

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

Love Your Pastor

By Glenn Gilbreath
of Decatur, Alabama

John 13:31-35 "Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. 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."

The greatest expression of love ever shown to mortal man is when God gave His Son Jesus Christ to die on the cross of Calvary

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Commit Yourself to Him

By Joseph M. Sidders
of Guntown, Mississippi

I Peter 2:11-25, "Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation. -- Submit yourselves to every



ordinance of man for the Lord's sake: whether it be to the king, as supreme; Or unto governors, as unto them that are sent

by him for the punishment of evildoers, and for the praise of them that do well. For so is the will of God, that with well doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men: As

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Egypt in Great Tribulation

By Matthew Stepp
of Wayne, West Virginia

A detailed prophecy of the salvation of Egyptians (and Assyrians) being saved and worshipping God in the millennial reign is found beginning in Isaiah 19:1-2, "The burden of Egypt. Behold, the LORD rideth upon a swift cloud, and shall come into Egypt: and the idols of Egypt shall be moved at his presence, and the heart of Egypt shall melt in the midst of it. And I will set the Egyptians against the Egyptians: and they shall fight every one against his brother, and every one against



his neighbour; city against city, and kingdom against kingdom."

During the first half of the great tribulation, the

nation of Egypt will be caught up in a civil war, as the Lord reveals that among this primarily Muslim citizenry are actually some of the lost ten tribes of the northern kingdom of Israel that have been scattered worldwide. The Gospel preaching of the two witnesses (Daniel and John) I believe will be combined with the ministry

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Christ's Coming is to be Premillennial

T. P. Simmons
(1898 - 1969)

Recently, in giving a forecast of some of the things which we anticipated giving our readers through these columns, we mentioned that we planned to prepare a series of articles on the second coming of Christ. We are impressed that the time is ripe for us to begin that series of articles. Therefore, we are now offering the first one.

In offering these articles we do not profess to have any special or superior knowledge. But we have



tried to make a close study of the subject and have come to have some more or less definite convictions concerning it. And our

design is to merely give our reasons for these convictions, and to commend them to others for their prayerful comparison with Scripture. In the first article we shall attempt to establish the fact that Christ's coming is to be premillennial. But before

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The purpose of the *Berea Baptist Banner* is as follows:

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

Commit Yourself

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free, and not using your liberty for a cloke of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king. Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. For this is thankworthy, if a man for conscience toward God endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it, if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but if, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God. For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps: Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: Who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not; but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously: Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.

Peter's letter here was written approximately 63 A.D. with the mission offering encouragement to the suffering Christians who had been driven out of Jerusalem and scattered throughout Asia Minor. Most commentators believe Peter wrote this from Rome during the great persecution administered under Emperor Nero. This persecution involved the torture and killing of countless Christians as they lost their lives for keeping

their faith. It is within this letter's first chapter that the theme of the book is made most clear; **"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ"** (I Peter 1:7).

There is a large level of commitment required for us to stand a trial of this magnitude. Peter describes a trial by fire--of purification. We see why if we reread that verse outside the commas: **"That the trial of your faith...might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."** For this level of commitment, you must first be made to believe in Christ and that He is coming again. If you do not believe He exists or that He will reign supreme and judge the living and the dead, then when these trials come you are not likely to bear them. It will be much easier for you to "blend in" as Mordecai accused his cousin Esther of doing...or go the way of the world as Paul says that Demas did.

At the end of this reading Peter calls us **"Strangers and Pilgrims"**. I do not know of a more perfect description of true Christians. Again, our true home is with the Father in the many mansions of His house. Our home is with the Father. **"I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God"** (Rev. 21:3).

Our thoughts, hopes, and dreams should be God-centered, for as saved individuals called to salvation from the cross, that is

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Brief Truths

By Randy Johnson of
Texarkana, Texas

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



God's Chastening of His Children

"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." (Heb. 12:6-8)

All true Christians need to understand that our sins have been paid for in full by the blood of our Saviour as outlined in Ephesians 1:6-7. **"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."** Jesus paid our sin debt in full that a child of the Living God will never experience God's wrath for his sins because they are already accounted for. God's children, rather, are chastened; they are trained up and educated by discipline to do right. The word wrath is a justified punishment by anger, indignation or vengeance. In Romans 1:18, God said of this word, **"For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness."**

A deep study of Scripture will never reveal God "chastening" a lost person, nor see God executing

His wrath against His children. Why not? Jesus suffered our wrath during His beatings, His public shaming, and His time on the cross through His death. His punishment was all-sufficient to the command of God for the sins of all God's elect. A Christian has no unaccounted sins to pay for because God said we have been saved from the punishment of sin, and God's wrath, through Jesus. **"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."** (Rom. 5:9-10). The wrath of God is reserved for God's enemies—the lost whom God hates. **"For thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness: neither shall evil dwell with thee. The foolish shall not stand in thy sight: thou hatest all workers of iniquity."** (Ps. 5:4-5) A worker of iniquity is any lost person who was not cleansed by the blood of the Lamb by the process of His crucifixion. Therefore, let us understand that God never hates His elect children for anything—ever, because God has an eternal love for them. From eternity past to eternity future, God never changes. The time of this world never changes God, rather, all the pleasure and will of God is executed in time as God elected.

Therefore, let us now look at God's chastening of a child. God

said, **"For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons..."** God will never deal with lost, non-elect people as sons because God hates them. However, the saved are God's children, and that relationship is likened to an earthly father executing discipline to his child. A good father never executes wrath on his child because that kind of punishment would be classified as abusive. Let us remember that the word wrath as related to God is a justified anger, which means the law of God called for this punishment. Let us understand that our chastening, or righteous discipline from God, is done in love to correct, not to punish. While the chastening of God can range from a spat on the hand to destruction of earthly life and goods, or even death, it is still not wrath. So, why does God chasten His child if not for sin? If we do not walk as God commands, we are disobeying our Father. God shows His Fatherly love to us by correcting us to walk orderly. The more a child disobeys, the more severe the correction can be. However, God's correction is always in love, therefore, we ought to praise God because it shows us that we are His. **"My son, despise not the chastening of the LORD; neither be weary of his correction: For whom the LORD loveth he correcteth; even as a father the son in whom he delighteth."** (Pro. 3:11-12) Remember, obeying God is not an option—it is a demand, and refusing to do so could bring great pain or even death. In I Corinthians 11:30-32, Paul told the church at Corinth that their disobedience to do things properly brought discipline on them from God. **"For this cause**

many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep. For if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged. But when we are judged, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world." This chastening was brought on an entire church, not just a couple of members. God demands, **"... all things be done decently and in order,"** in I Corinthians 14:40. The level of chastening is in God's choice, but the way to avoid God's chastening is to walk in the Spirit. Walk in the order and command of the Scriptures; the Bible is a commandment not a suggestion! **"This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh. For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."**

(Gal. 5:16-17)

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



Commit Yourself

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our inheritance. Romans 8:16-19, **"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."** As an added blessing to the believer, our Christian walk, if we are truly pursuing after our Lord,

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will take us along paths that will draw us closer to Him.

The first thing we see referenced by Peter is the concept of submission (vs 13-17). Paul also touches on submission in Romans 13:1-7. **“Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God’s ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour.”**

It is easier for us to submit when we recognize that God is in control of everything. Some might ask, “Well, brother, what of the imprisonment and suffering? Being flayed alive, boiled alive, crucified, stoned, beheaded--all that our forefathers and even the apostles have suffered?” To that I would ask, are we committed enough to stand for God like this today? What did they say of their

suffering? According to Acts 5:41, they rejoiced **“that they were worthy to suffer shame for His name.”**

James 4:7-10, **“Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you. Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners; and purify your hearts, ye double minded. Be afflicted, and mourn, and weep: let your laughter be turned to mourning, and your joy to heaviness. Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up.”** Submit to His will, which is the same will that ordained the earthly leadership among us. That is not always easy to do, especially in recent times. It takes a commitment on our part to live by faith and not by what we see. Do we believe that God is in control of all things? If so, we should submit and be faithful.

“Feed the flock of God which is among you...Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away” (I Peter 5:2-4). Our submission gives glory to God, and for those who might be made to witness our submission, they, too, shall see our ensample and know that there is a God. Oh I wonder sometimes how Peter must have felt penning the words **“feed the flock.”** How many memories might have bubbled to the surface for him as he thought back to the Lord’s correction of him: **“Do you love me Simon Peter? Feed my sheep”**

The second concept Brother Peter mentions here is Subjection (vs 18-20). **“Humble yourselves in the sight of the Lord, and he shall lift you up”** (James 4:10).

What is to be gained by being patient, humble, and subject to a higher time table? How about God’s uplifting? **“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us”** (Rom. 8:31)?

What about a bearing witness of the majesty and predestination of God’s plans? Seeing a lost sheep found would be a great blessing that can only result from the hearing of His Word. Oh, beloved, that we might see a soul saved that once despised God yet this day!

A humble man does not fight and plead for attention; he doesn’t argue with authority just to argue. He is seen as humble when he turns the other cheek for the sake of what is more important--the condition of lost souls. It takes a level of subjection on our part that we might see lost souls saved. Again, I Peter 2:17, **“Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the king.”**

Let us read what Jesus said on this matter in Matthew 5:39-48: **“But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloke also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his**

sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so. Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.”

Ephesians 6:5-8, **“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.”**

Finally, Peter presents the idea of suffering (vs 21-25). This is a concept that perhaps we do not feel we should be allowed to go through. Do we, dear reader, not deserve Hell for our sins? Why, then do we attempt to deny God’s sovereignty in this? **“Then said Jesus unto his disciples, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me”** (Matt. 16:24). Jesus calls us to take up our cross. Have you taken up your cross? Only you know today what that cross is. What have you neglected to do for our Lord? What keeps you from serving as you should? Is it pride that prevents you from submitting?

Our suffering comes most times from not putting Him first. Sometimes it is a result of sin and other times it is God’s will. In every circumstance, God is good!

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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).

Fool Aware

A few weeks ago in Alaska, a man and his dog were hiking when the dog spotted a bear cub. The border collie chased the cub away, but mamma was not pleased. She went after the hiker, bit him a couple of times before she gave up, and went on her way. Bear attacks are rare because bears generally will avoid people if they can help it, but they have limits. Messing with her cub is one of mamma bear's limits. Earlier this summer, I preached a meeting out west, and much to the dismay of my boys (and the joy of my wife) we did not see any bears in our travels. But I did see a lot of fools doing foolish things and that is more terrifying. Proverbs 17:12 says, **"Let a bear robbed of her whelps meet a man, rather than a fool in his folly."** Since I was heading into grizzly country I read up on some helpful literature from the Forestry Service on being "Grizzly Bear Aware." The Bible has good information about being "fool aware."

Folly is being ridiculous, absurd, and frankly, stupid. Coming back home, we stopped at a National Park for a few hours and went for a hike on a pretty famous trail. It has a beautiful view at the end, but is a tad perilous in places. Just past a sign on the path that said, "Dangerous Cliff, Keep Right," a group of impatient teenagers, who thought we were walking too slow, passed us on the left (the side with the dangerous cliff) and jumped off a rock to get around us. One girl slipped when she landed, but was

able to get her traction before she plummeted to her death. I passed erratic drivers texting on their phones while driving 90 MPH. I saw people shooting off fireworks in the middle of a drought, in the middle of a dry-as-bones prairie. God made the world, and the world operates according to God's rules. Folly is when you act contrary to or in defiance of God's world. Jumping off a roof is dumb because, in God's world, there is gravity. When silly people act without considering the consequences, or without wisdom, you get a dangerous situation. Most sane people know better than to get in the way of a bear and her cubs, but do not know better than to get in the way of God and His prophets. **"So the waters were healed unto this day, according to the saying of Elisha which he spake. And he went up from thence unto Bethel: and as he was going up by the way, there came forth little children out of the city, and mocked him, and said unto him, Go up, thou bald head; go up, thou bald head. And he turned back, and looked on them, and cursed them in the name of the LORD. And there came forth two she bears out of the wood, and tare forty and two children of them. And he went from thence to mount Carmel, and from thence he returned to Samaria"** (II Kings 2:22-25). Sinning is also dumb because, in God's world, there are consequences for breaking his moral laws too. Many cultivate

common sense, but not spiritual sense. We warn teenagers about texting and driving, but do not consider where they are going or who they are texting. We caution Jonah to wear a life jacket to stay safe, but not to consider the danger of rebelling against God.

I made it back to West Virginia without any bear encounters, but plenty of fool sightings. I was in much more danger of the fool than the bear.

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



Love Your Pastor

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and to bear the sins of His elect. John 3:16, **"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."** God set the example of true love, and we as His chosen ones should express that kind of love to our friends, family, Christian brothers and sisters, and yes even to our enemies. But there are those that come into our lives who are given to us that take on a position in this life to be our "spiritual leader," "overseer," or what is commonly known as "pastor." Our love for him should be along the same line as the love we have for family, because he is part of our Christian family. Love your pastor!

I have had the privilege to be under the instruction and leadership of four wonderful pastors in my lifetime – Elders Floyd King, Doyal Thomas, Ted Tweet, and presently George Kelley, Sr. The love these men have shown to me and my family can only be through the love they have for the Lord. Pastors are truly a gift from God. Love your pastor!

God calls men to the office of pastor. I Timothy 3:1, **"This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work."** The word "desireth" in this verse means to reach out for; long for; covet after. A lost man cannot desire spiritual things for he is dead in trespasses and sins. God speaks inwardly through the Holy Spirit to those men He has called to serve as pastors and ministers of His church. Someone described this calling as "God's voice heard by faith." Love your pastor!

The duty of a pastor is given to us in I Peter 5:2 **"Feed the flock of God which is among you..."** "Feed" here means "to tend as a shepherd." Pastors are given a tremendous duty to feed God's people spiritually through the scriptures in the way in which they are led by the Holy Spirit. God's people need the whole truth of the Word. Pastors spend a great deal of time on study and preparation in the Word to instruct and teach us what we need to know about the Word. Ephesians 4:12, **"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ."** When pastors bring a message that may "step on our toes," in that it reveals sin in our lives that we have not repented of, do we "blame" the pastor and resent him? God forbid! He is only preaching what the Bible says. We should love what the pastor has presented and praise God for revealing it to us. Love your pastor!

We as sheep should follow our pastor's leadership. Notice the credentials God gives to pastors. Titus 1:7-9, **"For a bishop MUST be blameless, as the steward of God; not self-willed, not soon angry, not given to wine, no**

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Love Your Pastor

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striker, not given to filthy lucre; But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; 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."

Are these credentials only for pastors? No!! Every child of God MUST follow every one of these credentials. Love your pastor!

Churches sometimes expect their pastors to be "perfect." We think they are not to make a mistake or say something with which we may disagree. If the pastor greets everyone in the church but forgot to greet you, do not be offended – make it a point to greet him first. When a church calls a man to pastor, they expect him, if physically able, to be at each service. Does not the pastor expect every member to be at every service? If he loves them, he does. I know I will offend some when I say that every member of one of the Lord's churches should, if physically able, attend every service of the church of which you are a member. Notice that I said "physically able." If you are physically able, you are not providentially hindered. Many members of churches today stay at home and listen to a message on the internet. God has allowed us to have the technology to broadcast services for those who are shut-in and not physically able to get out. It is good to be able to listen to messages that other churches broadcast, but these should be listened to after our own services, and certainly not instead of. Jesus Christ established the church. He gave His life for His church. He loves His church, and it is there where He meets with His people

and has fellowship everytime the doors are open. When He gave the commission to the church, He told them to "go" and "teach;" and then He said **"and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."** If we say we love our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and long to be with Him and make it a point to miss any service of the church of which we are a member, then maybe we need to reevaluate our love that we say we have for Him. We are all guilty of this from time to time because we are still sinful creatures. But if we have the ability to correct this sin in our lives, should not we strive to accomplish it? The pastor's duty is to feed the flock. How can he do that if the members are unwilling to attend every service? Remember what the Lord said unto the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2:4-5, **"Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou has left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove the candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."** The more we love Jesus Christ and His church, the more we will love our pastor and brothers and sisters in Christ. Love your pastor!

I apologize for going off on this long "rabbit trail," but how can we show love for God, for Christ, for our pastor if we choose to neglect the church. This is a serious problem today. If you are a member of a church, go to church and take your family. If you are not a member of a church, GO TO CHURCH and take your family. Where else can you be fed the sincere milk of the Word? Love your pastor!

Another way we can show our love for our pastors is to try

to make them a part of your family. Invite them out for a meal on occasion. Or invite them to a family gathering. Many are away from their own families and miss that family fellowship. If they do not feel like coming, or may feel like they are intruding, let them make that decision. Do not just invite one time and forget about it – continue to invite, and they may feel led to attend on occasion. Invite out of love for them and the fellowship that you can have. Love your pastor!

Jesus Christ teaches us in His Word that we are to love God first and foremost in our lives and then to love one another. Mark 12:29-31, **"And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord: And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these."** The love Christ has for us should reflect the love we have for each other, and that especially goes for our love for our pastor. John 13:34-35, **"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 your pastor!

There are many churches that do not have pastors at this time, as well as churches that have gone many months or years without and now have a pastor. We as members of one of the Lord's churches must respect and follow the teaching of our pastor because he is given to us by God. Show

him the love that God has shown you, and the church will have great fellowship and will prosper for many years to come. I cannot say it enough, love your pastor!!!



Great Tribulation

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of the 144,000 Hebrew gospel preachers around the globe and particularly for our study today--in Egypt, of all places, praise God! At least five cities will be attacked as the Antichrist comes in fierce persecution in Isaiah 19:4 **"And the Egyptians will I give over into the hand of a cruel lord; and a fierce king (Dan. 8:23) shall rule over them, saith the Lord, the LORD of hosts."** **"And in the latter time of their kingdom, when the transgressors are come to the full, a king of fierce countenance (Son of Perdition/Antichrist), and understanding dark sentences, shall stand up. And his power shall be mighty, but not by his own power: and he shall destroy wonderfully, and shall prosper, and practise, and shall destroy the mighty and the holy people"** (Dan. 8:23-24). Selah! Think about it!

Our text in Isaiah 19 deals with a prophetic event. Namely, the burden of Egypt or the future of Egypt. I believe this unbelievably detailed prophecy is foretelling events during the Great Tribulation. Primarily because from vs. 23 on, the only thing I can imagine it speaking of is the millennial reign. (Not to say that God might not work this revival miracle before then, in His cycles of mercy and justice called longsuffering.) As we mentioned, the Egyptian civil war in vs. 4 is probably precipitated as the 144,000 Jews preach the

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Great Tribulation

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Gospel in the Great Tribulation. The seven seals reveal the events in the first quarter (21 months, or so) and along with the “Fierce King” being revealed as the white horseman of Revelation 6:1-2, that conquers with a “bow,” rather than a sword (yet); the concurrent fifth seal reveals the burning olive tree of martyrdom, that converted believers of Daniel’s people will be giving their lives once again for their Saviour and King Jesus! **“In that day shall five cities in the land of Egypt speak the language of Canaan, and swear to the LORD of hosts; one shall be called, The city of destruction”** (Isa. 19:18). At least five Egyptian cities will see many converts and they will be attacked by the Beast, as he consolidates his power over the remaining majority of Egyptians. Similar to the Vietnam War over Communism/Democracy, like North Vietnam, this probable Muslim majority will oppress both its own citizens and the converted Israeli-Egyptian rebel government of the five cities.

Daniel and John, as they continue their ministry as unstoppable forces may even make one of those cities a “City of Destruction,” (that the gates of Hell may not prevail against!) their headquarters for a part of their 3.5 year ministry as Jesus did with the Galilean city of Capernaum! As we peer into the ministry of the two witnesses, we find that they will indeed be attacked, persecuted, maligned and generally be the focus of Satan and his protégé’s hatred. But what will happen to those companies of fifty that are sent out against God’s prophet in II Kings 1:9-13? **“Then the king sent unto him a captain of fifty with his fifty.**

And he went up to him: and, behold, he sat on the top of an hill. And he spake unto him, Thou man of God, the king hath said, Come down. And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. Again also he sent unto him another captain of fifty with his fifty. And he answered and said unto him, O man of God, thus hath the king said, Come down quickly. And Elijah answered and said unto them, If I be a man of God, let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty. And the fire of God came down from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty. And he sent again a captain of the third fifty with his fifty. And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight.”

Wow! Pretty powerful, potent stuff! But exactly the same scenario is going to be played out in the future ministry of Daniel and John, as God’s chosen vessels in the Great Tribulation! Listen to Revelation 11:3-6 **“And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be**

killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.” As Moses would stride into Pharaoh’s court of yore, so, too, will these faithful men stride into Cairo, Buenos Aires and Rome, as they are directed of the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel of God’s Kingdom. Surely we should not be surprised at such authority! We have it already, in the Lord’s New Testament Baptist Churches that span this globe with Gospel Authority! **“And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven”** (Matt. 16:18-19). That God adds physical power in this perilous age to come is merely another wonder in this coming age of terrible and marvelous signs!

“For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the LORD, to serve him with one consent” (Zeph. 3:9). As I search the prophecies of Scripture, I can find nothing else that would make one of these godly five cities in Egypt to be called a “City of Destruction.” Certainly, the destruction here from this city speaking the language of the Gospel will not be a city of Perdition! But rather, as already inferred from Christ’s promise to make His Church, both a defensive and offensive bastion in our present Kingdom of God, that all the forces of Satan

will throw themselves upon, only to be broken by the “city that is set upon a hill,” so, too, must be the nature of this exceptional city of God, that is placed for the time being here in Egypt! A “City of Destruction,” the area residents will call it! It destroys every “army” or “deputation” that the Fierce King sends unto it! Beloved reader, if Daniel and John are using this town as their provisional headquarters, it will not fall, until at least, the midpoint of Daniel’s Seventieth Week! **“What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us”** (Rom. 8:31).

Back to our reading in this marvelous chapter, in vs. 5 we see God intervening with an unprecedented famine and drought in Egypt that will cause the economic disaster and national collapse depicted in verses 5-15, in particular. (Some of the later trumpets or vials predicted for the Great Tribulation in Rev. 8-16 could possibly be the cause.) Oh, the foolishness of these Gentile Nations to ignore the powers revealed from the God of the heavens and earth! **“And the waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defence shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. ...Surely the princes of Zoan are fools, the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharaoh is become brutish: how say ye unto Pharaoh, I am the son of the wise, the son of ancient kings? Where are they? where are thy wise men? and let them tell thee now, and let them know what the LORD of hosts hath purposed upon Egypt”** (Isa. 19:5-6, 11-12). **“The**

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Great Tribulation

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first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood; And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed. And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters; And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter. (...and the foolish part...) And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk: Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts" (Rev. 8:7-11/9:20-21).

Judah (the Jews) in the Holy Land of modern day Israel, I believe, will be unaffected, and it will be evident to all that God makes a difference between His people and the enemy here. (ten plagues, anyone?) In some ways, this is a two-edged sword for these imperiled Jews. Although it is actually their Jehovah God that is protecting them and

making a difference, they will blasphemously give the credit and glory to their antichrist, in their midst! **"For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. ...For she did not know that I gave her corn, and wine, and oil, and multiplied her silver and gold, which they prepared for Baal"** (Hosea 2:5, 8).

In verses 16-18, we see that fig tree Israel is able to support these Jewish-Egyptian allies, so probably the five towns will be on the Sinai or Mediterranean borders. As we progress through the "time of Jacob's trouble," we get closer to the battle of Armageddon in this 19th chapter of Isaiah, as well. The betrayal of the peace alliance with the man of sin will force much of Israel into the hidden-fortress of Petra, and after the martyrdom of Daniel and John, even the "City of Destruction" will hold no special powers anymore. Just truth and glory will await these stalwart saints of Jesus Christ! **"And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he (Beast) corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand, (the Remnants of the 144,000?) among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be holpen with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.**

And the king (AntiChrist) shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself, and magnify himself above every god, and shall speak marvellous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done" (Dan. 11:32-36).

Marvelous verses of a great revival fill the remainder of this glorious passage for this undeserving Egyptian nation...! **"In that day shall there be an altar to the LORD in the midst of the land of Egypt, and a pillar at the border thereof to the LORD. And it shall be for a sign and for a witness unto the LORD of hosts in the land of Egypt: for they shall cry unto the LORD because of the oppressors, and he shall send them a saviour, and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the LORD shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the LORD in that day, and shall do sacrifice and oblation; yea, they shall vow a vow unto the LORD, and perform it"** (Isa. 19:19-21). Verse 19's altar is probably erected by Daniel and John and very likely this salvation is primarily referring back to the beginning weeks of Daniel's Seventieth Week, and the great revival of Israel's lost tribes, but perhaps also there might be a revival in Egypt promised, leading up to Armageddon, as well! God is so Gracious, that we can never plumb the depths of His mercies! Selah! Think about it! Who would have thought it? Jesus, the Saviour of Egypt, too! "A great Saviour"! He who once condemned me with His precious Law, hath now delivered me! He who once condemned "Egypt" with His precious Law (and plagues of truth), hath now

delivered Egypt!

The Hebrew Egyptian coalition will worship God and be delivered, but not in the usual way, though. God will have mercy and grant salvation to a large number of the oppressed Egyptians (He will heal them)! There might even be some implications of Zech. 12's outpouring of Sovereign Grace here. And the civil war predicted will probably escalate quickly into world events leading up into the Battle of Armageddon and the 2nd advent of our Lord. **"And the LORD shall smite Egypt: he shall smite and heal it: and they shall return even to the LORD, and he shall be intreated of them, and shall heal them"** (Isa. 19:22).

Interesting verse, this 22nd verse of Armageddon in our text. What do you think of, when you think of Armageddon? Fiery destruction and the end of the world, right? Well, that is from our perspective of our relative times of peace! From the tribulation saint's perspective, what do you think they will do with Armageddon? Anticipation! Check out this perspective from Scripture, as the LORD reveals a passage that only a tribulation saint can appreciate! We pick up our reading "immediately" after vs. 19 records the Rapture in Luke 21:20-28 **"And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judaea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. But woe unto them that are with child, and to them**

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Small Drops

By Joseph M. Sidders of
Guntown, Mississippi

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



Delayed Gratification

Romans 8:18-28 "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. ¹⁹ For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. ²⁰ For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, ²¹ Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. ²² For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. ²³ And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. ²⁴ For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? ²⁵ But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. ²⁶ -- Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. ²⁷ And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. ²⁸ And we know that all things work together

for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

I have personally quoted Romans 8:28 many times on its own, but I cannot remember the last time I've applied it in its entire context to my own situation. My wife and I have three beautiful and healthy children, two of which have been saved and love the Lord. Over the past 7 years we have found ourselves helpless as we have watched three more go on to be with the Lord through miscarriages. Each time we had to ask just as David did "Who can tell whether God will be gracious to me, that the child may live?" (2 Samuel 12:22).

It is a hard thing to long for something and pray for something over a long period to find that the answer to that prayer was "no". It should not cause for us to be distraught and turn against the Lord, but it should leave us longing to know what His will actually is for us.

When David's child died in that text from 2 Samuel we see that "David arose from the earth, and washed, and anointed himself, and changed his apparel, and came into the house of the Lord, and worshipped" (verse 20). That too is what we should do if we long to know what the will of God is for us. "Draw nigh to God, and He will draw nigh to you. Cleanse your hands, ye sinners and purify your hearts, ye double minded" (James 4:8). What would cause for us to be double minded? Would it not be our stiff-necked

tendencies to question God? Could we not find hope in the fact that He knows best for His elect?

The text says that we are saved or delivered from this 'bondage of corruption' by hope. Think now of the personal example I gave you. It is hard to find hope in such a situation. Is death though not a result of the curse? Was it not foretold and even promised that we would all return to the dust we were taken from? Sure my wife and I longed to hold those babies, but could anyone doubt their safe conditions with the Father in Heaven now? I shall go to them, but they shall not return to me... nor should I pray against the will of God for them to be anywhere but where He has called them to be. "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." My place, your place, is to be waiting on the Lord. Longing for His will and seeking His purposes for our life. One day we will have more than we could have ever imagined for as we who are born-again shall have our precious Savior before us and we shall ever be with Him. Until that time let us be 'saved by hope' in that He has promised all things to work together to our good according to His will. This is not a "good things come to those who wait" type of promise but more like "the best things, better than you could even hope for, have been laid up as treasure for you in the kingdom so trust in My will and timing" sort of thing. Praise God!

Each of those little ones who proceeded us to glory passed away during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy. They were with us just long enough for us to know about it I suppose you might say. This past June my wife woke up feeling very nauseous, convinced

it might be a new type of Virus or something, and insisted I take her to the doctor. We found out that day that we were 16 weeks pregnant. In His infinite wisdom the Lord provided us with another baby and did not even allow for us to know about it until we were past the 12 weeks that would have worried us so. God is good, trust in Him today.

Should you have questions or comments please send e-mails to pastorjoegmbc@gmail.com or find us on Facebook @bbcmantachie



Commit Yourself

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In Acts 9:15-16, we see not only confirmation that Paul was an elect of God, but that he would suffer great things for Jesus' own name. It must all be according to His will, or none of it is, beloved. **"For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing"** (I Peter 3:17).

We are to bear our cross. Listen to how Christ suffered for us. Listen to how He was our example: **"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth"** (Isa. 53:6-7). **"For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls"** (I Peter 2:25). Praise the Lord!

We are to submit, subject,

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Great Tribulation

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that give suck, in those days! for there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people. And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled. And there shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations, with perplexity; the sea and the waves roaring; Men's hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after those things which are coming on the earth: for the powers of heaven shall be shaken. And then shall they see the Son of man coming (at Armageddon!) in a cloud with power and great glory. And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh." Healing for those saints in the person of Jesus Christ, the King!

So back in Isaiah's vision, the nation of Egypt is both "healed" and "smitten," right? Who is healed? Gloriously, those precious sheep, that have been slaughtered on every hand! Who is smitten? Justice is certain. As we study the Battle of Armageddon in Scripture, please remember that God allows it to go very badly for this rebellious fig tree nation. "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the LORD, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on my name, and I will hear them:

...For I will gather all nations against Jerusalem to battle; and the city shall be taken, and the houses rifled, and the women ravished; and half of the city shall go forth into captivity..." (Zech. 13:8; 14:2). But, this Battle of Armageddon has been, thus far, the battle between Satan's forces of evil and the children of God. And as I love to preach to my flock here at Big Creek Baptist, when Jesus shows up, "Battles turn into judgments!" He does not fight fair! He is "sovereign"! "...none can stay His Hand, or say unto Him, What doest Thou?"

The Battle of Armageddon turns into the judgment of the nations when Christ appears! Watch it happen in "all" the prophetic passages! "And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; ...And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. ...And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh" (Rev. 19:11-12, 21). "Then shall the LORD go forth, and fight against those nations, as when he fought in the day of battle. And his feet shall stand in that day upon the mount of Olives, which is before Jerusalem on the east, and the mount of Olives shall cleave in the midst thereof toward the east and toward the west... and the LORD my God shall come,

and all the saints with thee. ... And it shall be in that day, that living waters (Joel 2:4-9) shall go out from Jerusalem; ...And the LORD shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall there be one LORD, and his name one. ...but Jerusalem shall be safely inhabited. And this shall be the plague wherewith the LORD will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem; Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth" (Zech. 14:3-12). Not much battle, eh? Red Sea rules apply! Stand still and see the Salvation of the Saviour! Only judgment and destruction upon these guys, or as Isaiah records: smiting!

And lastly, let us connect the dots to the judgment (of Armageddon) prophesied by our LORD to His Apostle Matthew. "Immediately after the tribulation of those days shall the sun be darkened, and the moon shall not give her light, and the stars shall fall from heaven, and the powers of the heavens shall be shaken: And then shall appear the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds (including healing Egyptians!), from one end of heaven to the other. ...When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he

shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left" (Matt. 24:29-31; 25:31-33). Thus the smiting and the healing of this great day of Armageddon and Judgment! Selah! Think about it!

Then, as we stated at the beginning, the last three verses must be referring to the millennial reign, as I see no great time of peace and prosperity in the Middle East until then. "In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the land: Whom the LORD of hosts shall bless, saying, Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance" (Isa. 19:23-25). "Blessed be Egypt, my people!" How marvelous is this Grace of God! How unthinkable, except that it is recorded in Scripture! How many times have you read this chapter in your daily devotions and marveled at the soon coming Grace of God?

The Assyrians, too, will have their own story of God's mercy and grace that must parallel the Egyptian story here told (likely America, too! Filipino's, etc...!). They will be "servants together" with Israel to glorify the God of their Salvation! This preacher could be off with some of his bolder interpretations (that is the way it is with prophecy), but the elements and actions of this passage definitely speak of God's grace and mercy to Egypt at some future point in time! God does

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Little Hills

By Nathaniel Hille of
Plant City, Florida



SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON - BIBLE SURVEY #28 The Book of Nehemia

AIM: Over-View of the Book of Nehemiah

INTRODUCTION: We now look at the 16th book of the Bible; the 11th in the Historical Section: Nehemiah

I. AUTHOR: It is believed to be Nehemiah. His name means "the consolation of Jehovah." Comes from the meaning of to pity or to sigh, to breath out. Nehemiah is the breathing out of God.

II. THEME: Service to the Faithful God. God's faithfulness is still at the forefront of this book. However, we also see the service of the child of God to the Lord because of God's faithfulness. Nehemiah 1:3-4 sets the scene for the entire book of Nehemiah. It is a book of God's faithfulness, His people serving Him "in great affliction and reproach."

III. Chronology of These books: "Fourteen years after the return of Ezra to Jerusalem, Nehemiah led up a company (B.C.444) and restored the walls and the civil authority. Of those events this book is the record."

IV. Ezra and Nehemiah: The book of Ezra deals primarily with the return to Israel, the building of the temple, and the restoration of the worship of Jehovah. The Book of Nehemiah deals with the building of the wall around Jerusalem, the restoration of the spiritual aspects of the worship of Jehovah, and the political aspects of God's people.

V. Outline: A basic outline of the book of Nehemiah is as follows.

1. Reconstruction of the Wall: Nehemiah 1:1-7:73
 - a. The Preparation to Reconstruct the Wall--1:1-2:20
 - b. The Reconstruction of the Wall--1:1-2:20
 - i. Record of the Builders--Neh. 3:1-32
 - ii. Opposition to the Reconstruction--Neh. 4:1-6:14
 - iii. Completion of the Reconstruction--Neh 6:15-19.
 - iv. Organization of Jerusalem--Neh 7:1-4
 - v. Registration of Jerusalem--Neh 7:5-73
 - c. The Restoration of the people: Nehemiah 8:1-13:31
 - i. The Worship of God Restored--Neh 8:1-13:31
 - ii. God's People Doing "Thus saith the Lord" Neh 11:1-13:31.

VI. Key Person(s):

1. Nehemiah: Neh 1:3-4--1. Nehemiah is the main person in this book. Upon hearing of the ruin that Jerusalem was still in and the condition of the people, Nehemiah sat down, wept, mourned for certain days, fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven.

- a. Nehemiah's Prayer: Neh.1:5-11—reveals to us a great deal

concerning him as and individual as well as His beliefs towards His Lord and Savior, Jehovah. Nehemiah prayed and spoke of the hallowed Name and Nature of the Lord (vv.5,6). He then turned to the sins of himself and his fellow saints. He confessed their sinful condition and sinful natures (Vv.7). He was familiar with the word of the Lord and called upon God to keep His covenant with Israel, even though they had not kept their part (Vv.8,9). He calls upon the Lord to see that a remnant had turned their hearts, and had kept His commandments and He calls upon the Lord to remember His words of which he said, "yet I will gather them from thence, and will bring them unto the place that I have chosen to set my name there" (Vv.9). Nehemiah, then beseeches the Lord to hear and answer his prayer according to His mercy, grace, and word which He had already spoken.

Nehemiah is a monument of God's power and grace. Oh that we might get a double portion of the Spirit that was upon him!

2. Artaxerxes: Neh 2:1-- he is the king of Persia Empire. Yet, even he was under the control of the King of kings (Proverbs 21:1). The Lord uses whom He will to bring about His purpose and plan. Even the unregenerated king of a heathen nation (Romans 8:28).

3. Sanballat and Tobiah: Neh 2:10--These were those who opposed the work that God had called Nehemiah to do (the rebuilding of the wall). They stand for all those who are in opposition to the Lord's work.

a. Methods:

- i. They laughed to scorn (Neh 2:19-20)
- ii. Mockery (Neh 4:1-3)
- iii. Anger and physical fight (Neh 4:7-9)
- iv. Threat of death (Neh 4:11)
- v. By seeking a false peace between them (Neh 6:2)

b. Nehemiah's responses: Nehemiah strengthened himself in each case. Truly the Lord was with Nehemiah giving him great wisdom. We must understand that the Lord's work today of preaching the gospel to every creature, of baptizing, and of teaching them to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded is hindered in much the same way.

4. Fellow Jews: Neh 5:1--Here fellow Jews were filled with indignation because they had been supporting the building of the wall and it cut into their personal profits. Nehemiah was filled with indignation for the selfishness of these

5. God: 1. The Lord God is spoken of, we see the effects of Him working behind the scene. It is the Lord who brought all this about. To Him be glory and power and honor forever and ever!

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Commit Yourself

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and suffer for Christ. Our work is laid out in verse 12 of our text: **"Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they**

shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation."

Commit yourself to Him that judgeth righteously. Live soberly, Brothers and Sisters, abstaining from all appearances of Satan. **"Honour all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King"**



The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Is the Thanksgiving holiday scriptural?

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“As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him: Rooted and built up in Him, and stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught, abounding therein with thanksgiving” (Col 2:6-7).

The holiday known as Thanksgiving originated in the United States, as many well-know, after the Pilgrims survived their first winter and made it through to the following harvest. At that time, those survivors offered thanks unto the Lord for His provision and providence toward them as they desired a religious liberty in a new world. Their launch, journey, and settlement did not come at ease, yet these pilgrims trusted in God throughout and gave Him thanks, as recorded in history.

The holiday of Thanksgiving is not set as a convocation or feast in the Old Testament, nor is it established in the New Testament. In fact, the only, **“... this do in remembrance of me,”** memorial in the New Testament is that of the Lord's Supper in I Corinthians 11:24-25. So, then, this holiday should not, and cannot, be considered a set day as by command.

The principle of Thanksgiving, however, according to our text, holds firm so long as the origin of the set day is true at heart. If

Thanksgiving is a day set aside by the children of God to, once more, give praise, recognition, thanks, joyful gladness, and adoration toward the Lord as we endeavor to walk in the things of Christ, then by all means, exercise the liberty of Thanksgiving. There is never too much exercise in the form of thanksgiving for fallen, yet redeemed, men; nor shall there be, though eternity be the lecture hall of it, a system of praise too well-known. How often is too often for the redeemed of God to give thanksgiving for the salvation of our souls? For the care of our person in this life? In the darkest of pain, temptation, or sorrow, can we give too much thanks for the blessed hope of our Great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, who has promised His eternal presence to those for whom He died?

However, if Thanksgiving is a day of family, friends, and football, a day off from work, a day to buy turkey on sale, a day to prep for Black Friday, or a day to do anything but abound in thanksgiving having received all manner of blessings and provisions of God in the perfect and wondrous love of Jesus Christ, then, by all means, put that day away. It is of no godly or fit use to your soul if it does not cause you to walk, be rooted, and built up in Him (the Lord Jesus Christ), nor does it stablish you in the faith when you walk according to the lust of this world and of your flesh.

While Thanksgiving is not prescribed in the Scriptures as a national holiday, the mode and manner of being for every child

of God should be that of a daily personal holiday of thanksgiving! **“O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.”** (Ps. 136:1) With the mercy of God enduring forever as He endures forever, likewise ought the gratitude of the redeemed endure forever, overflowing with thanksgiving unto God.

Sinner, I encourage you to examine yourself. If there is no sense of thanksgiving in your heart, it may well be that you have not received the Lord Jesus Christ. If there is no desire to walk in the Lord, be rooted in the Lord, be built up in the Lord, nor to be established in the Lord, having been rescued from yourself and your sinfulness, it may be the case that you simply have not been saved. How can there be forgiveness of sins, rescue from the dread of just condemnation, and liberty of justification, yet there be no thanksgiving or desire to walk in Christ? Do not be deceived, sinner. There is plainness to this Scripture. If there is no joy and thankfulness accompanied by walking in Christ, being rooted, being built up, and being established in Christ, then you are not saved. I encourage you to repent, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and be saved. May the Lord bless.



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Every day ought to be a day of thanksgiving according to I Thessalonians 5:18: **“In every thing give thanks: for this is**

the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.” So I guess in the broadest sense of the question, yes, it is scriptural. In fact, according to the verse quoted, every circumstance of life ought to be attended with an attitude of thanksgiving and gratitude as we humbly submit to the revealed will of God and His providential dealings with us.

There are instances in both Testaments of God's people offering praise and thanksgiving to God at different times. We should not find it surprising that there are many commands and admonitions for God's people to be enthusiastic and earnest in their offerings of thanksgiving. Psalm 95:2-3 declares, **“Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.”** Psalm 100:4-5 commands, **“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name. For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.”** Philippians 4:6-7 states, **“Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.”**

As God's dear children, we have so much to be thankful for on a daily basis. The Father loved us with an everlasting love and chose us in Christ Jesus before the world began (II Thes. 2:13). The Lord Jesus Christ agreed to be the vicarious substitute for all those the Father gave Him in the

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The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. Could you briefly comment on I Thessalonians 5:21?

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Written by the apostle Paul, I Thessalonians was a letter to a people that had several issues to be confronted. Paul had only been at Thessalonica for three weeks before being run out of town by Jewish unbelievers (Acts 17:1-15). Timothy and Silas had gone back to strengthen and establish those of Thessalonica, but Paul had continued on through Athens to Corinth where he appeared unto them with fear and trembling (Acts 18:1; I Corinthians 2:1-5). Upon hearing from Silas and Timothy concerning the Thessalonians, Paul was encouraged and pressed, or compelled, by the Holy Spirit in the testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 18:5).

By reading I Thessalonians, there are at least a few things we can gather that these people struggled with. Much of Chapter 2 involves Paul stressing his authenticity before God in his witness toward them. Specifically, I Thessalonians 2:5 stresses the truth that neither Paul, Silas, nor Timothy used their office or preaching as a means of gain of covetousness, calling God as their witness. I Thessalonians 4:1-7 calls these converts to righteous living, with emphasis given in verse 7; **“For God hath not called us unto uncleanness,**

but unto holiness.” At last, there were those who were minimally confused about the topic of the resurrection, which Paul addresses from I Thessalonians 4:13-5:11.

The conclusion of I Thessalonians (5:12-28), then, is not merely a setup of one-liners, but a conclusive summary of these ideas. With love, Paul is encouraging this group of people unto love and good works in the Spirit of God and holiness unto the coming of the Lord. No verse in this sequence should be read outside of this context. I Thessalonians 5:16, for example, reads, **“Rejoice evermore.”** In the context, then, they were to know that their rejoicing was to be in the Spirit of God, in a loving manner, in a holy manner, and fitting for approval at the coming of the Lord. This is not an approval for rejoicing in anything that is ungodly, unloving, unholy, or unbecoming a child of God and the coming of the Lord.

We must approach I Thessalonians 5:21, **“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good,”** in the same fashion as described above, not abandoning the logic and flow of the letter. In proving all things, we must understand the phrase. Many would use this verse as an excuse to experiment with all manner of lust to see if it be enjoyable, good, and worthy of holding on to. “I am going to try to prove whether it be good to follow this or that lust rather than follow the Word of God. Then, based on my own logic, reason, experience, and outcomes, I will decide whether I

will hold fast to that item.” Does this even sound rational? Sadly, many children of God hold this line of thinking to their own sorrow. Instead, this verse is wondrously explained internally. Please notice the flow of verses.

Verse 19: **“Quench not the Spirit.”** That is, do not side with the flesh over the Spirit of God in daily living.

Verse 20: **“Despise not prophesyings.”** The Word of God is not to be refused, but loved and preferred.

Verse 21: **“Prove all things...”** not by the wisdom of men, but by the love and holiness of God.

Verse 22: **“Abstain from all appearance of evil.”** Again, not by man’s estimation, but God’s.

This group, then, having issues with loving leadership, godly living, and the coming of the Lord, was encouraged to exercise love in all things, prove or examine all things under the holy lens of God Almighty in the spirit of truth, and to live accordingly unto the coming of the Lord. Any exercise to use this verse as an example of looseness or immorality is irrational in logic, irreverent toward God, and inconsistent with the letter and the Bible in general.

Children of God, with examination of this verse in the context of our present world, I can say, first, that with proper proving under the holiness of God, there is much to be abstained from. In fact, if we were to properly examine ourselves in the light of truth, there is much evil that each of us have held fast, all the while abstaining and putting away of that which is good. Is the Lord not loving in His salvation of sinners? Did God not exercise holiness? And for the cause of holiness in exercise of love, did not Christ die for the ungodly? Knowing

the cost of evil and uncleanness, it ought to be the supernatural desire to abstain from those things that were the charges of our case. Knowing that the coming of the Lord is near, literally all things should be proved and examined of their fittingness in our lives. That examination ought always be through the lens of God’s holiness, holding fast to those things that are good, while abstaining from all appearance of evil.

A sinner, unsaved and undone, is nothing but pure evil. What can be done, then, reader? Well, abstain from yourself. That is to say, repent, turn from yourself, cry unto the Lord for mercy, and believe the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Christ died a substitutionary death, was buried, and rose victoriously over the death, hell, the grave, and Satan himself, putting them all to an open shame. May the LORD bless.



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I Thessalonians 5:21 states, **“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”**

This verse is included in a cluster of admonitions and commands that are related to the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. This verse follows **“Despise not prophesyings”** (5:20), which referred to special revelations from God to prophets in the early days of Christianity before the final canon of Scripture was established. Believers were exhorted to prove and test whether

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Forum Question #1

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Covenant of Grace and secured all the benefits of redemption for them by offering His sinless life and precious blood on the cross. He then rose again from the dead signifying He had conquered sin, death, and the grave on behalf of His people. The Holy Spirit regenerates and grants the gifts of repentance and saving faith to all that the Father chose and the Son died for. The Holy Spirit creates spiritual life in the powerful work of the new birth and then indwells the children of God to instruct, convict, and guide them in the way of truth. We have all the promises of God and all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. We are promised that we will live eternally in the glorious presence of God in Christ. We have been blessed with life, health, and all things. We are partakers of God's goodness in provision and protection each and every day. On we could go listing all of the reasons to give thanks to God.

As for the American celebration of Thanksgiving Day on the fourth Thursday of November each year, there is no specific command in Scripture specifying its observance, since the canon of Scripture closed long before America ever came into existence. The origins of the holiday signified that the early settlers wanted to give thanks to God for preserving their lives and providing for their needs. Over time Thanksgiving was enshrined as a national holiday in America. Unfortunately, there is little emphasis upon giving thanks to Almighty God in our present day. Secularists have tried to rewrite the history of Thanksgiving in America. As a result, for most people Thanksgiving is just a day of feasting, football,

and shopping with little or no thought of God. This attitude of forgetfulness and ingratitude has brought the judgment of God upon America, fulfilling the promise of Psalm 9:16-17: **"The LORD is known by the judgment which he executeth: the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah. The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God."**



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The setting aside of the fourth Thursday in November as a Thanksgiving Day used to be a Scriptural event, but like so many things in modern America, it is not really so much anymore. That America had set aside a Day for our admonition and a celebration of thanking the Lord, was an evidence of our once blessed and Christian Nation, desiring a practical reminder to be thankful for our "One nation under God." Selah! Think about it!

Four hundred years ago this month, in 1621 AD, the Pilgrims of Cape Cod set aside a Day of Thanksgiving, to commemorate the hand of God's providence in bringing them through great trials and difficult times. This is not only permissible, but it really is Scripturally incumbent upon God's people to set aside a time to publicly proclaim God's goodness and grace unto them! This typically happens every week, as the Lord's Day was originally

sanctified in the first book of the Bible for this very purpose of rest, thanksgiving and worship!

Very similarly to these American pilgrims, the pilgrims known as the children of Israel also went through their own exodus of dearth and renewal, as recorded in Scripture. As they recalled God's goodness unto their "nation," the LORD called upon them to institute twelve sanctified "Holidays/Holy Days" each year, on the first day of each month/moon. The new moon holiday was to be a solemn day of worship, feasting and thanksgiving, whether it fell on a Sabbath, or not! **"Sing aloud unto God our strength: make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery. Blow up the trumpet in the new moon, in the time appointed, on our solemn feast day. For this was a statute for Israel, and a law of the God of Jacob. This he ordained in Joseph for a testimony, when he went out through the land of Egypt..."** (Ps. 81:1-5).

References are made in both American and Israeli histories of these Thanksgiving days of feasting and national celebration of a recognized God of the people! Oh, that we might return to such sanctified times! A true day of Thanksgiving, by a godly Nation that would sincerely humble themselves with hearts of repentance and allegiance, as they feast (or fast) as the Lord would instruct and lead them. Scripturally examine the parallels of godly Nations, observing regularly scheduled feasts of Thanksgiving: **"And David said unto Jonathan, Behold, to morrow is the new moon, and I should not fail to sit with the king at meat..."** (I Sam. 20:5).

The Hebrew version of American turkey and dressing! "Whereas it is the duty of all Nations to acknowledge the providence of Almighty God, to obey His will, to be grateful for His benefits, and humbly to implore His protection and favor—and whereas both Houses of Congress have by their Joint Committee requested me to recommend to the people of the United States a day of public thanksgiving and prayer to be observed by acknowledging with grateful hearts the many signal favors of Almighty God..." (President George Washington) **"Behold, I (King Solomon) build an house to the name of the LORD my God, to dedicate it to him, and to burn before him sweet incense, and for the continual shewbread, and for the burnt offerings morning and evening, on the sabbaths, and on the new moons, and on the solemn feasts of the LORD our God. This is an ordinance for ever to Israel"** (II Chron. 2:4).

But, Thanksgiving Day can just become turkey and football day, by a slothful and atheistic people and God is "not" pleased: **"Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; it is iniquity, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth..."** (Isa. 1:13-14). We even have a mention of "Black Friday" as greedy merchants desired profits, more than recognizing the God that had blessed their Nation in Amos 8:5, **"Saying, When will the new moon be gone, that we may sell corn? and the sabbath, that we may set forth wheat, making the ephah small, and the shekel great, and falsifying**

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Forum Question #1

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the balances by deceit?" Selah! Think about it! Our nations are not so very different, eh?

This year, may godly Christians not fail to sanctify the Thanksgiving Day holiday, as one to worship God and give thanks for His "many" blessings, but perhaps leading up to this signal day, we need to prepare our hearts with the fasting and prayers enjoined unto our sister nation in Joel 2:12-17, **"Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil. Who knoweth if he will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God? Blow the trumpet in Zion, sanctify a fast, call a solemn assembly: Gather the people, sanctify the congregation, assemble the elders, gather the children, and those that suck the breasts: let the bridegroom go forth of his chamber, and the bride out of her closet. Let the priests, the ministers of the LORD, weep between the porch and the altar, and let them say, Spare thy people, O LORD, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the heathen should rule over them: wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God?"** That's what Thanksgiving Day needs to be again, this year... Selah! Think about it!



Forum Question #2

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or not these prophesyings were indeed of God. If they proved to be of God, they were admonished to hold fast that which is good.

I am currently working on a verse-by-verse exposition of First and Second Thessalonians. Here is part of my draft on I Thessalonians 5:20-21:

The saints were also admonished not to despise prophesyings. Before the canon of Scripture was completed, God employed prophets (Eph. 4:11) in the church to reveal His mind and will. They were inspired men selected to attest, in a special manner, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the midst of His people and to make known His will. Their message would include commands from God, interpretations of Old and New Testament prophecies, and the foretelling of future events. Perhaps the saints at Thessalonica were not paying heed to the preaching of the prophets within the church.

Even though the ministry of prophets died out when the Book of Revelation was completed, there are still ways in which people despise prophesying in our day. There are no more prophetic revelations given to select men. We now have the Canon of Scripture which is the entirety of God's revelation. With that said, when people refuse to hearken to the revealed truth of the Word of God that a preacher preaches, they are despising prophesying. Others may despise the truths that relate to prophecy and the Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. God help the Christian who fails to hearken and respond to Biblical preaching. In light of this application, it is

absolutely vital for elders, pastors, and preachers to faithfully explain and open up the Scriptures in a clear, unmistakable manner teaching exactly what the text under consideration reveals.

All preaching is not scriptural and God-honoring. For this reason, the saints are admonished to **"prove all things."** Everything that we believe in the spiritual realm should have its source in the revealed will of God which is His Holy Word. In order to discern the will and mind of God on any matter we must go to the Holy Book and be instructed by the Holy Spirit. We must be like the Bereans in Acts 17:11 which states, **"These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so."** The reason so many people are duped by false religion in our day is because they listen to the opinions of men without proving them by searching the Word of God. There would be no one following women preachers, fake healers, free-willers, and religious crooks if people would search the Book of God rather than listening to the deluded opinions and theories of men. I John 4:1 declares, **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world."** May God grant us the grace to prove what we hear and believe by the Word of God through the instruction of the Holy Spirit.

As we are proving all things, we are to cast off the error and **"hold fast to that which is good."** The commandments, doctrines, and rebukes of the Holy Scriptures are good food for the soul. We ought to hold fast those convictions and

graces that are good in the sight of God and promote the spiritual welfare of God's people. The truths of Scripture should be precious and valuable enough for every saint of God to not let them slip through compromise or convenience. Yet, in our day, the good things of God are being cast aside for the sake of popularity, numbers, and money. Proverbs 23:23 declares, **"Buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, and instruction, and understanding."** Fruit bearing is directly related to holding fast the truths of the good Word of God as Luke 8:15 states: **"But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience."** II Timothy 1:13 explains we are to, **"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."**



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"Despise not prophesyings. Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil" (I Thess. 5:20-22).

The Apostle exhorts the Thessalonian Baptists to "Separate the good from the bad and then hold fast to all of the good stuff, while abstaining from the very appearance of the bad!" Selah! Think about it!

We are to "prove all things." Inherent in this admonition is

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Forum Question #2

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the reality of good and evil. The prophesyings of our peers may be godly or ungodly, depending on the fellows preaching and their agendas! We must not be naïve, and even if someone calls themselves a Baptist, we need to test them, or as John says: **"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world"** (I John 4:1). **"But let a man examine (prove all things in) himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup"** (I Cor. 11:28). **"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God"** (Rom. 12:2).

Prove "all" things! There is a holiness and wholly(ness) in that little adjective "all." Nothing is to escape this purview of our lives! "Why do we celebrate this? Is God pleased with that? Are we doing enough in this ministry? How go the priorities of our lives?" Nothing too little, beloved reader! Prove all things, whether tangible objects and possessions, or the very Doctrine of Scripture that our churches preach. **"Prove all things!"** by the inspiring Grace of God.

The next phrase is just as important, once we have ascertained the good and bad in our lives, doctrine and conversation. **"Hold Fast that which is good."** The thought here is to grasp, buy the truth, reach out and seize, even, all that good stuff! **"...let us seize on his inheritance"** (Matt. 21:38). **"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised;)"**

(Heb. 10:23). **"...having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience"** (Luke 8:15). **"Now I praise you, brethren, that ye...keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you"** (I Cor. 11:2).

There is a continual and unrelenting verbiage used here, as the Apostle Paul closes up this first epistle. Hold it "fast"...! Against great adversity and opposition, please remain faithful in clutching it close unto your heart and soul...! **"As sorrowful, yet alway rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things"** (II Cor. 6:10). These good things that we are to hold fast, supercede anything else in this world! Deemed poor in this world? We can be as rich as the Smyrna saints **"I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) ...Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: ...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life"** (Rev. 2:9-10). It matters naught what earthly possessions we have, to the point that earthly poverty becomes relative to the good stuff we are holding onto in our hearts "as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." We ought to prove all these things, so that we will know "what" to cleave unto and hold it fast with all of our physical and spiritual strength combined! **"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life..."** (I Tim. 6:12). **"...strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. ...And have tasted the good word of God... let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works"** (Heb. 5:14; 6:5; 10:24). **"Dearly beloved, I beseech**

you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul; Having your conversation honest among the Gentiles: that, whereas they speak against you as evildoers, they may by your good works, which they shall behold, glorify God in the day of visitation" (I Pet. 2:11-12).

Let it not be said that we **"...blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called..."** (James 2:7). **"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin"** (James 4:17). **"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith"** (Gal. 6:9-10). **"Prove all things; hold fast that which is good..."** (I Thess. 5:21). Selah! Think about it!



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entering upon a consideration of that matter we desire, by way of introduction, to give—

1. Some scriptural reasons for preaching and writing on Christ's second coming.

Some would have us believe that a study of this subject is idle theorizing, or that preaching and writing on it makes one a sensationalist. Others would insist that we should devote all our time to what they consider the more practical things. But the Scripture gives us abundant justification for preaching and writing on our blessed Lord's return to this earth. It is not in the realm of idle theorizing to seek to discover what the Scripture teaches on any subject. And the Scripture shows that some very practical and

wholesome results will flow from a consideration of the Redeemer's return. Let us note four scriptural reasons for preaching and writing on this subject:

We should preach and write on it because the Scripture deals with it, and all Scripture is both inspired and profitable. **"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"** (II Tim. 3:16). This fully settles the question of whether we ought to preach and write on this subject. Had the Holy Spirit not desired us to study it, and had it not been a profitable subject for study, he would not have spoken favorably concerning it. Those who disparage an inquiry into this subject, say, by their attitude toward it, that they think there is some Scripture that is not profitable. No man is preaching the whole counsel of God if he is not preaching on Christ's second advent to this earth. And, let it be said with emphasis, that it is not enough to merely affirm that Christ is coming again. The Scripture teaches more than that. It gives many of the antecedent and subsequent details of his coming. It is both obligatory and profitable for us to know all the Scripture says on any subject, including even that which it says by implication.

We should preach and write on it because of the large place given to it in the Scripture. The Scripture not only deals with Christ's return to the earth, but it gives a large place to it. The Scripture probably has more to say about the second coming of Christ and related events than it has to say on any

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other one subject. It has more to say about his second advent than it has to say, by way of prophecy, about his first. And it has many times as much to say about Christ's second advent as it has to say about baptism or the Lord's supper. Thus, the Holy Spirit has emphasized the importance of this subject.

We should preach and write on it because that is necessary in order to refute and counteract the false teachings that are current. The second coming of Christ is a subject that rightly holds a peculiar interest for believers. Just as many a sweetheart looked and longed for the return of her lover from the late World War, so, with an infinitely higher affection, the bride of Christ should look and long for his return. And those who are truly looking and longing for his return will not be content with the mere fact that he is coming again; they will delight to learn everything they can concerning his coming. Thus this subject has become a favorite tool of false teachers, such as the Russellites and Adventists. And can we expect anything else other than that our people will be misled by these false teachers, unless we teach them the truth on the subject? They are rightfully interested in it, and if we do not give them the truth, many of them are going to imbibe error. And surely it is not needful to argue that religious error always has its derogatory and blighting influence.

We should preach and write on it because a consideration of it is an incentive to endurance, patience, faithfulness, and holy living. Here we will merely let the Scriptures speak without any

comment. Attention is called to the following passages: **"Be ye also patient, stablish your hearts; for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh"** (James 5:8). **"Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Lord"** (Jas. 5:7). **"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"** (II Tim. 4:1). **"...The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ"** (Titus 2:11-13). **"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"** (II Pet. 3:10-11). **"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure"** (I John 3 :2-3). We turn now to consider—

2. Six proofs that Christ's coming is to be premillennial.

Bible students are divided into two main groups on the question of our Lord's return to this earth. There are those who believe that the millennium (the

word means a thousand years—see Rev. 20 :1-7) will be brought in by the preaching of the gospel, and that Christ will not make his personal return to this earth until after the millennium. These are called postmillennialists. There are others who believe the Bible clearly reveals that the millennium will be ushered in by the personal return of our Lord; at which time He will judge the world (II Thess. 1:7-10; Matt. 25:31-46) and will reign personally over the earth a thousand years (Rev. 20:1-6). These are called premillennialists. And in each of these two main groups there are several shades of teaching. Therefore, later we shall go more into detail concerning our position; but here we will attempt to establish only the mere truth that Christ will make his personal return to this earth before the millennium. We offer the following proofs for this:

Present-day conditions indicate that it will require the personal return of our Lord to bring in the millennium. Postmillennialists believe that the end of this age will be marked by a well-nigh universal acceptance of the gospel. They think that the saints will be so proportionately numerous that all rule and all authority will be in their hands, and that thus the kingdom of this world is to become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ (Rev. 11:15). But do present-day conditions encourage such expectations? Most emphatically they do not. Instead of the saints becoming proportionately more numerous, just the reverse is true. And instead of all rule and all authority being placed in their hands, it is being taken out of their hands. From a worldly standpoint, the world is better civilized today than it was centuries ago; but it is not more godly. Under the veneer

of civilization runs the same vein of selfishness and sin that has always marked the depravity of man. Professed Christians are becoming more worldly as a whole. Rebellion against the whole truth of God is on the increase. And it is becoming more and more manifest that the majority of the members of even Baptist churches are not bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. We are living in a godless, selfish, pleasure-mad age. But perhaps some will say, like Senex of the Western Recorder, that, although the world is going to the devil, they hope something will take place to turn the tide back to God. But we ask, "Where is there any Scriptural ground for such a hope?" Instead of giving ground for such a hope, the Scriptures reveal that **"...evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived"** (II Tim. 3:13), and that **"...in the last days perilous times shall come"** (II Tim. 3:1); accompanied with a falling away (II Thess. 2 :3), and a refusal to endure sound doctrine (II Tim. 4:3).

The parables present to us the opposite of what postmillennialists expect. Consider first the parable of the sower. In this parable four classes of people are described, and only one of them, the last one, represents truly saved people. Matthew 13:1-8 **"The same day went Jesus out of the house, and sat by the sea side. And great multitudes were gathered together unto him, so that he went into a ship, and sat; and the whole multitude stood on the shore. And he spake many things unto them in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sow; And when he sowed, some seeds fell by the way side, and the fowls came and devoured**

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them up: Some fell upon stony places, where they had not much earth: and forthwith they sprung up, because they had no deepness of earth: And when the sun was up, they were scorched; and because they had no root, they withered away. And some fell among thorns; and the thorns sprung up, and choked them: But other fell into good ground, and brought forth fruit, some an hundredfold, some sixtyfold, some thirtyfold."

And its conclusion in Matthew 13:19-23 "When any one heareth the word of the kingdom, and understandeth it not, then cometh the wicked one, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart. This is he which received seed by the way side. But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while: for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended. He also that received seed among the thorns is he that heareth the word; and the care of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word, and he becometh unfruitful. But he that received seed into the good ground is he that heareth the word, and understandeth it; which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

Take next the parable of the wheat and the tares. Here we have it revealed that the children of the devil will never be even approximately removed from this world by conversion, but that they

are to be finally and fully removed only in the end of the age by the angels. "Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field: But while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up? But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (Matt. 13:24-30). And its conclusion in Matthew 13:37-43 "He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world; the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; -- The enemy that sowed them is the devil; the harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine

forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." This certainly refers to the judgment of this world. And the judgment of this world is to take place at the coming of Christ (Matt. 25:31, 32). But someone may ask if the parable of the mustard seed, and that of the leaven, do not favor the postmillennial view. We answer that they do not. To see that they do not, we have only to note that, from the parable of the tares and that of the net in this chapter (Matthew 13:47-52 "**Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a net, that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind: Which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world: the angels shall come forth, and sever the wicked from among the just, And shall cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. Jesus saith unto them, Have ye understood all these things? They say unto him, Yea, Lord. Then said he unto them, Therefore every scribe which is instructed unto the kingdom of heaven is like unto a man that is an householder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things new and old.**"), it is evident that the kingdom of heaven includes all professed Christians whether they are truly saved or not. So, although the kingdom of heaven should encompass the whole of the human race living at any given time, yet that would not necessarily indicate such a condition as would be required before the millennium could be ushered in. In I Tim. 3:1-13 Paul gives a picture of the majority group of the kingdom of heaven in the last days. Today,

nearly all of our politicians are professed Christians, and therefore members of the kingdom of heaven; but is there much to indicate that their rule is the rule of Christ? Some of the worst crimes and atrocious deeds are being committed by those who are professed Christians, and, therefore, members of the kingdom of heaven. As cases in point, we call attention to Hickman, who butchered the little Parker girl in California; and to Carnes, the Home Mission Board thief. Both of these were professed Christians, and even church workers; and, therefore, members of the kingdom of heaven. We have no doubt that the man of sin (II Thess. 2:3-4), whom we take to be identical with the beast of Revelation (Rev. 13), will be a member of the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, even when we take these parables in the light in which they are viewed by postmillennialists themselves, they cannot be made to prove the postmillennial contention. (We are not ignorant of the fact that leaven is thought by some to refer to error and evil that will permeate the kingdom of heaven. This view has in its favor the fact that everywhere else leaven represents evil, and the fact that we find the kingdom of heaven today permeated with error and evil. But we have thought best to meet postmillennialists on their own grounds.)

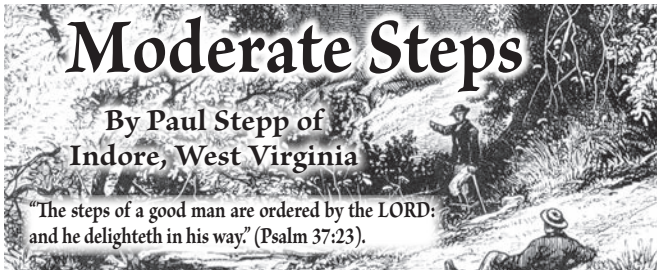
The man of sin is to be revealed in this age, and he is to be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming; therefore, Christ is coming before the millennium. "**Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto him, That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be**

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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).



Praying for Kings

"I exhort therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty" (I Tim 2:1-2).

Prayer is an important and indispensable part of every Christian's life. In fact, I believe that prayer unto God – accompanied by a ready and regular knowledge and study of God's Word are inseparably linked to the life of every successful Christian. In other words, if we desire to be faithful unto God; if we desire to be a good witness for Jesus Christ; if we are to ever bear much fruit in the Kingdom of God; then, we must study often, and pray unceasingly.

In our text passage, I want us to note that we are particularly encouraged (commanded) to pray **"For kings, and for all that are in authority."** In our day and time, it seems that the ones in power; and the ones who rule over us have taken more authority upon themselves than their elected offices actually permit. These demagogues and tyrants have done much to take away the liberties of the American people – and they will do even more, if the American people do not resist, and if God will allow them the opportunities. As Christians in America, maybe we have gone too far – or at least diverted more of our energies than we should

have – in seeking mortal relief from our predicament. Maybe we should get back to prayer? I know it may sound absurd (in the flesh), but let us pray for the souls and the salvation of our leaders. Of course, we should pray for Donald Trump. I imagine that many of you do on a daily basis. We want him to be saved, and we want the Lord to guide him in his decisions, and to give him strength in his convictions. But, today, I want you to pray for Joe Biden, that God would save his soul. Pray for Anthony Fauci, that God would break his heart, and bring him to repentance and faith in Jesus Christ. Pray for Nancy Pelosi – who knows the limits of God's grace? God saved you, He can also save the Speaker of the House!

I submit to you today, that it would be better to have as our President, and as our leaders, men who are saved and led by God – no matter the Party that they may have been affiliated with than to have the most moral conservatives, who do not know the Lord, to be placed in authority over us. As a side, I do believe that it would be very difficult for any man or woman who is saved by God's grace, and who is openly and daily seeking to follow God and glorify Jesus Christ; it would be very difficult (if not impossible) for such a man or woman to openly ally himself to the Democratic Party – when that Party openly condones murder in the abortion of babies. Who but God knows? Surely God can save some from

amongst these who are placed in power over us despite their political party, or their former beliefs – he can change each of us as He sees fit! Surely, He can bring their will into submission unto His, and He could, if it were His Will, make these (formerly) wicked politicians into the bravest, the boldest, and the most fervent of His servants! Pray for those who rule over us. That their wicked agendas would be halted; that their evil desires would not be fulfilled; and, most of all, that they would be saved and converted into servants of Jesus Christ.



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troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God" (II Thess. 2:1-4). There could be no universal reign of peace and righteousness, such as the Scriptures teach there will be during the millennium (For further study see Rev. 20:1-5; II Pet. 3:10-13; Isa. 65:17-25; 11:6-9; Zech. 14:16-21), if the man of sin were on the earth; therefore, the man of sin is not to be revealed during the millennium. And certainly, Paul was not writing to the Thessalonians about something that should come to pass after the millennium. If he had been, doubtless he would have said something like this: Brethren,

you need not fear that the day of Christ is at hand. That day shall not come until the man of sin be revealed, and that will not come to pass until after the millennium. It is plainly evident that Paul was writing to these saints about something that would come to pass in this age. And, as stated above, with the man of sin here, there could be no such condition on the earth as shall prevail during the millennium; therefore, he must be destroyed before the millennium. And since he is to be destroyed by the brightness of Christ's coming, Christ's coming must take place before the millennium.

Also we believe it is plain that the beast of Revelation is identical with the man of sin, and the beast is to be destroyed before the millennium (Rev. 19:17; 20:6). From I Thess. 4:14-18 we learn that the resurrection of the righteous is to take place at the coming of Christ, and Rev. 20:1-6 shows that this resurrection is to take place before the millennium; therefore, Christ is coming before the millennium. Rev. 20:1-6 makes it plain that there are two resurrections, and that the first one is of those that shall reign with Christ. These then are the righteous. And this resurrection is plainly that which is described in I Thess. 4:14-18, which is to be at Christ's second coming.

The judgment of Matt. 25:31-46 is to be in connection with Christ's coming, and is to be before the millennium; therefore, Christ's coming is to be premillennial. We have here two propositions to be established. The first one is that the judgment spoken of is to be in connection with Christ's coming. Verse 31 settles that. The second proposition to be established is that this judgment is to take

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place before the millennium. This is shown by the fact that while there is to be a judgment after the millennium (Rev. 20:11-15), yet it is manifestly a different Judgment from the one we are now considering. In the judgment of Matt. 25 nothing is said about any of the dead being present; in the judgment of Rev. 20 nothing is said about any except the (lead. In the judgment of Matt. 25 both lost and saved are present; in the judgment of Rev. 20 only the lost are mentioned. Also let it be noted that in the judgment of Matt. 25 the righteous are to inherit the kingdom (vs. 34). This is evidently the millennial kingdom, for it cannot be established that heaven is ever particularly called a kingdom.

The Scriptures teach that Christ is to reign personally on the earth during the millennium, therefore, his coming to this earth is to be premillennial. Concerning Jesus, the angel announced to Mary: **"He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end"** (Luke 1:32-33). Old Testament prophecy foretold that Christ would sit on the throne of David. (For more please see Isa. 9:6-7.) Christ is not now sitting on the throne of David. We challenge any man to produce one word of Scripture to show that He is. Christ is now sitting with the Father in the Father's throne, but later he is to sit on His own throne; and His saints will sit with Him (Rev. 3:21). This latter throne is the throne of David. He will sit on that during

the millennium. And the burden of proof is on postmillennialists when they assert that Christ's reign is to be spiritual instead of literal and personal. In Psa. 132:11, we have the record of God's oath to David guaranteeing David a successor fruit the fruit of his own body. This was fulfilled literally in Solomon. Why then should we take it that a prophecy quite similar to this oath, but referring to a later and more illustrious descendent of David, must be taken in a figurative or spiritual sense only? When the apostles asked Jesus about the restoring of the kingdom to Israel, he did not deny that the kingdom would be restored to Israel; but instead, implied that it would. Acts 1:6-7 **"When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power."** In Matt. 19:28, **"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel"**, we have the record of Christ's promise to the apostles that in the regeneration they should sit upon the twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Is that to be on the earth? It most certainly is to be on the earth. For this passage referred to specifies that it is to be fulfilled when Christ sits upon the throne of his glory, and that is to take place on the earth after his coming **"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of**

his glory" (Matt. 25:31). Matt. 19:28 will be literally fulfilled in the millennium, along with Luke 1:32-33; Matt. 5:5; I Cor. 6:2; Rev. 2:26-27; 3:21; and 20:1-4.

(This article was taken from *The Baptist Examiner* Vol 1, No 3 from May 1, 1931)



Great Tribulation

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not have to save any Egyptians or Assyrians, but He chooses to "continue" to be merciful! What a "wonderful" God we serve! Fear Him! Selah! Think about it!



The Kentucky Baptist and the Burning Coals of Truth

C. D. Cole
(1885 - 1968)



History Repeating Itself



"They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace" (Jer. 6:14). "For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them. . ." (I Thess. 5:3).

One of these texts describes the ministry of the false prophets in the long ago; the other gives us the shibboleth of a certain group in the closing days of the present dispensation. One is history; the other is prophecy which we believe is about to become history. These two texts, separated from each other, in point of time, by centuries, tell us that history is to repeat itself. And, why not? Human nature is ever the same, and unrestrained by the grace of God, will always lead to the same culmination. Jeremiah was God's prophet to Judah in the declining period of her national existence. A nation had abused God's mercies and flouted His holy commandments until He sent a stern messenger who foretold of destruction and

desolation. His ministry was opposed by a "majority group" who cried, "Peace, peace," and whose preaching was much to the prejudice of the lone man of God.

It Did Look Like Jeremiah Was Wrong!

But Jeremiah preached what he did because he knew he had the Word of the Lord. He was walking by faith and not by sight. The signs were against him, but the Word of God was in his heart as a burning fire so that he had to speak. There was material prosperity, and the country was enjoying an era of peace. No sign of war. Therefore, optimism prevailed. But there stood the man from Anathoth, timid by nature, with no backing but God; with a holy zeal and dramatic fervor, telling of the coming of a mighty and cruel army from the north country that would spoil the coveted treasures of Judah, and leave death and desolation in her path. He described this cruel enemy as God's instrument, working under His direction and accomplishing

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From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



He Being Dead Yet Speaketh

[Editor's note: This article was originally published in the *The Berea Baptist Banner* Vol 12, no. 10 in the October 5th 2002 issue, just after Brother Cockrell's passing]

If this is ever printed, I will already be with the Lord. I wanted it printed to prevent some preachers who are better politicians than pastors from misusing me or anything which I have written. My church will try to continue to carry on the work the best they can. If for any reason they cannot, they may give it to another church and pastor who will keep to the old paths I would hope.

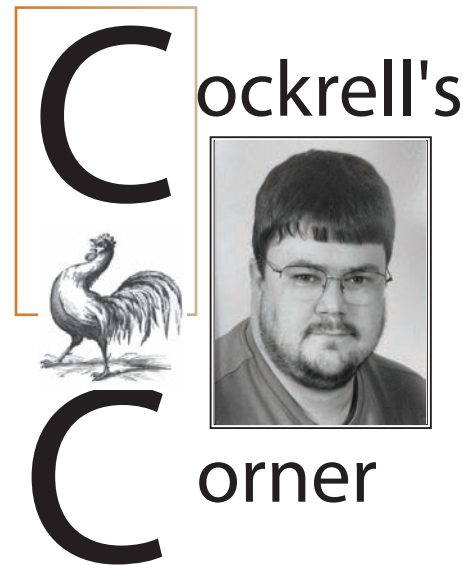
To be forewarned is to be forearmed. There are among us a few preachers who might print some of my articles in their papers to lead people to believe they were my friends. In truth, these men never cared for me personally, and they cared much less for the doctrines I spent my life preaching and teaching. Beware of such men. They will lead you only into error by their fair speech and deceiving words. These men should be marked and avoided as the Scripture enjoins (Romans 16:17-18).

Please be patient with the man who may follow me. It took me many years to get to where I am as I write this (5-29-02). He, too, will need time to develop. Once I was given a job very much like he will now have. I refer to when I took over *The Baptist Examiner*

in 1975. A whole gang of would-be-editors tried to tar and feather me. Others showed little compassion, but by God's help the work continued. Please be kind to him, a thing I did not in the main receive in 1975.

I thank you for all your support and friendship over the years. Great confidence was placed in me by the brethren over the years. I have not knowingly ever done anything to be unworthy of this trust. Our records have always been open to any supporter without any advance notice. This should ever be the case. An informed people are a working people.

Remember the things I taught you while I was still among you. Preach Christ and keep to the old landmarks of the Word of God. We shall meet again in Heaven never to be separated. The grace of God be with you all!



Christopher R. Cockrell
(1965 - 2021)

When the Rooster Crowed

[This article was shared with the paper from Brother Chris's wife, Virginia, after his passing]

The night that our Lord was betrayed He was abandoned by all of His disciples except one, Peter; for a time.

Earlier that night Peter had been bold in speaking, **"Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended"** (Matt. 26:33), he said later that he would lay down his life for Jesus' sake (John 13:38). **"And he said unto him, Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death"** (Luke 22:33).

Yet our Lord replied **"Verily I say unto thee, That this day, even in this night, before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice"** (Mark 14:30).

Later that night Peter denied his Lord three times as he sat outside the palace warming himself. **"And Peter said, Man,**

I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly" (Luke 22:60-62).

In this short passage of Scripture we see that the simple crowing of a rooster had a bitter lasting effect on the Apostle Peter. For we are told he **"Wept bitterly"** or exceedingly, after **"he thought thereon"** (Mark 14:72).

When you next hear the crow of a rooster, stop and think if you might be guilty of the same thing that Peter was; denying our Lord.

In what ways do we deny (refuse; withhold; disown; disavow; or repudiate) our Lord? In many ways we have denied our Lord in failing to live a life that reflects that of our Saviour in refusing to witness to those around us, in failing to study His Word, in failing to show compassion for others, in failing to help those that are less fortunate, in failing to pray as we ought, in failing to spend our time in service to Him rather than in service to self etc.... This list could go on much further if we took time to list all of the commandments of our Lord both in word and actions. It is easy to say, "I have not denied my Lord", but it is much harder to live it. Oh, if only we could weep bitterly over our sins now as Peter did.

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33).



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER

Financial Report

9-1-2021 to 9-30-2021

Beginning Balance.....\$1273.13

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS2,500.00
 Berea B. C., Stonington, IL 60.00
 Bethel B. C., Pasadena, TX 50.00
 Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV 200.00
 Carol Willett, Cottonwood Shores, TX 100.00
 Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 25.00
 Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00
 Grace B. C., Gladwin, MI 50.00
 Grace B. C., Germantown, NC 50.00
 Grace Missionary B. C., Tulsa, OK 50.00
 Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
 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
 Victory B. C., Courtland, VA 25.00
 Beauty Mtn. B. C., Edmond WV 50.00
 Bruce Allen, Cross Plains, TX 25.00
 Southside B. C., Fulton, MS 25.00
 Subscriptions 6.00
 Anonymous 750.00
 Sub Total\$4,601.00
 TOTAL\$5874.13

EXPENDITURES:

Postage 620.10
 Printing..... 543.90
 Wages 2,300.00
 FICA 175.96
 Supplies 49.00
 Bank charge 13.00
 Total Expenditures \$3,701.96
 ENDING BALANCE\$2,172.17

History Repeating

(Continued from page 20) ♦

His vengeance against a people who were incorrigibly wicked. The prophet employed some very striking metaphors to describe the abounding wickedness of the people. He tells them that sinning with them is as easy and natural as for a fountain to cast out her waters (Chap. 6:7). In another place he likens Judah to reprobate silver that cannot be refined (6:29-30). All efforts to purify had been in vain. The bellows had burned up, the lead was consumed of the fire, and the founder had melted in vain: they were as wicked as ever, and could not be separated from their sins.

But Judah Was Not Without Religion

It has been truly said that man is a religions animal. All people are easy to sell religion to if you give them the kind they want, and if there is somebody who cannot find the brand he wants, it will not be long until Satan will bring it out. Now, true religion is of God, and only the Holy Spirit can sell it: for flesh and blood cannot reveal it. Men may present it, by word and deed, but the Holy Spirit alone can close the deal. And this fundamental truth should determine our method in evangelism. There is no doctrine that needs more emphasis today than the doctrine of scriptural evangelism. I feel sorry for a lot of lost people in our churches. They are to be pitied rather than blamed for being in the church. They are not hypocrites. They were tricked into joining the church. They were beguiled into making a profession by slick-tongued, artful evangelists, who had a reputation to be maintained; and who placed more dependence

upon psychology than upon the Holy Spirit. Under present-day evangelism it is surprising that every lost man and woman is not a member of some religious denomination. Eager competition for members on the part of the churches; the cleverness of professional evangelists; and the undying energy of many pastors, it seems, would get every man into some church. That it is not so must be due to the restraints of a merciful God.

Let me call your attention to two things about the religion of Judah. First, there was harmony. Prophets, priests and people were in wonderful agreement (5:31). They were agreed in rejecting the Word of God. There is a unity that is dangerous. A unity to be desired is a unity in the once delivered faith—agreement in the Word of God. Union on any other basis is a barter of the truth of Him who said, **“Buy the truth, and sell it not...”** (Prov. 23:23). So, do not be afraid of religious controversy. The greatest enemy the cause of Christ has today, or can have, is the man who believes in peace at any price. If an issue arises, get on the right side. If you do not know which is the right side, then get busy and find out. Christianity is a controversial religion.

It challenges the existence of every other religion. The Bible is a controversial book and claims to be the only rule of faith and practice. The true God is a mighty polemic. He says, “I am God and beside me there is none else.” The existence of true churches of Christ in the world today is due to controversy. Every worthwhile member of any church today is a contender for the once delivered faith. The very existence of Baptists through the ages has been due to their controversial spirit. The glory of Baptists is

their doctrines, and when they surrender them “Ichabod” may well be written over their doors. Every doctrine we count precious today was handed to us by the battle-scarred hands of our fathers who, with Paul, said, **“... Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed”** (Gal. 1:8).

Someone has well said that truth does not advance its kingdom by surrender, but by victory. Now, I am aware that there are many wrongs to be guarded against in controversy. And, perhaps, a few words of caution might be timely. We need to take care lest a spirit of personal animosity and malice possess us. We need to guard against an ambition to win a personal victory. We need to guard against a disposition to prolong the argument when we have been convinced that we are wrong. But, after all, truth is more valuable than peace. Get these words of our Lord: **“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. . . . And a man's foes shall be they of his own household”** (Matt. 10:34:1-36). Christ came to this world to fill it with doctrines that would be opposed, and those who believe them are warned to expect foes in their own household. History is repeating itself. There is a clamor everywhere today for a religion of peace and harmony at the sacrifice of truth. We have a sample of it in Jeremiah's day. May God save us from it.

Another noticeable thing about the religion of Judah was its expensiveness (Jer. 6:20). Materials for their ceremonial worship were imported. They sent to Sheba for their incense

♦ (Continued on page 23)



BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST

Financial Report

9-1-2021 to 9-30-2021

Beginning Balance.....\$3,846.00

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS 225.00
 Calvary Ind. B. C., Sumas, WA 100.00
 Grace B. C., Corbin, KY 100.00
 TOTAL4,271.00

EXPENDITURES:

Radio time 403.98
 Tape prod. Oct. 2020-Mar. 2021 325.00
 TOTAL EXPENDITURES 728.98
 Interest +0.03
 ENDING BALANCE\$3,542.05

History Repeating

(Continued from page 22) ♦

and to a far country for “Sweet cane.” They thought this would atone for their sins of oppression, idolatry, and rejection of the Word of God. But God plainly tells them that their burnt offerings were not acceptable, and that their sacrifices did not please him. **“The sacrifice of the wicked is abomination to the LORD”** (Prov. 15:8). How this reminds us of multitudes who reject the Word of God about many things—they play cards, dance, frequent worldly places of amusement, etc., and yet worship God in great style after the ceremonial fashion of the age. Now, true religion is expensive. The work of the churches of Christ is no “Cheap John affair.” It takes lots of money to have the gospel preached to every creature. But God never meant for money to take the place of practical godliness. **“...to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams”** (1 Sam. 15:22).

Contempt For the Word of God

Jeremiah, though sent by God and with God's message, complained that he could get no hearing. He could find nobody that would have any patience with him or his message. They looked upon him as a disturber of the peace. To them he was a veritable “kill-joy”—an old “calamity howler.” What a good time they could have if they could only get rid of him! God's Word was a reproach unto them. They acted as though the prophet had wronged them by preaching the truth to them. They felt insulted! Their pride had been wounded. One day when our Lord was pronouncing a series of woes upon the Pharisees a lawyer heard him

and said, in effect: “Master, the way you talk you are insulting us, too.” Oh the pride of the natural heart! My reader, what effect does God's Word of reproof have upon you? When your attention has been called to your sins, do you become offended and feel that the preacher has wronged you? Let us take heed lest we count him an enemy who tells us the truth. There is something in the world today—I do not know what to call it, but it passes current, even in the religious world, for LOVE. I know it is not love, and I abominate it, and yet I find myself afflicted with it. It is a spirit that tells us to agree with everybody, to help everybody, to praise everybody. It tells us that we must never criticize anybody, nor voice objection to anything. It is the spirit that causes the mother to say, “I love my daughter so much that I just can not help letting her go to the dance.” It is the spirit that leads the father to say, “I love my son so much that I must give him all the money he wants and let him do as he pleases.” It is the spirit that prompts the pastor to say, “I am so in love with my members that I cannot afford to oppose them when they are going contrary to the Word of God.” It leads the woman to say, “I love my neighbor and therefore, I must play cards when she asks me to.” I know that such a spirit is not love. It is something that is fleshly and Satanic! Who loved Judah in the days of her apostasy? Was it the lying prophets, who preached unto them smooth things, saying, “Peace, peace, when there was no peace?” NO! They were lovers of self, and destroyers of others. Who loved Judah? It was the faithful prophet of God, who brought them God's untempered and undiluted word of rebuke. Listen to his cry of love and

devotion to a sinful nation: **“Oh that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of my people! Oh that I had in the wilderness a lodging place of wayfaring men; that I might leave my people, and go from them! for they be all adulterers, an assembly of treacherous men. And they bend their tongues like their bow for lies: but they are not valiant for the truth upon the earth...”** (Jer. 9:1-3). They tell us that in nature there is such a thing as a protective mimicry: animals having the power of changing their color to match their surroundings, whether it be the gravel of the stream or the leaves of the tree. That is what a great many of us do. To save ourselves from a little criticism we will change our color to suit the environment. We cannot stand to be classed as peculiar or odd. Put us in a place where certain forms of worldliness are common and fashionable, and we go in for them. Take us away from these and we change our color to something a little whiter.

The People Were Impudent and Unblushing

The people were so sin-hardened that they committed the most immoral acts without a blush; yea, they had reached the point where they could not blush. The man who cannot see that America is fast reaching such a stage in her career of revelry and lustful pleasure greatly needs his eyes anointed. The day of feminine modesty has all but passed away; and the chivalry of knighthood is, of necessity, passing with it. God's line of distinction between the sexes has been rubbed, and rubbed, and rubbed until it has about reached the

vanishing point. The divine order of the sexes has been tampered with, and one of these days God will call for a settlement. The Word of God clearly delineates the sphere of men and women in human society and in the church, and His Word cannot be trifled with except at a terrible cost. Humanly speaking, the salvation of any nation is its women. So long as a country has the right kind of wives and mothers it will stand. When Paul would emphasize the terrible state of the heathen he said, “Even their women” did thus and so.

The False Prophets Were Sorry Physicians

The priests and prophets of Judah had dealt falsely. They had not been faithful to their trust. As watchmen and counselors, they had not told the people of their sins, and of the danger that was to come. They were sorry physicians. They had healed the hurt of the people slightly. They did not probe the wound of national sin to the bottom; they merely drew a skin over it and called it a cure. They flattered the people into the opinion that they were not very bad, and that there was no cause for alarm. They cried, “Peace, peace.” They soothed and comforted the people in their sins; they gave them opiates to make them feel easy for the present. They treated the national ills of Judah like some physicians once treated the writer when he had blood poison in his hand. They applied poultices and gave opiates, and all the while the poison was creeping through my body. And when the arm was terribly swollen to the shoulder, we found a physician who seemed to administer cruel treatment. With a sharp knife he lanced the

♦ (Continued on page 24)

History repeating

(Continued from page 23) ♦

place and laid the wound open and probed to the bottom. It was painful, but my life was saved. History is to repeat itself. While men are crying “peace and safety” sudden destruction will overtake them. While men are boasting of human progress in the arts and sciences and rejoicing in the delusion that the world is getting better, an angry God will arise from His seat of longsuffering to shake terribly the earth: Isaiah 2:19, **“And they shall go into the holes of the rocks, and into the caves of the earth, for fear of the LORD, and for the glory of his majesty, when he ariseth to shake terribly the earth.”**

(This article was taken from the April 1st 1931 issue of The Baptist Examiner.)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Beauty Mountain Baptist Church of Edmond, WV, and Pastor Jonathan Bailess would like to announce their upcoming Bible Conference, November 5th-7th.

Service times are Friday at 7:00 p.m. with a meal provided at 5:00 p.m., Saturday at 9:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. with lunch provided, and Sunday at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. with lunch provided.

Scheduled speakers are: Elders Justin Meier, Andy Proctor, Clint Keith, Joe Collins, Tom Ross, Benjamin Stepp, Doug Newell IV, Matthew Stepp, Leroy Pack, Chris Burke, Nathan Long, Paul Stepp.

For more information contact Pastor Bailess at (304) 663-8894

The Sovereign Grace Missionary Baptist Church of Silsbee TX is hosting a meeting December 17-19. Should you

have an interest in attending and require directions or accomodations suggestions please contact Pastor Joe Newell at 225-772-9158.

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 interest 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.

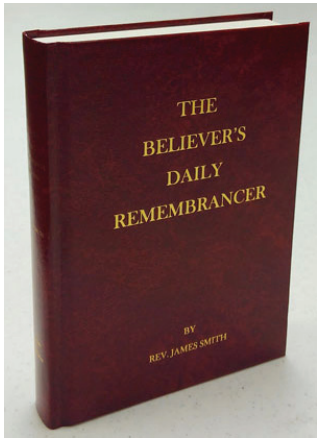
The Lord’s Baptist Church in Tacoma Washington is in need of a pastor. For more information please contact Gaylen Russell at 360-879-5565 (home) or 253-495-4567 (cell) or by Email: gaylenr@rainierconnect.com.

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.

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rdreed70@spectrum.net



We here at Berea Baptist Church would just like to take this opportunity to thank all who have thought to call, email, write, and even extend love offerings in the memory of our recently called home brother Chris Cockrell.

As his pastor, I would ask that you continue to remember his dear wife Virginia as well as his children as we seek the Lord’s will going forward. Thanks and God bless!

Bro Joe Sidders

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