

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

Satan's Abode & the Finality of Hell

By Nathaniel Hille
of Caldwell, Kansas

Last week in the *Caldwell Messenger* a short column mentioned that a sign was observed in a community that said, "Satan called, he wants his weather back." While humorous (and yes, I got the joke and even chuckled), this statement exposes two fallacies widely accepted by religious and non-religious individuals, of which I would like to deal with in this article: 1) Satan is currently in Hell, 2) Hell is able to be tolerated.

First, many believe that Satan's abode is Hell, which at best is a falsehood. Quite a few people believe that Satan is in Hell torturing the inhabitants of Hell. While we read in Matthew 25:41, **"that hell is prepared for the devil and his angels,"** Hell is not Satan's present address. The Bible is quite clear as to the present residence of Satan being upon the earth: Genesis 3:1, Satan is depicted as coming to deceive Eve in the form of a serpent; Job 1:7, when Satan was asked of God where he had been, Satan replied **"From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it";** Matthew 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13, we read of the temptation of Jesus by the devil for forty days, which took place in the wilderness upon the earth; I Peter 5:8, **"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about,**



seeking whom he may devour?" Where is Satan walking about devouring? In Hell? A definite no! It is here upon the earth; for Simon Peter wrote unto those elected saints of God who were **"strangers scattered throughout"** the world (I Pet. 1:1). One day Satan will be cast into Gehenna, or the Lake of Fire,
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Sign of the Times!

By Donnie Burford
of Irvine, Kentucky

(Read II Timothy 3:1-5)

"Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof" (II Tim. 3:5).

Many people love to try to discern the end of the age. The time that the world as we know it will come to an end. This is true of the world in general with all their different speculative scenarios, from the Mayan Calendar and Nostradamus to global warming. This as well is also true in the realm of Christianity as seen in all the various speculation and conjectures of Eschatological schemes. But this article is not so much about Eschatology, (end time events) in the proper sense,



but more about the present reality we as the Lord's people, and churches are seeing and experiencing not only all around us today, but even in our midst, and yet it is feared that we most often have failed to see that it is more than a mere occurrence of a sin induced weakness, but rather in reality it is a sign that we are living in the last days.

Most often when a Christian thinks and questions when the end of the world may come they think only of the external signs that may be recognized.

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The Hearing of the Lord

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Read Psalm 34:1-22

Note verses 4, 6, 15, and 17. **"I sought the LORD, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears"** (vs. 4). **"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles"** (vs. 6). **"The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry"** (vs. 15). **"The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of**



all their troubles" (vs. 17). We know that God hears and sees everything, but these verses speak of His giving special attention to certain things and a particular people.

When we speak of the hearing of the Lord, we refer not so much to sounds falling upon His ears as so much noise, but to His intent listening and responding to the prayers and supplications of the righteous. One of the reasons that we who are children of God are encouraged to pray is because God's ears are open. **"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers; but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil"** (I Pet. 3:12).

What is encouraging to us about the hearing of the Lord is that He hears us at all times, and our circumstances are not a hindrance to His hearing. God is not limited by our situation. We look upon the things at hand, and we think that nothing good can be done, or no great work for the Lord can be accomplished. We see our lives and our weaknesses, and we think that there is no reason for going on in the service of the Lord. If the things we see with the eyes of the flesh were all there was to it, then that would be true. But the things that limit us do not limit God. Many times, the things that we

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Christian Singing and Instrumental Music

By Milburn Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)

In all ages and dispensations of time, God's people have sung praises to the Lord. The singing of hymns has been a part of the worship of local congregations since the beginning of the Christian era. In our time the song service makes up an important part of the Sunday morning worship hour. The song service of a church constitutes

almost the only act that can be called worship in the strictest sense. It is a time when all can vocally unite in the act of worship.

THE CHARACTER OF SONG WORSHIP

The singing of hymns in church worship ought to be congregational. Psalms 67:5 says: **"Let the people praise thee, O God: let all the people praise thee."** The singing of hymns in church worship is not to be a performance by

a little click for the entertainment of the congregation, but an act of worship by the whole church. All the assembly should praise God in song.

The style of music should be such as the common people can perform. This must be so if the whole church is to sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Music complicated in structure and artistic in execution is suitable for choirs who have practice sessions, but congregational singing should be of the simplest kind.

The manner of this singing is to be with the heart as well as with the mouth. Ephesians 5:19 tells us to sing and make melody in our hearts to the Lord. If we are singing unto the Lord, then the words of the song we sing must be according to God's Word, otherwise it will be unacceptable. Singing for the applause of man must ever be avoided in Christian worship.

According to I Corinthians 14:15

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A blind man does not see himself in a looking glass.

*Neither do the spiritually blind see themselves in the Word of God,
although it is a perfect mirror of truth and character.*

"He answered and said, Whether he be a sinner or no, I know not: one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see" (John 9:25).

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Staff: Sheron Cockrell, Marsha Kiser, Virginia
Cockrell

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

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Christian Singing

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our singing is to be "with the Spirit" and "with the understanding also." This means we are to sing with our human spirit under the influence of the Holy Spirit. The words of our songs must be understandable. The words must be understood by the singer and the listener.

This is the type of music I use on the Independent Baptist Hour. I play the old songs which Baptists have sung and rejoiced in for centuries. I avoid using the modern religious pop music which is so commonly heard on most programs.

I believe God is not pleased with much of the church music of our day. Many religious societies are completely given over to religious rock'n roll. Such music has the sound of the jungle toms. This religious pop music is widely used by the famous quartets and soloists. It is even found in juke joints and bars. It is very popular with the unsaved who often dance to the rhythm. Some churches have so departed from the New Testament pattern that they have turned their sanctuaries into a stage for hippie music under the cloak of "Christian folk musicals."

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC AND BAPTISTS

The question of the use of instrumental music in church worship has been debated for centuries in Christendom. It has been debated by my own people, the Baptists. One rather large and old group of Baptists opposes the use of instrumental music in church worship. A little over a hundred and fifty years ago, a disgruntled segment withdrew from these Baptists and changed their name. They, too, are opposed to the use of instrumental music in church worship.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN OLD TESTAMENT

There are numerous references to instrumental music in the Old Testament. In I Samuel 10:5 King Saul met "a company of prophets coming down from the high place with a psaltery, and a tabret, and a pipe, and a harp, before them." This passage reveals instrumental music as being common in ancient Israel, even among the prophets.

David was not only a great warrior but also skilled musician. His tuneful melody upon the harp had a profound effect upon the demonized Saul. I Samuel 16:23 reads: "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took an harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

Instrumental music had a prominent place in the tabernacle and temple worship. I read in I Chronicles 25:1: "Moreover David and the captains of

the host separated to the service of the sons of Asaph, and of Heman, and of Jeduthun, who should prophesy with harps, with psalteries, and with cymbals. . ." Verse 3 says they "prophesied with a harp, to give thanks and to praise the LORD." Verse 6 says: "All these were under the hands of their father for song in the house of the LORD, with cymbals, psalteries, and harps, for the service of the house of God. . ." I Chronicles 16:42 speaks of "trumpets" and "cymbals" and call them the "musical instruments of God."

I am aware that sometimes musical instruments were used for revelry in the Old Testament times. Amos 6 deals with a group of people in Zion who lay "upon beds of ivory" and ate "the lambs out of the flock" and invented "to themselves instruments of music like David." These same people drank wine in bowls and chanted to the sound of the viol. God never authorized these people to do this. A musical instrument is a good thing, but these people misused them. The fault is not in the musical instrument, but in the users of the instruments.

INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC IN NEW TESTAMENT

Did God abolish the use of instrumental music in the New Testament? The ceremonial law of the Old Testament era was abolished by Christ. Colossians 2:14 declares: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." This verse does not mention the abolition of instrumental music. The writer of Hebrews tells us how the Aaronic Priesthood and animal sacrifices have ceased, but no where does he say instrumental music has ceased. To assert that it has ceased is to speak where the Bible is silent! The New Testament no where states that instrumental music in worship is abolished.

It seems to me that the burden of proof has been pushed off on the wrong party. Since instrumental music was used to praise God in the Old Testament worship, we would assume it is carried over into New Testament worship, unless Scripture plainly forbids its use. Since no New Testament Scripture prohibits its use, we have every right to believe it does continue. There is no New Testament Scripture which says we ought to have a church building. But we know from the temple and its worship that God does approve of such. The same is true of instrumental music in Christian worship. Until some find one Scripture which forbids instrumental music in Christian worship, they would do well to remain as silent about the subject as the New Testament.

NEW TESTAMENT APPROVAL OF INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

In connection with the raising of Jairus' daughter, I read in Matthew 9:23-25:

"And when Jesus came into the ruler's house, and saw the minstrels and the people making a noise, He said unto them, Give place: for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn. But when the people were put forth, he went in, and took her by the hand, and the maid arose."

Note the word "minstrels" which means "persons who play instruments of music." Here we see instrumental music used in connection with a funeral. Christ honored this funeral service with His presence. He did not rush into this house and preach a lengthy sermon against instrumental music. Instead, He raised the dead girl back to life again. The presence of Christ where instrumental music was used, the miracle performed, and His failure to rebuke them for the music they used, proves Christ approved of such.

In Revelation 5:9 it is said that the twenty-four elders had harps and "sung a new song." They are pictured playing the harps and singing unto the Lord the song of redemption. This is in the New Testament. It reveals that singing with instrumental music will be carried on in Heaven. If it is right to do this in Heaven, can it be wrong to do it on earth? God help those who would condemn a man for doing in church what the saints will do in Heaven in the presence of God.

This passage is indeed a problem for the non-musical contenders. They believe the book of Revelation is the trials and triumphs of the church. Of course, we premillennialists do not believe this is the case. But if they are right in saying Revelation is a history of the church, then they must admit that they have instrumental music in the church in the New Testament.

EPHESIANS 5:19 AND COLOSSIANS 3:16

Those who are opposed to the use of instrumental music appeal to Ephesians 5:19 for proof of their position. It reads: "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." But where does this verse forbid the use of instrumental music? It does not approve or disapprove of its use. This verse only tells us what and how we are to sing in Christian worship. All reference to the abolition of instrumental music in this verse must first be put into it by those who have a dogma to defend.

Another proof text for the non-musical contenders is Colossians 3:16 which says: "Teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." It is just like Ephesians 5:19. It only tells how and what we are to sing in church. It makes no reference to instrumental music.

You will observe that both passages tell us to use the psalms. Colossians 3:16

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Christian Singing

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goes so far as to command us to teach and admonish one another in psalms. If the New Testament Christian teaches from the psalms, will he teach the use of instrumental music? What will a New Testament believer sing about if he sings from the book of Psalms? What do the Psalms say about the use of instrumental music?

Why not just look and see for ourselves. Don't take my word on this. Search the book of Psalms yourself. I read in Psalms 33:2-3: **"Praise the LORD with harp; sing unto him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto him a new song; play skillfully with a loud noise."** Listen to Psalms 98:5-6: **"Sing unto the LORD with the harp; with the harp, and the voice of a psalm. With trumpets and sound of cornet make a joyful noise before the LORD, the King."** Psalms 150:3-4 commands: **"Praise him with the sound of the trumpet; praise him with the psaltery and harp. Praise him with the timbrel and dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs."**

In the light of these inspired words, I conclude that if a church member teaches and admonishes from the Psalms, he will teach the use of instrumental music. If he sings from the Psalms, he will sing about God's command to praise the Lord **"with stringed instruments and organs."** So the verses usually appealed to to condemn instrumental music in Christian worship actually teach it is permissible.

SOME OBJECTIONS ANSWERED

Some object to instrumental music in church because the Old Testament mentions the dance along with instrumental music. They seem to believe if you have instrumental music in the church it will lead to dancing. This makes as much sense as to say drinking grape juice will lead to drinking wine or to have a wife will lead a man to commit adultery, or to read the Bible will cause a man to read filthy books. Many good things could lead to bad things, if the person using them lacks self-control. The problem is in the person, not the thing.

Those who contend for this never define the word **"dance"** as it is used in the Old Testament. They seek to make people believe the Old Testament dance is the modern ballroom dance of today. This is an inexcusable error.

The dance in Old Testament times was not a second cousin to the modern ballroom dance of today. The Jewish dance was performed by the sexes separately (Jer. 31:13; Ps. 68:25). It was nearly always a means of praising the Lord. Psalms 149:3 commands: **"Let them praise his name in the dance. . ."**

Some will ever be saying that there is no Scripture for instrumental music

in the New Testament. I offer a few questions for the consideration of those who say so. Where does the New Testament say we can have a church building? an offering plate? church pews? a baptistery? a public address system? revival posters? song books? a pastor's study? a telephone? a nursery? a church bulletin? a blackboard or a tuning fork? Nearly all who oppose instrumental music use tuning forks. A tuning fork is a tone producer, and so is an organ or piano. So even those who oppose musical instruments in the church is, after all, using a musical instrument.

The Bible does not condemn those who sing in their churches without musical instruments. Neither does it condemn those who sing with instrumental music. If some want to sing without instrumental music I will not condemn them for the Bible does not. Nor do I expect to be condemned for using instrumental music in the worship at my church, since the New Testament permits its use.



Satan's Abode

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to be tormented day and night for ever and ever (Rev. 20:10), but presently he is alive on the earth seeking whom he may devour.

Second, that Hell is able to be tolerated. Hell is a place of extreme pain and suffering. It is a place of fervent heat; one of torment. Hell is a lot of things, but it is not a place one will be able to escape once there. Recall the words of Abraham to the rich man who died and went to Hell and lifted up his eyes being in torments when he requested relief from Abraham: **"Son, remember...between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence"** (Luke 16:25, 26). Once there, none can escape. There is no place where one can go to be "cooled off", to "get relief". It will be **"for ever and ever"** (Rev. 20:11-15).

However, there is but one escape from the torments in Hell that shall come upon Satan and his angels and all who have fallen short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23); and that is the salvation that Jesus Christ has provided through His shed blood at Calvary. This salvation may be yours by faith in Christ as the only Savior, for there is no other name given among men whereby we must be saved (Acts 4:12). And if this salvation in Christ is neglected, then you shall not escape, but suffer the same end as the Devil, in Hell (Heb. 2:3). Amen



The Hearing of

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think of as such great hindrances are nothing more than perceived problems, which, if we would turn the matter over to the Lord, would be no problems at all.

I want to note some of the times and manners in which the Lord hears us, and the results of our being heard by the Lord.

1. **"I sought the LORD, and he heard me."**

One of the times in which the Lord hears us is when we seek Him. **"Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened"** (Matt. 7:7-8). The Lord's people must learn dependence upon God. We must learn to ask, seek, and knock. Spiritual blessings and power are to be had in this manner. The majority of Christians only seek the Lord in times of extremity and adversity. God sometimes has to send times of difficulty into our lives so that we will learn to lean upon Him. When the situation is calm and without hardship, then we tend to forget the Lord, when in reality we ought to be seeking Him then just as much as in times of trouble. The Christian life is one of dependence upon the Lord for all things. We need the grace, mercy, peace, and power of God daily in order to have victory over sin and live for Him. Therefore, we are to be seeking Him. **"Ye have not, because ye ask not"** (James 4:2). **"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you"** (James 4:8). The reason we have not found the blessings of God often is because we have not sought after Him fully in our hearts. If we seek Him, He shall hear us.

2. **"This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him."**

The poor man is one who has no other means available to him, and so he must cry unto the Lord. Jesus said, **"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"** (Matt. 5:3). David calls himself a poor man, which shows that without the Lord, he was a pauper; impoverished, without means. Those who are poor are those who have no resources with which to help themselves, and so they are dependent upon the kindness of others. We are dependent upon the kindness, compassion, and love of God. **"The poor is hated even of his own neighbour: but the rich hath many friends"** (Prov. 14:20). Beloved, the Lord hears us in our poverty, when we have nothing to offer, nothing to lean upon, and nowhere to turn. **"I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me: refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O LORD: I said, Thou art my refuge and my portion in the**

land of the living" (Ps. 142:4,5). The poor are hated because they are of no use to those who would gain for themselves. You are of no use to the world so long as you are serving the Lord. The only One who will hear you and help you is God. God hears those who no one else will. The poor are those who have the greatest need, and God is able to supply all your need. **"But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus"** (Phil. 4:19). We are poor in ourselves, but He is rich, and He bestows His riches upon us when we call to Him in Christ.

3. **"... he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."**

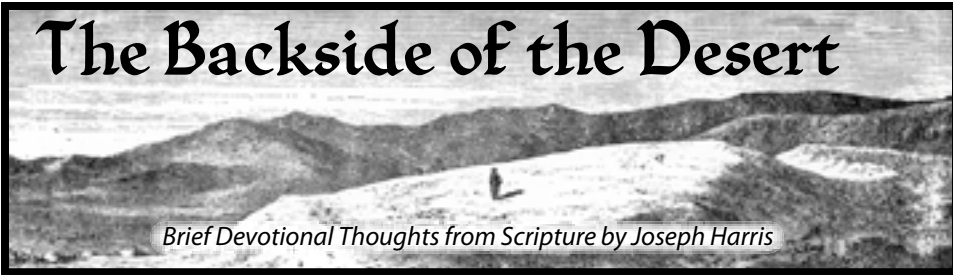
One of the results of the Lord hearing us is that He delivers us from our fears. Fear is one of the greatest enemies of a child of God, and of the Lord's churches. Many do not serve the Lord because of fear. The enemy is a roaring lion, and he seeks to frighten children of God into submission. There are many things which we may fear, but God can deliver us from that fear. **"Be careful for nothing; but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God"** (Phil. 4:6). **"Casting all your care [anxiety] upon him; for he careth for you"** (1 Pet. 5:7). God is bigger than what we fear, and He is greater than our fear. Fear dominates people's lives and makes them useless in God's service. Deliverance from fear is found only in the Lord. Was it not Christ who said, **"Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid"** (John 14:27)? Courage does not come from within; it comes from above, from the throne of grace where Christ intercedes for His people. If we would have our fears quieted, we must seek the Lord who hears us and believe in His power to deliver us from fear. Satan wants you to be afraid. Many are afraid, afraid of sickness, afraid of failure, afraid of being alone, afraid of what others think and say. The God who hears is able to deliver us from fear. (Read Rev. 2:9-10).

4. **"... the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles."**

The life of a child of God is one which includes troubles, but the Lord can save us out of all troubles. Trouble refers to distress. We face things which trouble us in our bodies, in our minds, and in our hearts. Troubles come upon individuals, families, and churches. **"In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world"** (John 16:33). We are not to be ruled by troubles, but rather by the peace of God which passeth all understanding. One of the reasons we do not often have peace in our hearts as we ought is because we do not pray as we ought and call upon the Lord who is able to save us out of all troubles. I do not know what troubles you are going to face, in the near

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The Backside of the Desert



Brief Devotional Thoughts from Scripture by Joseph Harris

How and Why Should We Praise God?

Psalm 146

Introduction- Praising God with a description of His attributes is always in order since His actions are based on His attributes. However, more praise is usually given to God declaring His actions, since we see His goodness and relate to it by experience as recipients. Since we are commanded to praise God, and from God can come growth and strength, then the purpose and formula of praising God must be understood and followed in order to present perfect praise to our Lord.

This Psalm focuses on declaring praise based on His actions, while indirectly mentioning His attributes. He is shown to be our (1) great help and benefactor, (2) based on His unconditional word, (3) who is just and benevolent, (4) who reigns forever.

WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD NOW IN THIS LIFE BECAUSE HE IS OUR GREAT HELP 1-4.

a. We should praise God now in this life. The first common sense thought in regard to this statement is, "Well of course we should praise God while we live. How can we praise Him if we are dead." But a closer look at the verse reveals that it is not speaking just of praising Him on this earth, in this life, once, or twice, or three times, or even occasionally. The emphasis is to praise God throughout life on this earth. Praise should be a continual, natural expression of our relationship with God, for a lifetime and as a way of life, hence the phrase, "While I live I will praise the LORD..."

b. We should praise Him in song. Praise can be given in meditation, in exclamation, or in song. Here the writer specifically states that praise should be in song. The Hebrew word for "being," transliterated owd, speaks of repetition or continuance. In true Hebrew parallelism, the writer once again reveals how our praise should be lifelong and not sporadic, while specifying in this second phrase the singing of the praise.

c. We should praise God and not earthly leaders (princes) or any man (sons of men) for in them, there is no real or lasting help. Though princes, or men, may give assistance, the only lasting help that endures comes from God. If David is the writer of this Psalm, then a prince, or former prince, is writing. In our understanding today, a prince might

be a leader in civic, and or governmental affairs and could even be "stretched" to include spiritual leaders. The admonition is strong and declarative: do not put trust in man, but in God alone. Why? Man is sinful and desperately wicked. We are to "look up to the hills from whence our help cometh." Man's help comes from Heaven, not from earth.

WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD BASED ON HIS EVERLASTING COVENANT 5-6.

a. God deserves this praise because He has bound Himself unconditionally to His people. Whether the writer is speaking of the man Jacob or the nation from Jacob, Israel, the thought is the same: an unconditional covenant. A conditional covenant of law was made with the people through Moses with the giving of the law at Sinai. However, over 400 years prior to this agreement, an unconditional covenant of grace was made by God with Abram and his descendants, which was confirmed with Isaac, then reconfirmed with Jacob, and sealed with his name being changed to Israel. Though Jehovah is often known as the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the name Jacob is used here signifying the perpetuation of the covenant. Though not Jewish, yet, as spiritual recipients of this covenant of grace, we should rejoice and offer praise to God as much as any child of Jacob.

b. We should praise God because just as He has created and sustains all things (finishes what He starts), so He will continue to fulfill that which He has promised in His Word. Again Hebrew poetry repeats the thought begun in verse 5. God's help is perpetual, based first upon the promise in His covenant, but then confirmed through His creation. What God has created, He has perpetuated. Jehovah maintains "Heaven, and the earth, the sea, and all that therein is." The truth of this verse is descriptive and confirming, therefore we can praise God by reason of the experience of what we have seen in our lifetime.

WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD BECAUSE HE IS JUST AND BENEVOLENT 7-9.

Though the Exodus is not mentioned in these verses specifically, God's justice and benevolence is mirrored in His care for Israel in Egypt and the original readers of this Psalm would have made the connection with the historical account of the Egyptian bondage and release of their forefathers.

a. God defends the oppressed and

persecuted. God is seen in Scripture as having pity for the orphans and widows (mentioned by name in verse 9), since they were often oppressed and persecuted with the absence of the husband and father who defended their rights before others. However, God is the great defender of all who are oppressed. Just as He heard the cries of the Israelites in Egyptian bondage and sent a deliverer, so He continues to hear today for His "hand is not shortened, that he cannot save, nor his ear heavy, that it cannot hear."

b. God provides for the needy. God, as father is seen as the great provider who gives to those in need. The most outstanding need seen and experienced by all men is the need for food. Outstanding examples of God providing food for His people are: manna in the wilderness, Elijah receiving food from ravens, and the different feedings of the multitudes by Jesus.

c. God sets the captives free. As the great emancipator, God's great love and mercy is shown as in no other way. To set captives free and give liberty for which the soul so earnestly longs is to touch the heart of man and provide his greatest need. We should praise God for every physical liberty granted, but especially to be set free from sin and the penalty of sin, elicits the praise of God as possibly nothing else can.

d. God gives healing to the sick and strength to the weary. God still heals and may effect physical healing and deliverance at His good pleasure. In doing so, He reveals His compassion by relieving suffering and anguish, and also brings glory to Himself as the great physician.

CONCLUSION- WE SHOULD PRAISE GOD BECAUSE HE REIGNS FOREVER 10.

The eternity of God is the fitting benediction to this Psalm of great praise. We should praise God throughout this life and into the next life forever, because He reigns forever. There is no other god like Him for there is no other god. In focusing on praising God with a declaration of His acts, we can immediately connect with God's goodness by recalling personal experiences related to the specific acts mentioned.



The Hearing of

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or distance future. I do not know what troubles this church will face, except that we will face some if we stand for truth and seek to honor and glorify God. But this I do know: "The righteous cry, and the LORD heareth, and delivereth them out of all their troubles." "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he

bear long with them? I tell you that he will avenge them speedily" (Luke 18:7-8). God hears the cries of His righteous servants day and night, and He shall deliver them from peril and distress.

"The eyes of the LORD are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry." "I acknowledge my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah. For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found: surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah" (Ps. 32:5-7). The Lord delights to hear His people. Would that we were a praying people. Would that we would pray for the souls of men, for the souls of our own children, for the prosperity of the church, for the health of this nation, and for the furtherance of the name of Christ. If there be sin in your life to keep God from hearing you, confess it and forsake it. (Read II Chron. 7:13-15.) May we be a praying church, and thereby a powerful church, knowing that our God hears us.



Sign of the Times!

(Continued from page 161) ♦

This is usually done in association with such passages as Matthew 24-25 where Jesus addressed His disciples over this issue, "what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world" (Matt. 24:3). A variety of external signs are given in these passages. Signs pointing out, not only things in the heavens and on the earth, but also things that will manifest themselves in the society of last days.

Although these are the type of signs most like to consider when trying to discern the end of the age, yet, it is believed that when this is the only aspect of revelation we consider we are prone to miss one of the greatest signs and proofs of the approaching end of the age. We often miss one of the clearest signs that is a Biblical testament to the fact that surly these are the last days. A sign not only to be seen in the natural world in general, but specifically a sign that is to be seen in individuals. Unfortunately this sign may be most evident as it manifests itself openly and undeniably in the Lord's churches today, in the lives of those who have made a profession of Christ and even joined themselves to one of His assemblies.

What is this sign we see all around us today, especially in our churches among those who have professed Christ, I believe

♦ (Continued on page 165)

Sign of the Times!

(Continued from page 164) ◊

Paul states it clearly, **“Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof”** (II Tim. 3:5). I think John Gill in his exposition of the Bible, on verse 5 has some good thoughts; “Having a form of godliness, ... Either a mere external show of religion, pretending great piety and holiness, being outwardly righteous before men, having the mask and visor of godliness; or else a plan of doctrine, a form of sound words, a scheme of truths, which men may have without partaking of the grace of God.” (He continues) “but denying the power thereof; though in words they profess religion and godliness, the fear of God, and the pure worship of him, yet in works they deny all; and though they may have a set of notions in their heads, yet they feel nothing of the power of them on their hearts; and are strangers to experimental religion, and powerful godliness: or though they profess the Scriptures to be the Word of God, yet they deny the use, the power, and efficacy of them.”

Many churches are seeing exactly this in these days in which we live! A lack of faithfulness by those who profess Christ and often are on the church roles? We always seem to preference this condition when we see it, by such stated facts as; “no one is perfect,” “we are all sinners,” “we all fall short at times,” “we are just sinners saved by grace.” We understand these statements of fact, for they are true. But when we find ourselves or others having to constantly appeal to these truths as a means of explanation or excuse for the obvious short-comings of sin and unfaithfulness in their lives, it may be more of a sign of the lack of the true regenerating, life giving and changing power of God in their lives.

Often this sign has been missed because we have veiled it with our hopes. We hope when we see manifested a weakened state of sin in ones life, or in a church, that it is a mere show of a back-slidden condition, and although this may be true, and we pray that it is, even as serious as that may be, yet it should be becoming more and more apparent by the unfaithfulness of so many professed Christians today that in reality it is a clear sign revealing that we are living in the last days.

The truth is for many if not most today, the reason they seem to be able to profess Christ and yet live such worldly and unfaithful lives, is because their faith is a matter of fiction rather than a fact. We can't ignore the fact that every time one knowingly chooses to sin and live in an unfaithful state, they are denying, forsaking, rejecting, abandoning even renouncing the power of God's Spirit and Word in their lives. In fact they are forsaking Christ Whom they may have

never known fully or personally in the first place.

There is no question we will always have those who are weak in the faith among us, but it is also true and especially to be seen, that as the days of this age grow closer and closer to the last day, there will be those more and more who will deny the faith because they have denied the power of God. Why? Why would anyone who professes Christ do such? It can only be because they have never truly experienced the power of God and thus have never truly been in the faith!

Let us not cover this sign with our false assumptions and hopes but rather let us hear and see the truth God is revealing to us as we live in these last days.

“They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Titus 1:16).

“Traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God” (II Tim. 3:4).

“Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him” (I John 2:15).

“Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils” (I Tim. 4:1).

“And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables” (II Tim. 4:4).

“Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us” (I John 2:18-19).

Yes, the sign has been clearly defined and revealed and we as the children of God should not only see it but deal with it, not letting our own lives be influenced by those whose faith is fictitious, but rather fully commit ourselves to live the life God has given us by grace, willingly submitting ourselves by faith, to His Word and His power!

Church member, are you saved? Are you truly faithful? Do you truly love Christ, or is it you we see as a sign revealing a fictitious faith of the last days? Are you keeping His Word, or are you denying the power thereof over your life? **“Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him”** (John 14:23).

Church member are you religious but lost, holding to a fictitious faith that has no power? **“But if thine eye be evil, thy**

whole body shall be full of darkness. If therefore the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness” (Matt. 6:23)!

We may never fully see the sign your life is revealing, but be sure, Christ both knows and sees it. And He exhorts us all to take a look at our own lives and see what they are really showing. **“Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall”** (II Pet. 1:10).

Yes, we should recognize all around us, and even in our midst, this sign of powerless lives, those who deny the power of God and the true faith and reveal a fictitious faith which is in fact no faith at all! But most importantly, as that day approaches, will you see the sign your life is revealing? **“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye**

that work iniquity” (Matt. 7:22-23).

Yes, we should recognize today in our churches and in the lives of many who profess Christ that the weakness we are experiencing is a sign that we are living in the last days. A powerless life, no matter how pious it may appear, can only add its weakness to a church and to those who follow its example. We pray that by God's grace, many who just think themselves to be in some state of unfaithfulness, not truly seeing the fact, missing the sign, that they are still lost and in their sins never having truly experienced the power of God unto salvation, will see the truth their lives are revealing before it is eternally too late, that all they have is a form of godliness, because in reality they have no power of God in their life having denied the Power! Will we, will you see the sign? **“Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates”** (II Cor. 13:5).



The Devil's Methods in Perverting Bible Preaching

By Roy Mason
(1894 - 1978)



preached---not book reviews, politics, etc., **“Preach the Word”** (II Tim. 4:2).

Paul could say, “I have shunned not to declare unto you the whole counsel of

God.” That sort of preaching requires a dedicated and courageous preacher who puts the call of duty ahead of his personal welfare.

THE DEVIL'S SCHEMES

Satan seeks to render preaching of none effect through his counterfeits. Let us note some of them:

1. *He substitutes topical preaching for the expository kind.* Text is pulled out of its setting, and becomes a spring board from which to launch out into space. Often the text has no bearing on the sermon at all. If the text had the measles the sermon is so far removed from it that it would never catch it. Modern books of sermons---most of them---are worthless. The sermons are weak little homilies that make little use of the Word of God. The sermons given in the Bible are expository and make use of whole passages of the Word.

2. *Alliterative preaching.* The average book of sermon “outlines” is worthless for it dotes on alliteration. We remember hearing a sermon with an outline something like this: “It's a sad old world; it's a bad old world; it's a glad old world.” That was the outline---a sort of a musical

The Devil can't prevent men from preaching so he has invented all sorts of schemes to render preaching just as ineffective as possible. And it is true that a person can attend many churches and hear the preaching for a lifetime and never learn anything to speak of about the Bible.

God meant that preaching should be expository---that it should be in the nature of exposition of the Scriptures, but there is very little of that sort of preaching. For one thing, the seminaries don't teach their students the expository method, and as a rule their homiletic teacher is himself a very poor preacher. We recall that a professor of homiletics brought the annual sermon at the Southern Baptist Convention one year, and he lost half of his crowd before his dry discourse was over. He had about six thousand people present, and about three thousand of them deserted him before his sermon was over. Was he qualified to teach young preachers the art of preaching, when he couldn't hold a crowd himself?

Note several things about preaching:

1. It should be a message from the Lord. Jonah 3:2, **“Preach. . .the preaching I bid thee.”**

2. Christ should be preached. Indeed He should be the center of all preaching (see Acts 5:42).

3. The Word of God should be

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Forbidden Scriptures #5

By Curtis Pugh
of Poteau, Oklahoma

Here is test #5. Read the verses, please, and try to remember if you ever heard a sermon on them: probably not. Because they contradict popular ideas most preachers will not preach them, except to try to explain them away, assuring their hearers that they do not really mean what they say. Read on. Decide if you, your preacher and your church really believe **"all the counsel of God"** (Acts 20:27).



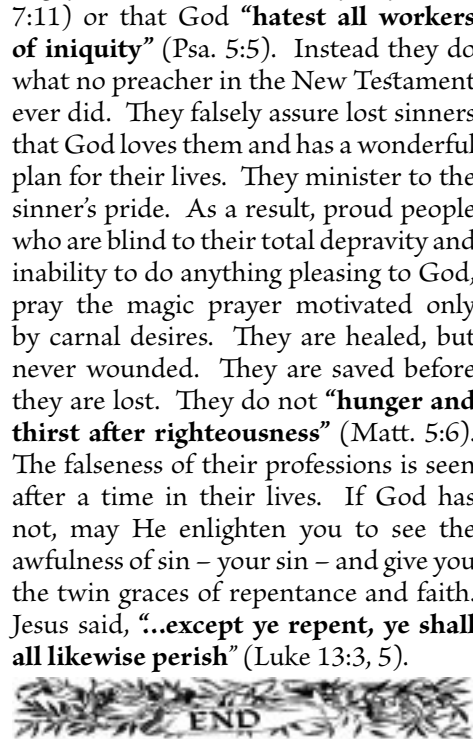
"..My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons" (Heb. 12:5-8).

God says, **"Man that is born of woman is of few days and full of trouble"** (Job 14:1). We are all born both spiritually dead and dying physically for **"by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned"** (Rom. 5:12). All suffer the consequences of Adam's disobedience! That is one kind of suffering, but there is another. First Peter 2:20 speaks of being buffeted for your own faults. Let me illustrate that: a man gets drunk, wrecks his car, and loses his legs. It is his fault. God may forgive him, but He does not give him new legs. He suffers the rest of his life for his own sin.

A third kind of suffering exists. Our text says God loves some people. Because He loves them He disciplines them by means of suffering. They are His sons. God **"chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth."** He purifies all His children this way. The phrase **"whom the Lord loveth"** speaks of one group of people and means there is another group. God is not said to love these others. He does not chasten them. They are designated in the text as illegitimate. They are not true sons of God. They suffer because of Adam's sin. They also suffer the consequences of their own sins, but they receive no spiritual benefit from their suffering not being chastened of God. God just leaves them alone.

Did you ever hear a preacher at "invitation time" tell the lost that if they

come to Christ they will be chastened and scourged: that God will put them through great trials and difficulties? I think you never have! That would not fit with the new, false gospel of enticing people to make a decision or to pray the magic prayer! It just would not be enticing to deceive people with enticing words (read 1 Cor. 2:4 and Col. 2:4). They appeal to fleshly desires. They promise a great family life, good health, prosperity, etc., etc., as well as eternal life, trying to get folks to come and pray "the prayer." They do not tell them **"Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution"** (II Tim. 3:12) or **"that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God"** (Acts 14:22). Neither do they tell them that Jesus said **"Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter in law against her mother in law. And a man's foes shall be they of his own household"** (Matt. 10:34-36). Jesus meant that often some family members would reject Him and oppose their believing relatives causing great sorrow and trouble in the family circle. In spite of these Bible truths, most preachers use smooth words that tickle the ears of pleasure-loving people promising them eternal life for a one-time prayer. They do not preach that **"God is angry with the wicked every day"** (Psa. 7:11) or that God **"hatest all workers of iniquity"** (Psa. 5:5). Instead they do what no preacher in the New Testament ever did. They falsely assure lost sinners that God loves them and has a wonderful plan for their lives. They minister to the sinner's pride. As a result, proud people who are blind to their total depravity and inability to do anything pleasing to God, pray the magic prayer motivated only by carnal desires. They are healed, but never wounded. They are saved before they are lost. They do not **"hunger and thirst after righteousness"** (Matt. 5:6). The falseness of their professions is seen after a time in their lives. If God has not, may He enlighten you to see the awfulness of sin – your sin – and give you the twin graces of repentance and faith. Jesus said, **"..except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"** (Luke 13:3, 5).



The Devil's Methods

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jingle, and it taught exactly nothing. Those who follow such a scheme of preaching usually do topical preaching that doesn't make head nor tail of the Scriptures. In fact the Bible is to many a mere book of texts out of which to grab a text to preach "FROM."

3. *International Preaching.* A pastor used to post his subjects out in front of his church, and he dealt with world topics. He kept abreast with the news, and he dealt with big international problems. Suppose that his congregation of less than a hundred had believed every word he said and fervently, what could they do about it? They had no power to handle the big problems of state, nation or world. The preacher was just wasting his words. Had he taken in consideration the needs of his congregation, and sought to minister to those needs, he might have gotten somewhere.

4. *The preaching of doctrine as an end in itself.* Satan likes to get men interested in some doctrine such that they make a hobby of that one thing and ignore the spiritual needs of people under their ministry. The apostle Paul preached doctrine, but he did not fail to make vigorous application of it. A man can get intellectual satisfaction out of preaching on certain "deep" subjects, and while he satisfies his intellectual bent, people under his ministry can starve to death. The Lord meant that preaching should be practical. He meant that it should move people to quit their sinfulness and to live consecrated lives, if saved people. If unsaved, He meant that it should be of the kind that He can use to bring conviction and to bring men and women to repentance and saving faith in Christ.



A Dose of Reality

"Common Sense Comments"

by Joseph Harris

Chairman of Biblical Studies
Southeastern Baptist
College, Laurel, Mississippi
www.miniedition.net



Now Is the Time

(A rant against Washington DC, illustrated by modern politically incorrect limericks)

NOW, is there anyone left out there who doesn't realize we need to put all of the politicians in DC on the road? After this recent debt ceiling debacle, isn't it obvious that nothing has changed in Washington? There was no debt reduction, no cutting back, no effort to spend less, no reduction in the size of government. The spending actually increased drastically. INSANITY, this is absolute INSANITY. The only thing that will be more insane is if we let it continue.

Therefore, we need:

Change in Washington

*When Congress makes you start to doubt,
"We the people" have all the clout.
They may turn a deaf ear,*

*So let's shout loud and clear,
At the polls, let's throw the bums out.*

It has reached the point where it really doesn't matter whether any politician is Democrat or Republican. The label is bogus. It means NOTHING! We have absolutely got to stop listening to what they say and watch what they do. In other words, we have been duped again.

They are all a bunch of:

Windbags

*From both parties it seems there's no end,
It's always the same, tax and spend,
We think we have say,
On election day,*

We change bags, yet still get the same wind.

Here is one fact you can take to the bank: with the current individuals and anyone of like mind, the unconstitutional spending spree will continue. These corrupt charletons will continue to SPEND, SPEND, SPEND, all in the name of compassion, sanctimoniously claiming to help the minorities, the poor, the underprivileged, the downtrodden, etc, etc. gag, gag. They care only about themselves and their agenda.

Every sane, common sense American should be sick of their:

Liberal Compassion

*Your money the Gov wants to take,
Their compassion for others is fake,
Their cry for the poor,
Is mainly manure,*

Cause' their actions say, "Let them eat cake."

The drain has been pulled and this once great Republic is steadily going down the drain, as the swirl accelerates.

As we continue down this road of Marxism and Socialism, the politicians in Washington have all been morphed into one corrupt being named:

Karl Lenin

*Our leaders are acting like Lenin,
Through taxes they give us a skinnin'
These students of Marx,
Have bites with big barx,*

Oh, why do we let them keep winnin'?

At home and in the workplace, when tight times come, we do not have the privilege of raising our debt ceiling and printing more money on demand. America truly has become an insane asylum run by the inmates.

For a definition of insanity, you can go to the dictionary, ask any psychiatrist, or simply look at DC for the supreme example of:

Insanity

*Barack has a big safety net,
Called spending your way out of debt.
It's like losing weight,
While eating just cake,*

Plain sense says his plan is all wet.

It is time to WAKE UP, smell the coffee, assume our responsibility, and throw the bums out. Are you with me? If not, go ahead and schedule America's funeral into your appointment book.



- A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF LEVITICUS -

By Timothy Hille
of Ashland, Illinois

Chapter Five – The Trespass Offering

The trespass offering points to Christ as the One who restores us to God through the payment of our sin debt. The trespass offering speaks of atonement made for a particular sin, and forgiveness thereby obtained. The trespass offering speaks of restitution being made for the sinner through the blood of Jesus (Luke 7:41-42). The trespass offering was needed because the rights or possessions of another, either God or man had not been respected. This was the case with the first sin; and this is the case with every sin (I John 3:4-5). The law declares the rights and the possessions of God, and all men have disregarded God's law. Jesus came and died to justify us – clear us of guilt and restore us to God in righteousness – from all our sins, from which we could not be justified by our own deeds or through keeping the law (Col. 3:14; Rom. 8:3-4; Acts 13:38-39).

Chapter Outline

- i. The Trespass Offering: vs. 1-13
 - a. for concealing knowledge in a case: vs. 1
 - b. for touching the unclean: vs. 2,3
 - c. for a false oath: vs. 4
 - d. confession to be made: vs. 5
 - e. the various forms of the offering: vs. 6-13
- ii. The Trespass Offering – for sacrilege: vs. 14-16
- iii. The Trespass Offering – for commandment breaking: vs. 17-19

I. VERSES ONE THROUGH FOUR.

“And if a soul sin . . .” The trespass offering, like the sin offering, shows the reality of sin and the need for atonement. The only atonement available which covers sins and brings peace with God to the sinner is the divinely provided atonement, the shed blood of Jesus Christ (Heb. 10:5-10; I John 2:1-2). The reality of sin is, **“For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God”** (Rom. 3:23). The sins mentioned here are secret sins

and sins of ignorance (Ps. 19:12). Every sin is a trespass against the will of God. Even sins committed in ignorance (which spiritually speaks of unbelief – I Tim. 1:3-15) make a person guilty before God, who beholds the sin-darkened hearts of men and their evil imaginations, and thus a trespass offering is needed to cover those sins, obtain forgiveness, and make restitution. These are sins of omission and commission, sins which affect others and sins which affect one's own self.

The first sin mentioned is that of withholding knowledge and being silent when one ought to speak, particularly in a legal matter. The **“voice of swearing”** refers to the call to bear witness of facts known to a person as a witness in some matter of question, as in a legal case brought before the judge. If an individual knows information pertinent to the matter and **“he do not utter it, then he shall bear his iniquity.”** In this case, the silence of this person is leading to injustice, and thereby the silent person is party to the injustice (Prov. 29:24). Men are silent about sin because their hearts are sinful and they love darkness (sin and evil) rather than light (righteousness and truth).

The second sin mentioned is that of touching the unclean, whether of the dead body of an unclean beast, or the **“the uncleanness of man.”** The children of Israel were required, under the law, to maintain ceremonial cleanness, which spoke spiritually of the holiness they were to maintain and promote and progress in as the people of God (Lev. 11:8, 24-25, 44-45). The spiritual cleanliness which we are to exercise and maintain and progress in as children of God is that of the sanctification of heart, and mind, and life through deadness to sin and growth in grace (Col. 2:20-23; 3:1-15; II Cor. 6:14-18). There is defilement through association with sin and the works of darkness. You who are now saved by faith in Christ Jesus once accompanied with the unclean and with the dead, and were unclean yourselves in the deadness

of sin (Mark 5:1-20).

The next sin particularly mentioned is that of false swearing. Men make oaths and promises with no thought of keeping them or of their ability to keep them, and thus do injury to others and to themselves and offend God, Who is altogether holy and true. God holds us accountable for what we say and do not say, as well as what we do and do not do (Matt. 12:36; James 5:12). In any of these sins, the trespasser may have done so in ignorance, **“and it be hid from him.” “When he knoweth of it, then he shall be guilty in one of these.”** When any is conscious of sin, then he or she is conscious of his or her guilt, and must obtain forgiveness through the divinely ordered offering. The law of God brings the knowledge of sin. Paul said, **“I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet”** (Rom. 7:7).

II. VERSES FIVE AND SIX.

The divine provision for the guilty one is here revealed. **“And it shall be, when he shall be guilty in one of these things . . .”** God provides the guilty one a way of forgiveness. God is **“just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus”** (Rom. 3:26). The guilty one, in order to obtain forgiveness and have his or her sin debt remitted, must come to God by way of the true trespass offering, which is Jesus Christ. The guilty one must acknowledge his or her own sins: **“he shall confess that he hath sinned in that thing;”** not that he has sinned in general, but in particular, owning and confessing his particular sins. This answers to repentance, the inseparable partner of faith in the salvation which God bestows on undeserving men, women, boys, and girls (Ps. 32:5; Prov. 28:13; Acts 20:21). Without confession – the owning of one's own sins as sins against God – there is no forgiveness.

The trespass offering consisted of **“a female from the flock, a lamb or kid of the goats.”** This is similar to the sin offering which was offered for a common person (Lev. 4:27-28), and is here said to be **“for a sin offering.”** The way of atonement for the guilty person was (1) through the substitute who was offered **“unto the LORD for his sin which he hath sinned;”** and (2) through the mediatory office work of the priest, who here makes **“an atonement for him concerning his sin”** (I John 4:10; Isa. 53:10). Jesus made His soul the atoning offering for our sins by which we were trespassers against God and indebted through sin; and as our great High Priest He offered Himself, making peace with God for us.

III. VERSES SEVEN THROUGH TEN.

Here we note the second provision for the trespass offering for the particular sins noted. If the guilty person could not bring a lamb, then two turtle doves

or two young pigeons could be brought **“unto the LORD; one for a sin offering, and the other for a burnt offering.”** Each type of offering points to Christ as the sin-bearing substitute whose blood makes atonement for the believer, and thus obtains pardon for sin and peace with God. The sin offering speaks of Christ being made sin for us; and the burnt offering speaks of our being accepted in Him, whereby we draw nigh to God. In Christ there is all-sufficiency to save all who come to Him by faith.

“One of the turtle doves or pigeons, whichsoever were brought, was offered up as a sin offering, and the other that remained was offered up as a burnt offering; so that the poor man had two sorts of offerings out of what he brought, when the rich had but one; and may denote the completeness of his sacrifice, and the full atonement made by it.”¹

We may also note here that God is no respecter of persons. Both the rich sinner and the poor sinner stand in need of a trespass offering to cover their sins.

The instructions are here given first regarding the ceremony for the sin offering of a turtledove or young pigeon, which had not been before described. God instructs how the bird brought for the sin offering is to be killed, and how the blood is to be sprinkled and poured out. This speaks of Christ, whose death was all according to **“the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God”** (Acts 2:23), in time, manner, and purpose. The blood is that which speaks of atonement (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22; 12:24; Matt. 26:28; Rom. 3:25).

The second bird was offered **“for a burnt offering.”** This offering speaks of approaching God. We note that worship is impossible where sin has not been remitted through the sin offering, as Christ was made sin for us, though He knew no sin, and we are accepted in Him and have access to God through Him. **“And the priest shall make an atonement for him for his sin which he hath sinned, and it shall be forgiven him.”** The atonement was made by the priest, even as Christ is the great High Priest of the people of God and has made atonement for their sins (Heb. 9:11-12; Rom. 5:11). Because of His atoning work, forgiveness is realized by all who believe (Eph. 4:32). Modern religion denies the need for God's forgiveness of the sinner, which is a denial of the reality of sin; but forgiveness is a reality for the believer in Christ (Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14). Without the shed blood and atoning work of Jesus, there is no forgiveness (Acts 5:30-31).

IV. VERSES ELEVEN THROUGH THIRTEEN.

A third class or type of trespass offering is here described. This offering was for the sinner who was **“not able to**

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Study in Leviticus

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bring two turtledoves, or two young pigeons," being very destitute. This denotes the all-sufficiency of Christ, who came "to preach the gospel to the poor" (Luke 4:18). This also speaks of the indebtedness of the sinner. One owes much, and another owes much more: but neither has anything with which to pay. God has provided for the sinner (I John 4:9; Rom. 8:32). This offering consisted of "the tenth part of an ephah of fine flour for a sin offering." This is similar to the meat, or meal offering, which points to the sinlessness of Christ as the Son of man, God in the likeness of sinful flesh, by whom we live and have fellowship with God. Unlike the meal offering, this had "no oil upon it, neither . . . any frankincense thereon: for it is a sin offering." When Christ offered Himself as our sin and trespass offering upon the tree of the cross, He was forsaken of the Father, having our sins laid upon Him, being made a curse for us. This points to Him who "by himself purged our sins" (Heb. 1:3).

The manner in which this type of trespass offering was offered is similar to the meat offering, showing that all the spiritual aspects of these offerings were fulfilled in One, Christ Jesus. A handful of the flour was taken by the priest, "even a memorial thereof," and burnt on the altar, "according to the offerings made by fire unto the LORD." The altar speaks of the claims and rights of God, which we had violated. The fire speaks of the undying judgment and truth of God. The sin offering satisfied these, the claims, rights, judgment, and truth of God, and thus brought in the mercy and favor of God by way of righteousness and peace (Ps. 85:10). The priest made atonement for the sinner "as touching his sin that he hath sinned," and thus forgiveness was enjoyed. Christ "suffered for sins . . . being put to death in the flesh" (I Pet. 3:18). If Christ's death was not for sin and to sin, then we are yet guilty and shall perish. The remainder of the flour that was not burned upon the altar became the priest's portion, "as a meat offering." Believers live by the One who died for their sins, their portion being in Him: as Paul said, "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:3-4).

V. VERSES FOURTEEN THROUGH SIXTEEN.

In these verses God speaks of the case of the soul that sinned "through ignorance, in the holy things of the LORD." We are reminded of that which Jesus said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things

that are God's" (Mark 12:17). Certain aspects of our lives belong to God – He has rightly claimed them as His, and they are to be rendered to Him while we are in this life (Acts 14:15-18; Rom. 1:21-25). The holy things of Jehovah in which an Israelite might sin were such things as the tithe, the firstfruits, and sacred food which was not to be eaten except by the priests as being given by God to them. If a man undervalued his crops and brought an insufficient tithe as required by the law, he must, upon being conscious of the sin, bring his trespass offering to the Lord. The offering was "for his trespass," as Christ offered Himself for our sins against God. This offering consisted of "a ram without blemish out of the flocks," pointing to Christ as the sin-less, sin-bearing substitute, "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (I Pet. 2:24).

The second aspect of this offering is the restitution that is made according to the estimation of the priest "by shekels of silver." The one that sinned "shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto, and shall give it unto the priest." The value of that which had been defrauded would be paid, and the fifth part added to make restitution for the damage done. This points to Christ who paid the sin debt of His people, who had ignorantly sinned against God. "Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). In Christ, the believer is seen as forgiven, as having not sinned against the Lord, as owing nothing and as having paid all that was due (Eph. 1:4).

VI. VERSES SEVENTEEN THROUGH NINETEEN.

Here is the trespass offering for sins in "things forbidden to be done by the commandments of the LORD." These were done in ignorance: "though he wist it not, yet is he guilty, and shall bear his iniquity." Sin committed in ignorance is still sin, and the sinner is still guilty (Acts 17:30). This offering is similar to the preceding one, which was for sacrilege, not rightly regarding the holy things of God. We may glean from these things the great propensity in us to sin, even to the extent that we are often at the time ignorant of the fact that we are sinning against God, so corrupt is our human nature. Only the sacrifice of Jesus can cleanse the conscience of sin, and thereby enable the believer to live for and to God (Heb. 9:14; 10:1-4, 12-18). A ram is here brought, along with the priest's estimation of the damage done by the sin. We ought always to regard sin in our lives as doing damage to God's interests, as well as to our own estate. "It is a trespass offering: he hath certainly trespassed against the LORD" (See Rom. 3:23). The sacrifice which saves from sin and brings forgiveness to every believer is the Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTES

1. Gill, John. *Exposition of the Old Testament* ("The Online Bible," Larry Pierce, 1994-95).

Chapter Six – The Laws of the Offerings

Israel's entire religious life (and as we shall soon note, Lord willing, their entire life, both temporal and spiritual) was directed by God. We have contained in this chapter the things which God ordained to be for His honor and glory and their good and godliness so long as they abode under this covenant. Now we are under a new and better covenant; and while the character of the covenant is changed – from, "The man that doeth them shall live in them" (Gal. 3:12), to, "The just shall live by faith" (Gal. 3:11) – the nature of the covenant is not, being that which is solely and entirely directed by God. All our worship must be according to THUS SAITH THE LORD, or we are merely committing folly and not really worshipping at all (John 4:24). People today are fond of saying that God does not care how we worship Him, so long as we do so from the heart. A right heart will do right, and the only way to have a right heart is by forsaking your own way and turning to the Lord. God still directs the lives of His people, and He directs them to walk in His Word.

Chapter Outline

- i. The Trespass Offering (continued) – for willful sins: vs. 1-7
- ii. The Law of the Burnt Offering: vs. 8-13
- iii. The Law of the Meal Offering: vs. 14-18
- iv. The Meal Offering for the high priest when anointed: vs. 19-23
- v. The Law of the Sin Offering: vs. 24-30

I. VERSES ONE THROUGH THREE.

God is the One who reveals the need of the trespass offering unto the sinner. The sins mentioned here as requiring this type of offering in order to make atonement are committed against men, but are trespasses "against the LORD," against whom all sin is committed. The chief character of the sins mentioned here is falsehood where the property and rights of another are concerned. The specific cases described are:

A. lying about that which was entrusted unto a person for safekeeping: "If a soul sin . . . and lie unto his neighbor in that which was delivered him to keep"

B. concerning some aspect of a partnership or dealing between persons: "in fellowship"

C. robbery: "in a thing taken away by violence"

D. extorting from or oppressing one's neighbor: "or hath deceived his neighbor"

E. knowingly keeping that which one's neighbor has lost: "or have found that which was lost, and lieth concerning

it"

In all cases, there is the implication of a false oath, wherein one claims to be innocent or ignorant of the case in point: as we note, "...and sweareth falsely." Two things which are particularly abominable to the Lord are "a lying tongue" (Prov. 6:17), and "a false witness that speaketh lies" (Prov. 6:19). These are trespasses against God who has said, "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself: I am the LORD" (Lev. 19:18). No one could be guilty of falsehood with his neighbor and be able to worship the God of all truth.

II. VERSES FOUR AND FIVE.

Restoration of the property of the wronged person and restitution for damages done in depriving the wronged person of his property is here required. The stuff that was stolen, or found and hidden, or obtained through deceit, was to be restored to the rightful owner "in the principal." Then "the fifth part more" was to be added and given "unto him to whom it appertaineth." This speaks of the damage done by sin to the interests of others, especially God's interests, as well as our neighbor's. Jesus restored that of which we through sinning had robbed God and man, and made restitution through His shed blood for the damage done to God's interests by our disobedience. In order that God should forgive us, there is to be an owning of sin and restitution made (Luke 19:8; Matt. 5:23-24). If we sin against our neighbor, then we must repent and seek the forgiveness of our neighbor as well as that of God, or else we cannot worship.

III. VERSES SIX AND SEVEN.

The offering required is "a ram without blemish out of the flock, with thy estimation." The sinner brought this animal unto the Lord, along with the fine imposed by the priest. This speaks of Christ who through His death for sin as our substitute paid the penalty of our sin debt. "And the priest shall make an atonement for him before the LORD," showing the mediatory office work of Christ who once for all sanctified His people to God by the offering of Himself. "And it shall be forgiven him for any thing of all that he hath done in trespassing therein" (Heb. 10:12-18). There is complete forgiveness of all sins in Christ Jesus.

IV. VERSES EIGHT THROUGH THIRTEEN.

Up to now, the divine command had been, "Speak unto the children of Israel," (Lev. 1:2); but now the Lord says to Moses, "Command Aaron and his sons." The things which follow are God's instructions for the priests concerning the offerings of the Lord, speaking particularly of their duties and portions in each. First we are given "the law of the burnt offering." This offering was consumed wholly upon the altar. Every morning and evening a burnt offering

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was offered upon the altar, and the fire of the altar was never permitted to go out or be extinguished (Ex. 29:38-42). Israel's whole relationship to God was daily based upon the continual burnt offering. Every morning and every evening this offering was renewed, so that there was symbolized the perpetual sweet savor of Christ's sacrifice for sins on the behalf of His people of which God is ever mindful. We shall only have fellowship with God as we are also ever mindful of Christ and are being brought nigh to God in Him.

The procedure for removing the ashes from off the altar in order to maintain the fire thereon is here given. Even the ashes of the sacrifices were to be handled in a divinely prescribed manner. Human wisdom and reasoning has no place whatsoever in true worship; rather all things ought to be done as we are taught of God (Lev. 6:12). The ashes were taken to a specific place outside the camp, which is also where the bodies of the sin offerings were burned. This points to Christ who was made to bear the reproach of our sins. The fire on the altar of burnt offering was maintained through a daily supply of fuel: **"it shall not be put out; and the priest shall burn wood on it every morning." "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out."** This speaks of God's unchanging and undying truth and righteousness. Christ the true burnt offering satisfied the truth and righteousness of God, whereby we who believe in Him have obtained mercy and peace.

V. VERSES FOURTEEN THROUGH EIGHTEEN.

"And this is the law of the meat offering." This offering resembles Christ in His incarnation: **"it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren"** (Heb. 2:17). The priests are here instructed as to how this offering was to be offered, and how the remainder which was left was to be eaten by them, being given to them by God for their food. A handful of the flour and oil, along with all the frankincense, was burnt **"upon the altar for a sweet savour, even the memorial of it, unto the LORD. And the remainder thereof shall Aaron and his sons eat."** This offering portrays Him who offered Himself without spot to God, and who is the bread of His people, giving them spiritual life. **"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst"** (John 6:35). **"As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father: so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me"** (John 6:57).

God gave the instructions as to how the remainder of the meal offering was to be eaten, and by whom. The high priest

and his sons, who were priests with him, were to eat this holy food **"in the holy place; in the court of the tabernacle of the congregation they shall eat it."** They ate this bread, unleavened, in the house of God, God's dwelling place in the midst of His people. They ate of the offerings of God's people, and today ministers of the gospel are to be sustained by the offerings of God's people (I Cor. 9:13-14). These things were to be considered holy. **"I have given it unto them for their portion of my offerings made by fire; it is most holy, as is the sin offering, and as the trespass offering."** So much was this so, that **"every one that toucheth them shall be holy"** (See Num. 18:8-10). That which is given to God is reserved for holy purposes. The things that are given to us of God for use in His service ought not to be used for carnal purposes. Even the eating of the priests was to be done in spirituality and mindfulness of God.

VI. VERSES NINETEEN THROUGH TWENTY-THREE.

God now instructs concerning a special order of meal offering which was to be offered when an high priest was anointed to serve in that sacred office. **"And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, This is the offering of Aaron and of his sons, which they shall offer unto the LORD in the day when he is anointed."** This special offering was to consist of a divinely ordered measure of fine flour, and was to be made as here specified, in a pan with oil and baked. Half of the bread thus made was to be offered in the morning, and the other half at night. Some believe this was done daily so long as that person continued in the office of high priest, and is thus signified by it being referred to as **"a meat offering perpetual."** In any case, we see here the weakness of the law, in making men priests who had infirmity, and who required first an offering for themselves, as well as to then offer on behalf of the people for sin. This special offering was to be done for every successive high priest: **"the priest of his sons that is anointed in his stead shall offer it."** This again demonstrates the weakness of the levitical priesthood, as they were not able or allowed to continue as priests by reason of death (Heb. 7:23-28). This offering was **"wholly burnt,"** and was not eaten by any priest, being offered for the high priest, and showing that he was wholly consecrated unto the Lord. This points to Him who died for us and gives us life through His own flesh, **"and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father"** (Rev. 1:6), Jesus Christ.

VII. VERSES TWENTY-FOUR THROUGH THIRTY.

Now **"the law of the sin offering"** is given through Moses to Aaron and his sons. The sin offering was to be killed in the same place as the burnt offering, which was on the north side of the altar of burnt offering. Again we are

reminded of the great care we are to take in following the instructions of God. We are not to care so much for the ways of man, including our own ways, as we are the ways of God (Matt. 5:19-20). We cannot worship God aright unless we worship God according to His Word. This offering was **"most holy,"** and thus was to be offered with great care in following the instructions of God. These offerings all pointed to Jesus Christ and the aspects of His one offering for sin forever, and the blessings which the believer has in Him alone.

"The priest that offereth it for sin shall eat it." The instructions are given as to the eating of the sin offering. The fat of the sin offering is that which was offered upon the altar, and the rest of the offering became the portion of the priest who offered it. This was eaten in the tabernacle by the priest, his portion in life being that which was given him of God from things offered on the altar. **"Whatsoever shall touch the flesh thereof shall be holy."** Great care was taken to preserve reverence for the offerings of the Lord, so that garments upon which the blood of the sin offering came were washed nowhere but in the tabernacle only, and vessels in which the meat of the sin offering was boiled were either broken or scoured after being so

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used. If that which was only temporary and typical was to be held in such regard and looked after with such painstaking care, how much more diligent ought we to be toward those better and more substantive things which we have as New Testament believers in Christ by the grace of God! The sin offerings which required that the blood be **"brought into the tabernacle of the congregation to reconcile withal in the holy place,"** as that for the priest or for the whole congregation required, were not eaten, but burnt outside the camp (Lev. 4:11-12, 21). This spoke of Christ who was made to bear the reproach of our sins and suffer the righteous judgment and wrath of God against all our sins (Heb. 13:11-13).



SONGS IN THE NIGHT

When a new heart I was given,
And my sins cleansed white,
The Lord reached down from Heaven,
And gave me Songs in the Night.

When I think of the Savior,
And how His death brought light,
My heart greatly rejoices,
In the Songs in the Night.

When the path is uncertain,
And doubts show their might,
I ask for God's guidance,
And He sends Songs in the Night.

When my soul is troubled,
And my strength takes flight,
I stop and listen closely,
To the Songs in the Night.

When I trust in God's plan,
And His will hold in sight,
He gives me glimpses,
Of the Songs in the Night.

When ere the darkness falls,
And the stars are bright,
I close my eyes,
And hear Songs in the Night.

--- Cyd E. James

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

1. Please explain the Tree of Life. - Tennessee

Matthew Stepp
Rt. 1 Box 1193
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor
Big Creek
Baptist Church
Rt. 1 Box 1193
Wayne, WV 25570



The Tree of Life is first mentioned in Genesis 2:8-9, 16-17 as being planted in the center of the Garden of Eden along with the infamous Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. **“And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil. ...And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.”** As we see here, Adam and Eve were allowed to eat from the Tree of Life in their perfect, immortal condition as upright creations of God’s own hand. No conditional strings were attached to the Tree of Life, unlike its compatriot in the center of the garden. Selah! Think about it!

The status of the Tree of Life as a special fruit reserved for upright immortals is further clarified as God carefully puts it beyond the reach of the pitiful, fallen creatures that now were our original parents in Genesis 3:22, 24, **“And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: ...So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”**

So what happened to the Tree of Life? Are the cherubims and the flaming sword still somewhere in the Middle East? No, chronologically, God probably removed the tree sometime before the world-wide flood of Noah’s day. Whether it went immediately to its next point of reference (in New Jerusalem) or was in holding in some place like Abraham’s bosom, is not known. But we do know that the next place we will definitely see it is there at the throne of God! Revelation 22:1-2, **“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of**

the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”

Further information gleaned from this passage is that there are possibly more than one of this species that may line the banks of the crystal clear river. **“...on either side of the river, was there the tree of life...”** This could just be one tree that engulfs said river and street, but most likely it will be an orchard of Trees of Life. A different fruit will be borne each month for a total of twelve kinds of fruit. Again, these fruit are reserved for the righteous immortals that occupy this fair land, as seen in verse 14: **“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.”** However, taking verses 2 & 14 in connection, we understand that it is not an exclusive treat just for the Lamb’s Bride that occupies New Jerusalem. All of the saints (and nations) will have access to the sweet fruit and therapeutic leaves of the Tree of Life.

And that would be our last point on the tree. Since there will be no sickness or death in the eternal ages, what will the leaves be used for? **“...and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.”** The Greek word for “healing” is “therapia”, which comes from the root word “therapeuo”. These are the noun and verb forms respectively that we get our kindred English words from. The thought here is that these leaves will be used in every nation’s attendance and worship of our great God and Saviour. Perhaps to be strewn at His feet in a similar worship service as Christ’s triumphal entry to Jerusalem in Matthew 21:8. After all, it IS still Jerusalem! Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Missionary of
West Jefferson Mission
Baptist Mission
90 E. Main St.
West Jefferson, Ohio 43162



I have always thought what a wonderful privilege for those who are in the Bride to be able to finally eat of that which was forbidden to Adam and all of mankind because of sin. Remember in Revelation 2:7 he is talking to the church,

not all Christians. Time and space will not allow a full discourse on this subject and, like everything else today, it is a very controversial subject. But I would like to mention a few things for the reader to consider.

“And the LORD God planted a garden eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the LORD God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:8-9).

The “tree of life” is first mentioned here in verse 9 showing that God placed it there along with the “tree of knowledge of good and evil” also mentioned in this verse. The next place the “tree of life” is mentioned is in Genesis 3:22-24.

“And the LORD God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: Therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life” (Gen. 3:22-24).

The “tree of life” appears in Proverbs four times (Prov. 3:18; 11:30; 13:12; 15:4). To lay hold of wisdom is to lay hold on “a tree of life” (Prov. 3:18). **“The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life”** (Prov. 11:30). Yet another proverb has this comparison: **“Hope deferred maketh the heart sick: but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life”** (Prov. 13:12). The author of another proverb wrote, “The tongue that heals is a tree of life” (Prov. 15:4). But none of these seems to refer to the “tree of life” mentioned in Genesis.

But all the references in the last mention, the Book of Revelation, do. Here we hear from John and he says it is given to eat for those who overcome, Revelation 2:7. And then John is shown where the “tree of life” is and will remain for eternity, Revelation 22:2, 14.

Where was the tree? The “tree of life” was in the midst of the Garden of Eden. It had easy access and sustained life. We see Christ today as the type of the “tree of life”. Who is the sustainer of life? Isn’t it Christ? Who is in the midst of the Church? Is it not also Jesus Christ? Can we not see the parallel between Christ and the “tree of life”? God had given it to man as a life sustaining food. God breathed into man the breath of life and provided him with the means to continue on. Christ now is the only one who can be the giver of eternal life. Adam was banished and because of his sin all die.

We can see that God did not constrict Adam from eating of it like he did the tree

of knowledge of good and evil. Before Adam sinned there was no forbiddance from him eating of the “tree of life”. The tree was in a most noticeable place in the garden and as I said it was easily accessed. After Adam and Eve disobeyed, sin interrupted the quality of life God had intended for them.

Where is the “tree of life” Now? We see in Revelation 2:7 that Christ tells John **“To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.”** Overcoming in John’s language is synonymous with believing in Paul’s language. **“For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?”** This event in 1 John 5:4-5 where faith in Christ is shown in the overcoming of the world in the pattern of the Saviour Himself **“These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.”** (John 16:33). With this in mind, it is much more satisfactory to see that the word defines what a true believer is expected to be in the local assembly. There will be different conditions in each church like there was at Laodicea and Ephesus, but it’s how the believer overcomes that is important or is he going to just sink back into the depths of sin? If a person is lost and not truly saved he or she will never be able to ever come. Against all the variety of those spiritual conditions true believers will stand out locally as marked by an active faith that cannot be hidden. They believe, therefore they overcome. But let me emphasize here, it is those who are in a true New Testament Baptist Church who will overcome, a believer cannot overcome in a false church. I am not saying they aren’t going to Heaven, but they cannot be in the Bride of Christ if they are not in His church.

The first promise speaks of the “tree of life” which recalls Genesis and the Garden of Eden. Because of one man’s act of disobedience man was banished and know longer could enjoy the “tree of life.” Now through grace and the act of one man’s obedience Christ, has allowed Him to be the dispenser of eternal life.

So where is the “tree of life?” Christ pointing out the location of the “tree of life” stresses this anticipation of future enjoyment. It is in the midst of the paradise of God. **“And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing**

♦ (Continued on page 172)

The Berea Baptist Banner Forum

Submit your questions on any Bible topic.

2. What is the difference between teaching and preaching? Also, when do we need to teach and when do we need to preach (Matt. (9:35)? – Tennessee

Roger Reed
20 Ledgewood Dr.
Mansfield, Ohio 44905

Missionary of
West Jefferson Missionary
Baptist Mission
90 E. Main St.
West Jefferson, Ohio 43162



“And daily in the temple, and in every house, they ceased not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (Acts 5:42).

I have always believed the teaching is for instructed learning and in detail to the subject being taught. Vine’s gives the meaning to give instruction, or to instruct. And as we can see by the above verse in Acts, there is a sense that there was both teaching and preaching. One of the first Scriptures that comes to mind is Titus 2:3-5, **“The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things; That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God be not blasphemed.”** This is surely instructing how young women are to behave themselves, even though our young people today may say, “will you quit preaching to me,” it is instructing (teaching) them what is right and proper.

The word teach alone is found 109 times in the Scriptures and most always gives the notion of instructing to learn something. I always liked Deuteronomy chapter 4; please ponder these verses:

“Now therefore hearken, O Israel, unto the statutes and unto the judgments, which I teach you, for to do them, that ye may live, and go in and possess the land which the LORD God of your fathers giveth you” (Deut. 4:1).

“Only take heed to thyself, and keep thy soul diligently, lest thou forget the things which thine eyes have seen, and lest they depart from thy heart all the days of thy life: but teach them thy sons, and thy sons’ sons” (Deut. 4:9).

“Specially the day that thou stoodest before the LORD thy God in Horeb, when the LORD said unto me, Gather me the people together, and I will make them hear my words, that they may learn to fear me all the days that they shall live upon the earth, and that they may teach their children” (Deut. 4:10).

“And the LORD commanded me at that time to teach you statutes and judgments, that ye might do them in

the land whither ye go over to possess it” (Deut. 4:14).

When I teach, more detail is given to dates, names, history, etc. Not much different than when I was in school, a subject is picked and I expound (to give a detailed description and explanation of a theory or viewpoint or an explanation of the meaning and implications of a written text) on it and it might take many months to get through the subject at hand. Though I will admit when I start talking about the Lord and salvation I find myself preaching more than teaching. Jesus said in the latter part of Matthew 28:20, **“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.”** I believe the doctrines, the history of the Scriptures and our Baptist ancestors should be no doubt taught to the fullest degree.

Preaching on the other hand, to me anyway, is preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ. Again Vine puts it this way; “preaching is almost always used of the good news concerning the Son of God as proclaimed in the Gospel,” and he does state there are a few exceptions. I know preachers stand up and preach on many things but I can’t think of one time that the subject that they are preaching on doesn’t mention the Lord Jesus Christ and/or our salvation in some way, at least it should. Again please ponder these verses:

“From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 4:17).

“And as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 10:7).

“John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Mark 1:4).

“And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead. To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins” (Acts 10:42-43).

“And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things” (Rom. 10:15)!

“And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people” (Rev.

14:6).

Also Acts 16:10, 17:3; Romans 1:15, 10:8, 15:20; 1 Corinthians 1:17, 23 and many others. Let the reader take the time and read all the references to preaching.

The second half of the question asks “When do we need to teach, and when do we need to preach? Always, always in our home, at work, at play, everywhere we go. Preaching and teaching doesn’t always have to be done verbally, it can be done by the way we walk, talk, dress, and who we have company with. I have had people come up to me and say, “You’re a Christian aren’t you?” What a testimony for Jesus Christ that is, and what an opportunity to tell them about our Great Saviour and God. **“Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine” (II Tim. 4:2).** **“To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily” (Col. 1:27-29).**

We should be teaching our children, grandchildren, and everyone we come in contact with about the Word of God. May God forgive us of our lackadaisicalness, and may He give us the desire to teach and preach The Lord Jesus Christ and His doctrines. God Bless!

ROGER REED

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

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



Matthew 9:35 declares: **“And Jesus went about all the cities and village, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.”**

The Greek word for teaching in this verse comes from “didasko” which means to give instruction and training. The Greek word for preaching in this verse is “kerusso” which simply means to herald, proclaim, or publish.

As a pastor I am not sure that there is a whole lot of difference in my teaching and preaching. All of my preaching has teaching in it. All of my teaching often has preaching and exhortation in it. I am proclaiming the truth of the Word of God by way of instruction and training in every message I prepare. I guess there could be a difference in teaching privately as opposed to preaching publicly. However,

all teaching and preaching with regards to spiritual things revolves around the accurate exposition and communication of the infallible, inerrant Word of God. The aim of preaching is always persuasion and conversion to the truth. All of our teaching and instruction is likewise aimed at informing people of the truth as it is in Jesus with hope that they will embrace it and walk in it. There may be a difference in teaching that is systematic, measured, and communicated in a classroom type lecture. Preaching definitely has the component of enthusiastic exhortation.

Every day affords us opportunities to teach and preach the Word of God to those around us. Matthew 9:35 displays the wonderful testimony of our Lord who spent His life teaching and preaching the Word of God to everyone He came in contact with. May God likewise give us grace to seize every opportunity to teach the Word and preach the Gospel with an enthusiastic zeal and evangelistic fervor. Don’t worry too much about the distinction between teaching and preaching. Rather, make it your mission in life to communicate spiritual truth from the Word of God in an accurate and compassionate manner. Let the Lord make the distinction if there is one and you keep on proclaiming, publishing, heralding, and instructing others in the way of grace and godliness.

TOM ROSS

Matthew Stepp
Rt. 1 Box 1193
Wayne, WV 25570

Pastor
Big Creek
Baptist Church
Rt. 1 Box 1193
Wayne, WV 25570



Well, the quickest definition I have is that when the speaker pounds the pulpit and raises his voice, he’s preaching. If he speaks in a normal voice and uses limited gesticulations, then he’s teaching! Although I start answering this with my tongue-n-cheek, there really is some truth in the picture painted.

Since the question is about the verbal actions, rather than the personages that are qualified to either preach or teach, I will answer from my own pastoral perspective of a pastor of one of the Lord’s churches, in which vocation I am required to both teach and preach! (Very good question, by the way, in that they really have distinct differences.)

There are fifteen different Greek words translated as preach, preaching, etc. But the thrust of each is easily defined as “a declaration or proclamation of doctrine by Scriptural proofs.” Preaching is very akin to Old Testament prophets and prophesying that can best be described as a “forth-telling of the truth.” This is where the pulpit pounding

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Forum #1

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of the nations" (Rev. 22:1-2). **"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city"** (Rev. 22:14). I believe that this paradise, and this view is much debated by commentators, is in the **"Holy City"** the **"New Jerusalem"** which is also much debated and that is where the **"tree of life"** is. The reason for the debate is many believe it is not a real city, I do! They want to spiritualize this city and some want to make it be the symbol of the church and the bride. The **"tree of life"** is there because Christ said, **"In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go and prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also"** (John 14:2-3). This place is finished and the **"tree of life"** is there, waiting for us to enjoy its fruits that we may enjoy everlasting life throughout all eternity. There will be no more burdens but there will always remain joy and delight. **"He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God"** (Rev. 2:7).

One day, I hope I will have the privilege to be counted worthy to be part of His Bride and will be able to pick the fruit of this tree and eat it as we walk side by side with Him. Isn't that just a wonderful thought? Why would anyone want to spiritualize such a wonderful event? The questioner and reader might be asking why I didn't mention the leaves that are on the **"tree of life"** for the healing of the nations. The reason is simple, I do not know! God Bless!

ROGER REED

<p>Tom Ross 6339 County Rd. 15 South Point, OH 45680</p> <p>Pastor Mt. Pleasant Baptist Church 6939 County Rd. 15 Chesapeake, OH 45619</p>	
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We are first introduced to the Tree of Life in Genesis 2:9. Adam and Eve had full access to the tree of life prior to their fall into sin. After Adam and Eve sinned God put a flaming sword and cherubims around the tree of life to prevent anyone from partaking of its fruit (Gen. 3:24). Evidently this tree has some qualities of immortality because in Revelation 22:2 we read **"In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit**

every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." The context and setting of this Scripture clearly reveals that the tree of life will have a function in the eternal ages as it will be used for the healing of the nations. There obviously will be people who are saved who enter into the millennial kingdom and later the eternal ages with their natural bodies. The tree of life will be used in some way to physically preserve and heal these individuals. Revelation 22:14 declares: **"Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city"** (cf. Rev. 2:7).

In the Book of Proverbs the tree of life is referred to in a symbolic manner. In Proverbs 3:8 wisdom is likened unto the tree of life in the way of preservation and happiness. In Proverbs 11:30 the tree of life is said to be the fruit of the righteous especially in relationship to their spiritual activity of witnessing and soul-winning. In Proverbs 13:12 the tree of life is connected to hope that comes to fruition. In Proverbs 15:4 the tree of life is likened to a wholesome tongue that speaks truth and righteousness. In every reference the tree of life seems to have some connection to spiritual life and the preservation of it. In this sense we may understand that Jesus Christ is our Tree of Life, the Righteous Branch who sacrificed Himself so that we may be eternally preserved by His grace.

It is difficult to answer a question like this because the Scriptures do not reveal a great deal about the tree of life. I am sure that there is much greater depth and significance to the tree of life that I presently do not understand; however there is coming a day when the frailty and shortcomings of my faulty understanding of spiritual things will give way to a glorified ability to discern all truth. John 16:13 records the promise of Jesus: **"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth..."** There is a definite sense in which the Holy Spirit guides me into truth each and every day. However, the ultimate fulfillment of this Scripture will come when my fleshly nature is put away and I am conformed to the image of my Blessed Lord! Then I will understand and rejoice in all truth! Even so come, Lord Jesus!

TOM ROSS



Forum #2

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comes in along with the elevated voice levels! It's important! Pay attention to this heralding of God's Word! Preaching can be done in a church building, on the street, in public or private buildings. It can be a crowd of believers or

unbelievers; saved or lost; neighbors or aliens or a combination of any of the above! Just lay it out - here comes the truth! Usually it is associated primarily with the Gospel, but do not constrain or limit preaching to the Gospel alone. All the truths of God's Word need to be blazed abroad, published widely and promulgated! Preached! Selah! Think about it!

Teaching is also a necessary part of a pastor's job. Generally when I'm teaching, I'll have a topical outline, an expository monologue (or in Bible studies a dialogue), or an exegetical word study. Sometimes there becomes a mixture of teaching and preaching in the same sermon! That is fine, but a pastor NEEDS to find that proper balance between the two. All preaching (or all teaching) will not feed the flock properly. Many folk think that the pastor should preach on Sunday morning and teach on Sunday night and Wednesday evening. And for churches that generally have more visitors on the Sunday AM service, that is very likely to happen... The preacher must preach to lost souls. Teaching will certainly benefit even a lost person, but their primary need is the preaching of the Gospel. Not that I would ever limit the gospel to a Baptist preacher, but this preaching will enhance as it builds upon the private witness and preaching of the good news by every godly evangelist, young and old, male and female. Isaiah 52:7, **"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that**

bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

The three-fold commission of the church in Matthew 28:19-20, **"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..."** can be simplified into 1) preaching, 2) baptizing, 3) teaching. The third phase of the commission is directed to those that have been disciplined and baptized in the first two discharges of the church's duty. Now we need to accomplish **"...the perfecting of the saints, ...the work of the ministry, ...the edifying of the body of Christ"** (Eph. 4:12). The Holy Spirit knew this as He caused the penman of Hebrews 5:12-14 to exhort: **"For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But 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."** Selah! Think about it!

MATTHEW STEPP



From the Pen of a Country Preacher

Milburn R. Cockrell
(1941 - 2002)



The God of All Things

"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen" (Rom. 11:36).

Very few professed Christians believe this verse. Even some who have made their calling and election sure have doubts about it. Arminians honestly confess they do not believe that all things are of God. Some sovereign gracers do not either. They would say that "some things" are of God. But three important truths are stated in my text. First, God is the Creator of all things: **"For of him, . . . are all things."** Second, God is sustainer of His creation: **"And through him. . . are all things."** Third, God is their final cause: **"To him, are all things."** All things, all events, are full of God. Here God is described as His own last end in everything that He does.

THE CREATOR OF ALL

All things in the universe were created by God: **"Thou art worthy, O Lord,**

to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created" (Rev. 4:11; cf. 10:6). Peter and John declared: **"Lord, thou art God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is"** (Acts 4:24). When Paul preached at Athens he spoke of a God **"that made the world and all things therein"** (Acts 17:24-25). In Colossians 1:16 it is written: **"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him."** God is the first cause and last end of all things.

Of Christ, the eternal Word, John declared: **"All things were made by him;**

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God of All Things

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and without him was not anything made that was made” (John 1:3). Everything which exists in the universe--all things great and small--were made by Jesus Christ. Without His wisdom and power nothing came into being. There are no exceptions. There is nothing that was not made by Him. The God of the Bible created all things.

THE SUBSTAINER OF ALL THINGS

God not only brought all things into existence, but He also preserves in existence what He created: **“All things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist”** (Col. 1:16c-17). The existence, order, and arrangement of all things derive their perpetuity from Jesus Christ. He is the principle of cohesion in the universe. He impresses upon all creation that unity and solidarity which makes it cosmos instead of chaos.

In Hebrews 1:3 we are told that Jesus Christ is **“upholding all things by the word of his power.”** Our Lord is sustaining and carrying forward all things in the universe. The weight of the whole creation is upon His hand. Men talk of the “laws of nature,” but in truth there are no such things. All things are maintained by the means and methods of Jesus Christ! How humbling, but true, O proud man!

Some think that God created the universe, and then walked away to let it “run alone.” They say all things were then left to chance or blind fate. Infidels and some professed Christians would banish God from His own creation, if they had the power to do so. Jesus Christ is the Upholder and Sustainer of all things. Nothing is exempt from His sovereign power!

The unsearchable wisdom and boundless power are seen in Jesus Christ’s governing and directing of animate and inanimate beings to attain His holy purposes. If this were not so, all things would fade into their original non-existence. Mind and matter depends upon Him. God feeds the sun with fuel, and He veils the moon in beauty. He guides the planets on their journey, and He keeps them from collision and disorder. He makes the **“sun to rule by day,”** and **“the moon and stars to rule by night”** (Ps. 136:8-9). Job said of God: **“Which commandeth the sun, and it riseth not; and sealeth up the stars. Which alone spreadeth out the heavens, and treadeth upon the waves of the sea. Which maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades, and the chambers of the south. Which doeth great things past finding out; yea, and wonders without number”** (Job 9:7-10).

The streams, rivers, and rains come

out of God’s reservoirs to nourish man and beast: **“He sendeth the springs into the valleys, which run among the hills. They give drink to every beast of the field: the wild asses quench their thirst. By them shall the fowls of the heaven have their habitation, which sing among the branches. He watereth the hills from his chambers: the earth is satisfied with the fruit of thy works. He causeth the grass to grow for the cattle, and herb for the service of man: that he may bring forth food out of the earth”** (Ps. 104:10-14).

From His laboratory the very life and breath of man and beast is forged and maintained. In Job 12:10 it is written: **“In whose hand is the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind.”** The psalmist wrote: **“These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather: thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled: thou takest away their breath, they die, and return to their dust”** (Ps. 104:27-29). Daniel upbraided Belshazzar by saying: **“The God in whose hand thy breath is, and whose are all thy ways, hast thou not glorified”** (Dan. 5:23). Every breath and pulsation of our heart depends on His sovereign beneficence.

The very pillars of the earth are kept in place by God; otherwise, the inhabitants of the earth would perish. The whole course of nature would burst asunder and break in pieces were it not sustained by His mighty power. Order is never violated, for the tree yields fruit **“after his kind,”** according to the original edict. Evening and morning come and go in sure and swift succession. **“While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease”** (Gen. 8:22).

GOD RULES OVER ALL THINGS

The God of the Bible is over all, higher than the highest. He has no superiors or equals. With Him nothing is impossible (Luke 1:37) or too hard (Jer. 32:17). God controls all things like the Bible says, or He controls nothing. He must rule, or be ruled; He must accomplish His will, or be thwarted by men and angels. It is written of God in Ephesians 1:11 that he **“worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”** Arminians and some Calvinists would remove the words **“all things”** and replace them with **“some things.”** This is a bit unusual for Arminians who generally insist that **“all”** means **“all without exception.”** The truth of Ephesians 1:11 is that every thing is comprehended in God’s purpose and every thing is ordered by His efficient control. God has foreordained all things which come to pass in time and eternity.

God’s eternal plan includes all things which take place in Heaven, on earth, and in Hell. The past, the present, and

the future of believers and unbelievers, angels and demons, are at His disposal. He does in time what He decreed from eternity. The divine energy of God works in all things. This is why Romans 11:36 says that **“For of him. . . are all things.”** It is also written in Ecclesiastes 11:5: **“. . . thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all.”** Acts 15:17 speaks of **“the Lord, who doeth all these things,”** and then the verse that follows says: **“Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world.”** I Corinthians 12:6 tell us of **“the same God which worketh all in all,”** and II Corinthians 5:18 declares: **“And all things are of God.”**

God does as He pleases: **“But our God is in the heavens: he hath done whatsoever he hath pleased”** (Ps. 115:3). **“Whatsoever the LORD pleased, that did he in heaven, and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places”** (Ps. 135:6). **“But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth”** (Job 23:13). **“Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure”** (Isa. 46:10).

The Mighty Monarch of the world exercises His power as He wills, when He wills, and where He wills. In Daniel 4:35 it is written: **“And all of the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou.”** God is not accountable to His creatures for any of His actions: **“Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters”** (Job 33:13). God is not accountable to His creatures, but they are accountable unto Him!

There is no place in the universe where the reign of the Sovereign of the universe does not extend: **“Thine O LORD, is the greatness, and the power, and the glory, and the victory, and the majesty: for all that is in the heaven and in the earth is thine... thou art exalted as head above all. . . .thou reignest over all. . . .”** (I Chron. 29:11-12). Note the words, **“thou reignest over all.”** There are no exceptions. No wonder the saints in Heaven cry: **“Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth”** (Rev. 19:6). You will note they did not say that the Lord God omnipotent was making an attempt to reign. They said that He did reign. According to some, God has made creatures He cannot control. They say that men and angels have made many problems for God and that the Devil has gained the upperhand in matters. God is standing on the sideline, wringing His hands, not knowing what to do in a bad situation. Such a God cannot be found in the Bible. The God of the Bible **“reigneth**

over all.” A disappointed and defeated God is no God at all.

God has not made creatures which He cannot rule: **“For all are thy servants”** (Ps. 119:91). The celestial bodies are under His control: **“Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together”** (Isa. 48:13). The angels of Heaven **“do his commandments”** and hearken **“unto the voice of his word”** (Ps. 103:20). The powers of nature are under His control: **“Fire, and hail; snow, and vapours; stormy wind fulfilling his word”** (Ps. 148:8). Sickness and disease are His servants: **“. . . but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed”** (Matt. 8:8). The activities of men are under His control: **“Man’s goings are of the LORD; how can a man then understand his own way?”** (Prov. 20:24).

NOTHING IS EXEMPT FROM HIS RULE

A God who controls something and leaves other things to chance is no God at all. If only a few things were left to chance, then God could not be sure of anything. One small event might disrupt God’s eternal purpose. Many Scriptures would suddenly become untrue. This cannot be (John 10:35). In the Bible, God promises to deliver His elect out of **“all his troubles”** (Ps. 34:6, 17). How could this possibly be, if even a few things were left to blind fate? In reality it could not be so. It is written in Psalm 121:7: **“The LORD shall preserve thee from all evil.”** But how could this be so unless **“all evil”** is under God’s control? Romans 8:28 tells us that **“all things work together”** for the good of the elect. Yet how could this be true, if God does not control all things?

How can Christ put **“all enemies under his feet,”** unless Christ has control over all the enemies of Himself and His people? How can Christ at His second coming restore **“all things”** (Acts 3:21), if He is not the Governor of all things? How can Christ be said to do **“all things well”** (Mark 7:37), if there are some things left to chance or blind fate? Will Arminians answer these questions for me? Will a Calvinist, who denies the absolute foreordination of all things, please step forward and help his Arminian brother on this point?

When Christ declared that He had been given **“all power”** in Matthew 28:18, are we to merely understand that He meant some small portion of power had been granted Him? In Acts 13:39 when it says we are **“justified from all things,”** does that mean there are some things from which a believer is not justified? When we read that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses **“from all sin,”** does that mean all sins without any exemption? Does **“all grace”** in II Corinthians 9:8 not

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God of All Things

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mean all grace without any exception? Does "all things given to Christ" in John 3:35 not mean He controls all things? Then why turn round and say "all things" in Ephesians 1:11 only refers to "some things"?

THE EVIL ACTS OF MEN

I can hear some person answer, "Of course we believe that God has ordained that the sun shine upon the earth, and the seasons are foreordained by God. Even the salvation of His people is decreed, but God has no control over the evil acts of men. You would make God the author of sin. This is a terrible misrepresentation of God."

To which I reply that God controls all things like my text declares. All things are according to the working of His power and pleasure, or they are according to His permission and purpose. The course of nature and the salvation of His people are a mighty exertion of His power. As to the evil acts of men and angels, God does not actively bring these things to pass. These proceed from depravity found in fallen men and fallen angels. God has surely determined what these shall and shall not do in time and eternity. Only in the sense that He takes no steps to prevent these acts, can such acts be said to have their source in God.

What about the fall in Adam? That even did not take God by surprise, for "times are not hidden from the Almighty" (Job 24:1). God did not actively send the Devil to the man and woman, but neither did He take any active steps to stop it. God could foresee that by allowing sin to enter, He could turn it to His own glory. If sin entered the world in opposition to God's will, what assurance would we have that it might not enter the world to come? Also, if sin had not entered the world, then there would have never been the salvation of the elect by the slain Lamb.

FOUR WAYS GOD CONTROLS EVIL ACTS OF MEN

God's sovereign control of all things, even the sinful acts of men, is fourfold. First, there are times when God is pleased to withhold men from sin. In Genesis 20:6 it is said of Abimelech: "For I (God) also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her." This is seen again in the case of David and Abigail: "And David said to Abigail, Blessed be the LORD God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me: And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which has kept me this day from coming to shed blood, and from avenging myself with mine own hand. For in very deed, as the LORD God of Israel liveth, which hath kept me back from hurting thee, except thou hadst hastened and come to

meet me, surely there had not been left unto Nabal by the morning light any that pisseth against the wall" (1 Sam. 25:32-34; cf. Ps. 19:13; Hos. 2:6).

Second, there are times God does not withhold men from sin: "So I gave them up unto their own hearts' lust: and they walked in their own counsels" (Ps. 81:12). "Who in times past suffered all nations to walk in their own ways" (Acts 14:16). "And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient" (Rom. 1:28). In these verses God is said to give some up to the obstinate wickedness of their own hearts. There is no greater punishment than for God to deliver some to sin and Satan. This can only result in their damnation to eternal torment.

Third, there are times when God overrules evil for good. Consider the case of Joseph's brethren who sold him into slavery. Joseph told his brethren in Genesis 50:20: "But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive" (cf. Isa. 10:5-7; Acts 4:27-28). Psalm 76:10 declares: "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." This can only be so if God is in control of all things, good or bad.

Fourth, in some cases God prescribes the bounds and determines the effect of the evil acts of man. Consider the case of Job: "And the LORD said unto Satan, Behold, all that he hath is in thy power; only upon himself put not forth thine hand. So Satan went forth from the presence of the LORD" (Job 1:12). Even Satan is limited by God in the evil he can do, and if this be true to the greatest sinner, then it must be true of all lesser sinners. The psalmist relates how God determines the bounds of men's evil acts: "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side, when men rose up against us: Then they had swallowed us up quick, when their wrath was kindled against us" (Ps. 124:2-3; cf. 1 Cor. 10:13).

THERE IS A SENSE IN WHICH EVIL ACTS COME FROM GOD

In the sense that God does not stop men from evil acts by an exertion of His mighty power, these acts are from God. I do not mean by this that God is the author of such things, for this could never be. But that there is a sense in which evil acts come from God is plainly taught in the Scriptures. Job told his wife: "Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips" (Job 2:10). This can only be the sense of Isaiah 45:7 where God says: "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the

LORD do all these things." This is the only way to explain Amos 3:6: "Shall there be evil in a city, and the LORD hath not done it?"

I hear a critic saying, "You are making God the author of sin." No, I am not. I am saying that sin is according to His permission, and in that sense only can all things be of God. But let me offer a few questions. Against whom is it possible for God to sin? Is He answerable to any being above Himself? If so, will you tell me who that being is? Is it Michael the archangel, or Satan, or possibly Adam? Assuming that God is guilty of sin, by what law will we try Him? Who will arrest Him and bring Him to justice? In what court can He be tried and found guilty? Will some Arminians take this upon themselves? Will some Calvinists? Who will be first to step forward and say he can handle the job? Speak now or forever hold your peace!

CONCLUSION

1. God either controls all things, or nothing. If some things are left to chance, then we cannot be sure of anything. If God does not control all things as the Bible declares, then the Bible is no more

than a scrap of paper with ink upon it. If God has not foreordained every thing that comes to pass, nothing is certain about the future. There may or may not be a resurrection and judgment. The earth may or may not be renovated by fire. The elect may or may not have eternal life.

2. Thank God we serve the God of all things. The future is sure and certain because it has been decreed by God. All the elect will spend eternity with Christ. The Bible will stand fast even when heaven and earth pass away. Our God sits upon the throne and rules over all. Every thing is going according to His eternal purpose. Truly it may be said: "The LORD hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil" (Prov. 16:4).

3. Sinner, you are in the hands of a sovereign God. He can save or damn you, according to His good pleasure. "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him" (Ps. 2:12).



THE

BIBLE AND NEWSPAPER

Readers of the BBB are urged to submit religious news items which they may read in their local paper or some other publication. In sending these please give the name of the publication as well as the date it was printed. We will not be able to print all which are submitted, but we welcome any item you may feel we should read.

Send them to The Berea Baptist Banner, PO Box 39, Mantachie, MS 38855-0039.

OHIO BALANCES BUDGET AND PROTECTS LIFE

(WNS)--On Thurs., June 30, Ohio Gov. John Kasich signed into law the state's biennial budget. It trimmed spending and eliminated several anti-family programs and practices. "We promised a new way and a new day and we're delivering it," wrote Gov. Kasich in a letter to the people of Ohio. In addition to trimming the state's \$8 billion budget shortfall, the budget will keep in place income tax cuts, eliminate the estate tax in 2013, and will prohibit public hospitals and other facilities from receiving taxpayer funds if they perform elective abortions. The new budget contains other pro-life measures as well. One measure requires the Ohio Department of Health to apply for federal abstinence education grants to reduce the number of unplanned pregnancies. Another preserves the right of student groups to use and benefit from school funds and facilities, therefore protecting the rights of pro-life groups on college campuses.

SENATE HEARING FOCUSES ON REPEALING DOMA

(WNS)--The U.S. Senate Judiciary Committee heard testimony on July 20 regarding "The Respect for Marriage Act," a bill that attempts to repeal the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). DOMA, signed

by President Clinton, defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman and acknowledges that states can refuse to recognize same-sex marriages from other states. The law passed in 1996 with overwhelming bipartisan majorities of 342-67 in the House and 85-14 in the Senate. The hearing, led by Chairman Sen. Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., was titled "The Respect for Marriage Act: Assessing the Impact of DOMA on American Families." According to a statement released by Focus on the Family, the witness panels largely opposed DOMA. Focus Senior Vice President Tom Minnery spoke at the hearing, arguing on behalf of a "mountain of solid data that demonstrates kids do best with a married mother and father."

HERITAGE REPORT FINDS THAT AMERICA'S POOR NOT SO DESTITUTE

(WNS)--The U.S. Census Bureau consistently reports that 30 million Americans are living in poverty. But a Heritage Foundation (HF) report says not all who live in poverty are poor. Robert Rector, senior research fellow in the Domestic Policy Studies Department at HF is the primary author of the report. The report is called, "Air Conditioning, Cable TV, and an Xbox: What Is Poverty in the United States Today?" The

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report said the typical household defined as poor by the government had a car, air conditioning, two color televisions, cable or satellite TV, and a DVD player. The report went on to say that most “poor” Americans have homes in good condition with more space than the average (non-poor) European. “One of the most regrettable aspects of official U.S. government poverty statistics is the misleading negative image that they project around the world,” said the report.

NEW YORK'S GAY MARRIAGE LAW CLAIMS FIRST CASUALTY

(WNS)--A town clerk in upstate New York, Laura Fotusky, resigned her position rather than compromise her religious belief that marriage should be between a man and a woman. “There was no protection provided in (New York’s) legislation for town clerks unable to sign these marriage licenses due to personal religious convictions,” Fotusky said. “I had to choose between my job and my God.” New York legalized same-sex marriage in June. On July 24 the law takes effect and obligates town clerks to officiate same-sex marriage. The law provides protection for religious professionals, such as pastors, but fails to protect common citizens who morally disagree with the law. Clerks who refuse service to same-sex couples can be sued.

ORGANIZATIONS FIGHT ABORTION AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICANS

(WNS)-- African-American pro-life and pro-family organizations are speaking out against Planned Parenthood, abortion among the African-American community, and other African-American leaders. The National Black Pro-life Coalition (NBPC), a network of African-American organizations, is launching a social media video campaign to expose Planned Parenthood and abortion businesses as the number one killer of African-Americans. The third video of the three-part series, released July 19, states that abortion in the African-American community outnumbers all other causes of death, such as heart disease, homicide and cancer, combined. NBPC compares the treatment of unborn children to that of African-Americans who suffered under slavery and race-based social policies. The video calls for viewers to “stop Planned Parenthood” and “bring an end to the genocide.” NBPC said that Planned Parenthood’s concept of “choice” is “a complete scam,” as it provides 340 abortions for every adoption referral.

PRESIDENT OBAMA CERTIFIES THE END OF “DON’T ASK, DON’T TELL”

(WNS)--President Barack Obama and top military officials on July 22 certified the repeal of the long-standing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy. The long-expected certification means Obama and his military team believe that military readiness would not be harmed by ending the 18-year-old ban on homosexuals serving openly in the armed

forces. “As commander in chief, I have always been confident that our dedicated men and women in uniform would transition to a new policy in an orderly manner that preserves unit cohesion, recruitment, retention, and military effectiveness,” the president said in a statement. The decision to certify the repeal, which takes effect in 60 days, was made by Obama, new Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen. The move represents the final step in what has been a long push by the Obama administration and congressional Democrats to end the policy put in place by Congress and President Bill Clinton in 1993.

LEAVING BEHIND NO CHILD LEFT BEHIND

(WNS)--More states are defying the federal government’s No Child Left Behind law. Idaho, Montana, and South Dakota, fed up over the education program, say it sets unrealistic benchmarks for schools. The states are preparing to reject the latest school progress requirements at the risk of losing some federal funding. The law stipulates that every child must be proficient in reading and math by 2014. When it passed in 2001, it allowed states to establish how much schools must improve each year. Many schools saved the biggest leaps for the final years, anticipating changes in the law. Idaho state superintendent Tom Luna said the state will no longer raise benchmarks that public schools have to meet, nor will it punish the schools that do not meet these higher testing goals. Montana and South Dakota are also rejecting the No Child Left Behind targets, while Kentucky is seeking a waiver that would allow the state to use a different method to measure whether students are making progress under the program. Of the 821 public schools in Montana, 255 are not meeting the current benchmarks, and nearly half would fall short by next year.

OBAMA'S EXECUTIVE ORDER AND THE FIRST AMENDMENT

(WNS)--The Obama administration has drafted a new, little-noticed executive order that would plainly stifle free speech. The “Disclosure of Political Spending by Government Contractors” order is still a draft, but if the administration has its way, the order will be in full force soon.

Premised on the idea that sunlight disinfects, President Obama’s executive order would require all bidders for federal contracts to disclose all financial contributions to candidates standing for election. The order includes all corporate contributions and all personal giving in excess of \$5,000 by officers and directors of corporations concerned, and it also requires the disclosure of contributions made to third-party groups like the National Rifle Association or the Center for American Progress. The order takes direct aim at the \$530 billion in federal contracts that will be issued in 2012, and it represents the latest move in a series of tactics designed to drag the Supreme Court’s defense of the First Amendment in the *Citizens United* decision through the mud.

The Court’s decision, announced in 2009,

struck down parts of the McCain-Feingold Act that prohibited corporations and unions from broadcasting on behalf of candidates close to a primary. The move sparked a public feud between President Obama and the Court, as Obama (in an infamous moment) chose his State of the Union Address in 2010 to openly criticize the ruling. Reacting instinctively, Associate Justice Samuel Alito responded to Obama’s factually incorrect criticism by mouthing the words “not true” in a very public way.

The Court, of course, was acting to defend free speech from the muzzle of government regulation, even if that regulation was proscribed in the name of openness and transparency. Affirming the First Amendment, the Court sided with the Founding Fathers, who hotly rejected the idea of disclosure on all political communication. Indeed, the pseudonym “Publius” was employed by Hamilton, Madison, and John Jay as a way to protect themselves as they defended the passage of the new Constitution in *The Federalist Papers*, and similar *nom de plume* moves came with such high-profile public debates as Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense*, signed “Written by an Englishman,” and a cabinet debate between Hamilton and Madison under the names “Pacificus” and “Helvidius.”

Anonymity is an important cornerstone to American politics because it insulates the speaker from reprisal by the government or another disgruntled group in the face of political criticism. Additionally, providing the speaker with anonymity allows the argument to stand on its own merits, removing the caustic *ad hominem* barbs often attached to political discourse. The provision of anonymity has a rich heritage as, in the words of the Court, “a shield from the tyranny of the majority.”

This shield remains just as important in the digital era. In the wake of the Proposition 8 debates in California, major financial supporters of Prop 8 were routinely peppered with death threats, vandalism, and other intimidation tactics. Property was defaced, certain supporters were fired from their jobs, and some religious organizations even received envelopes containing white powder. The intimidation tactics were employed after the disclosure of the names, address, and employers of Prop 8 donors, providing would-be assailants with the data to construct a literal roadmap for violence.

President Obama rejects the condition of anonymity on political speech as a means of advancing controversial views, except (apparently) when it benefits his own party. In objecting to *Citizens United*, the president decried the donations of anonymous corporate-backed super-PACs to candidates, but he hasn’t objected to the contributions of Majority PAC or American Bridge 21st Century—both of whom have substantial anonymous donor bases—to his reelection efforts in the West. Tellingly, his new order also does not require unions to disclose their political contributions.

Now President Obama appears to want to institutionalize the spoils system by making

political affiliation part of the bidding process on federal contracts. Rather than awarding the contracts to the companies that provide the best combination of prices and services, the contracts may flow to political allies. These new disclosure requirements could turn discussions about cost and efficiency into purely political calculations by allowing bureaucrats to award contracts exclusively to their followers. Moreover, the public dissemination of this information on data.gov, as proposed by the order, would allow for violent backlashes by political opponents.

Anonymous speech has been protected by the First Amendment and affirmed by the Supreme Court. By allowing the White House to adjudicate federal contracts based on political donations, President Obama is jeopardizing a long history of valuable political anonymity in this country. Ironically, Obama warned that the *Citizens United* decision “strikes at democracy itself.” The First Amendment is a vital part of that democracy.

KANSAS TO OBAMA: KEEP THE MONEY

(WNS)—Kansas Gov. Sam Brownback said he would return \$31.5 million from the Obama administration, saying there were too many strings attached. The grant was awarded to Kansas as one of six “early innovators” that were developing insurance exchange models other states could follow when ObamaCare — the federal law requiring consumers to buy health insurance or pay a penalty — is fully implemented. But Brownback — who voted against the bill in the U.S. Senate and campaigned for the governor’s office saying he’d block it — said Kansas would be better off developing its own. “There is much uncertainty surrounding the ability of the federal government to meet its already budgeted future spending obligations. Every state should be preparing for fewer federal resources, not more,” he said. Kansas is part of a 26-state federal lawsuit to overturn ObamaCare. Oklahoma rejected its \$54.6 million grant in April.

PARENT SUES SCHOOL DISTRICT OVER HOMOSEXUAL-THEMED EVENT

(WNS)--The Pacific Justice Institute (PJI) filed an appeal on behalf of a parent suing the San Jose School District for ignoring the parent’s request to consider having a more balanced anti-bullying event — one that focused on more than homosexual-themed issues. Upon hearing that Castillero Middle School was planning a “Rainbow Day” to discourage violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) students, Norina Mooney asked the school district to place an item on its next meeting agenda to make the next “Rainbow Day” more inclusive, since all students can be affected by bullies. PJI filed the original lawsuit June 3 with Superior Court of Santa Clara County; the court rejected it without a written opinion on June 28.

NO CONTEST: THE REAGAN STIMULUS VS. THE OBAMA ONE

(WNS)--How ironic that as America

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debated its debt ceiling all summer and faced a stunning credit downgrade, the nation approached a most timely anniversary: It was August 13, 1981, that President Reagan signed the Economic Recovery Act. Understanding Reagan's thinking 30 years ago is critical to discerning where we are now.

Reagan's initiative was the antithesis of President Obama's \$800-billion "stimulus" that didn't stimulate. The 2009 version was the single greatest contributor to our record \$1.5-trillion deficit. It was, plain and simple, what Reagan didn't do.

When Reagan signed the Economic Recovery Act at his ranch near Santa Barbara, it was the largest tax cut in American history. He also revealed leadership that Democrats and Republicans alike agree we are not seeing currently from the White House. Even the Washington Post called Reagan's action "one of the most remarkable demonstrations of presidential leadership in modern history."

The enemy that day was America's progressive federal income-tax system, birthed in 1913 by Congress and President Woodrow Wilson. It was revolutionary, requiring a constitutional amendment. That tax, which began as a 1 percent levy on the wealthy, would rocket up to a top rate of 94 percent by the 1940s.

Ronald Reagan personally felt the toll. In the 1940s, the so-called "B"-movie actor was one of the top box-office draws at Warner Bros. Then a Democrat, Reagan saw no incentive in continuing to work—that is, make more movies—once his income hit the top rate. He also realized who suffered from that choice. It wasn't Reagan; he was wealthy. It was the custodians, cafeteria ladies, camera crew, and working folks on the studio lot. They lost work.

Reagan viewed such rates as punitive, confiscatory—"creeping socialism," as he put it. In speeches in the 1950s and 1960s, he blasted the tax as right out of Marx's Communist Manifesto.

By the late 1970s, Reagan concluded that out-of-control taxes, spending, and regulation had sapped the economy of its vitality and ability to rebound. And so, on that August day in 1981, Reagan, with a Democratic House and Republican Senate, secured a 25 percent across-the-board reduction in income tax rates over a three-year period beginning in October 1981. Eventually, the upper rate would drop to 28 percent.

As biographer Steve Hayward notes, even when Reagan compromised with Democrats on tax increases in exchange for promised spending cuts in 1982, he "never budged an inch on marginal income tax rates." Reagan understood that not all taxes, or tax increases, are equal.

After a slow start through 1982-83, the stimulus effect of the cuts was extraordinary, sparking the longest peacetime expansion in U.S. history. The "Reagan Boom" not only produced widespread prosperity but—along

with the attendant Soviet collapse—helped generate budget surpluses in the 1990s. Carter-Ford era terms like "malaise" and "misery index" vanished. Only now has America re-approached similar misery-index levels, reaching a 28-year high.

Unfortunately, liberals have so maligned Reaganomics that they are unable to separate facts from myths—to the detriment of their party and president. Among the worst myths is that Reagan's tax cuts created the deficit, even as the deficit increased under Reagan.

In fact, Reagan inherited chronic deficits. Since Franklin Roosevelt, the budget had been balanced a handful of times, mainly under President Eisenhower. From 1981-89, the deficit under Reagan increased from \$79 billion to \$153 billion. It peaked in 1983-86, hitting \$221 billion. Yet, once the economy started booming, the deficit steadily dropped.

Tax cuts were not the problem. Tax revenues under Reagan rose from \$599 billion in 1981 to nearly \$1 trillion in 1989. The problem was that outlays all along outpaced revenue, soaring from \$678 billion in 1981 to \$1.143 trillion in 1989.

The cause of the Reagan deficits was the 1982-83 recession and spending—as is always the case. And, yes, the culprit was not just social spending by congressional Democrats but Reagan defense spending designed to take down the Soviet Union. What a bargain that turned out to be: It helped kill an "evil empire" and win the Cold War, paving the way for a peacetime dividend in the 1990s.

Yet it is clear today that we have refused the proper lessons of history. For one, our problem remains excessive spending. Obama must bear this in mind if he's considering tax increases (which hamper growth) as part of his "balanced" approach to deficit reduction. More than that, the best "stimulus" relies on the tried-and-true American way: Let free individuals stimulate the economy through their earnings and activity.

Ignoring such realities explains the mess we face in August 2011—a millennium removed from the wisdom of August 1981.

THOUSANDS LEFT BEHIND

(WNS)--Pastor John Piper and others have told the story of 19th-century evangelist D. L. Moody visiting Scotland and opening his talk at a local grade school by asking rhetorically, "What is prayer?" To his amazement, hundreds of children's hands went up.

Moody called on a boy near the front, who promptly stood up and answered, "Prayer is an offering up of our desires unto God, in the name of Christ, by the help of His Spirit, with confession of our sins, and thankful acknowledgment of His mercies." Moody, recognizing that as the answer to question No. 78 in the Westminster Catechism, responded, "Be thankful, son, that you were born in Scotland."

Should our children be thankful that they were born in America? In one sense, they are: Even most of the poor among us are materially, technologically, and medically better off than most people at any time in

history anywhere in the world. In a second sense, of course: As Lee Greenwood sang, "I'm proud to be an American, where at least I know I'm free."

But what else do our children know? Educationally, how do American children compare with their 19th-century Scottish counterparts? The Scots of Moody's time learned that God created the world and them, but American children typically hear a murky story of ascent from the muck. Educrats talk about children developing high self-esteem, but that often turns into a desperate search for crowd-esteem. Neither lasts.

Beyond the lack of education in what's most important—our knowledge of God—slouches a frequent lack of education in what's needed to get a good job. The 10-year-old No Child Left Behind (NCLB) plan was supposed to help children stuck in bad public schools. The bipartisan deal that greased its passage gave liberals what they wanted, a huge increase in dollars from taxpayers. It was supposed to give conservatives a way to demand that schools push their students to become proficient in reading and math.

After a decade, it looks like NCLB proponents snookered conservatives. U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan acknowledges that 80,000 of the nation's 100,000 public schools could be declared failing this fall—so he wants to dumb down the passing grade. He's like the corrupt teacher who sees 80 percent of his students fail, and gives them C's anyway. Duncan says grades of F will demoralize public-school administrators and teachers, but what about the students who are demoralized now, or will be once they graduate without adequate skills?

Should schoolchildren in Detroit be thankful for their educational opportunities? The National Institute for Literacy estimates that 47 percent of Detroit adults (more than 200,000 individuals) are functionally illiterate. That means difficulty in performing everyday tasks such as locating an intersection on a street map, reading and comprehending a short newspaper article, or calculating total costs on an order form.

According to "Addressing Detroit's Basic Skills Crisis," a paper produced by the Detroit Regional Workforce Fund, half of the 200,000 functionally illiterate adults have a high-school diploma or GED. That means they have been lied to, passed from grade to grade or test to test without gaining basic skills. Yes, not one child was left behind—tens of thousands were.

And what about those who do well enough to go to college? Tests of basic reading and math are helpful in elementary school, but Michigan State University professor Jerry Weinberger recently complained in *City Journal* that an emphasis on test-taking among older students has crowded out the study of history, science, literature, and anything that requires creativity. Weinberger said his students link education not to learning how to think but learning how to pass standardized tests.

Throughout its history WORLD has favored educational innovations such as tax credits and vouchers. Particularly and unabashedly, we'd like more children to learn what prayer is, but in general we favor opportunity and diversity over one-size-fits-all approaches. Bill Gates, now the largest private grantmaker in education, recently praised in the *Wall Street Journal* the "very positive characteristics" of vouchers, but said "the negativity about them" among some groups has kept his foundation from supporting them. Too bad. The status quo is broken, the NCLB fix hasn't worked, and the alternative proposal we're hearing is: Shovel more dollars into the jaws of failure.

NARAL SEEKS TO FORCE RELIGIOUS EMPLOYERS TO COVER CONTRACEPTION

(WNS)--The Obama administration announced plans to adopt new guidelines forcing insurance companies to provide free preventative health care to women—including contraceptives and pills that may cause abortions. Now NARAL Pro-Choice America is seeking to close the last loophole in ObamaCare by forcing even religious employers to pay for the measures. Without a copayment, the cost of birth control pills and abortifacients will be shared among everyone in the insurance pool. NARAL—the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws—is urging its members to write the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), saying, "I am concerned that certain religious employers may be allowed to opt out of the requirements. All women should have access to contraceptive coverage, regardless of where they work."

MONEY FOR NOTHING

(WNS)--When thousands of Texas teachers marched on the State Capitol in Austin this spring to protest proposed cuts in state funding for K-12 education, some carried signs claiming that tens of thousands of teachers would be laid off. To varying degrees similar alarms went off in Wisconsin, California, and 36 other states where legislatures struggled with how to respond to big projected budget deficits.

By late June, when the Texas legislature finally passed its biennial budget, it turned out that state spending on K-12 education in 2012 and 2013 is "cut" only in the sense that schools will be getting a \$1.6 billion increase in state funding next year instead of the \$3.6 billion hike they would have received under the state's previous school funding formula.

Education reformers say exaggerated warnings of massive teacher layoffs and of big program cuts are standard practice, as is the education establishment's message: Reduced spending will jeopardize the quality of education received by current and future students. But Rob Eissler, the Republican chairman of the Texas House's Public Education Committee says, "There's 40 years of data showing that increased spending on education has not moved the dial on average student achievement. Yet our behavior has been that if we just put more money into

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schools they'll improve."

Neal McCluskey of the libertarian Cato Institute has documented the inefficacy of federal spending on K-12 education, which rose 133 percent from 1970 to 2006. Total real spending per pupil (counting all sources of money) rose 122 percent, from \$5,593 to \$12,463. Yet, since the early '70s the scores of 17-year-olds on the National Assessment of Educational Progress—often called "The Nation's Report Card"—are virtually unchanged.

So if all that extra spending hasn't led to significant improvement in average student achievement, what has it bought? For starters: more teachers. Over the last 40 years the notion that low student-teacher ratios improve learning and student achievement has become deeply ingrained in American thought. The student-teacher ratio nationally today is 15.5-to-1. In 1965 it was 25.8-to-1. From the 2000-2001 school year through 2009-2010 the number of public-school teachers across the nation grew 9 percent, almost twice the 4.7 percent growth rate in public-school enrollments.

Eissler says the academic evidence shows that schools could move back at least half-way toward those higher 1960s-era student-teacher ratios without harming the quality of education, saving tens of billions of dollars in the process. Layoffs wouldn't be necessary: The perennial double-digit turnover rate among teachers means that higher student-teacher ratios could be achieved within a few years via attrition.

Still, the growth in the number of teachers relative to enrollments does not account for all the extra government spending. Education reformers point to the number of school administrators. Nearly 5 million students attended Texas public schools in the 2010-2011 school year, up 19 percent from 2000-2001. The number of classroom teachers in the state's public schools rose 23 percent during the same period. But "administration" and "professional staff"—superintendents, principals, educational program leaders, and other school district bosses who typically hold advanced degrees and earn the biggest paychecks, along with accountants, computer programmers, audio-visual technicians, secretaries, and so forth—ballooned 38 percent to 39 percent in Texas over that same decade.

Texas now employs nearly as many full-time public-school employees who don't work in a classroom as those who do—326,812 compared to 333,090 in 2010.

The Cypress-Fairbanks Independent School District provides a good case study of administrative bloat in public schools, says Cindy Mallette of The Red Apple Project, the education finance watchdog arm of the Texas chapter of Americans For Prosperity. The Cy-Fair district covers a huge swath of suburbia and exurbia northwest of Houston, and with 100,000-plus students is the third-

largest in the state. The Texas Comptroller's office has called it one of the state's most efficient districts in terms of how it spends its money and the results it gets as measured by student achievement.

Yet even that "model" district is so top heavy that it requires 443 secretaries to support 1,329 administrators, managers, and non-teaching professionals. That total includes a superintendent whose base salary before retiring in June was \$292,736, plus eight assistant and five associate superintendents, 272 principals and vice and associate principals, 182 counselors, 86 directors and assistant directors, 68 coordinators, 66 media specialists, 43 academic coaches, 73 education diagnosticians, and 16 psychologists.

"If conservative, fiscally responsible Texas has this problem, you can bet that less fiscally sound states are dealing with it, too," Mallette says.



GLEANINGS



Importance of Correct Habit

J.B.G.

Attending our usual Sabbath evening lecture recently, I was particularly impressed by the remarks of the learned Prof. Garland, on the subject of habit, which he represented as being a strong force in favor of virtue or vice. It is presumed that most people understand this fact in some degree, but it is certain that we have failed to utilize it as we ought. We are all now, and destined always to be, governed by habit. Nothing is further from the truth than to say that men are governed by reason. They ought to be, but they are not. After a few illustrations of the power of habit, I shall attempt to utilize the fact. Recently a story has been told me of a man, a very learned man, who has a habit of plucking out the hairs of his head while studying. His wife, not wishing him to be bald-headed, is under the necessity of confining his hand during study hours. Everybody has heard of Alexander, who contracted such a habit of warring that he wept when he could war no more. I am personally acquainted with a woman who has such a habit of exaggerating that she can't give anything its simple proportions. Perhaps the reader can supply a few illustrations of this sort for his own instruction. We have all observed the amazing power of the habit of drinking; so strong is it that, to indulge it, honor, and all love are sacrificed. Something might be said of the use of tobacco, but it is useless to say what everyone knows. Habit is the most in perilous tyrant that

ever stretched out a scepter over our race. But a good habit brings to bear all its mighty force on the side of right. I am now at the place to remark that the business of training children is largely comprehended in the idea of breaking bad habits and substituting in their stead good ones. Perhaps what has already been said will be very generally agreed upon. We need not argue the case.

Now let us have an application of fact that habit rules to some of the practical business of life. Give me leave to sit down by the readers of The Baptist and ask a question or two. My good brother, do you wish your children to become intelligent? Do you wish them to become interested in what is going on in the world? If so, what are you doing on in the world? If so, what are you doing to have them become so? Do you know that if they grow up in sympathy with the age, they must read? Ignorance kills out all interest. Intelligence kindles life. Let us come to the point are you providing your girls and boys with some thing that will tempt them to read and will form in them a habit of reading? My observation is that the majority of people take no pains to cultivate a taste for reading. There is in the country homes, Christian homes, too, a lamentable lack of books, and especially such books as will attract the attention of children. Picture-books and books containing suitable stories for children, and a few dollars expended for papers annually will go further toward the cultivation of children than many times the amount spent for tuition. It is a great pity the children in general have nothing to read. I know in most homes there are some books, but they do not suit the boys and girls. He who writes a book that children will love is doing a great work. I have a profound conviction that Christian parents are, as to the most part, derelict as to this duty. You have said for the hundredth time that you believe your boys will be dunces and your girls tom boys. Try the effect of about fifteen or twenty dollars invested in good juvenile literature, and see if things don't look more encouraging in six months. One of England's most learned men, in a public address, attributed his standing in the literary world to one book which he chanced to buy at auction when a boy. Give the young people something to read that will whet the appetite for reading, and do not be afraid of something funny. The writer wishes to express his lasting obligations to the author of Wild Western Scenes, as also to the author of Georgia Scenes. These were the first books he could ever read through, but by the time he was through them for about the second or third time, his appetite for reading was so keen that he would read gladly whatever he could lay hands on. But few men even can pursue any course long that is not agreeable - how much less children?



The Saviour of Sinners

By Frank James
of Cobbitty, Australia

"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. Then said Jesus,



Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided him, saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS. And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise" (Luke 23:33-43).

A DAY OF DEATH

The death of the Lord Jesus Christ, which occurred between two criminals, was the crowning work of God's purpose of grace in the salvation of His people. The Roman rulers, the Gentiles, and the people of Israel along with their leaders consented together to put Jesus Christ to death by a cruel crucifixion. Yet unknown to them, they were fulfilling what God had before determined to be done (Acts 2:23, 4:27-28). For it was through the death of His Son, that God would redeem His people unto Himself. And through His perfect sacrifice, Christ would save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). The fact that He was crucified between two criminals was in fulfillment of the words of the prophet Isaiah (Isa. 53:12). Much can be learned about sin and salvation from this account in the book of Luke concerning the death of the Lord Jesus Christ. For we see that even in death, even as His hands and feet were nailed to the tree, He manifested

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Saviour of Sinners

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the grace of God and showed Himself to be the only Saviour of sinners.

TWO SINNERS

We learn from Matthew's account of this same event, that these two criminals were thieves (Matt. 27:44). Little is known about them, but it seems apparent that they had been tried in a court of law for their crimes, were found guilty, and had been in prison awaiting execution. When it was determined that Jesus Christ would be crucified, these two thieves were executed with Him.

These two men, one on the right hand and the other on the left hand, can be seen as representatives of all humanity as to our standing in the sight of God. For God has declared in His Word, that **"all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"** (Rom. 3:23). Their condition and circumstance as they were crucified is a perfect illustration of every person's condition before God as a sinner. Let us examine some aspects of this.

First, we know that these two men were lawbreakers, and had refused to live under the requirements of the laws of the Roman Empire. Likewise, the Bible declares that every person is lawless and disobedient in regard to the law of God. We are all transgressors and refuse to submit ourselves to the rule of God and His righteousness. We have rebelled against God, we have become His enemies, and we have gone our own way doing what is right in our own eyes. The Bible declares, **"Because sentence**

against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil" (Eccl. 8:11). While the evil that we commit is manifested in many different ways in our lives, it is all sin in the sight of God. See also (Rom. 1:29-32; 3:9-18).

Second, these two men were condemned and found guilty by a lawful court. The Word of God also teaches how that every person is condemned and guilty under the justice of God for our sins. **"Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God"** (Rom. 3:19). This means simply that God has pronounced us all guilty. Further, He has already sentenced us under the just requirements of the law, because the penalty for sin is death (Rom. 6:23). The trial is over, the sentence is passed, and all that awaits us at death is the execution of the sentence, which is eternal separation from God in the lake of fire. This is the meaning of Christ's words to Nicodemus. **"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. And this is the condemnation, that light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil"** (John 3:18-19). Dear reader, do you realize that you are condemned already, and that your only hope is in the crucified Saviour?

Third, it was impossible for these two thieves to do anything about their condition. Their hands and feet were nailed to a stake. They were condemned to die. They couldn't amend their ways, turn over a new leaf, or reform their lives. So it is with every person before God. We are condemned under the penalty of the law and we are helpless to do anything about our condition. Many hope that by reforming their lives, or by trying to be a better person, that this will somehow help them to become accepted before God. Some attempt to change themselves by religion or by joining a church. Others are trusting in their baptism or good works to secure a place for them in heaven. But, dear reader, do you not know that you are under the death sentence? You are bound by the cords of your sins, just as these two men were nailed to the stake. **"Jesus answered them, Verily, Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin"** (John 8:34). Our only hope is in the crucified Saviour.

A DYING SAVIOUR

Most of the people present could not see how that Jesus Christ could ever save anyone. After all, He was nailed to a stake, bleeding, and soon to die. For this reason the people mocked and ridiculed Him. They were ignorant of the fact that

through His death, Christ was making a perfect and complete sacrifice for sin, thereby accomplishing the redemption of every one of God's people (Heb 10:7-14). This was His purpose for coming into the world. **"And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins"** (Matt. 1:21). Through His death He brought victory over sin and death, and having accomplished this, He was raised again from death after three days and three nights. He was exalted to the right hand of the Father in heaven, there waiting to reign upon the throne of David over His earthy Kingdom (Luke 1:31-33). Christ paid the penalty for all of the sins of all of God's elect people, thereby securing eternal life for them, and qualifying Himself to be the only Saviour of sinners.

A CHANGED HEART

One of the most remarkable things about the death of the Lord between these two criminals is that one of thieves had a change of heart towards Christ during the time that the three of them were crucified. It is recorded by Matthew that both of the thieves railed upon Christ at the beginning of their crucifixion. **"Likewise also the chief priests mocking him, with the scribes and elders, said, He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. The thieves also, which were crucified with him, cast the same in his teeth"** (Matt. 27:41-44). What was it that changed one of the thieves from a mocker to a believer in Christ? He had not yet seen any of the great miracles that occurred on that day, for it was about the sixth hour, or about noon, when he made his request to the Lord. This was just before the three hours of darkness, (Luke 23:44) and before the earthquake (Matt. 27:50-53). He was saved, therefore, by the grace of God through faith. For it is only by a miraculous work of God's grace, that a heart of stone can be changed and opened to **"the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ"** (II Cor. 4:6). Like Lydia, **"whose heart the Lord opened"** (Acts 16:14), this man had a changed attitude towards Christ. Before, he mocked Him as the King of the Jews; but now he trusted that the Lord would reign in His kingdom. He had ridiculed Christ as the Son of God and the Saviour, but now he believed with His whole heart that He was indeed the Christ of God, with the ability to give eternal life.

REPENTANCE AND FAITH

In our present day, repentance and faith are greatly misunderstood and even declared to be non-essential in many religious circles. Others have made them to be mere exercises of the flesh, rather

than the spiritual graces that they are. However, repentance and faith are both gifts of God (Eph. 2:8-9) (Acts 5:31) (II Tim. 2:25), and evidences of the new birth (Eph. 1:19). Both of these gifts of grace are clearly and distinctly evidenced in the words that this thief spoke, first to the other thief and then to Christ. First, his repentance (which is a change of heart and mind which resulted in a change of his actions) was manifested in his rebuke to the other criminal. **"But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Doth not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss"** (Luke 23:40-41). Second, his faith was manifested by his request to the Lord Jesus Christ. **"And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom"** (Luke 23:42). This was an expression of complete trust and confidence. He believed and knew that Christ was the **"Lord"**, that He would rise again from the dead, and enter into His kingdom. By this faith, he was saved. **"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast"** (Eph. 2:8-9). Dear reader, have you seen your lost condition and just condemnation before God? Have you seen your need of Jesus Christ as this thief did as the only Saviour of sinners?

CONCLUSION

The salvation of this criminal exposes many false ideas as to how sinners are saved. We learn that they are saved completely apart from any works of their own, for this thief did not have any good works. We also learn that salvation is not through religious works such as baptism, church membership, or any kind of religious ceremony, because this thief did not partake in any such things. Instead, we see that sinners are completely without strength to do anything about their lost condition. Also, we learn that God is sovereign in the salvation of sinners. That is, He saves who it pleases Him to save (Rom. 9:11-24). Two men were crucified with the Lord Jesus Christ. They were both the same in that they were both thieves and sinners who mocked Him; however, one was saved while the other was left to his just condemnation. This shows us that God will have mercy upon whom He will have mercy. We also see two more truths here manifested; that whosoever calleth **"upon the name of the Lord shall be saved"** (Rom. 10:13), and that sinners will never call upon the Lord who do not first believe in Him (Rom. 10:14). For while one thief believed and called upon Christ as his Saviour, the other thief did not believe and remained a mocker. Further, we learn from this example that a new birth resulting in a new heart

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Saviour of Sinners

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is essential and necessary to salvation (John 3:3, 5).

Last, we can see from these verses in Luke 23 that Christ is a merciful Saviour who prayed for those who crucified Him. He receives with joy and gladness all who come to Him in repentance and faith (John 6:37). Dear reader, may it please the God of all grace to open your heart today, to see your lost and condemned condition, and to reveal the Lord Jesus Christ as the only Saviour of sinners. **“Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life”** (John 5:24).



Repentance Unto Life

C. D. Cole
(1885 - 1968)

It is the opinion of the writer that the word “repentance” was better understood in the days of Christ and the apostles than it is today. The first message of John the Baptist was on repentance, although he did not define the term: **“In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand”** (Matt. 3:1-2). And our Lord began His ministry by saying; **“Repent ye, and believe the gospel”** (Mark 1:15). When Christ and the apostles preached repentance, the meaning of the word was fixed in the minds of the people, so that definition of the word was not necessary. But this is not true today. There is so much confusion over the doctrine; there are so many conflicting ideas; the word is used with such a variety of meanings that the preacher needs to take great pains to know and to teach the true meaning of the word. If a man does not know what repentance is, he cannot know whether or not he had repented. The writer believes that many a saved person is confused over the matter and is anxiously asking himself, Have I repented? We believe the average Christian has a better view of saving faith than he has of **“Repentance unto life.”** However, if one is sure of his faith in Christ, he may also be sure that he has repented.



Repentance and faith are mutually inclusive, like the two sides of a coin; they are inseparable graces, so that you cannot have one without the other. The two doctrines are mutually helpful, so that to understand the one will help to understand the other. The New Testament sometimes uses both terms to express a saving experience, while at other times only one or the other term is employed. When we read that repentance is unto life, saving faith is implied; and when we read that the believer has everlasting life, repentance is implied. While inseparable, repentance and faith are also distinct exercises of the human soul. Paul testified, **“Repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ”** (Acts 20:21).

Etymologically, repentance means a change of mind. The English word comes from a compound Greek word: *metanoeo*. The Greek noun *nous* means mind. The Greek verb *noeo* tells us what the mind does; it thinks or considers. Then the Greek preposition *meta*, when connected with *noeo* expresses the idea of a change. And so *metanoeo* (repentance) means to consider the past, to think back and change the mind. It is afterthought as opposed to forethought. In repentance the sinner is occupied with his past record before God.

If one should feel that it is minimizing a great truth to define repentance as a mere change of mind, it is enough to say that in the Bible the mind includes what we mean by the heart; it includes the affections as well as the intellect. And remember also that gospel repentance is a change of mind toward God about sin. The carnal mind is enmity against God, and to change the mind from enmity to love for God is no small change. It is as difficult as to raise the dead or create a world. This may cause one to ask, How can a sinner repent since a stream cannot rise higher than its source? The answer is obvious: We cannot repent except by Divine grace. The New Hampshire Confession says, “Repentance and Faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God.” This plain statement finds ample support in Scripture. Paul writes that **“In meekness”** we should instruct **“those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth”** (II Tim. 2:25). We should preach the duty of repentance, and at the same time pray for God to give repentance.

The Divine order, when repentance and faith are used together, is repentance and faith; not faith and repentance. In repentance the sinner takes the place of a sinner; in faith he takes Christ as Saviour. In repentance one sees himself as a sinner before God; in faith he sees Christ as Saviour from the wrath of God. In repentance one is sick of sin; in faith Christ is precious. In repentance there

is sorrow for sin; in faith there is joy for salvation. In repentance the sinner is helpless; in faith Christ is mighty to save. In repentance the sinner distrusts himself; in faith he trusts the Lord Jesus Christ. A man who reversed the Divine order, and put faith before repentance, once asked the writer to explain how one could repent toward God who did not first believe there is a God. This question revealed the man’s idea of faith. To him faith was simply the belief in the existence of God, something the devils also believe, **“Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble”** (James 2:19). Of course, one must first believe there is a God before he can repent towards God, but this is not the faith that saves. In saving faith there is an element of trust--trust in Christ who put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself.

Our Lord said **“Repent ye, and believe the gospel,”** thus putting repentance before faith. To urge an impenitent sinner to trust Christ is like urging a well man to take medicine, or like begging a rich man to beg for alms. Repentance is the effect of seeing oneself as he really is: ruined, guilty, undone, and in danger of Hell. Repentance is the effect of seeing sin in its true colors. The natural man, morally speaking, is color blind; sin appears attractive and entrancing. The natural man has a ruined taste; he calls sweet bitter and bitter sweet; he confounds good and evil; he is all mixed up on the question of right and wrong. Repentance is caused by the withering work of the Holy Spirit, Who takes the sword--the Word of truth--and slays man’s natural self-esteem and self-righteousness, causing him to cry, **“What must I do to be saved?”**

Repentance involves two facts: the fact of sin and the fact of grace. If a man is not a sinner he would not need to repent, and if God is not gracious it would do no good to repent. The writer once found himself in a Bible Conference with certain brethren who insisted that repentance has nothing to do with sin. One of them challenged anybody to find the expression “repentance for sin” in the Bible, or where we are commanded to “repent OF sin.” It is the contention of this school of thought that repentance has only to do with one’s attitude toward Christ and that one repents by trusting Christ as Saviour. It is true that the exact words “repent of sin” are not in the Bible, but we do have the equivalent of the expression in several places. In Jeremiah 8:6 we read that no man repented him of his wickedness. In Acts 8:22 it is written: **“Repent therefore of this thy wickedness.”** In Revelation 2:21, Jezebel is said to have been given time to repent of her fornication. In Revelation 9:20-21 we are told that certain men who had been visited with plagues repented not of

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BEREA BAPTIST BROADCAST Financial Report 7-1-2011 to 7-31-2011

Beginning Balance\$5,369.56

RECEIPTS:

Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS225.00
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY100.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY100.00
.....425.00
TOTAL5,794.56

EXPENDITURES:

Radio Time 670.00
Tape Production 195.00
TOTAL EXPENDITURES875.00
.....\$4,919.56
Interest June..... + .21
Interest July + .19
.....4,919.96
Less Corbin, KY des.-1,483.72
ENDING BALANCE\$3,436.24

CORBIN, KENTUCKY REPORT

Beginning Balance\$1,643.72

RECEIPTS:

TOTAL 1,643.72

EXPENDITURES:

WCTT160.00
ENDING BALANCE\$1,483.72



BEREA BAPTIST BANNER Financial Report 7-1-2011 to 7-31-2011

Beginning Balance\$2,671.34

RECEIPTS:

Amazing Grace B. C., Stockdale, TX25.00
B. C. of Brimfield, Brimfield, IL 27.39
Berea B. C., Mantachie, MS200.00
Berea B. C., Stonington, IL.....60.00
Bible Believer’s B. C., Naples, ID 50.00
Big Creek B. C., Wayne, WV313.45
Briar Creek B. C., Williamsburg, KY150.00
Citrus M. B. C., Inverness, FL 25.00
Faith M. B. C., Lynn, AR 50.00
Grace B. C., Corbin, KY100.00
Grace B. C., Winston-Salem, NC50.00
Grace M. B. C., Marion, IL.....50.00
Grace M. B. C., Tulsa, OK.....35.00
Indore B. C., Indore, WV 100.00
Lamdmack B. C., Moncks Corner, SC 50.00
Leroy Bullard, Albuquerque, NM.....100.00
The Lord’s Church, Goose Creek, SC 50.00
Mt. Pleasant B. C., Chesapeake, OH100.00
New Testament B. C., Goshen, IN 50.00
Philadelphia B. C., Decatur, AL100.00
Portland B. C., Plumersville, AR.....50.00
Southside B. C., Fulton, MS 25.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Northport, AL.....100.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Silsbee, TX 30.00
Sovereign Grace B. C., Warren, OH 75.00
Victory B. C., Courtland, VA25.00
Subscriptions196.00
Dividing checks150.00
Anonymous \$1,913.00
Sub Total\$4,249.84
TOTAL\$6,921.18

EXPENDITURES:

Printing 581.00
Postage 794.90
Supplies 35.31
Wages 2,300.00
FICA 192.02
Dividing checks 150.00
Total Expenditures \$4,053.23
ENDING BALANCE \$2,867.95

Repentance Unto

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the works of their hands. So repentance implies sin, sorrow for it and a changed attitude towards God about it. Nobody but a sinner can repent, and there is nothing to repent of but sin. It is absurd to talk about repentance for doing what is good.

Repentance is not internal grief and sorrow as a price of salvation. There is nothing meritorious but rather the conscious lack of merit. In repentance the sinner says in effect: "Nothing in my hands I bring, Simply to Thy Cross I cling." Repentance is emptying oneself of all self-confidence, and when it is "repentance unto life" includes confidence in Christ as the one and only ground of salvation. There is no specific length of time one has to mourn nor any certain degree of sorrow one must feel. This is because mourning is not the price of salvation. One mourns over his lost condition--mourns because he is not saved, not in order to be saved. The sinner cannot be saved by his mourning. Mourning may reveal his interest in salvation, but will not merit salvation. You go to your physician for a check-up just as a precautionary measure. He gives you a thorough examination and tells you that you have cancer. This will naturally cause grief and anxiety. But all the mourning you might do would not contribute to any cure. Worry and grief would not cause you to get well. Now suppose your doctor, after a brief pause, assures you that he can cure you without surgery. If you believe him there will be wonderful peace of mind, but if you keep on in your grief that will be evidence you do not trust him. From the standpoint of the sinner's duty there is no need to mourn any length of time over sin. As soon as he feels concern over his lost condition and hears about Christ as Saviour, he ought to put his trust in Him and cease his mourning. The preacher should never tell the grief-stricken sinner to keep on mourning, but should tell him to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved. However, from the standpoint of God's sovereign dealings, He often allows the sinner to grieve and struggle with sin for a long time before He shows him the sufficiency of Christ as Saviour.

Repentance unto life includes faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. It has respect to Christ as Saviour, as well as to God as Lawgiver. It does not end in despair but in hope. Judas repented and hanged himself, but this was not gospel repentance, and a different word in the Greek is used to describe it. In gospel repentance we have sins perceived, sins abhorred, and sins abandoned in the heart, as one turns to Christ for salvation. The believer will never in this life be able to quit sinning, but in his heart he wants to. Someone

has called repentance the repudiation of sin. In true repentance there is not only a desire to escape the consequences of sin, but to be rid of sin itself as a thing displeasing to God. Much so-called repentance is illustrated in the little girl's prayer: "O God, make me good--not too good--not real good, but just good enough to keep me from being whipped." True repentance is a permanent and abiding grace in the soul. It is an attitude that belongs to the whole Christian life in regard to sin and the Saviour. As one grows in grace, sin becomes increasingly hateful and Christ becomes more and more precious.

The necessity of repentance was emphasized by Christ, by John the Baptist, and by the apostles. Our Lord preached, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Paul preached that God had commanded "all men every where to repent." May writer and reader bow in adoring wonder at the wisdom of God in human salvation.

(The Pioneer Baptist, April 1969)



ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

Mark Fenison at (360) 751-2929.

The Calvary Baptist Church of Piqua, Ohio is in need of a pastor. Any interested party may contact the church at 726 Wilson Avenue, Piqua, OH 45356 or call Terry Allen at (937) 773-9272.

The New Testament Baptist Church of Goshen, IN is looking for a pastor. Their previous pastor, Elder Mike Aman has resigned. Any interested brother should contact Elder Medford Caudill at medcthebaptist@msn.com or write to him at the church address, 22111 C.R. 38, Goshen, IN, 46526.

The Sovereign Grace Baptist Church of Galena, OH is in need of a pastor. Any interested candidates possessing the qualifications and traits concerning the office as found in I Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9 are asked to contact either of the following: Bro. Randy Coffey at (614) 871-2406 or email recoffeypot@aol.com or Bro. Joe Vass at (614) 846-8699 or email jamijoe@wowway.com.

The Bethel Bible Baptist Church, PO Box 85, Mansfield, LA is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elder should call Connie McMellon at 318-872-1647.

The Landmark Baptist Church of Collinsville, IL is in need of a pastor. Any interested Elders may call (618)

288-4236 for more information.

The Windsor Baptist Church at Windsor, IL is searching for a Sovereign Grace pastor. Any one interested may contact Larry Rawlings at (217) 665-3643, or cell (217) 620-4675, or by mail at PO Box 194, Bethany, IL 61914.

The Grace Baptist Church of Winston-Salem, NC is in need of a pastor. The church believes in the Doctrines of Grace, the local church, and is Pre-millennial. Interested brethren should contact Deacon Cletus Snyder at 336-788-5753.

Any church that is without a pastor, please feel free to send your information in regards to the pastoral position for publication in these announcements.

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Scriptural Church Organization	\$6.95
Wine, Worship, and the Word	\$6.95
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Reprinting the Berea Baptist Hymnal (Third Edition)

We are glad to announce that the Berea Baptist Hymnal (Third Edition) is at the printer.

We are currently awaiting proof copies to finalize and complete its republication. At present the expected cost will be \$10 per book, plus shipping.

We expect to have enough copies for all those churches and individuals who have previously requested them. At present, we expect to have some extra copies as we have ordered a few extra above what we had requests for.

We currently don't yet have a fixed date on when to expect them in.

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