy, and the denial of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

The best way to protect

ourselves from heresy is to be grounded in the truth (Eph. 4:13-15). I want to lay a foundation for the theological truth concerning the person of Jesus Christ in this article. There is a lot here, and I do not intend to say everything about these subjects but I hope to whet your appetite to dig deeper. I also want to uphold that Old Landmark of the nature of Christ. Friends, you may hold to Baptism and church ordinances. Still, the first and original Landmark of the church was that Jesus is **“the Christ, the Son of the Living God,”** and if you do not have Christ, it does not matter what you think about Baptism, church organization, or wine in the Lord’s supper; you can go to Hell full of church truth. J. C. Philpot said, “There are two things which every child of God has the greatest reason to dread; the one is evil, the other is error. Both are originally from Satan; both have a congenial home in the human mind; both are in their nature deadly and destructive; both have slain their thousands and tens of thousands; and under one or the other, or under both combined, all everlastingly perish but the redeemed family of God.”

First, let us consider the Trinity. Our God is the One true and living God in three Persons. There are two different terms in discussing the Trinity, the ontological Trinity and the economical Trinity. Ontology is the study of being, so when we speak of the Ontological Trinity, we consider what the Bible says about the being of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit without considering creation and redemption. The Economical Trinity speaks about what the Bible says about the Trinity revealed in creation, redemption, and human history.

God does not change, and there is only one being of God in three persons, but for our finite minds to understand what the Bible has revealed, theologians have given us categories to help define what we are speaking about. So when we think of the economic Trinity, we distinguish among the Godhead in their roles in creation and redemption. The Father chose a people unto salvation, in Christ, and then sent His Son into the world for our redemption. The Son accomplishes our redemption on the cross, and the Spirit applies that redemption to us. One God, in three persons, distinguished by what they do in particular for us in the covenant of redemption.

The ontological Trinity is when we think about the nature of and being of God. So what the Son did for us does not make Him the Son. The Son isn’t the Son because He came to the Earth, but the Son came to Earth because He was the Son (Rom. 1:3-4). That is why the need for those two categories of thought. Also, know that God does not exist in different modes at different times, nor is God divided into thirds. Each person of the Trinity is true God. Jesus and the Father are one. We do not use terms of quantity when discussing the Trinity (fully or 100%), but we use terms of quality (True God). Since the Son is truly God, He is equal to the Father in power, glory, and being. He is from everlasting to everlasting. One in being, but distinguished in persons, from all eternity. The Father always was, the Son always was, the Spirit always was, and each person always will be. To believe in Jesus is to believe in the Father, and to look upon Jesus is to see the express image of the Father (John 1:14; Heb. 1:3; II Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15). The Father is truly God. The Son is Truly God.

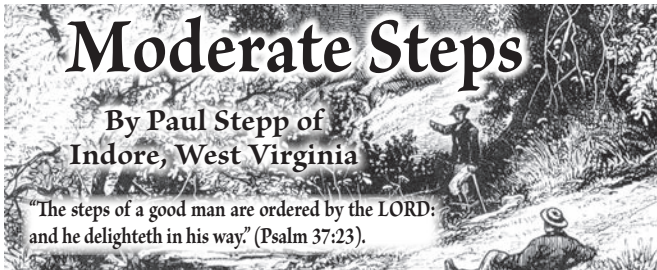
The Spirit is Truly God.

Let us now consider the begotten Son (John 3:16). John 1:1 tells us **“...the Word was with God and the Word was God.”** Christ did not become the Son of God when He was born of a virgin (remember, He was always the Son ontologically), but the Son was **“made flesh”** and dwelt among us in the economy of redemption. Jesus is the Son of God. Not in terms of a title, not an official sense, but truly the Begotten One. When Jesus said He was the Son of God, the Jews knew He was talking about His being and being one with the Father because they charged Him with blasphemy (Matt. 26:63; John 5:18; 10:36). How is Jesus the Only Begotten? Not because He came into existence in eternity past. I have heard people say that Jesus was born twice, but that is not true. Nor is it true that Jesus became the Son when He was born in Bethlehem. Jesus is the begotten One, the Son by eternal generation. Jesus never came into being. There was never a time when the Son did not exist. The eternal generation of the Son was not a choice by the Father to bring the Son into being, but a necessary act of the Father. Louis Berkoff wrote, “This does not mean, however, that it is an act that was completed in the far distant past, but rather that it is a timeless act, the act of an eternal present, an act always continuing and yet ever completed. Its eternity follows not only from the eternity of God, but also from the divine immutability and from the true deity of the Son. In addition to this, it can be inferred from all those passages of Scripture which teach either the pre-existence of the Son or His equality with the Father, Mic. 5:2; John 1:14, 18; ♦ (Continued on page 7)

Moderate Steps

By Paul Stepp of
Indore, West Virginia

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



Trusting God

"Cast thy burden upon the LORD, and he shall sustain thee: he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved" (Ps. 55:22).

Following God, and serving Jesus Christ is not always easy in this life that we live. This verse from the Psalmist lets us know that there are burdens that we must bear – because he says, **"Cast thy burden upon the LORD..."** However, in the very next breath we find the comfort and the strength that we need while carrying our burdens: **"...and he shall sustain thee."**

We know that the Psalmist is speaking of the saved because he says (of God), **"...he shall never suffer the righteous to be moved."** So, it seems that those who would live their lives in a righteous fashion, shall have a burden to bear – but the Lord will sustain us, as we cast that burden upon Him.

Additionally, the future is confirmed and certain, for those who are given unto Him, because the Lord God will not allow them to be moved or taken away from Him. We trust in God to save us, and we trust in God to keep us.

I hope it is not your own righteousness that you are trusting in today but rather the righteousness that is found in Jesus Christ. **"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all**

things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith" (Phil. 3:8-9). We cannot save ourselves – we are sinners, and we have no righteousness with which to justify ourselves before God. We, as sinners, must repent of our sins and trust in Jesus Christ to save us. He will pay the price for our sins, and He will give us of His righteousness and present us before God the Father as justified saints of God.

It is a pleasant thought, and very comforting to our souls, to know that, while the world and this present Age continues, our salvation is sure and certain because it rests not in ourselves or in the power of any man, but in the Person and the Work and the Righteousness of Jesus Christ.

(Paul Stepp is pastor of the Indore Baptist Church of Indore, West Virginia.)



Did Jesus Go To Hell?

(Continued from page 6) ♦

3:16; 5:17, 18, 30, 36; Acts 13:33; John 17:5; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:3."

Eternal generation means that the Father, from all eternity, communicates the One essence of the being of God to the Son. Now, that is hard to understand because we are finite beings. But it is evident in Scripture and something you believe and receive by faith. Do not try to think up examples or illustrations about

the Trinity. Just receive the truth from Scripture and be satisfied with what the Lord has revealed about Himself. John Gill warns us, "Without his eternal generation no proof can be made of his being a distinct divine Person in the Godhead." John Owen rightly said, "Whoever denies Christ the Son, as the Son, that is, the eternal Son of God, he loses the Father also, and the true God; he hath not God. For that God which is not the Father, and which ever was, and was not the Father, is not the true God." Jesus, the Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, entered into His own creation.

This leads us to our next stop, the hypostatic union, which refers to the truth that Jesus is both true man and God in one person. Hypostasis is Greek for subsistence (translated person in Hebrews 1:3) so that union refers to the fact that in the incarnation, the Son added to His divinity, humanity, and Jesus has both a human and divine nature. Two errors to avoid, that Christ had only one nature, or to separate the natures to the point that Christ was essentially two separate persons (Nestorianism).

Christ is truly God and truly man without confusion, meaning Jesus did not become a third thing by mixing divinity and humanity. The human nature did not become divine, nor did the divine nature become human. It is not that there are two persons, a divine person, and a human, nor a human body and a divine mind and no human soul. But in the one person, there are two natures, at once true man and true God. **"Before Abraham was, I am."** This same person who spoke to the Jews, spoke to Abraham, so this proves another nature in the same person. Great is the mystery

of godliness! This union is without change, meaning the Word was still the Word and did not become something other than the Word. Nor does it mean that Jesus was half God and half man. This union was without separation. Christ Jesus was one as God and man. He did not lay down His divinity in His humanity. Jesus did not do away with His divinity or leave it behind, but it was the assumption of human nature "into the personal subsistence with the Son of God," where two natures were in the one person of the Son. In Jesus, there was the union of the two natures in the same person. It is an everlasting union, as Christ now sits bodily at the right hand of the Father, evermore the Godman. He veiled His attributes, but never could He abandon them or leave them behind. R. Scott Clark said, "The incarnation is a great mystery, of course, but we can say what we should say and we should always say that Christ is one person, not a composition, in whom two, distinct natures are indivisibly, inseparably united and that the incarnation is for our salvation and for the glory of God."

Why did all this happen? Jesus, the Eternal Son, the Word made flesh came into this world to fulfill the eternal covenant of redemption where in eternity, He voluntarily willed to come and redeem the elect of God given to Him by the Father, accomplishing the work of redemption on our behalf. The only possible way was through the shedding of blood (Heb. 9:22). But not the blood of bulls and goats. It was necessary that Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, come in the flesh and that He suffer and die for sins (Heb. 2:17). It "behooved Him," or it was His necessary duty and

♦ (Continued on page 8)

Did Jesus Go To Hell?

(Continued from page 7) ♦

responsibility as the second person of the Trinity, in the economy of redemption to die for sinners. God's Holy wisdom required the broken law be paid for by the same nature that sinned against Him, and so our Redeemer had to be a man.

Where did this redemption take place? It took place on the cross, where Jesus paid the sin debt. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree (I Pet. 2:24). It was on the cross where the wrath of God was satisfied (Isaiah 53:10) when His soul was made an offering for sin. The suffering of Christ was far greater than the physical death that He suffered as He bore our sins. Doubtless, Christ suffered beyond imagination, for Christ drank the cup the Father gave Him. The agony Christ suffered as the perfect man suffering for sinners is beyond my comprehension. Christ suffered the equivalent to the wrath the elect deserved, not exact in every form and fashion. It was a hellish suffering, though not Hell itself. Due to the infinite merit of Christ and the infinite worth of the Son of God, He could satisfy divine justice as a substitutionary atonement in His vicarious death (Isa. 53:5). But it was at Calvary, not in Hell, that Jesus suffered. It was the blood of Jesus Christ that was sufficient to pay the price of our propitiation (Rom. 3:25; I John 2:1-2). In terms of redemption, the purchase of His people, the Bible points to the physical death and shedding of blood and price (Heb. 9; Col. 1:14; Rom. 3:24-25; Rev. 5:9; I Pet. 1:18-19). Christ is the propitiation for our sins by the blood (Romans 3:25) The blood cleanses us from sin (I John 1:7).

Jesus did not go to Hell, or literally burn in the fire. During the three hours of darkness, Jesus was on the cross, not in Hell. Jesus was alive, not dead. Remember, the hypostatic union, the Lord was not the Logos, in the shell of a body, but He was true man and to say the living body and rational soul of Jesus could be conscious on the cross in body, while also literally in Hell denies the humanity of Christ and makes Christ something other than true man. Or, to say that Jesus paid the penalty on the cross, then also went to Hell after to pay for sins is unbiblical. Jesus said He thirsted, He told John to care for His mother, He told the thief that he would be in paradise with Him. All on the cross, where Jesus, in the flesh, with His true, rational soul, spoke, and thought and felt, and prayed. The only way Jesus could be in Hell while His body was on the cross was if Jesus were two different persons, which He most certainly is not. The penalty for our sins was paid in the death of Christ and the shedding of His blood. The wrath of God's justice fell upon Christ on the cross because He became sin for me, and in my place, bore my sins and paid the debt owed to justice. He became a curse for us (Gal. 3:13), and God made Him to be sin for us **"...that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him"** (II Cor. 5:18-21). Sin was imputed to Him, rather than Jesus became a sinner. Rather than me paying for my sins in Hell, Jesus paid for my sins on the cross. When Jesus said it was finished, it was over. He was still on the cross, and He never left. He had been there the whole time. When Jesus died, He went to paradise (Luke 23:43). He died once for all for sin, not twice. Jesus died physically and rose from the dead physically.

That is the gospel (I Cor. 15:1-4). We were reconciled in the **"...body of His flesh..."** (Col. 1:21-22), the body and the blood (Luke 22:19-20). As preachers, let us be careful with our words (Jam. 3:1). As Baptists, let us uphold the first and most significant Landmark of them all, the doctrine of Christ.



What is Message?

(Continued from page 1) ♦

joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen" (Luke 24:44-53).

To some of your minds it may seem, perhaps, that we are lingering too long in one place, seeing that we have preached already from these verses two or three times. But, I think there is a need, and as God helps, we shall take note of the things that the Holy Spirit says to us from these words of the living God. I do think that we all, each and every one of us, have too little appreciation for the fact that we are before the true and living God, the thrice-holy God, the God who made all things and upholds them with the power of His voice, who shall one day fold all things up and conclude all things according to His own design and determination which He has decreed and made known unto His servants, and before whom we shall all stand and give account. In many respects, we find that the verses before us were sort of a beginning, a commencement. Jesus was sending forth the church that He had founded and established, and to whom He committed the truths of God, into the world with a particular mission, message, and motive. This was not the beginning of the church, as an institution, for as we know it had already been in existence, had already been

operating, and had already been assembling together and going forth, but with a limited scope. Now that scope was broadened to the ends of the earth, and power to achieve the divinely entrusted mission and proclaim the divinely appointed message was promised (and we know that the promise was fulfilled).

It is sometimes good and necessary to revisit the beginning of things, to be reminded of what it is we are to be about, to refocus our attention on the critical elements and key objective, and to refresh and reinvigorate our efforts for the cause and purpose on which we had originally set out. We are all keenly aware, or at least we ought to be, of the sad condition of things at this present hour. Many churches have left the truth that they once held and proclaimed and practiced. Many have no interest in spiritual things or the work of God. Many are overtaken with and consumed by mere worldly and temporal cares. Many are so cold hearted and unconcerned that they behave (and we can only judge their desires and thoughts by their actions and their conduct) as though the work of God is the least important thing in all the world, so far as they are concerned. In our own church, the pews stand empty, the house of God is forsaken, and the Word of God goes largely ignored. What is the remedy for such conditions? Is there a remedy? What will it take for saints to be revived and sinners to be saved and added unto the Lord?

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and

♦ (Continued on page 9)

What is Message?

(Continued from page 8) ♦

that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” First of all, I think we must realize and recognize that there is no answer apart from, outside of, or without the scriptures. If the direction that is taken is the mere conception of the mind of man, or the collaborative conclusion of the imaginations of the hearts of people, and not the Spirit-led, Spirit-taught submission to the Word of God which alone reveals the will of God, then it will end in shame, folly, and ruin. Now I do not say that the thoughts of people may not be pleasing and acceptable to the majority, and that there may not be outward results when the imaginations of the hearts of men are followed; but what I say on the authority of God’s Word is that those results will not stand the test of eternity. **“I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that planteth any thing, 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 labour. For we are labourers together with God: ye are God’s husbandry, ye are God’s building. According to the grace of God which is given unto me, as a wise masterbuilder, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. But let every man take heed how he buildeth thereupon. For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold,**

♦ (Continued on page 10)

Heavenly Hymns

“...Be filled with the Spirit; speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ” (Ephesians 5:18-20).

The Tempted Saint's Prayer

Timothy J. Hille
Tammara M. Hille

mf

Piano

The fight ra - ges in me - How long shall it be That sin and
The dev - il is roar - ing My life to de - vour He slan - ders
My spir - it is brok - en My bones sear - ing shake. Lord, wilt Thou
In pain or in sick - ness In sor - row or loss, Whether friend-less

B♭ Trumpet

Pno.

temp - ta - tion press hard up - on me? My soul is so wear - y - Lord, dost Thou
and buf - fets me as hour sup by hour. Ev - il men stand a - gainst me, With dou - ble tongues
not hear me or I nailed to a cross, No To Thy will I bow and No righteous-ness
or home-less

B♭ Tpt.

f *mf rit.*

Pno.

not know - How long wilt Thou tar - ry whilst I sink in woe?
they lie. Lord I wait for no oth - er to Thee on - ly I cry.
my own; On - ly by Je - sus' blood with I now to Thy throne.
de - sire, On - ly, Lord, Thou with me while I walk through the fire!

B♭ Tpt.

For Whom the Bell

(Continued from page 4) ♦

I'll enter the lifeboat that will be near,
To carry me over the sea

He'll hold ----- my hand
As over death's river I go;
Then safe-----I'll be
In beautiful heaven I know

My bark shall sail safely
tho' waves dash high
For Jesus will be at my side;
He'll still the rough
waters when by and by
I'm crossing the river so wide

He'll hold ----- my hand
As over death's river I go;
Then safe-----I'll be
In beautiful heaven I know

I'm ready to go
to that golden shore
To live there while ages shall roll;
I want to see Jesus and saints of yore
In heaven the home of the soul."



What is Message?

(Continued from page 9) ♦

silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are. Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise

in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise. For the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God. For it is written, He taketh the wise in their own craftiness. And again, The Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain. Therefore let no man glory in men. For all things are yours; Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; And ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's" (I Cor. 3:6-23).

It should be obvious to all that we are not merely to sit back or sit by. But what should we do? Again, God's Word alone has the answer.

We see that the first church had a mission, a message, and a motive? First of all, what was their message, for ours is to be the same as theirs. Their message was the gospel message, that Christ Jesus had come into the world, had suffered and died on the cross on account of sins, had been buried, and had risen the third day, all as the scriptures had foretold and promised; and that now all people everywhere ought to forsake their sins and their own ways and turn to God by faith in Christ Jesus, and that through Him they will receive the full and free pardon and forgiveness of all their sins, and be brought into fellowship with the God who gave them life, breath, and all things.

One has well said that there is a monopoly on the forgiveness of sins, an exclusive method, and the monopoly belongs to Jesus Christ. Notice that the message is all about Jesus Christ. "...Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name

among all nations." Charles Spurgeon wrote: "... God will pardon, but he will only pardon in one way, — through his Son Jesus Christ. The Lord Jesus has a monopoly of mercy. If you will depend upon the uncovenanted mercy of God, the mercy of God apart from Christ, you shall find that you have depended upon a reed, and built your house upon the sand. Into the one silver pipe of the atoning sacrifice God has made to flow the full current of pardoning grace. If you will not go to that, you may be tempted by the mirage, you may think that you can there drink to the full, but you shall die disappointed. You must die, unless you come for salvation, to Christ. What does he say himself? "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture." He that believeth on the Son of God is not condemned; but he that believeth not — may he go right too? No, he is condemned already, because he believeth not. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." These are Christ's own words, not mine. He that believeth shall be saved, "but he that believeth not shall be" — what? Pardoned for his unbelief? No; "shall be damned!" There is no other alternative. The expression might seem harsh if I were the inventor of it; but, as it came from the lips of Christ, who was the gentlest, meekest, and most tender of men, God forbid that I should affect a charity of which the Lord himself made no profession! "He that believeth not shall be damned." God presents mercy to the sons of men, but he has chosen to present it in one channel only, — through that Man who died for sinners, the Just for the unjust, that he might bring them to God." (Spurgeon, C. H. Sermon 3129, "The True

Aim of Preaching.")

Would we not be liars, guilty of misrepresenting God and the most vital, most solemn, most needed, and most urgent subject that bears on the lives and souls of men, women, boys, and girls, if we either neglected to preach this message, or we preached any other message? I know many have and do, but can our consciences bear to do so, to "preach any other gospel," or to avoid giving out the true report to those about us? Many have felt no guilt, no shame, no regret whatsoever, who have either abandoned the cause of Christ and the work of His kind of church to pursue their own fleshly and worldly concerns; but can we? I know that many have corrupted the message into a message that serves, not the souls of men who are devil-blinded and hell-bound, but their own gain. But again, I ask, what will we do? "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. For do I now persuade men, or God? or do I seek to please men? for if I yet pleased men, I should not be the servant of Christ. But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:6-12).

♦ (Continued on page 11

What is Message?

(Continued from page 10) ♦

Do we preach the gospel that is after man, or that is according to man's ideas and opinions; or do we preach the God-given, God-revealed, God-ordained, God-declared message?

One of the most common and apparently well-received and accepted practices and lines of thought in our hour is to say that those of the past who handed down the truth to us were wrong on this or that point of doctrine or practice, or that they held to some personal opinion or tradition on this or that matter, and so their example and teaching need not be followed. This is nothing more than leaven being introduced, which ends up leavening the whole lump. Such troublemakers ought not to be tolerated, but they have been more than tolerated, they have been embraced wholesale, admired, and elevated in the esteem of many; and the results have been the loss of one church after another to error, schism, worldliness, and man-pleasing, flesh-pleasing doctrine and practice. The gospel is rarely, if ever, directly attacked. The deceiver does not use a direct approach, for he is wily. Why not stick to the old paths? Why not hold fast that which has been received? **"For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you"** (I Cor. 11:19). **"For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them"** (Acts 20:29-30).

What is our message, beloved? It is that Christ is the door, and that if anyone enters in by Him, that is, by faith in Him, believing that He died for their sins according to the scriptures, and rose again, and repenting toward God, confessing and forsaking their sin, they will be saved, and go in and out, and find pasture. I think it was very fitting and necessary that the Holy Spirit saw fit to mention in our text **"... that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name..."** When we tell people that they must believe, they often reply that they do; but the scripture says that saving faith is always accompanied by and joined with saving repentance. You and I know many people who

♦ (Continued on page 16)

Brief Truths

(Continued from page 3) ♦

our God with all our heart and might. As the scriptures teach, **"Only fear the LORD, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you"** (I Sam. 12:24). Failing to do so will be your loss, you could lose all the rewards you earned by not serving the Lord properly. **"Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire"** (I Cor. 3:13-15). Your failure to serve the Lord properly is not hidden. Notice these words, **"Every man's work shall be made manifest"**. You may fool your family, friends, church, and Pastor, but you will not fool Jesus Christ. **"But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against**

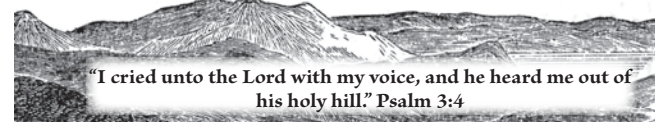
the LORD: and be sure your sin will find you out" (Num. 32:23). Will you, Christian, have crowns or rewards in Heaven? Will you, Christian, have nothing in Heaven to offer God? In Heaven the greatest honor of ours will be to praise God with our crowns and rewards. What will yours be? **"The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that**

liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:10-11). If you have none you are inexcusable, and the eternal affect will be because of you!



Selahs

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



Quite You Like Men

"And Jesus said unto him, No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (Luke 9:62).

The ploughman ought to look before him, on what he is doing and the ground he is ploughing, or he is not an effective ploughman; nor will he make proper strides or moves to do his job well. He must stay focused on what he does. If he decides to do it, he must do it to the best of his ability, standing closely to his decision or calling as a ploughman.

In many aspects of your life, how many times have you made a decision that you were sure was the right one? You decided to say yes because of the one asking. You chose to say no because of the cost. You agreed to stay because of familiarity. You opted to leave because of discomfort. You decided to hold on because of the promise. You chose to let go

because of disappointment. These decisions are made from the right motivation, with the best of intentions.

But then, right away, you begin to question, what if you were wrong? In the ministry, "Am I really ready to serve God?" On other things in your life, what if you should have said no instead of yes, left instead of stayed, let go instead of held on? What if? But you will never know what if until you act. Remember, **"A double minded man is unstable in all his ways"** (Jam. 1:8).

So when you have to decide, choose and move, be a decisive ploughman. Do not get caught in the trap of "maybe." You will be in that snare for far too long. Today, "pray" for it, make the decision, make your move, and realize that all things will work out for the good, for those who love the Lord (Rom. 8:28). So just do it. You will never know until you are "in it." Selah!



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. How can the members of the church you pastor best care for you? And for each other?

Matthew Stepp
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570

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



First, is Prayer. It is a common answer but probably one of the most misunderstood aspects of any Christian's life. The best way to care for your pastor and the other members of your church and family is to keep them before the Sovereign God of the Universe. If our Great God cannot keep our loved ones safe, who can? As we turn our thoughts and hearts toward God each day to thank Him for His mercy and grace, we should thank Him for our loved ones! The natural follow-up prayer, is that we would ask our Awesome God to bless our pastor as one of our loved ones...! Selah! Think about it!

There are many worries and much terrible "wrongness" in our modern world and Satan is very busy attacking (literally) the Lord's churches. One of his primary targets will be your pastor. The Devil will use any means available to try to tear him down. He will use evil men to spread rumors, or to attack his testimony as a worthy Man of God. Taking words and sermons out of context is a common way to create doubt in the minds of congregants or fellow Christians. It was the way he drove a wedge between Eve and Adam, and then Adam and God! **"Now the**

serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden" (Gen. 3:1)? They will start supposedly in "what God said," but their purpose is not to edify, but rather to destroy and tear down.

It can become very discouraging, if all the worthy pastor hears is continuous clamor and turmoil. I hope that you pray every day that the Lord will strengthen and comfort your pastor with the peace and sureties of God. Pray that the world will not distract him from his studies and sermon preparation, so that he can be the blessing that God has ordained him to be (to you!).

The second step in caring for your pastor is to make sure that you take the time to encourage him with your words and actions. The faith and joy shown by personal (Perfect!) attendance in every church service possible and the ready fellowship with brotherly and sisterly love will likely be the first way God will answer your tenderhearted prayers for his well-being. Do not just assume that he knows you love him! Do not use the excuse of "giving him a big head" as a reason not to thank him for faithfully preaching God's Word! The pastor does not need to be flattered or to be built up in pride, but just a simple "God really blessed me with your sermon today!" will go a long way to make your pastor even more diligent in his study and delivery of his weekly sermons. Not everyone is

as comfortable as they should be in letting their pastor know that they are there for them. But, please make the effort, beloved reader! I have heard the old saying, that if you think you need a "better pastor," then pray and encourage the one you have! I guarantee, that a pastor that can feel the love and support of his congregation will respond "better"! God is the One that gives these pastoral gifts, and the sooner we start praying, and encouraging, the sooner God will bless a church that "comes together in one accord." Selah!

The third step is to interact more often with your pastor. Whether it is inviting him to dinner, or just stopping for a few "extra" moments to ask questions about his sermon, or to dig deeper into a doctrine that is being studied, will definitely perk up a pastor. The Bible is our "bread and butter" and nothing thrills us more than to talk about the Lord Jesus Christ with our church members. For a pastor to see a desire for Revival and a closer walk with God in his members, will zoom him on up to 7th Heaven, for sure! To ask him to go visit a family member or friend with you about the Lord, is "not" a burden, but an opportunity of love! A great pitfall is for a pastor to feel isolated and lonely and each church member has the ability to make sure the pastor (and his wife!) feel their physical love each week! Praise God for members that will go out of their way to make sure their pastor is appreciated and prayed for!

The last step is to take care of your pastor financially, as best the church is able. Not very many churches can afford to take care of their pastor full-time, and generally that is not necessary. Whatever the Lord has provided will certainly be sufficient, but

there should be an attitude that the pastor and his family should not have to worry about poverty. Just enough to scrape by? Maybe sometimes, if the entire congregation is also going through times of difficulty. But if the congregation is doing well, so too, should be their desire for their spiritual leader. May God bless each of His churches! Selah! Think about it!

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

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



First, "How can the members of the church you pastor best care for you?"

Ephesians 6:18-19 states: **"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel."** Pray daily for the pastor and his family. Pray for the power and grace of God to rest upon your pastor so he can minister effectively.

Hebrews 13:7, 17 declares: **"Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God: whose faith follow, considering the end of their conversation... Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account, that they may**

◊ (Continued on page 14)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What words of wisdom do you have for the young preachers today?

Matthew Stepp
286 Big Creek Road
Wayne, WV 25570

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



2) What words of wisdom do you have for the young preachers today?

1) Love and respect the Lord's New Testament Baptist Church that God has put you in. It is your priority, particularly if the Lord has called you to pastor it. Your highest calling is to **"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind"** (I Pet. 5:2). Selah! Think about it!

2) Choose a good mentor (maybe God has already chosen one for you?) that is grounded in a love for God's Word and Baptist heritage. As God provides, he will be conservative and just "a phone call away!" A good mentor is not afraid to rebuke you, and he will always be there to love and guide you into the Scriptures. If he is constantly giving you "words/books of men" rather than "Words of God," you may have to reconsider his mentorship and find another! **"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers. For there are many unruly and vain talkers and deceivers..."** (Tit. 1:9-10).

3) Avoid Modernism and Liberalism in both your studying and your friendships. Satan has drawn away many of the last few generations from a firm foundation on the inerrant Word of God (the KJV in the English Language) and our Trail of Blood heritage in Landmark Baptist Church History (II Tim. 3:1-17).

4) Avoid social media outlets as a place to vent and debate or to "recruit a following." The temptation to see an increased number of watchers and virtual attendees is secondary to feeding your flock (point 1). The proper usage of social media today is as an additional pulpit of the declaration of truth. Do not allow fractious debates and frivolous time-wasters (in the comments, etc) to distract the attention of your members and place within them the seeds of doubt. Satan is already doing that full-time! The Public Forum is not the place for iron to sharpen iron, but is rather to be a Public Proclamation of God's Truth!

5) Make sure your congregation is well-fed and well-grounded in Biblical Truths. That will entail study time and much prayer for the Leadership of the Holy Ghost. Topical preaching on the great themes and subjects of the Bible will be necessary to educate young believers and reinforce the great joys of your mature members. Many times preachers will get into a "rut" of just preaching through various books, and although exegetical and expository preaching are great teaching methods of "word studies," "contextual studies" and

"prophetic studies," it is necessary for God's men to connect the dots from book to Bible book and to see the big pictures of our great God! Character studies of Bible men/women will endear them to your congregation and self. It is important to preach through the Doctrines of Grace and Church Truth every year, in clearly delineated outlines that will enable the membership to remain strong in the truth long after the pastor is gone (II Tim. 4:1-18).

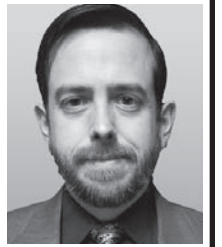
6) Do not preach a passage until God gives clarity and understanding. Youthfulness is not stupidity, it is but ignorance. As the Lord gives light and maturity, the truth will resonate in scriptural context!

7) Read much! Particularly in the Scripture, as God will open up passages already preached into deeper and more precious truths. But be very careful in your reading after men. Commentaries are very useful for word studies, where educated men's wisdom can be very helpful in revealing God's manifold wisdom in the Hebrew and Greek tongues that our English minds will have missed. But very few Sovereign Grace Landmark commentaries are available to draw correct conclusions from Scripture, so typically that is where commentaries' usefulness end. Do not place confidence in men's writings, but continually compare them to Scripture and Baptist heritage, as God has preserved His truths generationally to His precious Baptist pastors and churches. Generally speaking, the older the commentary, the more likely it is to have value for the studying time. Gill, Spurgeon, Pink, Cockrell, and Ross have written extensively, and these and other Baptist writers should be prioritized as we grow in the

truth with solid foundations. JFB, Barnes, Henry and Morris have commentaries that I have personally used for reference to preach beneficial sermons on practical and fundamental matters, but again, your doctrinal messages will come direct from Scripture more times than not. Daily reading and studying the KJV Bible will cause the errors in men's writings to ring "untrue" and "empty." **"Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me"** (John 5:39). You have found the good stuff, when you find Him! Selah!

Joseph A. Newell
3484 FM 92
Silsbee, TX 77656

Pastor
Sovereign Grace
Baptist Church
3484 FM 92
Silsbee, Texas 77656



"I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom; Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry" (II Tim. 4:1-5).

According to Scripture, there are exactly 2 (two) kinds of preachers. First, there are those that handle God's Word faithfully, dutifully, readily, with application to reprove (convict,

◊ (Continued on page 14)

Forum Question #1

(Continued from page 12) ♦

do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.” Your pastor/elder has been appointed to feed and care for the flock of God by preaching the Word of God. As he ministers the Word, obey the truth he preaches in sincere love for the Lord Jesus. Keep in mind that the responsibility of the pastor/elder is to prepare you for the Judgment Seat of Christ. His desire is for you to hear the words “..Well done, thou good and faithful servant...enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.” Submission and obedience to the truth of the Word of God are key components to readiness for the Bema Seat.

I Thessalonians 5:12-13 states: “**And we beseech you brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly for their work’s sake. And be at peace among yourselves**” (cf. I Tim. 5:17-19). If you have a pastor who truly labors in the Word of God and faithfully preaches the Word and cares for your spiritual wellbeing, you are truly blessed indeed. Such pastors are rare in our present day. Thank God for them. Learn to love and respect them in word and deed. Support them financially as best you can. When there is love and respect between the Pastor and the members of the church there will be a spirit of harmony and joy.

Second, How can the members of the church best care for one another?

John 13:34-35 declares: “**A new commandment I give**

unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.” Love the brethren in word and in deed. Be a blessing to one another. Encourage one another. Edify one another. Be a godly example to one another. Do not gossip about one another. Do not be a fault finder. Do not have a contentious, sour attitude.

Hebrews 10:23-25 states: “**Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;) And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works; Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.**” Strive to be an exceptional church member. Be faithful in attendance, prayer, Bible study, witnessing to the lost, tithing, and most of all devotion to the Lord. So much can be accomplished when every member understands how important they are to the body. If you really care about the members of the church you belong to you will show it by the way you live. We need each other’s fellowship, love, and encouragement. One of the best ways to accomplish this is by being committed to faithful attendance to the Lord’s house.

Philippians 2:1-5 declares: “**If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies, Fulfill ye**

my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind. Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus.” Do not be selfish or narcissistic. The Lord’s church is more important than you are. Ask yourself “What kind of church would we have if every member lived and served the Lord like I do?” It is a sobering question that ought to motivate us to serve the Lord in sincerity and truth, promoting the unity of the body through selfless sacrifice and love.

I am sure an entire series of sermons could be preached on this subject matter. Bryan Station Baptist Church of Lexington, KY printed a booklet I wrote entitled “Are You an Exceptional Church Member?” It is quite a bit more extensive in covering what it takes to be a good church member.

Forum Question #2


(Continued from page 13) ♦

correct), rebuke (admonish, forbid, censure), and exhort (console, strengthen, encourage), and that with all longsufferingness (patience), “and cannot be separated from the strict doctrine/teaching of the Word of God.” The second type of preachers are those that separate themselves from “sound” doctrine, thus leading others away as well, perverting minds while seeking after their own lusts (desires), all the while preaching perversions of the truth (lies) and turning others

to fables (narratives, stories, fiction, inventions, speculations, and musings).

Paul told young Timothy to be “preacher #1,” and watch out for “preacher #2.” By the authority of the Word of God, I encourage young (and old) preachers to do the same.

May the Lord bless.

<p>Jon Bailess 91 Stringtown Rd Hico, West Virginia 25854</p> <p>Pastor Beauty Mountain Baptist Church 30 Apple Ridge Rd. Edmond West Virginia 25837</p>	
--	---

Thank you for allowing me to share a few short thoughts on this topic with you today. Based on what I have learned in the few years in the ministry I will endeavor to answer this question. I have 3 basic thoughts: Buy the Truth, Remove NOT the ancient landmarks, and do not be carried about by every wind of doctrine.

“**Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding**” (Prov. 23:23). While this is a simple verse to read, it is much harder to put into practice. There are many false doctrines out there that are alluring many of our young folks and young preachers. However, we should view the truth as something much too precious to compromise or to turn completely away from. People look to us for guidance in the Word of God. We must do as II Timothy 2:15 states “**Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.**”

Secondly, “**Remove not the ancient landmark, which thy fathers have set**” (Prov. 22:28). While this verse is referring to

♦ (Continued on page 15)

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 14) ♦

literal landmarks on property such as boundary markers, it is also applicable to the church. As young preachers we do not need to attempt to reinvent the church, revamp the church, or modernize the church. In addition to this, we have certain landmark doctrines that we should hold to, rather than attempting to tear them down. In our "modern times" a few things I will mention are that we are still to uphold the Bible Doctrines, maintain church autonomy and truth, abstain from drinking and drug use, we should not welcome the pagan holidays into the church, and we must uphold the home as set forth by God. In addition, I will add that we should maintain use of the King James Version of the Bible.

Finally, **"That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love"** (Eph. 4:14-16). The primary thought here is that we are not to be carried about with every wind of doctrine, but rather, we are to be rooted and grounded in the truth. There are plenty of people that wrest the Word of God unto their own destruction, we should not be in that crowd. What immediately comes to my mind in reading this is the fear

of offending those under our ministry that tempts us to "pull our punches" and maybe soften our approach to prevent such offenses. John Gill says this on this topic: **"tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine"**; false doctrine, which may be compared to wind for its lightness and emptiness, and for its swelling and puffing nature, and for the noise and bluster it makes, and for its rapidity and force, with which it sometimes comes and bears all before it, and for its infectiousness, which is the nature of some winds; and to be tossed to and fro, and carried about with it, is expressive of much ignorance and want of a discerning spirit, and implies hesitation, and doubts and scruples, and shows credulity, fickleness, and inconstancy: and which is brought on."



I was recently asked the Forum question: What words of wisdom do you have for the young preachers today? The question immediately prompted a whole range of responses within my mind. It also was like a thunderbolt of reality that made me realize I am not a young preacher any more! As I thought about offering advice to young preachers I came to the realization that I am insufficient for the task at hand. I have failed in so many ways in 41 years of preaching. Yet I also reflected on how faithful men of God have mentored me and given me sage advice through

the years. I was taught the truth of the Lord's Church, the doctrines of grace, and premillennial eschatology by my only Pastor, Elder Dan Ferrell while I was under his ministry at Wilmington Baptist. He also taught me how to construct sermons textually by using sound exposition. Bro. Ferrell also taught me how to preach verse by verse, chapter by chapter through the books of the Bible. The fancy description used today is sequential exposition. I also learned how to knock on doors, evangelize, and visit while at Wilmington. For all those lessons and experiences I am eternally grateful. Others like Milburn Cockrell, Al Gormley, Scott Guiley, Garner Smith, Harold Harvey, Roger Jones, Mark Minney, Harry Balmer, Tom Hysell, Pete Horn, Dan Stepp, Wayne Reynolds, Gail Terrell, and Ron Crisp have all had a positive impact and influence on my ministry. I thank God for Baptist preachers who have influenced my life and ministry. I am sure I have left someone out, but these came to mind as I was writing.

I offer the following words with the disclaimer that I am not in any way an expert on preaching and pastoring. I have had to learn the hard way at different times in the ministry. All of my adult life has been spent in the ministry. I am so thankful and happy that God called such an unworthy sinner like me to salvation and to preach His Word. I love preaching! I am grateful for every time I have the opportunity to expound the Word of God! So this advice comes from someone who

loves being in the ministry. I hope what follows might be a help and an encouragement to young preachers.

1. Make sure that you are truly saved by grace through faith in the death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Make your calling and election sure before God. Also, make sure you know that God has truly called you to preach and pastor. If either of these things are not settled in your heart you will not be fit to preach. II Timothy 2:6-7: **"The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits. Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things."**

2. Surrender your life and submit to God without reservation. Live everyday with the attitude expressed by Paul when he was saved on the road to Damascus **"...Lord, what wilt thou have me to do..."** (Acts 9:6)? Settle it in your heart that your will, your desires, your wants must all be surrendered to the primacy of God's will. You may be called to suffer privation, poverty, loneliness, imprisonment, ill treatment, false accusations, and physical persecution like the apostle Paul experienced. Are you surrendered? Are you submissive to God's will no matter what it may entail? Or are you in the ministry to gain a following, to be heard, to be praised and exalted by men? If so, quit now.

3. Be committed to preaching the Gospel in the pulpit and out of it. Wherever you are, you ought to be a faithful witness of the Gospel of Christ. Everyone you know should know that you are a Gospel preacher. Be

♦ (Continued on page 23)

What is Message?

(Continued from page 11) ♦

say, "I believe Jesus died for my sins;" but then they never cease from sin and follow Him. They never have done with what they say with their mouths that Jesus died to save them from. There is no salvation in such so-called "believing." **"...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"** (Luke 13:3), Jesus said. **"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy"** (Prov. 28:13). I do not know that too many even bother to cover their sins in this present hour. They flaunt them, brag about them, and defend them, but I do not see too many who cover them; but the meaning is the same, they must repent of them, which means they must confess and forsake them, abandon them, receive forgiveness and cleansing through the blood of God's atoning sacrifice, His only begotten Son, and then, **"...go, and sin no more"** (John 8:11).

I think we are well established on the message, so I will not tarry on this point any longer. Let us consider the mission. The message is to be preached. It is to be proclaimed. It is to be shared. It is to be published. It is to be reported. It is to be witnessed and testified. There is no message unless the message is transmitted. There is no such thing as a message unless it is sent, unless it is communicated. If I keep something in my heart and do not tell you, there is no message, because I never sent or communicated the message. When it comes to the gospel, our message given us by God as a church of the living God, it **"should be preached in his name among all nations."** We did

not create or come up with the message. The message is not ours, but God's. It originated with Him, it belongs to Him, it serves His purpose, and it is not our business to change it in any way. But He has made us His messengers. We are to transmit the message. **"Do all things without murmurings and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world; Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain"** (Phil. 2:14-16). If we refuse to preach the message, and do not hold forth the Word of Life, then we do not need to have our lampstand removed, because we have simply ceased to be a lampstand of the Lord Jesus Christ. **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature"** (Mark 16:15). Can anything be clearer or plainer than that? **"Therefore they that were scattered abroad went every where preaching the word"** (Acts 8:4).

Many of you are good at giving out all kinds of reports to the people you know. You give the weather report, the gossip report, the grapevine report, the heard it on the telephone report, the read it in the paper or saw it on the television report. Those things are not your or my concern. **"Let the dead bury their dead: but go thou and preach the kingdom of God"** (Luke 9:60). The newspaper and the news station and the weather man or woman and the neighbor up the road and the person across the street whom you do not even know but about whom you heard some juicy news do not need your help getting out their report, and neither is it any of your concern.

Your concern is the message that through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ any person may find remission of sins with God. Now you may not be able to give that message out to very many people; but your concern is giving it out to the people to whom God wants you to give it out, to whom He gives you the opportunity to be a witness; and also by being a fellow helper to the truth in support of those whom God calls to give it out unto others, such as your pastor, other pastors and teachers of God's Word, and missionaries who are sent out by the leadership of the Spirit of God.

Now I want to touch briefly upon what is our motive. Notice the last verses of our text. **"And they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen."** Our motive is the praising and blessing of God, or bringing Him glory. And I am convinced that nothing brings God so much glory as the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. What is it that is going to result in the praising and blessing of God throughout all eternity by both men and angels? It is the redemption of all who have been washed from their sins in the blood of God's Lamb. And what is it that brings men to the fountain opened for sin that is filled with blood drawn from Immanuel's veins? It is the gospel message, that official and factual report from heaven that, **"...Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations..."** Many have said that our motive is the salvation of sinners, and

that is partly true; but to what end are they saved? They are saved unto the praise and honor and glory of God through Jesus Christ. And so our motive, which moves us to fulfill our mission in communicating and giving out the message of the gospel, is that in all things, by lip and life, in thought, word, and deed, we should do all things to the honor and the glory of God. **"Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God. Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God: Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved"** (I Cor. 10:31-33).

Will you recommit your life to the honor and glory of God? Will you repent of your lack of concern, lack of interest, lack of devotion, and lack of participation in the work of God, turn your back on mere carnal and worldly concerns, and fulfill your part in the work of the church of the living God?



The Blessed

(Continued from page 1) ♦

The word spelled "blessed" is found over 300 times in the Bible. When you look in a dictionary for the meaning, you will find this definition: Divinely or supremely favored; fortunate; worthy of adoration, reverence, or worship. This word is an adjective that means a word imputing a characteristic of a noun or pronoun. If we say then that that person is "blessed," then the word shows us a characteristic of that person. The root word "bless" is an action word that means to consecrate or sanctify by a religious act, make or pronounce

♦ (Continued on page 17)

The Blessed

(Continued from page 16) ♦

holy, to bestow good of any kind upon, and to request of God the bestowal of divine favor. As we look at this word that is spelled the same in both cases, but can be pronounced two different ways, we must consider the context in which it is presented in the Word of God. In our text verses, we see this word used both ways. **“Blessed (Bless’ed) be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed (blessed) us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ”** (Eph. 1:3). In the first instance, the word is used to describe God. Our definition above states the meaning here to be “worthy of adoration, reverence, or worship.” We should never reverence a man or worship him. Whenever this word is used in the context speaking of God, we should pronounce it as “bless’ed” (two syllables). In the second instance in this verse, the word is used to describe what happens when God bestows kindness to His chosen people. We are “blessed” (one syllable), or “supremely favored,” as we saw in the definition. In studying this word “blessed” in the Bible, both Hebrew and Greek give the definition of this word to apply to both man and God. I used Vine’s Dictionary and also Strong’s Hebrew and Greek Dictionary for definitions. I cannot definitively say that we must use and read this word the way I am trying to describe. But what I do suggest is that you consider my point as you read the Word of God and that you please emphasize the difference in the pronunciation, and recognize and give God the Supreme glory when we use this word.

I believe we can all agree that

God’s chosen people are blessed beyond our comprehension. We are blessed every day of our lives. We are blessed in the good times and in the bad. We are blessed many times when we do not even recognize it. There are hundreds of Scripture verses telling us how and when man is being blessed. The first verses in the Bible telling of man’s blessing are Genesis 1:27-28 **“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed (blessed) them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.”** If God had not blessed Adam and Eve to be able to multiply, none of us would be here today being blessed in all aspects of our everyday lives. God molds His people into whatsoever He sees fit. **“But now, O LORD, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter, and we all are the work of thy hand”** (Isa. 64:8). God blessed Noah, Joseph, Moses, and so many others throughout the Bible. The Beatitudes give us a variety of types of people who are blessed; those who are poor, those who mourn, the meek, the hungry, those who are merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers and many others. According to Strong’s, the word “blessed” in the Beatitudes means supremely blessed or fortunate.

God’s people, because they are blessed, are expected to be a faithful people. God blesses us with salvation and everlasting life. Should we not be faithful to God, to obey His teachings, to study His Word, etc.? **“And the Lord said, Who then is**

that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing” (Luke 12:42-43). Jesus said that servant would be blessed in his faithfulness to be a wise steward. God blesses His people with gifts, whether it be temporal or spiritual. Isaac was blessed with his faithful and loving wife Rebekah. God also blessed “the latter end of Job more than his beginning” because he was faithful.

In addition, God’s people bestow blessings upon one another in praying for each other. **“Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much”** (James 5:16). **“For this cause we also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that ye might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding”** (Col. 1:9). We are also told to pray for our enemies as it says in Luke 6:28 **“Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you”** (Luke 6:28).

How do we know we are blessed? Only God can reveal our spiritual blessings. Romans 4: 7 tells us we are blessed because our iniquities and sins are forgiven. We are further blessed when we endure trials and temptations. **“Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him”** (Jam. 1:12). We know we are blessed by the change in our lives that we and others see in us after the Lord saves us. Psalm

145:1-2 explains this very well: **“I will extol thee, my God, O king; and I will bless thy name for ever and ever. Every day will I bless thee; and I will praise thy name for ever and ever.”**

Now let us consider the One that I, and hopefully you, refer to as being the “Bless’ed.” The above meaning of the word blessed is, worthy of adoration, reverence, or worship. We know that only God is called “reverend.” In Psalm 111:9 **“He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”** This entire Psalm is speaking of God and no one else. Man cannot do what is described in these verses. God provides all things to His people. Salvation (Psa. 27: 1); Faith (Eph. 2: 8-9); Spirituality (Gal. 5:16); Love (Eph. 5:2); Illumination (I John 1:7); Christlikeness (I John 2:6) and much more. We have all these characteristics because we are blessed of God. Let us look at some verses in the Bible that show that God is the “Bless’ed.” **“Blessed (Bless’ed) be the LORD God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things”** (Psa. 72:18). Only God can do “wondrous things.” **“Blessed (Bless’ed) be the LORD God of Israel from everlasting to everlasting: and let all the people say, Amen. Praise ye the LORD”** (Psa. 106:48). Only God is from everlasting to everlasting. **“Blessed (Bless’ed) be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead”** (I Pet. 1:3). Only God can bestow His abundant mercy upon His chosen people, giving them that “lively hope.”

To be blessed of God is to be

♦ (Continued on page 23)



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



When Gog Meets God

North of Palestine is a nation occupying one-fifth of the earth's surface or twelve million square miles. I refer to the land of Russia and her satellites. Soviet Russian occupies 8,647,250 square miles and her satellites about four million. Russia and her satellites have a population of over nine hundred million people. She probably controls thirty to forty per cent of the world's population one way or another. Russia is the king of the north. Her dominion extends from the Baltic Sea to the Pacific Ocean, a two-continent empire spreading over Europe and Asia.

One of the most significant events in the last quarter of a century is the remarkable rise of Russia to a place of world prominence. Rising up from almost total destruction in World War II, she has become one of the principal competitors of the United States for world leadership. The United Soviet Socialist Republic of Russia has as its goal the completion of the world revolution begun in November 7, 1917. She expects her master plan to communize the world to be successful between 1970 and 1980. The overthrow of the non-Communist world is to be accomplished through infiltration and minor wars.

Many Bible readers are asking will Russia rule the world? Is Russia mentioned in Bible prophecy? Will Russia fight a

war in the Holy Land? To these questions I must reply that Russia has a very prominent place in Bible prophesy. Ezekiel chapters 38 and 39 tell the future of Russia in world affairs.

In Ezekiel 36 to 40 we have a panoramic view of the end time scenes. Chapter 37 is a prophecy of the restoration of the nation of Israel. This prophecy was fulfilled in the last generation. After two thousand years of dispersion of the Jews among the Gentile nations of the earth, the State of Israel emerged on May 14, 1948.

Chapters 38 to 39 reveal events which happen after the restoration of Israel to Palestine. So the prophecy in chapters 38 and 39 could not have been fulfilled before 1948. These two chapters tell of Russia's invasion of Palestine at the battle of Armageddon. Chapters 40 to 48 describe in great detail the rest of Israel in the land of Palestine and the reign of King Jesus on earth.

MAGOG IS RUSSIA

We are presently living in the time between the 37 and 38th chapters of Ezekiel. The 38 and 39th chapters predict a war between Israel and Russia. Two thousand and five hundred years ago the Spirit moved Ezekiel to utter a prophecy against Russia. At the time Ezekiel wrote the inhabitants of this northern country were roving tribes, living by thievery and warfare. These people had terrorized southwest

Asia from the time of Ezekiel's birth. So he was familiar with these people then called Scythians. It is believed by some that the Babylonians sent the prophet to the land of the Scythians.

Ezekiel describes Gog as the king of the land of Magog. He wrote by divine inspiration in chapter 38, verses 1 to 4 these words: **"And the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Gog, the land of Magog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal, and prophesy against him, And say, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I am against thee, O Gog, the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal; And I will turn thee back, and put hooks into thy jaws, and I will bring thee forth, and all thine army, horses and horsemen, all of them clothed with all sorts of armour, even a great company with bucklers and shields, all of them handling swords."**

One can readily see that the identity of Gog and the land of Magog are vital to understanding this passage. Since Gog is referred to as **"Thou," "Thee," "Him"** (Ezek. 38:16-17, 22) and is said to have hands (Ezek. 39:3), we can be sure he is a real person. Ezekiel 38:3 says that he is the prince of Rosh, Meshech and Tubal. Hence Gog is the king of a northern confederacy of nations which will attack Israel when they are dwelling in security in the latter days prior to the second coming of Christ.

The word "Magog" is mentioned first in Genesis 10:2 as the second son of Japheth. Since Ezekiel speaks of the land of Magog, he must be referring to the land where the descendants of Magog settled. Commenting upon Genesis 10:2 Josephus says: "Magog founded those that from

him were named Magogites, but who are by the Greeks called Scythians" (ANTIQUITIES OF THE JEWS, p. 40). We know from history that the Scythians lived north of Israel and were scattered over the area that is now called Russia.

John Gill, writing in the mid 1700s, wrote in Ezekiel 38:2: "Gog is further described as the chief prince of Meshech and Tubal: some render it prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal; taking Rosh, as the rest, for the name of a place, a part of Scythia, from which the Russians came, and had their name" (GILL'S EXPOSITOR, Vol. VI, pp. 197-198).

James Bicheno, pastor of the Baptist Church in Hop Garden from 1811 to 1818, wrote about Gog and Magog: "Respecting Gog and his associates, mentioned by Ezekiel, it appears that Gog, or Magog, the son of Japheth, settled himself about Mount Caucasus, and is esteemed as the father of the Scythians, who dwelt on the east and north-east of the Euxine or Black Sea. Gomer and his son Togarmah peopled the northern track of the latter Asia; Meshech settled to the eastward of Gomer, in part of Cappadocia and Armenian, to the south and south-east of the Black Sea; Tubal settled still farther to the eastward, towards the Caspian Sea. These two latter were the near neighbors of Gog. From a colony of Tubal sprung the Russians; and the Muscovites own their origin to a colony of Meshech" (SIGNS OF THE LATTER DAYS, p. 103, 1794 edition).

He adds on page 104: "Thus the Russians and Moscovites themselves appear to be included in the enumeration of Ezekiel, and we may observe that they have already extended their conquests

◊ (Continued on page 19)

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 18) ♦

into the neighborhood of the Black and Caspian Seas, and of those parts originally settled by Gog and their ancestor Tubal. The probability is, that they will extend their conquests still farther, and be distinguished instruments in the overthrow of the Turkish Empire. And having effected this, it is likely that, with the assistance of their newly acquired subjects or allies from the Caspian to the Propontus, with the Persians, & c. (The people enumerated by Ezekiel), they will both be the invading multitude marked out by the Spirit of Prophecy."

These two statements from two great Baptist scholars are sufficient to convince me that Gog is the ruler of modern Russia. But there is much modern scholarship to vindicate these two old Baptists. A footnote on Gog in the Scofield Reference Bible says on page 883: "That the primary reference is to the northern (European) powers, headed up by Russia, all agree." Halley's Bible Handbook, Fairbairne's Imperial Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Lange's Commentary, Unger's Bible Dictionary and the New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge all agree with this view.

Gensenius, the German-Hebrew scholar, in his unsurpassed lexicon states: "Roch---proper name of a northern nation, mentioned with Tubal and Meshech, undoubtedly the Russians, who are mentioned by Byzantine writers of the tenth century, under the name of 'the Rhos' (In Greek), dwelling to the north of Taurus."

The American Standard Version gives the correct translation of Ezekiel 38:2 where

Gog is called "**The prince of Rosh, Meshech, and Tubal.**" The King James translators were wrong in making Rosh have the adjective meaning of chief. It is a proper noun. Rosh is probably the root of our modern word Russia. It is quite common for the consonants to remain the same and the vowels to be changed. If the vowel "o" is changed to "u" it becomes the root of our word, "Russia," with the suffix added.

"Meshech" is the ancient tribal name for Moscow. It is related to Moschi, a people who inhabited a portion of the land between the Black and Caspian Seas. These people were later called "Muscovites" from which came the name Moscow. "Tubal" is the tribal name from which the eastern capital of Russia, Tobalski, is derived.

RUSSIA NORTH OF PALESTINE

If one rejects these conclusions, he still must admit that Russia is in a geographical location north of Palestine. Ezekiel three times tells us according to the marginal rendering that these invading hordes come from "the uttermost parts of the north" (Ezek. 38:6, 15; 39:2). If you draw a straight line from Jerusalem to the North Pole, you will find that your line passes through the city of Moscow as both Moscow and Jerusalem are in the same meridian.

RUSSIA'S ALLIES

Ezekiel even names those nations who will form a confederacy with Gog in the invasion of Palestine. He says in verses 5 to 6: "**Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya with them; all of them with shield and helmet; Gomer, and all his bands; the house of Togarmah of the north quarters, and all his bands: and many people with thee.**"

The list of Russia's allies starts

with Persia. Much of what was once ancient Persia is modern Iran, for in 1935 the name of Persia was changed to Iran. The term Persia may also embrace modern Syria, Afghanistan and Iraq, all of which today are under the control of Russia. Events in Iran have received much attention in the last few months. Under the rule of the Shah, Iran was loyal to the United States. Now an Islamic-Marxist government has replaced the Shah. Khomeini has seized power with the support of the Soviet Union. These events are a prelude to a complete Russian takeover.

Ethiopia, a country in east Africa, comes next in the list. This is Cush, the first son of Ham (Gen. 10:6). His descendants settled in what is now modern Ethiopia and Sudan. This country is south of Egypt and is generally mentioned in connection with Egypt in the Old Testament (Ps. 68:31; Isa. 20:3-5; Ezek. 30:4-5; Dan. 11:43; Nah. 3:9). Modern Ethiopia has adopted Communism and allied herself with Russia. This has occurred after the United States donated her millions of dollars in foreign aid.

Libya comes next. This is Phut, the third son of Ham (Gen. 10:6). Some believe his descendants settled on the tract of land lying on the Mediterranean between Egypt and Carthage. Others believe it was in the same geographic region as Persia and Ethiopia, which lies south of Russia. David Cooper holds that Libya is Somaliland east and north of Ethiopia. John Gill says it is a country in Africa to the west of Egypt.

Next is Gomer. In Genesis 10:2-3 Gomer is seen as the oldest son of Japheth, but later the name was applied to a tribe, probably the Cimmerians. Their land was sometimes called Gomeria,

Gomerland, and Germeria. We know it to day by the name Germany. It is also well-known that East Germany is presently under Russian control.

Then there comes Togarmah. We learn from Genesis 10:3 that Togarmah was a son of Gomer. They were the Armenians. They settled north of Israel in what is modern Turkey. Modern Turkey borders on Russia and is on very good terms with the Russians.

In verse 6, the expression, "**many people with thee,**" points to the countries swallowed up by Russian conquest. In 1940 Russia took the Baltic republic of Latvia, then Lithuania, then Estonia, and forced Rumania to give Bessarabia. Then in 1945 she took part of Finland, then swallowed up Czechoslovakia, then Poland, East Prussia, and seized the Kureles Islands, and then the south half of Sakalin Island. In 1948 she made satellites of Rumania, followed by Hungary, Albania, Bulgaria, East Germany and North Korea. In more modern times Russia has spread her tentacles into Cuba, Angola, and Vietnam.

THE INVASION OF ISRAEL

The actual invasion of Palestine is described by Ezekiel in verses 8 to 12: "**After many days thou shalt be visited: in the latter years thou shalt come into the land that is brought back from the sword, and is gathered out of many people, against the mountains of Israel, which have been always waste: but it is brought forth out of the nations, and they shall dwell safely all of them. They shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land, thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee. Thus saith the Lord GOD; it shall also come to pass, that**

♦ (Continued on page 20)

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 19) ♦

at the same time shall things come into thy mind, and thou shalt think an evil thought: And thou shalt say, I will go up to the land of unwallled villages; I will go to them that are at rest, that dwell safely, all of them dwelling without walls, and having neither bars nor gates. To take a spoil, and take a prey; to turn thine hand upon the desolate places that are now inhabited, and upon their people that are gathered out of the nations, which have gotten cattle and goods, that dwell in the midst of the land."

INVASION AFTER ISRAEL IS REGATHERED

The situation existing when this invasion takes place is worthy of consideration. Verses 8 and 16 tell us that this invasion will occur in the "latter days." Verses 10, 11 and 14 reveal that Israel will be dwelling in safety in their ancient land. Again we see that this battle cannot be fought until Israel is in her land. She must not only be in her land, but dwelling safely in her land.

Then, too, I notice that the invasion is to occur after the rebuilding of cities without walls. In ancient times cities had walls around them for protection from the enemies. This practice was discontinued in our time since walls are not adequate protection against modern warfare. If you go to Israel today you will see cities without walls. Unwallled villages point to Israel's present situation.

I further see in verses 12 and 13 that Israel will have become a great nation of wealth. Russia comes to take silver and gold. Those familiar with the present economic growth of Israel know that it has already become a nation

of wealth. Israel has a tremendous oil reserve. The chemical value of the Dead Sea area is believed to be about three trillion dollars. These chemicals of the Dead Sea are urgently needed for modern industry and warfare. Israel has already established a plant at the south end of the Dead Sea and is reclaiming these chemicals and shipping them out.

The Middle East is a hub between three major continents--Europe, Asia and Africa. Therefore it is of tremendous strategic importance to a nation seeking to dominate the world like Russia.

ISRAEL'S ALLIES

Some of the other nations of the world will protest this invasion of Palestine. Ezekiel tells us in verse 13 of chapter 38: **"Sheba and Dedan, and the merchants of Tarshish, with all the young lions thereof, shall say unto thee, Art thou come to take a spoil? hast thou gathered thy company to take a prey? to carry away silver and gold, to take away cattle and goods, to take a great spoil?"**

Sheba and Dedan are Arabian nations which would include modern Saudi-Arabia and Yemen. Tarshish is the country which was settled by the descendants of Javan (Gen. 10:4). Some twenty times in the Scriptures you can read of the ships of Tarshish or merchants of Tarshish (II Chron. 9:21; 20:36; Ps. 48:7; Isa. 23:1,6,14). We know from the story of Jonah that Tarshish was across the waters of the Mediterranean from Palestine (Jon. 1:3), a distant place (Isa. 60:9). Some identify it with Tartessus in south Spain near Gibraltar. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia says that "Tarshish was the farthest limit of the western world as known to the Hebrews" (Vol. 4, p.

2775). The reference is clearly to people living in the western world from Palestine.

Tarshish is connected with the young lions as if to imply that Tarshish is the old lion. This is doubtless a reference to the British Empire whose national symbol has been a lion as far back as we have a record. The young lions would be the nations which came out of the British Empire like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States. Tarshish and the young lions are Ezekiel's description of those countries which would rise to power from the then known world west of the Holy Land.

Since America is one of the young lions under consideration, some interesting thoughts come to mind from the account in Ezekiel 38. First, I notice that America will stand with the nation of Israel in the close of the times of the Gentiles. Second, I see that England and the United States will not be under Russian domination at the end of the age. Thank God for this truth! America and England merely protest the invasion of Palestine. This fits perfectly with the modern policy of both these countries. There was a time when we would fight to protect freedom around the world, but it is no longer true. Under our detente policy we constantly protest but never are willing to fight. Fourth, it would seem from other Scriptures that America and England will finally join the battle in Palestine as all nations are to come against Jerusalem to the battle of Armageddon.

The stage is set for the invasion of Palestine by the northern confederacy. The hours remaining of the times of the Gentiles are swiftly running out. The rapture of the saints could happen at any

moment. Are you ready for the coming of Christ? Is your soul sheltered under the precious blood of Christ?

"Therefore, son of man, prophesy and say unto Gog, Thus saith the Lord GOD; In that day when my people of Israel dwelleth safely, shalt thou not know it? And thou shalt come from thy place out of the north parts, thou, and many people with thee, all of them riding upon horses, a great company, and a mighty army: And thou shalt come up against my people of Israel, as a cloud to cover the land; it shall be in the latter days, and I will bring thee against my land, that the heathen may know me, when I shall be sanctified in thee, O Gog, before their eyes. Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them?" (Ezek. 38:14-17).

In my previous message I showed how Ezekiel foretold of a Russian invasion of Palestine near the end of the times of the Gentiles. I identified her allies as Iran, Germany, Turkey and other nations swallowed up by Russian conquest. I also showed how this invasion would take place after Israel was regathered to her land and living in safety. I concluded by speaking about the nations of the Western World protesting against this Russian invasion of Palestine. Bible prophecy discloses in Daniel 11:40 that the King of Rome and his ten federated nations will join with Britain and the United States in the battle of Armageddon in defense of Palestine's right to exist free from Russian domination. It appears that the King of Rome

♦ (Continued on page 21)

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 20) ◇

will go to Palestine and put down the nation of Egypt, the king of the south. Then **“Tidings out of the east and out of the north shall trouble him.”** The east refers to the invasion of the Oriental hordes from China, Japan, India and other countries east of Palestine. The threat out of the north is Gog and his bands which are Russia and her allies. Thus all nations will be gathered against Jerusalem (Joel 3:1-17; Zech. 14:2; Rev. 16:14).

THE TIME OF THIS INVASION

It is evident that this battle is yet future from Ezekiel 38:39. The invasion is to occur after Israel is regathered in her ancient homeland. There are distinct references to “the mountains of Israel” (38:8; 39:2, 17) and Gog’s grave is said to be “in Israel” (39:11). It is to come when Israel dwells safely in unwallled villages (38:8, 11). Ezekiel says it is to transpire in “the latter days” (38:16) and “the latter years” (38:8). This must be a reference to God’s dealings with Israel in the seventieth week of Daniel’s prophesy. It is connected with Israel’s conversion at the second advent of Christ to the Mount of Olives.

Premillennialists are all agreed that this battle has not yet taken place, but they are not completely agreed as to the exact time it will occur. Some believe it will transpire before the rapture, others hold it will occur sometime in the tribulation period. Still others place it at the end of the Millennium. However the great majority believe it will happen during the tribulation, either at the beginning or near the close. I believe this battle will happen at

the end of the tribulation period in connection with Armageddon.

I offer the following facts in support of my view: (1) A sword of the Lord is mentioned in both battles (Ezek. 38:21; Rev. 19:15, 21); (2) Both mention a great earthquake (Ezek. 38:19-20; Rev. 16:16-20); (3) Both mention a mighty hail (Ezek. 38:22; Rev. 16:21); (4) Both mention the fowls eating dead bodies (Ezek. 39:4, 17-20; Rev. 19:17-18); (5) Israel is converted following this great battle (Ezek. 7,25,29; Zech. 13-14; Matt. 24:29-31). This last point settles the time of the battle since all agree that the conversion of Israel is at the second coming of Christ at the close of the tribulation.

The chief objection offered is that since Israel is to be dwelling safely in her land this cannot be the end of the tribulation, especially since Israel is being persecuted by the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation (Rev. 12:14-17). But it appears to me the Antichrist is persecuting the believing remnant of Israel. We must not assume there will be no Jews in Jerusalem during the period the sun-clothed woman is preserved in the wilderness (Rev. 12:14). Zechariah 13-14 speaks of Jews in Jerusalem at the battle of Armageddon who are converted by the sight of Christ returning in glory. Thus it is the unsaved Jews in Jerusalem which Gog attacks.

I believe this battle will happen in connection with the battle of Armageddon at the end of the Great Tribulation. Israel is not at rest today with her neighbors though she has already been regathered to her ancient land. When the King of Rome emerges and revives the Roman Empire, he will make a covenant of protection and peace with the people of Israel (Dan. 9:27). Under this covenant

Israel will be able to relax from their Gentile enemies and dwell safely. Russia will invade the land of Israel during this period.

Ezekiel’s prophecy cannot be fulfilled until Israel is at rest. Presently Israel is an armed camp. Their state of unrest does not correspond to Ezekiel’s prophecy. If Russia invaded Palestine today, it would not be the fulfillment of Ezekiel’s words.

THE DESTRUCTION OF THE INVADERS

Ezekiel tells us that these invaders will be destroyed by God’s own power. **“Thus saith the Lord GOD; Art thou he of whom I have spoken in old time by my servants the prophets of Israel, which prophesied in those days many years that I would bring thee against them? And it shall come to pass at the same time when Gog shall come against the land of Israel, saith the Lord GOD, that my fury shall come up in my face. For in my jealousy and in the fire of my wrath have I spoken, Surely in that day there shall be a great shaking in the land of Israel; So that the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of heaven, and the beasts of the field, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth, and all the men that are upon the face of the earth, shall shake at my presence, and the mountains shall be thrown down, and the steep places shall fall, and every wall shall fall to the ground.”** So God will send earthquakes, falling mountains and other disturbances to hinder the march of the northern invaders.

This is in harmony with John’s description of Armageddon. **“And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake,**

and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath. And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found” (Rev. 16:18-20).

He continues in verses 21 and 22: **“And I will call for a sword against him. . . with pestilence and with blood; and I will rain upon him, and upon his bands, and upon the many people that are with him, an overflowing rain, and great hailstones, fire, and brimstone.”** Notice how God will **“call for a sword against him (Gog).”** Then compare John’s revelation of the Second Coming of Christ in Revelation 19. He tells us in verse 15: **“And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations....”** In verse 21 he also says: **“And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth....”** In Revelation 16:21 John mentioned hail which is about 125 pounds of weight.

Taking into consideration all that Ezekiel says, it appears that God will first send an earthquake and falling mountains upon Gog and his allies. This will cause confusion and **“every man’s sword shall be against his brother”** (Ezek. 38:21). Then there is **“pestilence and... blood”** which may be a virus epidemic of bloody flux. This is followed by a great electric storm. Those surviving this will be slain with the sword of Christ and the armies of Heaven.

GOG’S GRAVEYARD

Gog and his forces will be slain by God before they have had a chance to use their weapons

BEREA BAPTIST BANNER
Financial Report
3-1-2022 to 3-31-2022

Beginning Balance	6,122.29
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	500.00
S.G. B. C. Silsbee TX	30.00
Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX	100.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL	25.00
Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI	50.00
Grace B. C., Germanton, NC	50.00
The Lord's B. C., Goose Creek, SC	50.00
Michael Sherman, Ashland, KY	35.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Cheapeake, OH	100.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL	100.00
Portland B. C., Plumerville, AR	50.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Wellington, KS	100.00
Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV	50.00
Southside BC, Fulton, MS	25.00
N. T. B. C. Goshen, IN	50.00
Parkway L. B. C., Springfield, OR	100.00
Indore BC, Indore, WV	300.00
West Jefferson BC, West Jefferson, OH.....	75.00
Emmanuel BC, Oldtown, KY.....	100.00
Berea BC, Stonington, IL.....	60.00
Bethel BC, Pasadena, TX,	100.00
Big Creek BC, Wayne, WV	200.00
Eld Donald Parker, Millport, AL.....	100.00
Faith BC, Lynn, AR.....	12.50
Victory B. C., Courtland VA	50.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg KY	150.00
Grace B. C., Corbin KY	100.00
Timothy Arnold, Vine Grove KY	25.00

Divided Checks.....	150.00
Subscriptions	108.00
Anonymous	2270.00
Sub Total	5215.50
TOTAL	\$11,337.79

EXPENDITURES:

Postage	683.14
Printing.....	459.10
Wages	1750.00
FICA	133.88
Div Cks	150.00
Total Expenditures	\$3176.12
ENDING BALANCE	\$8,161.67



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST
Financial Report
3-1-2022 to 3-31-2022

Beginning Balance	\$4,103.17
RECEIPTS:	
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS	225.00
Calvary Ind. B. C., Sumas, WA	100.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg KY	100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY	100.00
.....	525.00
TOTAL	4628.17
EXPENDITURES:	
Radio time	363.98
Adobe	56.70
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	420.68
.....
Interest	+0.03
ENDING BALANCE	\$4,207.52

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 21) ♦

to any great degree. I read in Ezekiel 39:3-5 these words: **"And I will smite thy bow out of thy left hand, and will cause thine arrows to fall out of thy right hand. Thou shalt fall upon the mountains of Israel, thou, and all thy bands, and the people that is with thee: and I will give thee unto the ravenous birds of every sort, and to the beasts of the field to be devoured. Thou shalt fall upon the open field: for I have spoken it, saith the Lord GOD."** This is the complete destruction of Gog and his allies. That one-sixth of the horde from the north will be left alive, as the King James Version in Ezekiel 39:2 teaches, is a mistaken translation.

THE FOWLS EAT THE FOOLS

The mighty army of the north probably consisting of many millions will become bird food. Ezekiel tells us: **"And, thou son of man, thus saith the Lord GOD; speak unto every feathered fowl, and to every beast of the field, Assemble yourselves, and come; gather yourselves on every side to my sacrifice that I do sacrifice for you, even a great sacrifice upon the mountains of Israel, that ye may eat flesh, and drink blood. Ye shall eat the flesh of the mighty, and drink the blood of the princes of the earth, of rams, of lambs, and of goats, of bullocks, all of them fatlings of Bashan. And ye shall eat fat till ye be full, and drink blood till ye be drunken, of my sacrifice which I have sacrificed for you. Thus ye shall be filled of my table with horses and chariots, with mighty men, and with all men of war, saith the Lord GOD"** (Ezek. 39:17-20). John tells us in Revelation 19 that this will

happen at the Second Coming of Christ (Rev. 19:17-18).

So great will be the slaughter that blood will flow 200 miles long to the depth of a horse's bridle (Rev. 14:20). According to Ezekiel 39:12 it will take seven months to bury the dead. The Israelites will burn the weapons of war as fire wood for seven years (Ezek. 39:9).

GOD HAS DECREED RUSSIA'S DESTRUCTION

The Lord Himself brings Russia to this slaughter. There are three definite statements, **"I will bring thee against them"** (Ezek. 38:16,4,17). In this I see God exercising His sovereignty. No power on earth can prevent God's future destruction of Gog.

While the destruction of Russia is foreordained, Russia is still responsible for her conduct. She is said to decide to invade Palestine. The Bible distinctly says that Russia will say: **"I would (will) go up to the land of unwalled villages; I will go to them that are at rest"** (Ezek. 38:11). Here we see the harmony between God's plan and man's responsibility.

WHY GOD IS AGAINST GOG

The Scythians, the progenitors of the modern Russians, were a nomadic people of a bloodthirsty disposition. They sacrificed one out of every hundred of their prisoners of war to their god. They drank the blood of their enemies and made vases of their skulls and dollies of their scalps. No wonder even in the days of Ezekiel God said: **"...I am against thee, O Gog..."** God's attitude has not changed in the days of the modern godless Russians. God is still against Russia and has foreordained her doom.

First, God is against Gog because Gog is against God. A Red conspirator said some years ago: "Brethren, I come

to announce unto you a New Gospel, which must penetrate unto the very ends of the world. . .the old world must be destroyed and replaced by a new one. . .the lie must be stamped out and give way to truth. . .the first lie is God, the second lie is right. . .and when you have freed your minds from the fear of a God and from that childish respect for the fiction of right, then all the remaining chains that bind you, and which are called science, civilization, property, marriage, mortality and justice, will snap asunder like threads. . .Let your own happiness be your only law."

Such statements reveal the godless program of Russia. It is alarming to see how these Russian ideologies have crept into the minds of some young Americans. Modern Russians scoff at Heaven as the "promise of pie in the sky." They promise pie on earth, an earthly utopia in place of a heavenly home. This is why God is against Gog.

The second reason God is against Russia is because she is against the Jews. God promised the first Hebrew: **"I will. . .curse him that curseth thee"** (Gen. 12:3). Historically and traditionally Russia has been anti-Semitic. The Bolsheviks promised the Jews racial equality to secure their cooperation in overthrowing the Czar in 1920. Once Stalin came into power he began to liquidate the Jews from the Communist party. Leon Trotsky, Jewish partner of Lenin in leading the Revolution, was murdered. Other Jews were marked for extermination and officially labeled "Trotskyities." The psalmist uttered this prophecy centuries ago: **"Woe is me, that I sojourn in Mesech..."** (Ps. 120:5).

♦ (Continued on page 23)

Country Preacher

(Continued from page 22) ♦

In Russia, Jews are not counted as human beings, not to mention citizens. They are looked upon as undesirable aliens and nonentities. The stage is being set for Russia's invasion of Palestine. The conquest of the Holy Land will be the culmination of all Russian anti-Semitism.

PROBLEMS CONSIDERED

The reference to the antiquated weapons like the bow and arrow in Ezekiel's words disturb some. They cannot bring themselves to believe that horses are used in modern warfare. But these words are not symbolic, for all prophecy must have a literal fulfillment. I do not concur with the idea that Ezekiel described the weapons of his day only to show the army will be fully equipped for battle. These weapons are just what Ezekiel says because the Bible declares they will be burned (Ezek. 39:9). It would be very difficult to burn a symbol.

I believe the nations will sign a disarmament treaty like many world leaders are already talking about. Since the production of tanks and guns could be easily detected, Russia will gather many horses and resort to primitive weapons made in secret. This will make the invasion of Palestine a surprise attack. Ezekiel's very words support this. **"Thou shalt ascend and come like a storm, thou shalt be like a cloud to cover the land; thou, and all thy bands, and many people with thee"** (Ezek. 38:9). This would allow a complete literal fulfillment which prophecy demands.

It is also interesting to note that a large portion of all the horses in the world are in Russia. And before someone declares that horses are not used in modern

warfare, let him recall that five thousand mounted cavalryman appeared in North Korea south of the Yalu River in December 1950 and put the American Marines to flight. In Revelation 19 John tells us Christ will come from Heaven upon **"A white horse"** (Rev. 19:11). Then he mentions that **"...the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses..."** (Rev. 19:14). It is also significant that John describes the depth of human blood as being **"...unto the horse bridles..."** (Rev. 14:20).

CONCLUSION

Moscow is becoming emboldened in its drive for world domination. They realize that public sentiment plus congressional restrictions have eliminated the possibility of U. S. troops being dispatched overseas to contest Communist aggression. Russia and her client states are having a field day in Africa and the Mid-east. America's allies around the world have serious doubts about the ability of the United States to defend the free world against the rapidly mounting Soviet challenge.

It would seem from Ezekiel's prophecy that Russia will be a greater world power near the end of the age than America. But Russia will never completely dominate the world. Instead, she is headed for a shameful defeat at the hands of Almighty God. Her defeat will not come from Europe or America, but from Heaven.

While the Bible does not tell us all that the future holds for this country, it does make it clear there will never be a Russian dominated world empire. The invasion of Palestine by Russia fits into our contemporary scene. This strongly indicates the times of the Gentiles are fast running out and that the nations are preparing

for the final crisis. If there ever was a people who had a right to look forward to the coming of the Lord momentarily day by day, on the basis of what is around them, it is us! **"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord..."** (James 5:7).



The Blessed

(Continued from page 17) ♦

divinely favored. Read Psalm 89:15-17. God tells us in these verses that we are blessed because we know the joyful sound. What is meant by **"joyful sound"**? Strong's gives the meaning as acclamation of joy or a battle cry; rejoicing or shouting. He also tells us we shall **"walk, ... in the light of thy countenance,"** we will **"rejoice all the day,"** we will be **"exalted in His righteousness,"** He is the **"glory of their (our) strength,"** and in His favour we will **"be exalted."** We do not deserve these blessings. Only God can give us these Divine Favors, and we must acknowledge Him as Blessed.

I feel certain that not all will agree with me on this point, but what I want to prayerfully convey in this message is that we must acknowledge God as Reverend and Supreme in every way possible. Even in this one word, "blessed," we see it used in two different contexts. When it is used describing man use the one syllable word "blessed," and when it is describing God use the two syllable word "bless'ed." May the Lord bless you richly as you read His Word. **"Blessed (Bless'ed) be the LORD God of Israel for ever and ever. And all the people said, Amen, and praised the LORD"** (I Chron. 16:36).



Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 15) ♦

committed to the task of evangelism in your home, in your community, and through the work of missions. Every preacher must have a burden and concern for the souls of men. God has called you to preach the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as the only means of salvation to a world in darkness. Some Baptist preachers are missionary while in the pulpit but hardshell in practice. When was the last time you personally witnessed to someone and told them of the saving power of the Lord Jesus Christ? I Corinthians 9:16 states: **"For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel."**

4. **"Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all...Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth"** (I Tim. 4:13-15; II Tim. 2:15). You must be absolutely committed to the study of God's Word. This involves daily reading, study, memorization, and meditation of the Word of God. I have been preaching for 41 years and I have followed a simple formula to start every day: "BBB", Bible Before Breakfast! Generally,

♦ (Continued on page 24)

Forum Question #2

(Continued from page 23) ♦

I read through the Old Testament once and the New Testament three times a year.

Spurgeon said we ought to live in the Word of God and visit other good books. Hone your craft! Read good, sound books on preaching. Read systematic theology. Read biographies and autobiographies of faithful saints of God. Read Baptist history. Read sound expositions of the Scriptures. Read books on the subject of church truth. Read sound books on premillennial eschatology. Read books on the disciplines and practicalities of living the Christian life. If you are not committed to a life-time of reading, meditation, and application of the Scriptures; along with the reading of sound, Scriptural literature the ministry is probably not for you.

As a young preacher I had the advantage of pursuing my ministerial training in a true New Testament church and also supplementing my studies at Temple Baptist College in Cincinnati. My pastor and my professors all emphasized and encouraged the disciplined study and vigorous reading

of good books. Education forces a young preacher to complete a course of study and provides him with the necessary habits relating to the discipline of study. I have known exceptional preachers like Al Gormley and Milburn Cockrell who were for the most part self educated. You do not necessarily need a College education to be a well rounded preacher and pastor. Only God can truly make a man a preacher. However, every preacher must be committed to learning and growing in knowledge and wisdom.

When I was a young man I started out with C.D. Cole's *Definitions of Doctrine*, then T.P. Simmons *A Systematic Study of Bible Doctrines*, then John Gill's *Body of Divinity*, then J.M. Dagg's *Manual of Theology*, then *Christian Doctrine* by J.M. Pendleton, then *Handbook of Theology* by Norvell Robertson. I have read after but not completed theology books by Thomas Watson, J.P. Boice, Charles Hodge, R.L. Dabney, John MacArthur, and others.

♦ (To be continued in June issue)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

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

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

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

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

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Caldwell, KS is in need of a pastor. For more information

please contact the church in writing at SGBC, 400 N. Main St., Caldwell, KS 67022, or by phone Brother Darin Wiley 620-863-2431.

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

Grace Bible Baptist Church in Denham Springs, LA will be having their Bible Conference this year beginning on May 27th-29th.

Preaching for us will be: Brother Dan Gordon, Brother Joey Newell, Brother Larry Wilson, Brother Kelley Hinson, Brother Jerry Dodson, Brother Ken Long, Brother Randy Johnson, and Brother Joe Sidders.

If you have any questions or issues making a reservation, call me at (630) 485-1977.

The Beauty Mountain Baptist Church in Edmond WV invites you to their 2022 Spring Meeting, May 21, 2022. Meeting will begin at 9:30 with 3 speakers. Lunch will be provided.

Should you have any questions please call Pastor Bailess at 304-663-0966.

Philadelphia Baptist Church of Decatur, AL, and her pastor George Kelley would like to announce their upcoming fellowship meeting on June 10-12. Service times are Friday at 7:00 p.m. with a light meal provided at 5:00 p.m., Saturday and Sunday at 10:00 a.m. with lunch provided. The church house is located at 202 Mill Road, Decatur, Alabama.

For more information, contact Pastor Kelley at (909) 240-1809 or (256) 778-3042.

ARTICLE INDEX

Did Jesus Go To Hell? by Doug Newell IV	p. 1
What is Our Message by Timothy J. Hille	p. 1
The Blessed and the Bless'ed by Glenn Gilbreath	p. 1
For Whom the Bell Tolls by Joseph M. Sidders	p. 1
Brief Truths by Randy Johnson	p. 3
Narrow Paths by Doug Newell IV	p. 5
Moderate Steps by Paul Stepp	p. 7
Heavenly Hymns by The Hille's	p. 9
Selahs by Tomas Julius G. Salacup	p. 11
Forum	pp. 12-13
Country Preacher by Milburn Cockrell	p. 18